

**Creativity and the corporate brand within small to
medium sized creative organisations**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out an initial understanding, by providing exploratory insight into aspects of the corporate brand within business-to-business small to medium sized enterprises (SME's) located in the United Kingdom (UK) creative industry sectors. Specifically, it investigates how organisational creativity interrelates with the corporate brand from a mainly internal owner and employee perspective. It asks a) what factors are involved in the corporate brand building and maintenance process, from both an individual and organisational perspective; b) why and how do creative individuals impact upon the corporate brand; c) why and how do the clients impact upon the corporate brand. Calling upon bodies of creative literature, including those relating to situational, organisational and social factors of creativity, the study takes an exploratory, qualitative and inductive approach. Four organising themes and various sub themes are presented. The organising themes have been termed: identification; development; rewards and brand evolution. Each of these interrelates with creativity and therefore the corporate brand. The 'identification' theme captured various individual and organisational identification issues apparent within the data, each with implications for the creative organisation and their corporate brand. The 'development' theme uncovers some of the ways through which individuals look to grow and improve across different experiences. It also outlines how the lack of such opportunities may affect organisational loyalty and the corporate brand. 'Rewards' of various kinds also emerged as relevant to the creative process and the corporate brand. The rewards sought varied in type, and the management of such rewards presented particular problems within these kinds of organisations. Finally, as each of the case study organisations were classed as small to medium in size, issues relating to the growth of the organisation frequently emerged in relation to the corporate brand, as captured by the 'brand evolution' theme. The findings presented within this thesis will be relevant to both the academic and practitioner communities.

Keywords: Corporate branding; corporate identity; creativity; creative; small to medium size enterprises (SME's); creative organisations; client relationships; identity; identification; rewards; development; brand management; creative brand; corporate reputation.

Chapter 1 : Introduction

1.1 Introduction, chapter structure and objectives

This chapter will place the thesis in context. It will start by outlining the relevance of organisational creativity and branding. It will then set out the aim and objectives of the research. The chapter will also establish the usefulness and significance of research based on business-to-business small to medium sized enterprises (SME's) and creativity within the United Kingdom (UK) context. The overall structure of the thesis will also be presented.

The rest of this chapter is divided into several sections:

1.2 Creativity and the corporate brand as interlinking areas of research

1.3 Research aims and objectives

1.4 Usefulness and significance of the research

1.5 Structure of the thesis

1.2 Creativity and the corporate brand as interlinking areas of research

The systematic empirical research relating to creativity has accumulated for more than 50 years, and yet the concept still invites research, discussions and curiosity based on it being an interesting, valuable and complex topic (Martinsen 2003). Creativity is also one of the most difficult human attributes to manage (Huberman 1990). Recognition of this has led to a particular focus on the contextual or organisational factors which facilitate employee creative performance, particularly in the last 15 years as indicated within table 1.1 below. Organisational conceptions have shifted to highlight the value of individual and collective knowledge, creativity and experience in service production and organisational improvements (Gilmartin 1999).

As seen shortly within Chapter 3, theory development relating to organisations has highlighted how limited and fragmented the research which seeks to gain an understanding of creativity in a social context still is today. An extra aspect often seemingly overlooked, as apparent from the literature review undertaken for this thesis, is that such services are frequently produced in a client contact scenario with the clients' input and actions playing a significant role in the creation of the creative product. As a result, it is important to realise that 'moments of truth' service encounters and the interactions with clients are likely to have an impact on the corporate brand. There have also been calls for greater recognition of the business-to-business service process as a core component of the service provided, through which creativity is generated. Examples of such services include design services, architectural services, and branding services (DCMS 2001; Hill & Johnson 2003; New Zealand Government 2004). These services match the three case services selected for this thesis. Highlighting that much of the creativity research, to date, has mainly focused upon technologically led organisations or scientific organisations, Ensor et al (2001: 154), have called for an exploration of the work environment in less technologically led creative organisations, and across differing creative industries, to allow comparison with their own research. This thesis has therefore selected non-technological or science based case studies, from different industry sectors.

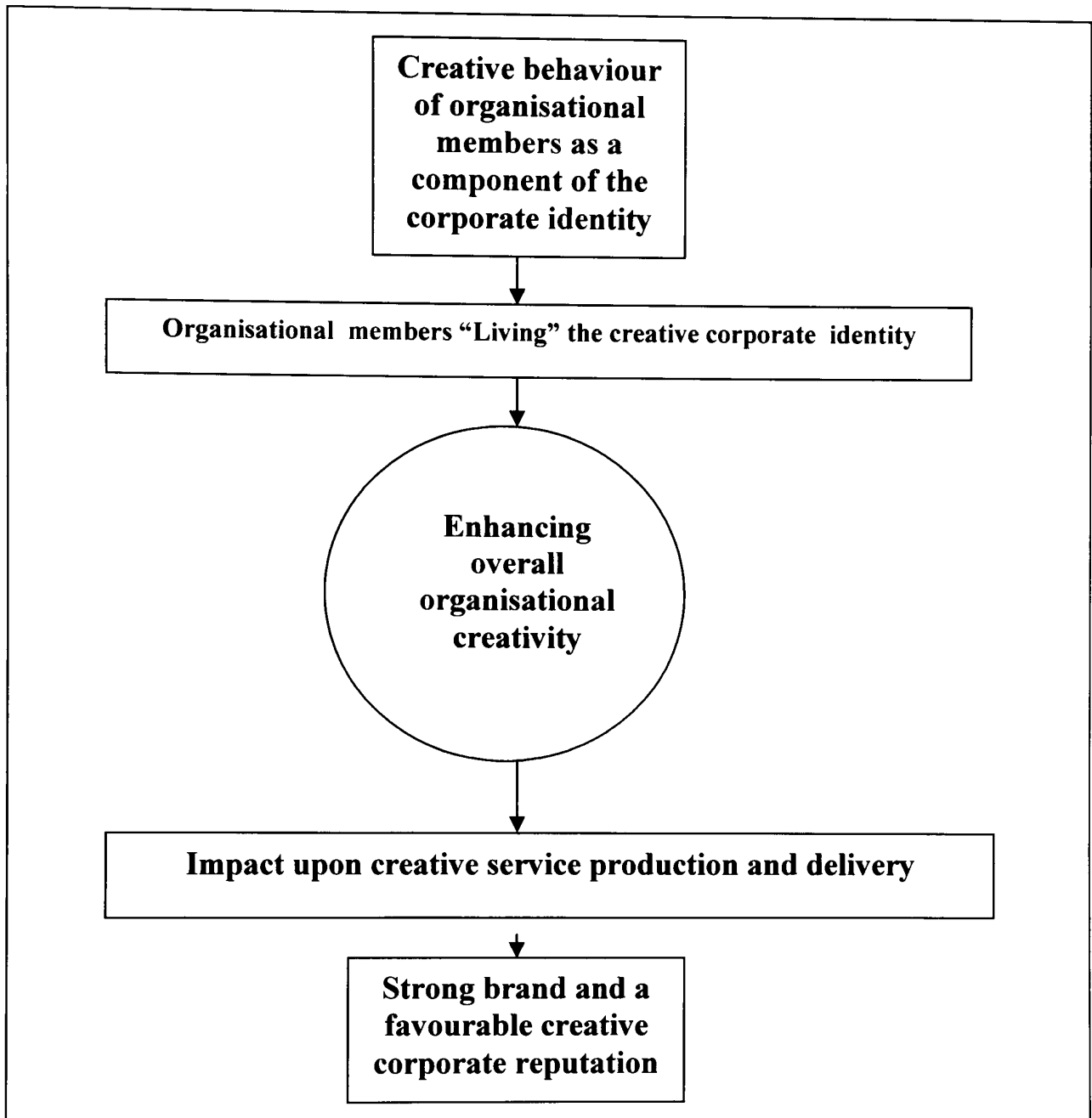
Table 1.1 Trend towards contextual/organisational factors within creativity

<u>Authors</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Findings</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Methodology</u>
(West & Farr 1990)	Innovation and creativity at work	Edited book presenting Innovation and creativity issues at individual, group and organisational levels	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Woodman & Schoenfeldt 1990)	An interactionist model of creative behaviour	Model linking personality, cognitive and social psychology to creativity	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin 1993)	Toward a theory of organisational creativity	Development of model for understanding creativity in complex social settings	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Ford & Gioia 1995)	Creativity in organisations	Edited book presenting both academic and practitioner viewpoints	Secondary	Not applicable
(Ford 1996)	A theory of individual creativity in multiple social domains	Draws on psychology and sociology – offers pragmatic view of creative action	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Oldham & Cummings 1996)	Employee creativity personal and contextual factors at work	Managers should consider personal and contextual factors to increase creativity	Primary – 171 manufacturing employees	Questionnaires
(Amabile et al. 1996) (Amabile 1997) (Amabile 2001)	Assessing the work environment for creativity and motivational aspects	Development and validation of a new instrument (KEYS)	Secondary – literature review. Primary - 120 R&D personnel	Critical incident study based upon interviews and thematic coding
(Mikdashi 1999)	Work environment affecting creativity	Assess impact of organisational climate on managers creativity	Primary – 300 managers	Survey using Amabile's (1996) keys instrument
(James, Clark, & Cropanzano 1999)	Positive and negative creativity	Model developed of factors that may trigger positive or negative creativity	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Tierney, Farmer, & Graen 1999)	An examination of leadership and employee creativity	Employee characteristics connecting with creativity	Primary – 191 R&D employees	Interviews and questionnaires
(Drazin, Glynn, & Kazanjian 1999)	Multilevel theorising about creativity in organisations	Model mapping organisational creativity unfolding over time	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Ford & Gioia 2000)	Factors influencing creativity in the domain of managerial decision making	Combines various models to show how managerial creativity is affected by differing factors	Primary – 51 upper level managers	In depth interviews and some questionnaire aspects
(Csikszentmihalyi 2001)	A systems perspective on creativity	Creativity exists within systems of cultural rules and requires support from peers and communities	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Zhou & Woodman 2003)	Creative ideas: a social-cognitive model	Highlights that manager's 'creativity schema' dictates recognition of creative ideas	Secondary – literature review	Not applicable
(Lapierre & Giroux 2003)	Creativity and work environment in a high-tech context	Model development adding to Amabile's (1996) KEYS instrument (see above)	Primary- 122 surveys	Questionnaires

Creative services are often high involvement, high cost and long term business-to-business purchases of great importance to both organisations involved in the relationship. The inherent ambiguity of the creative process means its outcome is not likely to be known until some time after the start of the project. Thus service 'credence' and 'experience' attributes may also take on heightened significance during the creative service process. Positive or negative service experience may relate directly to the acceptance and rejection decisions of creative outcomes presented to the client. The existence of high service credence and experience attributes concerning the creative process and outcome can lead to a heightened perception of risk in the relationship (Bateson 1989; Hill & Johnson 2003). Creativity of these kinds are delivered via an interactive process and therefore high purchase risk perceptions need to be reduced. In addition, what impact might this interaction and inter-reliance have on the creative organisation's own corporate brand?

Band (2002) has argued that academic developments relating to the building of a 'strong corporate brand from an internal perspective' has been quite limited to date, and has been mainly discussed via conceptual, theoretical concepts not largely based on collected empirical evidence, as also indicted within table 1.1 above. In addition, she has noted that the research has been discussed predominantly from the viewpoint of the business-to-consumer models rather than business-to-business models. Noted recent exceptions to this include Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2000, 2001) who focus on the creative industry sectors, dealing primarily with business-to-business transactions. Band (2002) has therefore called for further research within creative organisations to reinforce, refute or add to the academic developments that currently exist. Comparatively little is also known of the dynamics of managing the relatively smaller knowledge based creative organisations in the service sector. This thesis has specifically selected organisations classed as small to medium sized firms as the basis of the study. The broader aim of this thesis is to investigate the potential interlink between employees and how they may build value for the corporate brand within a creative SME service environment, as encapsulated within Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1 Impact of organisational members on the corporate brand



Adapted from Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2000) : 365, 367.

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The initial topic of investigation for this thesis was corporate identity and branding within knowledge based organisations. It was apparent from the first literature review that knowledge based organisations, trading upon and gaining a reputation via their creativity, are relatively under-researched when compared to some other forms of professional knowledge based organisations such as computer software companies, lawyers and research and development laboratories (Alvesson 1995b; Robertson & Swan 2003). The literature has therefore called for further

investigations into the process of corporate brand building (Balmer 2001), particularly within knowledge based creative organisations (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000; Ensor, Cottam, & Band 2001) as well as the specific challenges facing management in such organisations (Jones, Comfort, Eastwood & Hillier 2004).

The aim of this thesis is to look at aspects of creativity and the corporate brand within business-to-business small to medium sized enterprises (SME's) based within several United Kingdom creative industry sectors. The thesis takes a mainly internal view of brand building and maintenance, with the aim of uncovering and identifying some of the core aspects that are part of that process. Relating to this aim, the following objectives can be outlined:

- a) What factors are involved in the corporate brand building and maintenance process, from both an individual and organisational perspective?
- b) Why and how do creative individuals impact upon the corporate brand?
- c) Why and how do the clients impact upon the corporate brand?

1.4 Usefulness and significance of the research

The findings presented and discussed within this thesis must be considered in accordance with originality and relevance. As this thesis has used an inductive research approach, the themes identified within Chapter 5 are therefore all grounded and originate from within the data collected rather than any hypotheses generated from the pre-existing literature.

The concepts identified within this thesis will be relevant to at least two communities as well as clients/consumers in general.

The academic community will benefit from new insight based on inductively generated findings focusing mainly upon business-to-business SME's in the UK

creative industries. The concepts uncovered and discussed can be applied alongside existing creative and branding concepts and findings, to further our understanding and knowledge in relation to creativity and the creation of a corporate brand from an internal perspective. The practitioner community will benefit from greater insight into some of the ways that the corporate brand is enhanced or devalued from an internal perspective, leading to an ability to make better informed management decisions.

Finally, an improved understanding of the process of creative service delivery may assist both providers and consumers in attaining a better product and greater satisfaction in general.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 1</u> Introduction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Serves as an introduction to the study and illustrates its main aspects and structure</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 2</u> Relevance of creativity within the UK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Provides an orientation to corporate branding within the context of the creative economy</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 3</u> Literature review</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Aims to synthesise and discuss the pre-existing literature linking creativity and corporate branding</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 4</u> Methodology</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Devoted to the research methodology, outlining the reasoning for the research approach adopted and the procedures used to analyse the results</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 5</u> Analysis and synthesis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Focuses upon the major findings of the analysis and synthesis of the data, outlining the main concepts and themes identified</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 6</u> Discussion and Conclusions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Offers a summary discussion of the main aspects identified within the thesis as well as the implications and future research questions and avenues</p>

Chapter 2 : Relevance of creativity within the UK

2.1 Introduction, chapter structure and objectives

This chapter aims to orientate the thesis in relation to services and corporate branding, within the wider context of creative industries within the UK. The relevance of the concept of the knowledge worker within such organisations is also highlighted.

The rest of this chapter is divided into several sections:

2.2 The importance of SME's and creativity within the UK

2.3 Creative industries defined

2.4 Knowledge workers and creative organisations

2.5 Summary

2.2 The importance of SME's and creativity within the UK

2.2.1 Importance of SME's to the UK economy

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, the UK Small to Medium Size Enterprise sector (SME's) accounts for 55.4% of all employment and 51% of business turnover (Martin 2000: 6). In broad terms, an SME is a firm of less than 250 employees. However, within that figure, actual number of employees, maximum turnover and maximum assets, as seen within Table 2.1 below, can be used to further segment SME's.

Table 2.1 Further segmentation and definition of SME's

	DTI	European Commission		
Firm	Employees	Maximum Employees	Maximum Turnover	Maximum Assets
Micro	0-9	9		
Small	0-49	49	7m euros	5m euros
Medium	50-249	249	40m euros	27m euros
Large	Over 250			

Source: Martin (2000: 5)

Apart from size, small firms are also fundamentally different to larger firms in terms of innovation, uncertainty and evolution (Martin 2000) where

“Uncertainty stems from small firms having diverse owner objectives and being price-takers with limited customer and product bases. In terms of innovation, small firms are less committed to existing practices and products and are more likely than large firms to introduce fundamentally new innovations. Finally, small firms are able to turn themselves into something larger. This greater potential for evolution means that the structures of small firms are more likely to be in a state of change than those of large firms” (Martin 2000: 7).

The small size and uncertain environment surrounding most SME's leads to a heightened risk of decline or failure. Such firms often operate via word of mouth referrals and keep with the same core group of clients through long term relationships. Therefore, service delivery and the overall image and reputation of the corporate brand as they grow and evolve are of heightened importance, as investigated within this thesis.

2.2.2 Importance of creative service industries to the UK economy

It is commonly argued that advanced capitalist economies have progressively moved from a manufacturing based industry to a service based industry, where the production and consumption of services have grown in relevance and importance, and where the need for "solutions" largely drive the ensuing activities of organisations and consumers (Jaworski & Coupland 1999: 6).

The shift towards an increased need for solutions has led to a greater reliance on organisations that no longer operate on factory lines where workers are isolated from each other and their end users/consumers. This shift therefore means that networks have been encouraged to form between workers, and between workers and their clients. This is in an effort to discover and implement timely and suitable solutions, often based on knowledge.

Some observers have also argued that the world has entered into a fourth era of economic life, a 'knowledge economy'. Whereas the previous eras were hunting and gathering, agriculture and industrial, with the current being the information age. As the United Kingdom (UK) moves increasingly towards a 'knowledge economy' with competition based upon the creation and application of knowledge rather than capital, raw materials and labour (Kessels 2001), the UK government has called for priority placed on the fostering of knowledge, skills and creativity, stating: "It is through creativity and imagination that Britain will succeed in the 21st century." (Blair 1998).

Thus, some observers have argued that a fifth era is approaching, namely the ‘creative age’ (Botkin 1996; Kao 1996; Koh 2000), where:

“creativity and innovation are probably the most powerful engines of the human intellect. It is only through them that all new worlds of art, science and technology are conceived and ultimately realised” (Vandervert 2003: 1104).

Worldwide, the creative industries are seen to be growing faster than other economic sectors (New Zealand Government 2004). The pace of change, partly driven by technology, within many areas of the world, taken together with increased international and inter-organisational competition makes creativity essential for both individual and organisational survival and prosperity (Amabile 1988; Shalley 1991; Scott 1995; James, Clark & Cropanzano 1999; Tierney, Farmer & Graen 1999; Dess & Picken 2000; Shalley & Perry-Smith 2001).

While not necessary for all types of jobs and organisations, a ‘winning creative idea’ that stands can have a large impact on sales. Controlling for the same level of budget, product, distribution and other marketing mix efforts, research within advertising for example has indicated up to a five fold sales increase for such successful ideas (Blair 1988; Buzzell 1964; West 1999).

Nystrom (1990) and Mumford et al (Mumford, Scott, Gaddis & Strange 2002) have also indicated that organisational growth and profit may be related to creativity and innovation. Recognition of winning creative ideas can have a positive effect on the creative organisation’s image, leading to an ability to attract and retain employees of the right calibre. Even within relatively stable and predictable markets, organisations can benefit from creative ideas that help to improve quality or productivity or client satisfaction (Williams 2004). Management within many organisations constantly asks what new products and services can be designed and delivered, how they can position their products and services differently and how they can provide added benefit and value, for both new and old clients. To respond constructively to these

questions, companies need employees capable of generating new and often creative ideas, thus competencies relating to creativity have become increasingly important (Gundry, Kickul & Prather 1994). In addition, the enhancement of creative performance within employees is seen as a necessary step if organisations are to sustain a competitive advantage (Amabile 1988; Oldham & Cummings 1996; Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby & Ferron 1996). A McKinsey study as cited by Bharadwaj and Menon (2000: 424), indicates that firms expect new products to deliver 34% of future top-line growth while also planning on producing 21% fewer products than in 1998. Creativity within this context is therefore increasingly seen as the cornerstone of competitive differentiation (Watt, Russell & Haslum 2000).

Workload pressure and speed have also steadily increased within creative industries. Ensor et al (2001) citing a senior board member of a creative agency based in London have highlighted this:

“What I used to do in the early days of my career, in days, I now do in hours and what I did in hours, I now do in minutes and I learn on my experience”
(Ensor, Cottam & Band 2001: 152).

Within many small, creative and entrepreneurial organisations, there is often no marketing department containing marketing specialists. Hence, marketing tends to be adopted as a guiding organisational philosophy across the whole organisation, which often attempts to orientate itself and its activities around the needs of the customer and marketplace. Here, the relatively smaller size means that these organisations are often in very close touch with the marketplace and customer needs. This means that any changes can be more quickly identified, with successful management often being based on intuition, informality and speed of decision making (Collinson & Shaw 2001). With no marketing department to act as a potential buffer between the internal and external environments, the perceptions and actions of the creative employees, as well as those of the clients, can impact directly on the overall corporate brand whenever a ‘moment of truth’ service interaction occurs.

2.3 Creative industries defined

The department of culture, media and sports (DCMS), part of the UK government, has defined creative industries as comprising “activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent, and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property” (DCMS 1998: 10).

In reality, most, if not all sectors of the UK economy could claim with some probable justification to be driven by individual creativity, skill and talent relating to the development and implementation of intellectual property. It is therefore doubtful that an unambiguous generic definition that would set up firm boundaries for the industry can be established. It is more useful to think of the industry in terms of a “definitional continuum which may comprise a varying range of economic activities, particularly at the margins of the category” (Drake 2003: 513).

One useful way of narrowing the distinction within the continuum is to suggest that creative industries produce artefacts as goods and services, both tangible and/or intangible, from which the *primary* value is derived from their aesthetic attributes (Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor & Raffo 2000; Drake 2003). The three case organisations selected for this thesis, namely architects, design agency and branding consultancy all fall within this narrower distinction.

The creative industry sectors are seen as significant both in terms of revenue generation and employment within the UK. For example, UK architecture fee income was £1.7 bn with a secondary economic impact on the economy of £13.7 bn, along with 6000 private practices and some 22,900 architects in full time employment during 2000 (DCMS 2001). UK design agencies including brand consultancies fee income was £4.8 bn in 1999, with design related as a whole impacting on the economy by £26.7 bn, along with 4000 design consultancies, and approximately 76,000 people employed within the sector (DCMS 2001). The creative industry as a whole generates total revenues of £60 bn per year into the economy and employment

stands at more than 1.4 million (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000). During the period between 1997-2002 the creative industry sector grew by 6% per annum compared to 3% for the rest of the economy and by 2003 approximately 120,000 companies were classed as being within the creative industry sector (Jones, Comfort, Eastwood & Hillier 2004) .

It has also been acknowledged that creativity is an important source of competitive strength for organisations located within the creative industries (Cook 1998; Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000), and is one of the key elements for developing corporate brands with a high reputation (Sutton & Kelly 1997).

2.4 Knowledge workers and creative organisations

Creative employees can also be termed ‘knowledge workers’, professional or expert workers who use non-tangible inputs such as intellect to specifically produce a creative output. A knowledge worker can be seen as at least a ‘quasi-professional’ with a high level of education and who views work as a career. Their loyalty is often to the expertise rather than the employer and their expertise often leads to a high level of autonomy and discretion over the design and execution of their work (Hayman & Elliman 2000). In addition, there has been a relative growth of occupations in the service industry that require the reconceptualisation of information by ‘knowledge workers’ or ‘symbolic analysts’, especially outside of the more regulated professions (Ram 1999).

For this reason, in recent years, interest in what has been termed ‘knowledge work’ has been burgeoning, after earlier periods of discussion through the 1970’s and 1980’s. In 1973, Bell (1973) discussed the possibility of a post-industrial society being formed that would rely heavily on knowledge workers operating primarily within knowledge intensive firms (Robertson & Swan 2003).

During the mid 1980’s the literature, particularly in the popular press as well as some academic literature, suggested that corporate or organisational culture was a variable

that could be manipulated (Peters & Waterman 1982; Schein 1983; Schein 1992). Others also looked at issues relating to knowledge work within creative organisations (c.f. Sveiby & Lloyd 1987).

By the early 1990's a body of knowledge had been written with regard to the professions, the expert division of labour, professional organisations, knowledge workers and knowledge organisations (c.f. Alvesson & Berg 1992; Starbuck 1992; Sveiby & Lloyd 1987; Kunda 1992).

In addition, past research has not clearly identified how senior management should behave in order to build strong and consensual corporate values within knowledge intensive firms. For example, under the concept of normative management control, it is not clear that knowledge workers with higher levels of education are so easily led. Some authors have suggested that due to the higher levels of complexity, exceptionally high levels of management skills are needed in knowledge organisations (Sveiby & Lloyd 1987; Robertson & Swan 2003). Others have stated the need for a redress of the limited nature of empirical work that, to date, has been conducted in the context of knowledge work and normative and non normative control (Alvesson 1995b; Balmer 1996; Wilson 1995), with calls for more substantive empirical support and analysis in such organisations (Robertson & Swan 2003).

The literature has also introduced and discussed ambiguity as a state that a firm passes through rather than an environment it constantly has to operate in. This does not seem to apply to the environment faced by most knowledge intensive organisations, and in particular those based around creativity. Indeed, creative organisations often differentiate themselves through the proactive and successful use of perpetually ambiguous operating conditions.

For all of the reasons outlined within this chapter, creative organisations and their interactions within and outwith, still hold the potential to provide many avenues of fruitful academic research.

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has orientated the thesis in relation to SME's and the wider context of creative industries within the UK. The need for creativity to underpin competitive advantage in this sector has been outlined, and the relatively high impact of the creative industry sector on the UK has been identified. The relevance of knowledge workers has also been discussed. The next chapter will look more closely at the literature in relation to the research aims and objectives as set out within Chapter 1.

Chapter 3 : Literature review

The aim of this chapter is to identify and synthesise the existing bodies of creativity and corporate branding literature relevant to the research aims and objectives identified earlier. The final section will summarise the main points.

The rest of this chapter is therefore divided as follows :

3.1 Defining creativity and types of creativity

3.2 Boundaries for the scope of review

3.3 Creativity/brand research literature

3.4 Chapter summary

3.1 Defining organisational creativity and types of creativity

It has been suggested that “it is not necessary to begin with a crisp definition of an entity in order to study it.... It is hard to define something one knows little about” (Kosslyn 1980: 469).

Whilst more has become known about creativity and organisational creativity in the past few decades, enough is not known to completely specify universal definitions of the terms as seen shortly. However, for the research to be useful it is important that it identifies what it is that is being looked at or talked about, and what is not, to a reasonable level of consensus (Amabile 1983b). This subsection will therefore delineate the differences (and connections) between innovation, creativity and organisational creativity.

3.1.1 Innovation

All innovation begins with creative ideas. Innovation is built on creative ideas as the basic elements where “organisational innovation is the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organisation” (Amabile 1988: 126). New programs, products and services depend on a person or team having a new idea, and that idea being developed beyond an initial state (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby & Ferron 1996). In a similar vein, Gurteen argues that a useful approach is to view:

“creativity as the process of generating ideas whilst seeing innovation as the sifting, refining and most critically the implementation of those ideas. Creativity is about divergent thinking. Innovation is about convergent thinking... coming up with ideas is the food of innovation.” (Gurteen 1998: 6).

Oldham & Cummings (1996: 608), have also made a distinction between creative performance as discussed below and innovation, where innovation refers to the “successful implementation of these *creative* ideas at the organisational level”. This

thesis does not look at implementation issues directly as would be required if the focus of this study was that of innovation rather than creativity.

3.1.2 Creativity

Creativity is a complex and diffuse construct and can be defined in a number of ways and on a number of levels. West & Farr (1990: 10), have defined creativity as "... the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people or circumstances of his life on the other".

Pierson (1983: 13) has stated that "creative organisations differ in that their product is creativity. Customers or clients come to them for new ideas, fresh approaches, creative concepts". In addition, two types of creativity are proposed. Firstly, pure creativity is process-orientated and the product is not necessarily the final objective. Examples of this are individual artists who create for self expression only. Secondly, applied creativity or product orientated creativity is where the activities are aimed towards a specific goal, where it is determined by and directly related to the client or market for its ultimate success (Scott 1995). Some problems have been reported where managers in a boundary spanning role between the creatives operating in a process-orientated mode and other managers or clients operating in a product-orientated mode. This, in effect, is seen as a "process/product gap" (Scott 1995: 66).

Oldham & Cummings (1996: 608) have defined creative performance as referring to products, ideas, or procedures, or 'creative outcomes' that satisfy two main conditions :

- a. novel and original (it involves either a significant recombination of existing materials or introduction of completely new materials).
- b. potentially relevant for, or useful to, an organisation

When defining creativity as a process rather than an outcome, creativity is at the individual level:

“the engagement of an individual in a creative act.... creative engagement is a process in which an individual behaviourally, cognitively, and emotionally attempts to produce creative outcomes” (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999: 290).

This definition is important as it explicitly highlights that a creative process underlies a creative outcome.

Creative employees are also different, in some ways, to other types of employees. Creativity involves the need to process information in a non-linear manner, often seen as a non-rational manner to those less creative. Thus creative people may have a skewed or differing view of the world, and this differing perspective is often the core of creative thinking (Scott 1995).

3.1.3 Organisational/corporate creativity

The definition of organisational or corporate creativity as used within this thesis is presented by Robinson & Stern (1997) where

“a company is creative when its employees do something new and potentially useful without being directly shown or taught... the tangible results of corporate creativity, so vital for long term survival and success, are improvements (changes to what is already done) and innovations (entirely new activities for the company). As one would expect, most creative acts are improvements” (Robinson & Stern 1997: 11).

Taking this statement, a scale can thus be produced of creative companies that range from those making incremental improvements to existing products and processes at one extreme to those that make large leaps or produce entirely new products or

processes at the other, alongside those that produce creativity at all levels of this scale.

Of additional relevance in respect to this thesis, Zhou and Woodman (2003) have also highlighted that organisational creativity needs to take into account the factor of individuals working together in a social environment via “the creation of a valuable, useful new product, service, idea, procedure, or process by individuals working together in a complex social system” (Zhou & Woodman 2003: 631).

3.1.4 Types of creativity identified

Various forms of creativity were identified within the literature. In order to ensure that the review contained in this chapter related to the forms of creativity present in the case studies, and to help frame the scope of the ensuing literature review, a taxonomy of creativity, and the orientation of this research project within it was sought.

Within Table 3.1 below, routine problem solving is identified where standard operating procedures are called into play to find a solution. Intelligent adaptation is where tasks are addressed via existing generative rule systems for a given problem space using intelligence. Proactive creativity is where no external stimuli exists to indicate a need to start off the creative process. Reactive creativity is where an external stimulus creates novelty at the task level, leading the organisation or individual to look for a novel solution (Kaufmann 2003). This last form of creativity is used mainly by the three organisations selected as case studies for this research.

Table 3.1 The novelty-creativity taxonomy

Task Novelty	High	Intelligent adaptation	Reactive creativity
	Low	Routine problem solving	Proactive creativity
		Low	High
		Solution Novelty	

Source: Kaufmann (2003: 244).

In addition, the kinds of creative tasks and processes of the three case study organisations in this thesis can be termed ‘complex-heuristic’, as they are often open-ended and ill-structured and lack a clear path forward to a pre-determined solution (Amabile 1983b; Shalley 1995). The ensuing literature review; as discussed below, has thus been focused upon literature related primarily to ‘*reactive creativity at an organisational level*’ as well as those contexts that include or would require ‘*complex-heuristic*’ tasks and processes.

3.2 Boundary for the scope of review

Creativity research has been conducted in one form or another since at least the 1870’s (Galton 2003; Hennessey 2003) and by a wide range of researchers in fields such as economics, social and occupational psychology, personality theory, sociology, management science, and organisational behaviourism (Unsworth 2001; Drake 2003).

Each field has tended to approach creativity with its own philosophical underpinnings. For example, psychologists have tended to see creativity exclusively as a mental process, which has often been investigated using experimental studies in controlled circumstances, such as undergraduate students and small scale laboratory

problems (Weisberg 2003). Other researchers have emphasised that it is as much a cultural and social event, and that these aspects cannot be ignored (Csikszentmihalyi 2001). Social psychologists have attempted to overcome this shortfall since the 1970's (Hennessey 2003), but despite this, researchers have still tended to take either an intra-organisational and intra-individual focus rather than approaching their research from a combination of intra-organisational and external influences. Notable exceptions in the past decade include Woodman & Schoenfeldt (1990, 1993).

Given this broad range of research, it is important to set boundaries as to the scope of the review contained in this chapter. This review will not include *individual difference* or creative *process* or *innovation* research, here defined as the 'temporal sequence of activities that occur' or the 'stages of creative thinking' involved within the innovation process (King 1990). This thesis is alternatively focused on creative *outcomes* and the individual and contextual factors associated with those outcomes, and not the implementation of those outcomes through innovation. This emphasis is justified where in the past :

“as a result of the focus on individual differences, some potentially important areas of inquiry into creativity have been virtually ignored. There has been a concentration on the creative person, to the exclusion of ‘creative situations’ – i.e. circumstances conducive to creativity. There has been a narrow focus on internal determinants of creativity to the exclusion of external determinants. And, within studies of internal determinants, there has been implicit concern with ‘genetic’ factors to the exclusion of contributions from learning and the social environment” (Amabile 1983b: 5).

Kaufmann (2003) has also stated that although progress has definitely been made in the past few decades regarding creativity based research, in view of the considerable fragmentation that characterises the field as discussed above :

“... a blinking warning sign may still be in order. It may be argued that the research programme in creativity has been driven too exclusively from an

operational ‘bottom-up’ perspective, where development of tests of creativity has taken priority over the clarification of basic conceptual and theoretical issues. The proliferation of tests purporting to measure creativity, without solid conceptual and theoretical foundation may be seen as justifying such criticism” (Kaufmann 2003: 236).

Researchers have increasingly questioned the usefulness of the general literature on creativity as far as applying it to an organisational setting. During the past decade there has been a fresh call for more empirically based research within complex social settings such as the creative work environment, especially within management research which is relatively underdeveloped (Ford & Gioia 2000; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin 1993; Montuori 1998; Pearson & Chatterjee 1997; Tesluk, Farr & Klein 1997; Lapierre & Giroux 2003). Woodman et al have highlighted that:

“when the research is critically evaluated, however, one thing becomes very clear – after decades of theory development and empirical research, researchers still know surprisingly little about how the creative process works, especially within the context of complex social systems such as formal organisations” (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin 1993: 308).

Amabile et al (1996: 1180) have also called for more research directed towards:

“discovering the precise connections between particular events in individuals’ work experience and their resulting perceptions of the work environment... and other events within (and outside of) their organisation that lead people to perceive encouragement”.

Oldham & Cummings (1996) have made a similar call stating that although several theorists have called for research that addresses the joint or combined effects of both personal and contextual factors on employee creativity, few empirically based studies have actually been conducted and therefore “future practice and research needs to

further unravel the complex relations among personal characteristics, contextual factors, and a variety of creative outcomes” (Oldham & Cummings 1996: 629).

Tierney et al (1999) and Bharadwaj & Menon (2000) have additionally called for research focusing upon broader employee social context and those influences on creativity such as the work group or clients for example, as well as the intrinsic-motivation-creativity dynamic in the organisational context (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin 1993).

Mumford et al (2002: 737), have highlighted from their recent research that creativity and its management is an unusually complex phenomenon and that “the leadership of creative people cannot be understood through rote application of extant (traditional) models”.

Further, whilst researchers have studied the innovation process based on a sense making framework (Ring & Rands 1989; Dougherty 1992; Hill & Lavenhagen 1995), there has been relatively limited work that has applied an interpretive framework specifically to the study of creativity (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999; Ford 1996; Ford & Gioia 1995) as has been attempted for this thesis. As highlighted later within the Methodology Chapter, the goal of theory building in an interpretative or sense making perspective is to describe complex organisational behaviour and organisational life, and not to follow a normative agenda of reduction of complexity into variables. In addition, individuals are seen as the centre of organisational life, creating meanings in their social settings through interactions with, and not in isolation from, others (Weick 1979, 1995). Specifically for this thesis, the focus is less on understanding how to manipulate a system (to increase creativity in this case) and more on understanding the process through which individuals as employees and employers within organisations develop systems of meaning about creative action. The focus is primarily on how the development of meaning motivates engagement and action.

As the result of an earlier review of the creative literature, Andriopoulos (2001: 839, 2003: 376) has also encouraged researchers to :

- a) apply inductive methodological approaches to the identification of management practices that enhance employees' creative potential in practice
- b) bring creativity questions into the "person-organisational conditions" interplay and conduct further research in this area so that new insights can arise
- c) search for practical tensions, mixed messages or oppositions that are part of the everyday reality of managing creativity to stimulate wider theory development via discoveries of further opposing conditions or processes
- d) greater use of inductive research within the creative organisation rather than remote from or on the fringe of such organisations as would be the case via survey questionnaires for example

In addition, it can be noted that key research presented in the literature to date by some of the above authors, such as Amabile et al (1996) and Oldham & Cummings (1996), has been conducted primarily using medium to large sized organisations, and/or primarily using technological or Research and Development (R & D) employees.

This thesis differs from the majority of previous creativity research in the literature in that it looks specifically at SME's and non-technological and R & D based creative employees in the service sector, as outlined earlier within Chapters 1 and 2. It also applies an inductive approach to the data in a person-organisation context from within the heart of the organisations than from the fringes via questionnaires as discussed further within Chapter 4.

The literature review that follows has therefore been focused more specifically around the same distinctions and forms of employees, organisations and issues as outlined in this subsection.

3.3 Creativity/brand research literature

3.3.1 Situational factors and creativity

To date, research has been conducted mainly via three main streams within the creativity literature: individual characteristics, organisational influences (more limited stream than individual) and the latest of the three streams that attempts to integrate the two (Livingstone, Nelson & Barr 1997).

There have been mainly three ways of looking at creative antecedent research for individual level creativity, namely: trait approaches; situational influences; and overarching theoretical approaches (King 1990).

Taking trait approaches first, it can be seen that this form of personality based research has dominated individual level creativity. These have included, but are not limited to (King 1990): attempts to identify and measure a ‘creativity’ trait (Guilford 1959), or traits related to ‘creative production’ (MacKinnon 1962) as well as other traits associated with creative achievement, such as ‘autonomy’ (McCarrey & Edwards 1973), ‘social independence’ (Kaplan 1963; Coopey 1987), ‘high tolerance of ambiguity’ (Child 1973) and a ‘high propensity for risk taking’ (Michael 1979).

Moving to situational influences, much of the work in this area has focused upon creativity and creative problem-solving in the work setting, and includes a group of variables, which might be labelled social or organisational. Some of the more commonly discussed situational factors are covered below. Overarching theoretical approaches are discussed later within subsection 3.3.4.

3.3.1.1 Leadership

Leadership within creative organisations has received considerable attention within the literature with many writers highlighting the need for a mainly participative and collaborative style of leadership (King 1990; Peters & Waterman 1982; Kanter 1983), although others have argued that no one style can be generally prescribed (Glassman 1986).

Lapierre & Giroux (2003: 14) have discussed ‘vertical collaboration’ regarding communication and how this helps to drive tacit knowledge in creative organisations where employees get their ‘know why’ information. This form of information is often seen as more important than ‘know how’ information within a creative organisation, as it allows employees to fall back on principles and create new forms of know how as is often required. Robinson & Stern (1997) also introduce the concept of ‘alignment’: the understanding of the long-term organisational orientation amongst employees via clear and precise corporate missions. Thus it is argued that the ‘alignment of employee interests and actions with the companies’ key goals’, should allow employees to recognise and respond positively to potential new ideas and hence enhance the probability of sparking a creative act (Koh 2000: 93). This, it is argued allows the employees to picture the castle for which they are carving the stones (Arad, Hanson & Schneider 1997). This viewpoint is not dissimilar to that taken when looking at individual and organisational identity as discussed later in this chapter.

More recent research specifically focused upon creative organisations similar to those studied within this thesis, as conducted by Ensor, Cottam & Band (2001), has revealed that employees may in fact only have a vague understanding of the organisation’s vision due to rapid growth, structural changes and changes in ownership. Interestingly however, whilst perhaps unable to articulate the vision, senior management in those organisations still felt employees would know what was expected of them as that would be ‘embedded’ due to culture and climate factors. Some of these climate factors are highlighted as lack of structural boundaries.

informal discussions at all levels, and encouragement via what appear to be ‘extrinsic’ rewards, such as bonuses and promotion. It is interesting to note that this finding seems to argue against that of many main stream creativity researchers such as West et al (1990), Amabile et al (1996) and Woodman et al (1993). However, in the case of Ensor et al (2001), it is noted that the interviews were limited only to the board members within the creative organisations. The reported empirical finding may therefore be due to a possible over-reliance on only one level’s perspective within the creative organisation, and may explain the conflicting extrinsic motivation finding of these researchers. This thesis has avoided this potential methodological weakness via interviews at multiple levels within the chosen case studies, as discussed within the Methodology Chapter.

Managers and owners who show concern for employee’s feelings, needs and skill development, and who encourage them to voice their concerns, whilst also providing positive and mainly informational feedback, have been shown to promote an employees feeling of self-determination and personal initiatives in the workplace and enhance creative achievement. In contrast, those who are controlling, believe in close monitoring, are non-participative in decision making and give negative or untimely feedback, ultimately lead to a lowering of intrinsic motivation and therefore creativity (Deci & Ryan 1987; Oldham & Cummings 1996; Amabile 2001).

In addition to the above, owners and managers must know when, who and how to persuade others, both internally and externally (e.g. clients) for any given creative project to run more smoothly.

Leaders also seem to serve a number of roles when people are employed in creative work, for example (Mumford et al 2002: 738):

- Creating conditions for generation of ideas
- Evaluating ideas
- Integrating ideas with the needs of organisation/client

The work is complex, less well-defined, risky and demanding, and the employees need greater autonomy along with often adopting a professional and critical focus, with heightened intrinsic motivation. Creative employees often have strong egos. Hence managers and leaders of creative employees cannot rely primarily on more normative ways of managing, such as positional power, conformity pressure and organisational commitment, as ways of orientating people to their work. Such actions are likely to be counterproductive regarding the creative process and outcomes due to inhibition of creative exploration and experimentation (Mumford et al 2002). Hence leaders often need to share advanced technical expertise and creative problem-solving skills to be able to lead creative employees. Having such skills will lead to heightened levels of leader ‘credibility’, and credibility is seen as the “most powerful form of influence at the disposal of a leader” (Mumford et al 2002: 713) as this is needed to exert influence in a less normative way over others in such organisations.

Leaders in such an organisation will need an understanding of not only product, process, or technology but also an in-depth understanding of the organisation, its capabilities and its markets. Sense making by these leaders as discussed more fully shortly, is increased when such multiple parties are interacting to produce a creative product (Dunham & Freeman 2000; Mumford et al 2002).

Another key role of leaders is to help creative employees define problems in terms of organisational needs and goals and to be able to conduct some visioning as part of their influencing tactics (Mumford et al 2002) where:

“perhaps the most important role to be played by upper management in supporting creativity involves formulating and constantly communicating a clear vision of the organisation as innovative, supportive of new ideas, and offensive (rather than merely defensive) in the marketplace” (Amabile & Gyskiewicz 1987: 35).

Thus leaders within creative organisations ideally need to offer (Mumford et al 2002: 719):

1. Expertise
2. Visioning capabilities
3. Sense making capabilities
4. Social skills
5. Influencing tactics (taking into account unique characteristics of creative people such as autonomy, curiosity and professional focus) via:
 - reducing stress (requires social support and encouragement) and ambiguity while maximizing challenge and risk taking
 - encourage exploration whilst ensuring timely production of viable product
 - encourage individual initiative while promoting integration of group activities
 - the ability to lead both people, and the work

Research also indicates that employees are likely to withdraw from creative efforts without overt social support and encouragement (Scott 1995). Therefore, in addition to the above, leaders need to have or offer (Mumford et al 2002: 720):

1. Coaching skills
2. Communication skills
3. Persuasion skills (for employees and clients to accept outcomes and process when in boundary spanning roles)
4. Social intelligence (social perceptiveness, flexibility, wisdom, social appraisal skills)

5. Intellectual stimulation/engagement via environment – including role modelling in their day-to-day interactions, exhibition of involvement, idea support. Here role modelling as discussed in greater depth shortly, is seen as an important aspect of leadership of creative people. Leaders may use stories of crisis and achievements as a vehicle for defining a climate and culture likely to encourage creativity and innovation, as well as offering their own general behaviour for comparison.
6. Involvement – to encourage the intrinsic motivation to the problem at hand. Allowing creatives to select the problems they will work on is one example, but it is not as simple as this, as it is not always possible for creative organisations to facilitate this due to other commercial pressures. In addition, it may not be good for an employee to stay on the same project for too long due to boredom and a negative impact on creativity. Involvement may also be offered via greater encouragement to participate in defining the problems to be pursued and any approaches to be used in addressing problems. Also, involvement is often seen to increase when working in groups with peers (due to social facilitation) and when they are presented with challenging goals requiring substantial personal investment of time and energy.
7. Discretion - via a choice of the way one approaches the work or in the way a creative may use their time is often cited as a positive antecedent of creative performance (Amabile 1984; Peters & Waterman 1982; West 1987; Lovelace 1986). However, a complete freedom of choice of how creatives spend their time has not been found to be as effective as a more moderate freedom involving support through supervisors and managers through regular consultations (Glassman 1986).
8. Support is also needed from creative leaders through :

- idea support (creatives tend to explore first and confirm later – and they withdraw if they get premature negative criticism in the formative stages from leaders or peers)
- work support (access to resources needed to generate and implement new ideas)
- social support (helps with validating an individual's sense of self-worth)

Also, differing types of support are probably called for at different stages of the creative process, with tangible manifestations of work support likely to be particularly powerful during idea development and implementation - while idea and social support are likely to prove more important in initial idea generation, as with creativity.

Leaders also need to lead the overall work or project, taking into account the following aspects (adapted from ideas by Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000; Mumford et al 2002: 725):

- a) Output expectations and feedback
- b) Project selection and structure - specifying the work to be done but also the competencies needed as well as the framework around which employees and others will interact, including clients. Thus, project selection can be seen as a critical mechanism for both directing the work of creative employees and managing interactions within the group.
- c) Diversity – or make up of team may need to be changed, perhaps by limiting the time frame that workers are together on a team, or bringing in differing backgrounds and perspectives. One side-effect of this however may be stress, turnover and excessive conflict. Also, greater diversity in the management team (using people with different backgrounds and perspectives), seems to lead teams to perform better on complex and novel problems, because in most

“real-world” creative problems it is unlikely that any one individual will possess organisational or technical knowledge to make informed decisions.

- d) Contact and information exchange - is critical both internally and with external groups, but some of the internal groups may tend to focus on internal or more easily to obtain information, and may even reject external information.

Role modelling

Social cognitive theory has argued that learning can take place by vicarious learning via modelling and self-control processes. In other words, individuals are more likely to perform a behaviour they are capable of when they have been given a visual demonstration of that behaviour (behaviour modelling). They are also more likely to exhibit such behaviour through the transmission of examples of appropriate rules and thought process (cognitive modelling) (Bandura 1986; Shalley & Perry-Smith 2001). Therefore, a factor that may support or constrain an individual’s creativity is an organisation’s or manager/supervisor’s use of modelling of desirable and undesirable behaviours and work processes.

3.3.1.2 Evaluation and feedback

An important aspect of a manager’s job is evaluating employees’ work and providing feedback. Evaluation can be given in a number of differing ways, including in the case of performance, via information to help improve performance (informational), or to gauge how well one performs against a core set standard (controlling). Research indicates that controlling forms of feedback can have a negative impact on intrinsic motivation, whilst informational and particularly positive feedback leads to a stable or positive impact on such motivation (Deci & Ryan 1987; Zhou 1998; Shalley & Perry-Smith 2001). In this context, informational feedback should be given in such a way as to emphasise the development of competencies, such as increasing abilities and development of new skills as perceived by the receiver. One criticism of this

finding is that it is based on research primarily conducted using undergraduate students on an organisational behaviour course and under experimental lab-setting. As a result, the authors have called for research that upholds or disproves this finding in actual organisations, as has been conducted for this thesis.

Supervisory feedback and/or recognition, as well as in some settings the use of social support, have often been found to play an important role in fostering creativity (King 1990; Amabile 1984; West & Farr 1989), with a lack of appreciation of creative accomplishment being often cited as an obstacle to creativity (Glassman 1986). Positive competence feedback has been widely studied and several studies have found that it can increase intrinsic motivation by affirming competence as long as it is not seen as a form of interpersonal control by the individual (Deci & Ryan 1987). Creative people, while curious and open in their approach, also have a tendency to display a harsh, evaluative orientation towards both their own work and the work of others (Mumford et al 2002).

Calling on cognitive evaluation theory, the locus of control and perceived locus of causality regarding the source of the feedback (internal/intrinsic or external/extrinsic) has also been investigated for its impact on creativity (Shalley & Perry-Smith 2001). This research has found that expectation of evaluation is not good or bad in itself, but depends how it is presented and perceived. They advocate a focus on learning and continuous improvement. These authors call for future research to investigate the impact of modelling on creativity by examining factors such as a models source or perceived credibility.

Based on this discussion, internal evaluation and feedback relating to creative work may therefore have an effect on the way individuals would perceive the organisation and its brand. In addition, client evaluations and feedback may be present both during the creative process, and/or relating to the final outcome, and this may indicate a moderating effect. Thus, evaluation and feedback could be seen here as important aspects of a corporate brand as by:

“framing vision in terms of work goals and articulating this vision through project selection and project evaluation, rather than overt affective appeals, a work focused vision, or mission, may be promulgated that will enhance people’s creative efforts” (Mumford et al 2002: 716).

3.3.1.3 Risk and trust

Uncertainty within the creative process and outcome often evokes politics and persuasion and places a premium on actions that aim to reduce uncertainty. Associated with uncertainty is risk (Mumford et al 2002).

Agency theory and empirical research suggests that agencies will be relatively more risk seeking/taking in any creative process with their smaller clients than the larger ones. The reasons given for this include: loss of a smaller clients will not have such a major impact on revenue flow if the agency has a diversified portfolio of small and large clients; if this risk leads to ultimate success for the smaller client, the agency may benefit more overall than servicing a larger client which may simply absorb or buffer the benefit themselves internally; unwarranted levels of risk leading to failure for a large well known client in the marketplace may have severe negative implications for the creative organisation’s own reputation, but such a knock on market impact is likely to be greatly reduced if servicing a smaller client. The reverse implications are that the more riskier or more wide ranging, and perhaps more creative ideas, are not put forward to the larger clients because the supplying creative organisation tends to avoid uncertainty for their larger clients. This can be the case even though such clients may seek such a heightened creative input from the outset (West 1999).

Often creative services are also high involvement, high cost and long term business-to-business purchases, purchases of great importance to both the organisations involved in the relationship. The service provided is also likely to be high in credence attributes as a result of inherent ambiguity where the impact of any creative process and outcome is not likely to be known until a much later date after the start

of the project. Experience attributes may therefore take on heightened significance throughout such a process relating to the acceptance and rejection decisions of work presented to the client (Bateson 1989; Hill & Johnson 2003). The existence of high credence and experience attributes concerning the creative process and outcome can lead to a heightened perception of risk in the relationship. Statistical findings by Hill and Johnson (2003), indicate that whilst creativity was perceived as important for the same services as have been selected for the three case studies in this thesis, there were also relatively high levels of risk from the perspective of the clients. These authors also highlight that within Amabile's (Amabile 1988) 5 stages of the creative process, namely: 1. problem finding; 2. immersion or preparation; 3. idea generation; 4. idea validation and 5. application and outcome assessment – although stage three is mainly within the creatives domain, the other stages are either shared (2 and 4) or are largely the preserve of the client (1 and 5). This mixed process makes this kind of service delivery distinctive to others. Here, a creative service has, as its goal, the solution of a business need on the part of a client – as well as the suitable management of its delivery process. In other words, creativity of these kinds at least are delivered via an interactive process and therefore high purchase risk perceptions will need to be reduced. Identifying who's fault it is if there is a poor outcome if the customer was involved in the service delivery process stages and delivery of final product can thus, often, be difficult.

Also, creatives need to be able to put at risk the desire to appear consistent, comfortable, confident and competent in order to improve and be innovative (the 4c's). In order to risk the 4c's, individuals need to develop their own individual and organisational safety nets that enables them to take risks. This suggests that a climate of trust and kinship will support the groups' capacity to improvise (Crossan 1998).

This can also be seen as a form of psychological risk (Bharadwaj & Menon 2000) as risk attached to creative work implies a need to experiment and to be able to tolerate failure (Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000). Mumford et al (2002: 709) highlight three forms of risk with creative efforts :

- generation of a viable idea is not assured

- no assurance a viable idea can be developed
- successful development does not automatically lead to successful implementation or correctly match the market's needs

The work above also highlights that trust, researched heavily in marketing communications research, is more difficult in this sort of a creative relationship as it is often based on power differences, differences in needs and goals, and lack of a shared business language and common viewpoints.

Many clients of creative organisations also operate in highly complex and political organisations where thinking that is unorthodox or of an experimental kind is often not tolerated. As already discussed, clients are also joint stakeholders in the creative process, with risk involved relating to the outcome due to uncertainty, thus risk and creativity are closely linked and inherent in any creative venture (West 1999). Clients normally retain final approval throughout projects, and any changes requested may in turn lead to resentment from the creative suppliers (Kover & Goldberg 1995; West 1999). Knowledge-intensive, business-to-business, creative service organisations often need the client to play a 'co-producer' role as part of the process, with such contribution often integral to the service outcome and overall client satisfaction with the creative service provided (Bettencourt, Ostrom, Brown & Roundtree 2002; Lovelock & Young 1979). This, along with a possible lack of understanding of the creative process and creative employees, can lead to serious communication problems between the creative organisation and client organisation. This is particularly problematic, as for creativity to flourish, it generally relies on open and honest relationships between the main stakeholders.

Increased synergy between the client-creative supplier increases confidence on both sides and helps to build trust and acceptance of more original, unorthodox creative ideas. In addition, strong relationships based on all parties feeling understood, valued, challenged and stimulated, along with some form of project ownership, can facilitate higher levels of intrinsic motivation for both the creative employees and the clients (Watt, Russell & Haslum 2000). As discussed previously, intrinsic motivation is seen as key for higher levels of sustainable creativity amongst creative employees

(Amabile 2001). In addition, greater client motivation will increase the level of project buy-in and cooperation, improving input and creative potential overall (Watt, Russell & Haslum 2000). There may be advantages from bringing clients 'backstage' such as adding valuable knowledge to the people and teams that conduct the knowledge work, and the client may also learn something that they can grow from or take back to their own organisation (Sutton & Kelly 1997). However, within the business-to-business literature, it has been noted that there has been a tendency to overlook behaviours that may occur behind-the-scenes yet still help to contribute to the working relationship (Bettencourt et al 2002). This thesis has attempted to take such a 'behind the scene' perspective.

3.3.2 Organisational factors and creativity

Moving to organisational level research, two main traditions exist, antecedent and process approaches. Process research often looks at the sequence of activities that occur during creativity generation, and as already discussed is not of direct relevance for this review (see 3.2).

Antecedent research has identified three main factors of relevance to this thesis: characteristics or behaviour of organisational members, characteristics of the organisation and extra-organisational influences (King 1990).

Characteristics or behaviour of organisational members has focused mainly upon individuals identified as important to the overall creative process such as leaders, decision makers, and idea champions and their education levels, values and management style. In addition, research has looked at those in resistance to the creative process. There has, to date, been relatively little research on all levels of creative employees in an organisation, as has been conducted for this thesis.

Characteristics of the organisation include research on size, structure, resources and age. Of these, variables relating to structure have probably received the greatest attention, in particular with reference to: the *centralisation* of decision making;

stratification via organisational layers and levels; *formalisation* of role procedures through rules; *complexity* of occupational specialisation and task differentiation within the organisation. In the case of each variable except complexity, high levels are seen as having a negative impact on the overall creative process. Complexity often has a positive impact due to allowing a diversity of occupational backgrounds to bear on the problem, until it comes to implementation, where complexity can then slow things down. Research focusing upon these variables has been met with criticism relating to operationalisation and the frequent lack of clarity about what exactly has been defined and measured (King 1990).

Research has also been increasingly conducted on organisational strategy, climate and culture in relation to creativity. Here, climate is most often concerned with ‘mood’ and ‘atmosphere’, with culture most often comprising of symbols and structures enabling shared meaning, understanding and sense-making (Morgan 1986).

3.3.2.1 Extra organisational factors

An area of relatively more recent research has looked at ‘extra-organisational influences’ such as the market or sector in which the creative organisation is operating, as well as levels of competition and levels of environmental complexity and turbulence through political, cultural, societal or geographic spheres (King 1990).

Another line of extra-organisational research which has emerged in recent years, especially within service organisations, is the role that clients play in the co-production of a complex service such as that often provided by creative organisations, in what can be termed a ‘task-interactive’ service, with heavy reliance on the clients regarding the overall process and creative outcome (Amabile 1988). This is particularly relevant when a client is involved in long term, intensive and complex projects, such as in long running creative projects, where it is the clients that often ultimately set the workload:

“employees had control over their own work and were encouraged to suggest a number of ideas as long as it ‘fitted’ the client’s brief (creative output)” (Ensor, Cottam & Band 2001: 151).

In such a scenario, there is an elevated risk of disruption or impediment if the client’s input is unpredictable or below a required standard, or both. Such unpredictability can directly impact on the ability of the creative organisation to perform as required, and in a cyclical manner impact negatively on the client-supplier relationship and ensuing creative organisations own image and corporate brand. This dimension of time has been largely ignored by past creativity researchers, and is probably the result of most main-stream researchers seeing creativity as an outcome rather than a process, as already discussed above. The end result is that of many static models orientated around variance in the dependent variable (creative outcomes). Research looking at the dynamic process of creativity as it unfolds over time, perhaps for a project that may span months or years, is relatively rare to date (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999). The case studies used in this research are involved in projects which may span a few months to several years.

Hence, it is obvious that leaders of creative efforts need to be able to marshal social support from others beyond their own group and to be able to sell the creative outcome or process. They often do this by looking for ‘product champions’ within the client organisation. The problem is often how to identify and recruit these champions, especially if each party in the relationship is potentially speaking different forms of business language or coming from widely differing viewpoints as noted earlier.

One way of viewing clients in such a situation is as partial employees or temporary participants in the service production process, where they have a boundary spanning role (Lovelock & Young 1979; Beard 1996; Mills & Morris 1986). Within this context, role ambiguity can be a significant factor in the creative process as well as within the creative-client relationship overall, with role ambiguity defined as

occurring when three kinds of information are not readily available or communicated correctly relating to (Sawyer 1992; Beard 1996: 10):

- a) what the expectation of the role set are (e.g. rights, duties and responsibilities)
- b) what activities will fulfil the role responsibilities
- c) what the consequences of role performance are to self, others and the organisation

Role ambiguity can be either through lack of goal clarity: lack of clearly stated requirements regarding outputs and outcomes; or lack of process clarity via uncertainty as to how to perform the job. Ambiguity has been associated with various organisational and personal consequences including: job dissatisfaction and lowered loyalty, heightened tension and anxiety, and a propensity to leave an organisation, as well as negative attitudes to role senders, such as roles within the relationship between boundary spanning employees in the client-supplier relationship. It is therefore important for the above research to ensure that any employee acting as a creative organisation boundary spanner makes an attempt to assess the clients' role ambiguity in the early phases of the relationship, as clients are likely to have pre-existing perceptions of their role. Once this has been achieved, an attempt needs to be made to socialise the client to perform the role effectively as the relationship progresses through its life cycle (Beard 1996).

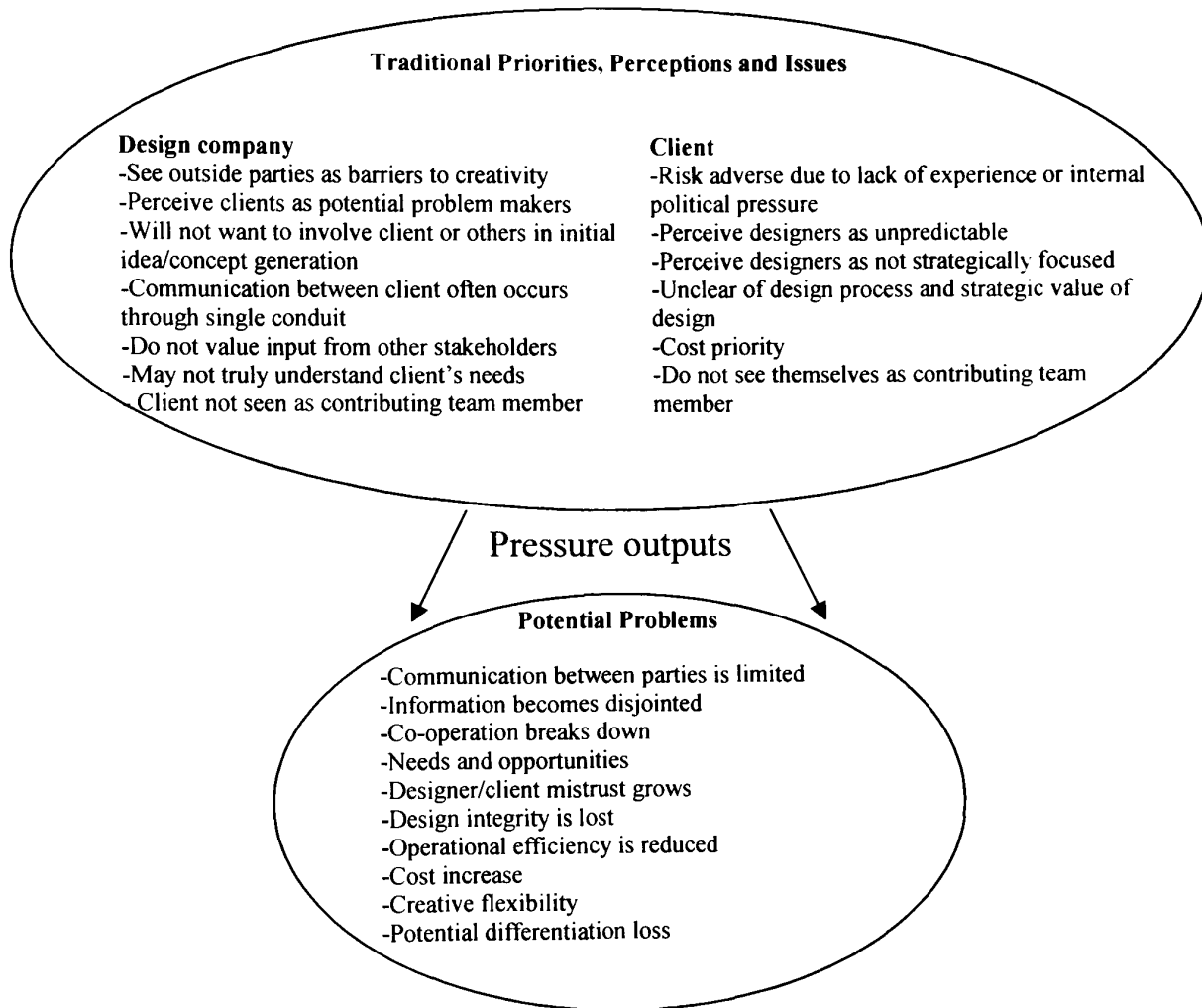
Within some creative organisations, the protection of inner structures by boundary structures are sometimes evident (Kover & Goldberg 1995). In agencies working with advertising for example, the boundary role is taken on by account management, with the aim of a reduction in uncertainty in the process and outcome. They shield the inner creative from the client environment and filter messages between both. Given this position, role and ensuing power, creatives often resent that power as it often removes the creative from the source of ultimate approval, and is also seen as another 'approval' step between creatives and the ultimate client. The reduction in uncertainty can ultimately lead to a lowering of control over the creatives' own work, work which sometimes is so deeply involving it becomes an extension of the person creating it. This is especially resented with feelings of reported contempt if those

taking the control are seen by creatives as not being qualified or motivated to correctly perceive, judge and understand the work (Kover & Goldberg 1995). This is due to differing needs and value systems between the two or all three parties. If some clients are also included, and may also be due to the different language used between each party.

As highlighted earlier in this thesis, many small to medium sized organisations do not have separately qualified employees tasked with interfacing between the creatives and clients. The impact of this for the creative organisations' brand can be seen for all three of the case studies focused upon in this thesis, as discussed shortly.

To conclude, using a design agency as an example as taken from pre existing literature, some of the priorities, perceptions, issues and ensuing pressure points that may exist and lead to relationship problems within a client/creative relationship can be seen within Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1 Designer/client priorities, perceptions, issues and potential problems



Source: adapted from Watt, Russell & Haslum (2000: 51).

3.3.3 Social factors and creativity

Research relating to social aspects within creativity are seen as important, including factors such as forms of motivation and social control where

“social factors may be responsible for only a small part of the total variance in creative behaviour, but they may account for the lions share of the variants that anyone can do anything about” (Amabile 1990: 76).

3.3.3.1 Social control

Keller and Holland (1978: 563) have highlighted that the :

“creative or innovative person tends to be transcendent of social conventions in order to achieve fulfilment... would tend to devalue social adjustment as a goal in life and the non-creative person would tend to be adaptive to social conventions in a conforming, unimaginative manner”.

Thus, creativity may require a culture differing to one which always encourages cohesion and loyalty, where clear norms and attitudes and behaviour are on display. Research indicates that social control should be lowered and employees should feel able to deviate from expectations and to be able to question shared ways of viewing things.

“Research on creativity has led to a recognition of the fact that the kind of environment most likely to produce a well-adjusted person is not the same as the kind of environment most likely to produce a creative person” (Woodman & Schoenfeldt 1990: 287).

Indeed, dissent within groups can actually help stimulate creativity, because if listened to, instead of ignored or overruled by the majority rule, they are likely to lead to more information seeking, complex thinking and problem solving overall, whether the dissent is right or wrong from the outset (Nemeth 1997).

Promotion of risk-taking and a reduction of fear from failure are often features of creative organisations. This presents problems if looking at an organisation through more normative approaches and understandings. The balance is between creating “unity in the organisation without uniformity” (Nemeth 1997: 60).

“.... Individuals create, not groups. And individuals tend to become dissatisfied and leave if they feel the organisation does not recognise that they want to be recognised for their individual contributions” (Wollf 1979: 44).

3.3.3.2 Motivation and rewards

Amabile has looked at intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and its impact on creativity, where:

“conformity pressure can lead to extrinsic ego-involved motivation, in which finding a solution is simply a means to an ulterior end. This contrasts sharply with intrinsic task-involved motivation, in which the creative act is seen as an end in itself” (Amabile 1990: 63).

For creative based work, extrinsic based rewards can even lead to an adverse effect compared to similar rewards offered elsewhere. In other words, individuals will be most creative when motivated mainly by interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of the work in itself, and not by external pressures. In addition, a high degree of intrinsic motivation could make up for a deficiency in a domain-relevant skill or creativity-relevant skill, by drawing on skills from other domains or by applying increased effort to acquire increased skills within the target domain (see below) (Amabile 1990; McGraw 1978).

However, this dichotomy may not be so black and white. Other research indicates that there is a direct link between an individual's *interpretation* of any extrinsic motivators, and the extent to which they will affect the overall creativity, one way or the other. That interpretative difference may be due to explicit forms of training and education or through naturally occurring personality characteristics (Amabile 1990). For example, the social and extrinsic motivators such as rewards, evaluation, time limits and competitive elements may undermine intrinsic motivation as much from individual emotions or the same form of affect learned when much younger as a child, as it does through concurrent thoughts or cognitive analysis during the actual

creative process. This is thought to be true where such extrinsic elements were often paired in childhood and early adulthood with activities that *had to be done* but which were often seen as not being fun, or maybe even aversive to the individual. More recently, some research has highlighted that extrinsic rewards may be beneficial to creativity where they are seen as a ‘bonus’ rather than a controlling extrinsic restraint (Hennessey 2003), or what Amabile (1983b) has called ‘synergistic extrinsic motivators’. Here, under certain specific circumstances, they can combine with the intrinsic motivators in an additive fashion, enhancing task enjoyment and involvement. For example, unlike in a laboratory setting where a creative task can be given that engrosses the person in a sustained creative act, real-life activities are not always, or continually, intrinsically interesting and thus able to be motivated fully by intrinsic means alone (Sansone & Harackiewicz 2000).

From this, the message is clearly that environmental and social factors have a significant and complex impact on creativity (Hennessey 2003). One theory which assumes that humans have inherent propensities to be intrinsically motivated, to assimilate their social and physical worlds, to integrate external regulations into self-regulations, and in so doing integrate themselves into a larger social whole is ‘self-determination theory’ (Deci & Ryan 1985; Ryan & Deci 2000). This theory highlights that these propensities operate in conjunction with the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The implications from the crux of that theory and a growing body of evidence, is that extrinsic rewards may undermine natural organismic processes, processes that originally evolved to keep organisms in touch with their needs and responsive to their surroundings, and this in turn impacts on internal motivation to the detriment of creativity (Ryan & Deci 2000).

3.3.3.3 Organisational and individual identification

As Rostan (1998) has indicated, creative employees have their identity bound closely with the work or process they are involved in. Further, it should be noted that such work is often conducted in circumstances of high ambiguity relating to the path and outcomes of that work. This means that the use of work as a source of identity,

heightened opportunities for professional achievement via autonomy, and the accompanying recognition, may be seen as powerful motivators for creative people. In addition, evaluation for creative employees has often been reported to be with their peers and/or profession rather than their current organisation. The need for achievement and autonomy with an often associated lack of concern for power and organisational affiliation, may lead to creatives being seen as the ‘odd man out’ or the unfixed self in some organisational settings (Mumford et al 2002). Where

“the self-concept of an individual is therefore not an entity made once and for all, but has a permeable boundary with the outside world. Components of the world, which are likely to bear on this self-concept are the prevailing ideas about creativity and creative people which the individual encounters. These sets of ideas will permeate the individual’s self-concept and they will engage with them in the process of building an identity for themselves as a creative person.” (Fisher 1997: 12).

Others (Alvesson 1995a; Kanter 1983; Kunda 1992), have also highlighted the increased relevance of cultural-ideological control (through the targeting of values, ideas, beliefs, emotions and identifications of employees). Indeed Alvesson (2000) argues that in comparison with workers whose competence and results may be evaluated through more materially grounded outputs throughout their work activities, knowledge workers, as found in creative organisations, may be seen to struggle more for the accomplishment, maintenance and gradual change of self-identity. The need for a sensitive and distinctive approach to the way expert workforces are managed has also been dominant, often through the development of a culture of ‘responsible autonomy’ (Robertson & Swan 2003).

Under the conditions of creative process and outcome ambiguity, identity and organisational identification becomes significant as they can be used as objects for management control and/or regulation within knowledge intensive creative organisations. Such control could help to accomplish a ‘subjectivity base’ for the right kind of action, such as is in line with image, rhetoric and orchestration of social

interaction as deemed to be appropriate (Alvesson 2000). Thus ideally, creative organisations need to adopt and develop an internal, organisational identity perspective towards the way they may manage their brand.

To date, many studies that have attempted to look at the processes of identification have often used such a broad-brush approach, that the subtleties and complexities of the dynamics of these processes have rarely been adequately captured (Brown 2001). This is particularly the case for research focused upon creative employees who

“tend to take responsibility for their own actions rather than point to outside causes or influences. They also tend to be more highly orientated to the job than to the organisation or the profession... whether they are highly creative or not, such people think of themselves as being creative merely by virtue of their profession or occupation and expect to be treated accordingly” (Pierson 1983: 17).

The organisational brand and individual identification themes and other themes uncovered later within this thesis is an attempt to look at some of these subtleties and complexities.

Albert & Whetten (1985) have defined organisational identity as that which is central, enduring and distinctive about an organisation's identity. This has been seen by many as the point of departure for the further exploration, debate and fresh conceptualisation of the concept.

More recently, scholars have applied a postmodern view to the terminology and concepts involved, leading, in their view, to identity having a more fluid nature than in earlier conceptualisations. This has highlighted often subtle yet theoretically important differences in the use of concepts. For example, (Gioia, Shultz & Corley 2000) believe there to be important theoretical implications for the treatment by Ashforth & Mael (1996) of the concepts of enduring identity and identity having continuity as the same, when they believe there is a subtle difference.

To date, issues of organisational identity have been researched from varying perspectives. Some of this research has looked at identity from a monolithic or fixed perspective, and also increasingly from the perspective of multiple identities that are constructed through discursive practices. Authors have also called for more research upon identity processes, focused upon individuals and organisations *becoming* identified rather than *being* identified. Although there are some at the conceptual level, there are relatively few addressing processes of identity construction at the personal level (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003) where people are “engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness” (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003: 1165).

One view of identity is as something that is imputed from values that are expressed. Here values are a label used to describe one element of a core identity (Gioia, Shultz & Corley 2000). Following this logic it can be argued that “identity is imputed from expressed values, but the interpretation of those values is not necessarily fixed or stable” (Gioia, Shultz & Corley 2000).

Gioia et al (2000) have highlighted that identity is essentially a social construction, which is drawn from repeated interactions with others, where identity is partly based on how others see us. Those identities are often different depending on the roles or the situation faced. If this view of identity and identity construction is accepted, and it is further accepted that this directly affects identity at the organisational level, then the interaction between those outside such as customers, media groups, competitors, investors and regulators must be taken into account (Ashforth & Mael 1996; Berg & Gagliardi 1985; Fombrun 1996; Gioia 1998).

Alternative literature views culture as a root metaphor with behaviour and culture mutually interdependent and not separate (cf Alvesson 1995b; Filby & Willmott 1988; Kunda 1992; Martin & Meyerson 1988; Meek 1988; Starbuck 1992; Willmott 1993). Here, culture from this alternative standpoint is not a ‘variable’ but is

something an organisation ‘is’ rather than ‘has’ (Smircich 1983; Robertson & Swan 2003). This perspective allows for an individual’s interpretation of any given event or situation does not necessarily mean it is shared with others, and thus this perspective has a pluralist view on culture. Importantly, it therefore challenges the ability of management to actively create or sustain an integrative culture shared by all, one which will then generate, through normative control, workers who naturally work in ways of interest and benefit to the firm (Robertson & Swan 2003).

Support for these arguments may be found when considering some of the factors associated with knowledge intensive creative work and knowledge workers, as seen in Table 3.2 below (Alvesson 2000; Robertson & Swan 2003).

Table 3.2 Factors associated with knowledge intensive work and workers

Often close involvement with clients in the service delivery leads to need for professionals to create their own roles during client assignments	(Morris and Empson 1998)
High levels of ambiguity and fluidity of organisational life	(Alvesson 2000)
Identity and image is evaluated (both internally and externally) through regular and often prolonged interactions with external actors	Ibid
Management of highly autonomous knowledge workers requires a balance between formalisation needed for co-ordinated action and lower levels of formalisation to facilitate knowledge work processes	(Starbuck 1992; Robertson & Swan 2003)
Individuals with high levels of education and specialist skills – combine expertise with ability to identify and solve problems.	(Alvesson 2000)

3.3.4 Existing organisational creativity models

The individual qualities that each creative employee has, as well as the environment around them, are seen in the literature as significant elements for creative process and output. Organisational creativity models, in comparison to individual creativity models need to uncover and describe the influence of organisational factors on individual creativity as well as incorporate all extra-organisational aspects that influence the 'target' creative idea or process. Many influencing sources for example come from far beyond the organisation, including the clients (Amabile 1988).

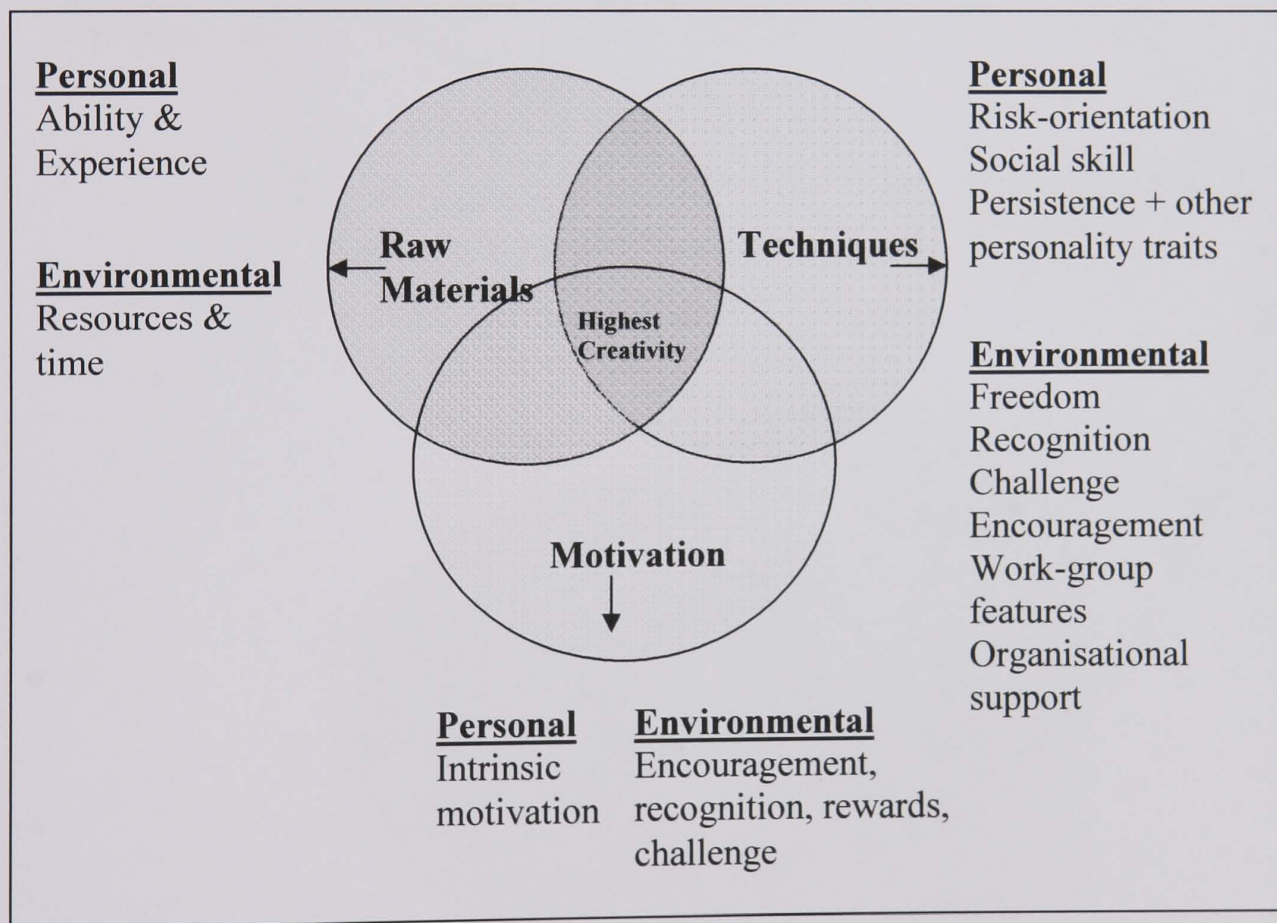
These aspects can be further broken down to three components, namely raw materials available, techniques used and types of motivation, as seen in Figure 3.2 below. Raw materials are the basics on which a creative employee may draw upon to produce a creative product, with techniques including the attitudes and approaches used in relation to those raw materials. Motivation is the level of intrinsic motivation to become deeply involved with the creative task at hand. The relative strength of the raw material and technique components can help to indicate what a creative employee *can* do, but the motivation component can help to indicate what they *will* do (Amabile & Gryskiewicz 1987). Similar factors from the work environment and their impact on individual and group creativity are outlined in the componential theory of organisational creativity contained within Figure 3.3 (Amabile 1997).

Extrinsic motivation is necessary and desirable under a number of circumstances such as constraints of deadlines, evaluation expectation, surveillance, and contracted-for-reward, where such motivation does tend to help the work get done. However, although the technical aspects of the work may not suffer under such motivations, the creative side is more likely to be stimulated and nurtured by intrinsic motivators (Amabile 1988).

Amabile (1988) has highlighted that some individuals seem to be able to work under strong extrinsic constraints and remain creative, and under certain conditions they may actually augment creativity. The crucial factor is the initial motivational orientation. Individuals starting with low intrinsic motivation are more likely to be

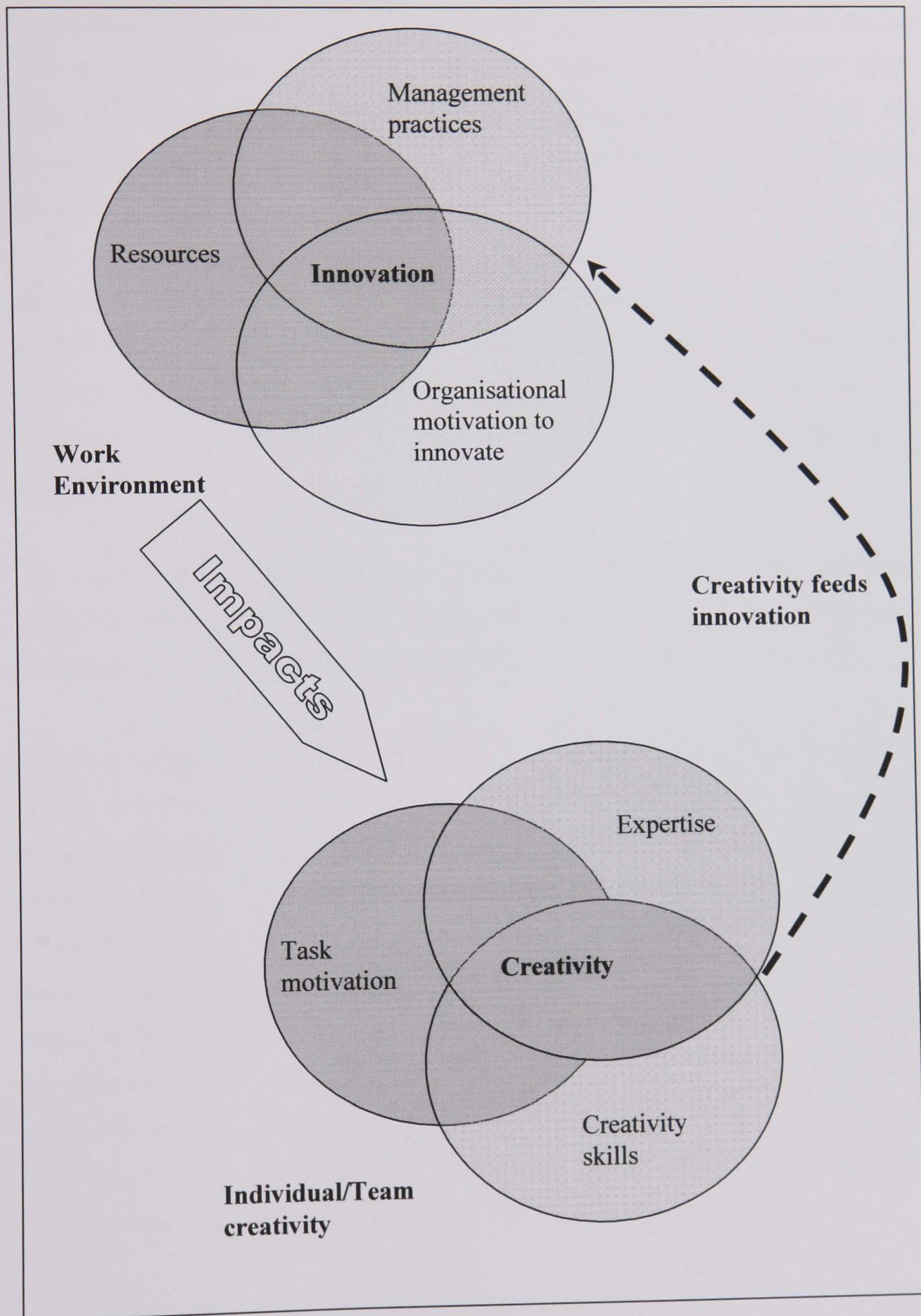
driven by extrinsic motivators, whereas those with moderate intrinsic motivation to start with, find this decreases as extrinsic motivators are introduced. Interestingly, for those starting with high levels of intrinsic motivation, where the work is driven because it is intriguing and challenging, creativity and intrinsic motivation is less likely to be negatively affected by extrinsic motivators. Here extrinsic motivators may add to the intrinsic ones. Overall, based on the discussion above and the Tables and Figures below, it is clear that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation via organisational support and encouragement are crucial factors in bringing the various resources together to lead to long-term creativity. These are, therefore, seen as important areas to consider and investigate within creativity research, and as such are discussed again later in this chapter (Amabile & Gryskiewicz 1987; Amabile 2001).

Figure 3.2 Personal qualities & environment for creative employees



Source : adapted from ideas by (Amabile & Gryskiewicz 1987: 19, 33; Amabile 1988: 157; Amabile 2001: 4, 10).

Figure 3.3 Impact of organisational environment on creativity : the componential theory of organisational creativity



Source: Amabile (1997: 53).

As seen above, although there are many variables and factors at the individual and organisational level that have been put forward as influences on creativity, there have been fewer attempts to place specific facilitators or inhibitors within overarching frameworks, which would help us to understand *which* and *why* particular factors have an effect (King 1990). Those that have taken place include the Jones information-processing model (Jones 1987); the motivational framework for stimulating creativity (Lovelace 1986) and the social psychological model (Amabile 1983b).

The information-processing model (Jones 1987), for example looks more specifically at barriers to creativity such as value blocks: where an individual's values block creativity; perceptual blocks through overlooking opportunities or non identification of threats; self image blocks due to lack of self confidence to resist anti-innovation (King 1990).

The motivational framework (Lovelace 1986) is concerned with both individual ability and motivation, and is built upon Maslow's (Maslow 1943) hierarchy theory of motivation, with self actualisation motivating towards creativity (King 1990).

The final social psychological model (Amabile 1983b), also a mainly motivational model, focuses upon process components such as task motivation, domain-relevant skills and creativity relevant skills in relation to overall creativity. More recently, this model has been developed into eight "keys for assessing the climate for creativity" (Amabile et al 1996: 1155). A criticism of this last model is that the social factors have only an indirect impact on the process, and it would be better to incorporate social influences and interactions directly within its description of the process sequence (King 1990; Andriopoulos 2000) . However, by looking at the environment in these ways, it is still possible to start to uncover specific factors that are likely to have an impact on creativity as seen within Table 3.3 below. Table 3.4 goes on to highlight the components of creative performance in this regard.

Table 3.3 Positive and negative factors in the creative environment

<u>Positive factors</u>	<u>Negative factors</u>
Freedom : to decide what to do and how – sense of control over one’s own ideas rather than having to match others constraints	Too much competition (driven internally or by external factors)
Encouragement : from management via enthusiasm and support for new ideas, and an absence of : organisational indifference to creativity and projects; destructive criticism; excessive fear of evaluation pressures	Moderate to high levels of restraint on freedom
Resources and time : adequate and at least minimum amounts of both where required	Organisation indifference and complacency towards creativity
Recognition : appropriate and constructive feedback along with appropriate recognition and rewards	Excessive or negative evaluation pressure via inappropriate evaluation or feedback procedures, unrealistic expectations, pressure to produce something (anything) appropriate as well as a general concern about criticism and external evaluation of work.
Challenge : when a certain kind of tension is felt within the individual from positive pressure such as the intriguing nature of the problem or organisational urgency as well as outside competition or realistic time urgency	Overemphasis on organisational status quo , particularly at highest organisational levels.
Other features of project management : including matching the right person to the right job	Excessive lack of resources including insufficient time
Work group features , with a focus upon creating supportive groups with a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds. But it can be difficult to get people to work together if diverse in perspectives and may lead to a tendency to create homogenous work groups which in turn often leads to lower levels of creativity.	Lack of collaborative atmosphere
Other features of organisational climate : cooperative and collaborative atmosphere, neither an overemphasis on tangible rewards nor an insufficient, unfair distribution of rewards and recognition. Minimisation of political problems internally.	Lack of attention to work group features and creation
	Lack of matching between employees ability/interests and project
	Poor treatment of employees whose creative ideas have been rejected, perhaps even leading to early termination
	Politics , where infighting, politicking and gossip taking peoples attention away from work and threaten creative work due to fear of other’s agendas

Source : adapted from ideas by Amabile & Gryskiewicz (1987: 22 - 31), Amabile (2001: 9, 10).

Table 3.4 Components of creative performance

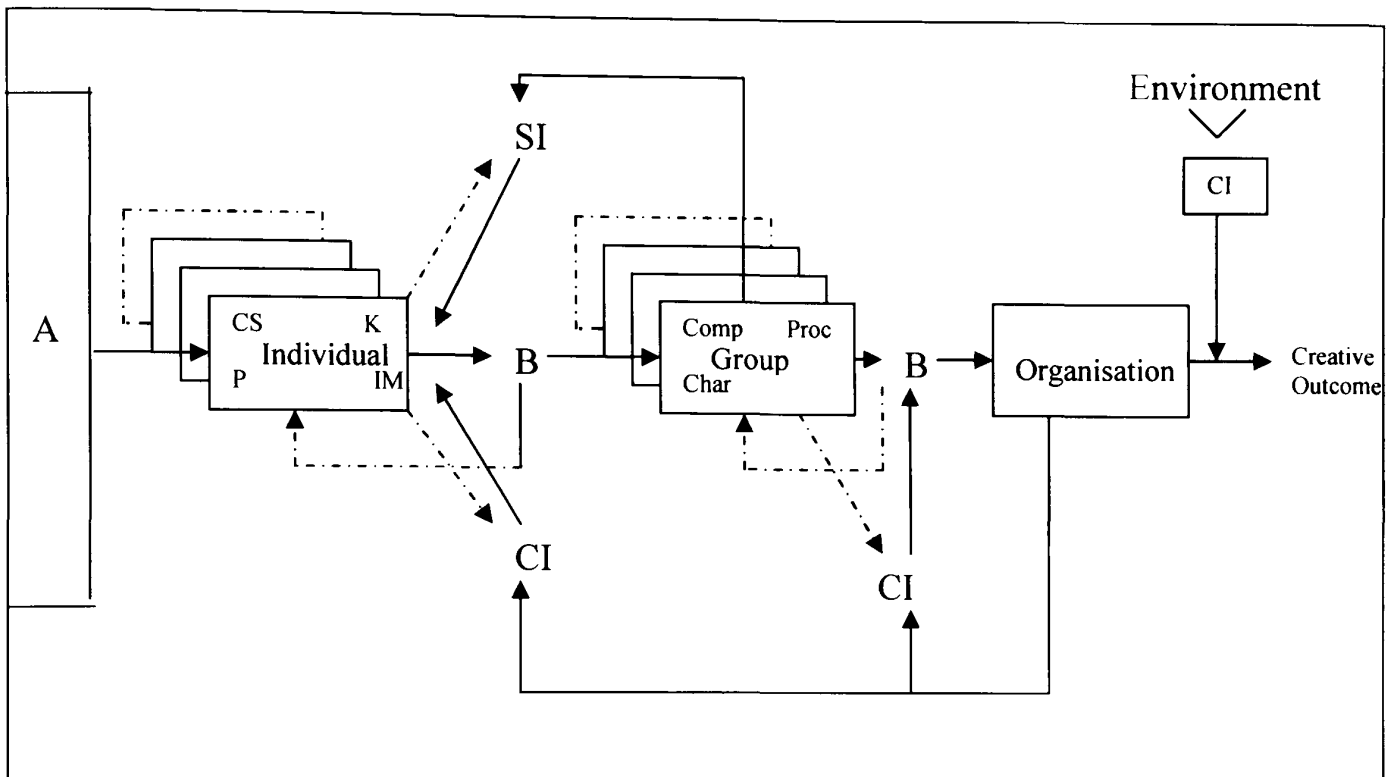
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Domain-Relevant Skills</u>	<u>Creativity- Relevant Skills</u>	<u>Task Motivation</u>
<u>Includes :</u>	<u>Includes :</u>	<u>Includes :</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge about the domain - Technical skills required - Special domain-relevant “talent” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate cognitive style - Implicit or explicit knowledge of heuristics for generating novel ideas - Conducive work style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attitudes towards the task - Perceptions of own motivation for undertaking the task
<u>Depends on :</u>	<u>Depends on :</u>	<u>Depends on :</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innate cognitive abilities - Innate perceptual and motor skills - Formal and informal education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training - Experience in idea generation - Personality characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial level of intrinsic motivation towards the task - Presence or absence of salient extrinsic constraints in the social environment - Individual ability to cognitively minimize extrinsic constraints

Source (Amabile 1983a; Amabile 1990: 77)

An interactionist model of creative behaviour as seen in Figure 3.4 below, attempts to include additional organisational factors, and incorporates elements of personality, cognition and social psychology as parts of the complex person-situation interaction leading to creativity within organisations. Such an approach suggests exciting avenues for future research (Woodman & Schoenfeldt 1990; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin 1993). The model contained in Figure 3.5 is a further attempt by these

authors to provide a fuller explication of their theory of organisational creativity as interlinking to individual, group and organisational level characteristics.

Figure 3.4 An interactionist model of organisational creativity



Individual creativity: $C_i = f(A, CS, P, K, IM, SI, CI)$

Group creativity: $C_g = f(C_i, G_{comp}, G_{char}, G_{proc}, CI)$

Organisational creativity: $C_o = f(C_g, CI)$

A = Antecedent conditions to current situation examples : past reinforcement history, early socialisation, biographical variables- sex, family position, birth order

B = Creative behaviour

CS = Cognitive style/abilities – examples: cognitive complexity, divergent thinking

P = Personality dimensions/traits- examples: locus of control, self-esteem, autonomy, intuition

K = Knowledge

IM = Intrinsic Motivation

SI = social influence – examples: social facilitation, evaluation expectation, rewards/punishments, role modelling

CI = Contextual influences – examples: physical environment, culture, group/organisational climate, task and time constraints.

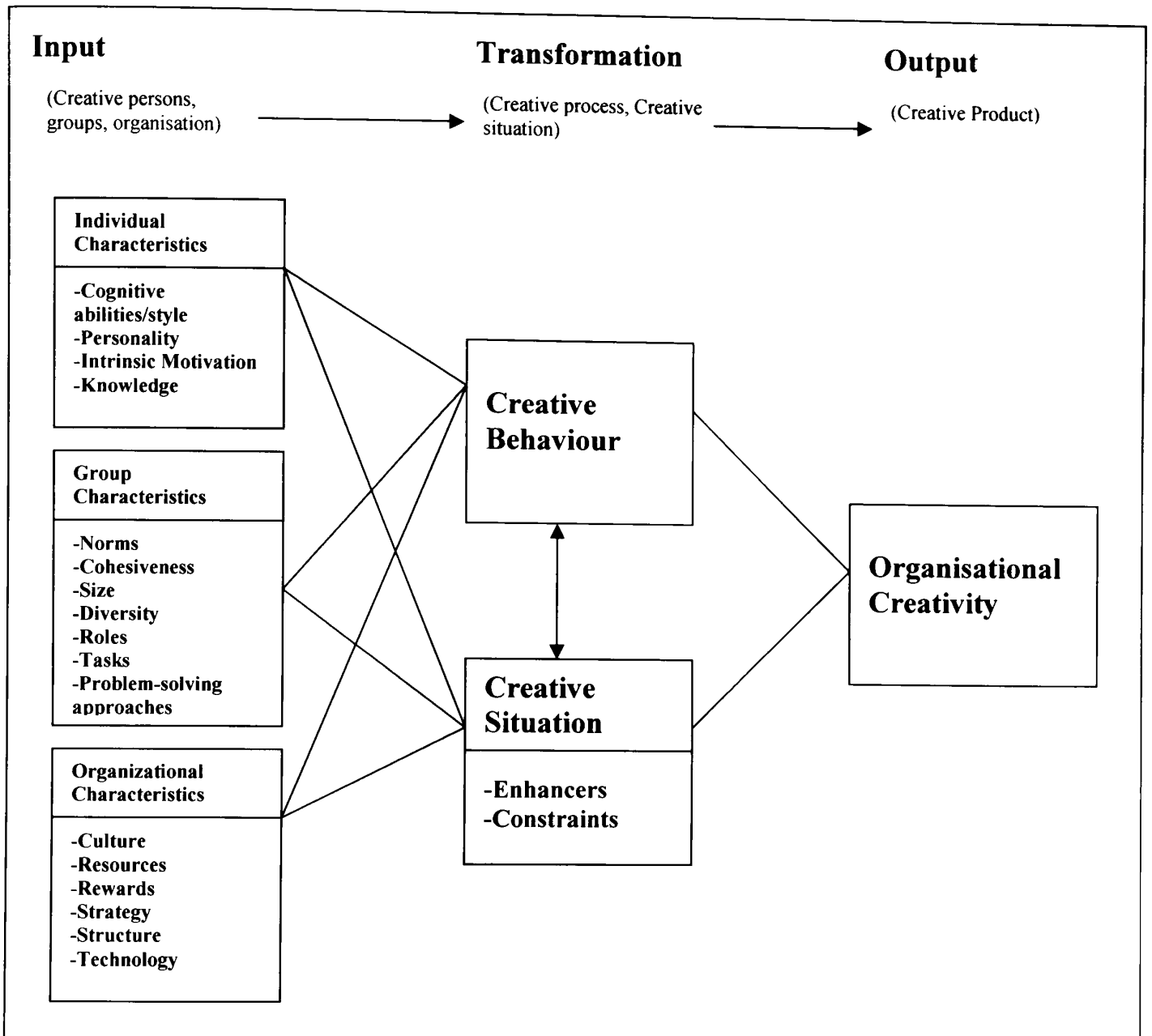
Gcomp = Group Composition

Gchar = Group Characteristics

Gproc = Group Processes

Source: Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin (1993: 295).

Figure 3.5 Conceptual Links Among Creative Persons, Processes, Situations and Products



Source: Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin (1993: 304).

3.3.5 Level of analysis

The discussion within this chapter so far has been based on a definition of creativity as being an important outcome to a system, along with independent variables that can be treated as factors which may be varied or manipulated to improve this outcome. This has led to most research questions explicitly or implicitly asking “how do you increase creative outputs in organizations” (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999: 288).

Creativity is modelled as a discrete task, which is conducted by individuals whom form part of a small group and whom are seen as somewhat isolated from the broader organisational and occupational environment. Employees in any organisation may indeed be 'totally included' in a specific group (e.g. a functional department or an assigned project team), and only that group may therefore have influence on the employee as a result. This appears to be the dominant viewpoint taken by many leading researchers on creativity to date, with individuals being seen as totally included within a small group (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999).

By taking a cross-level perspective, as presented within the interactionist models presented earlier, research opens up new avenues for sense making within such organisations. Project based creative work, with often ensuing long time frames, means that such 'stand alone' groupings are less common. The complexity of the task means that multifunctional, interdependent teams engaging with different communities and teams whose memberships ebbs and flows over time, are more likely to be the norm. In such grouping, employees who have only partial inclusion in a group will probably occupy many organisational roles and group memberships, and are thus influenced by each of these different groups. In addition, for these employees, particular situational circumstances within the organisation or relating to the project stage, can cue or make a particular group salient to the exclusion of other groups (Ashforth & Mael 1996; Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999). The extent to which this is relevant, is in most cases, probably directly related to the size of the projects and/or the size of the creative organisation and/or client. In the case of SME's, the focus of this thesis, small group settings are more likely to be characterised by a higher degree of employee inclusiveness.

The added complexity does not end there. In addition to multi group membership, any employee may also situate themselves in terms of an occupational identity, and maybe even a professional identity (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999; Trice 1993).

Acknowledging the above, naturally complicates research because effects can no longer be simply attributed to membership in a single group or category, but to

multiple groups and categories (e.g. occupational, professional, organisational or task). Never the less, for creativity research to be more relevant, it needs to accept and account for these multiple and perhaps even competing influences, that impact on the way that individuals situate themselves within this more complex environment (Ashforth & Mael 1996; Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999).

Ford (2000; 1996) has also highlighted that other voices should and need to be added to the negotiations over belief structures that drive large scale, creative projects, voices such as suppliers and clients/customers. Ford asks for future studies on organisational creativity that seek to identify both process and content sense-making, and for future creativity research to be based on “rich descriptions that depict co-evolution processes among multiple domains with redundant, independent and/or conflicting interests and requirements” (Ford 2000: 285). This thesis inductively answers this request by attempting to look at the domain of the organisation and the clients they interact with.

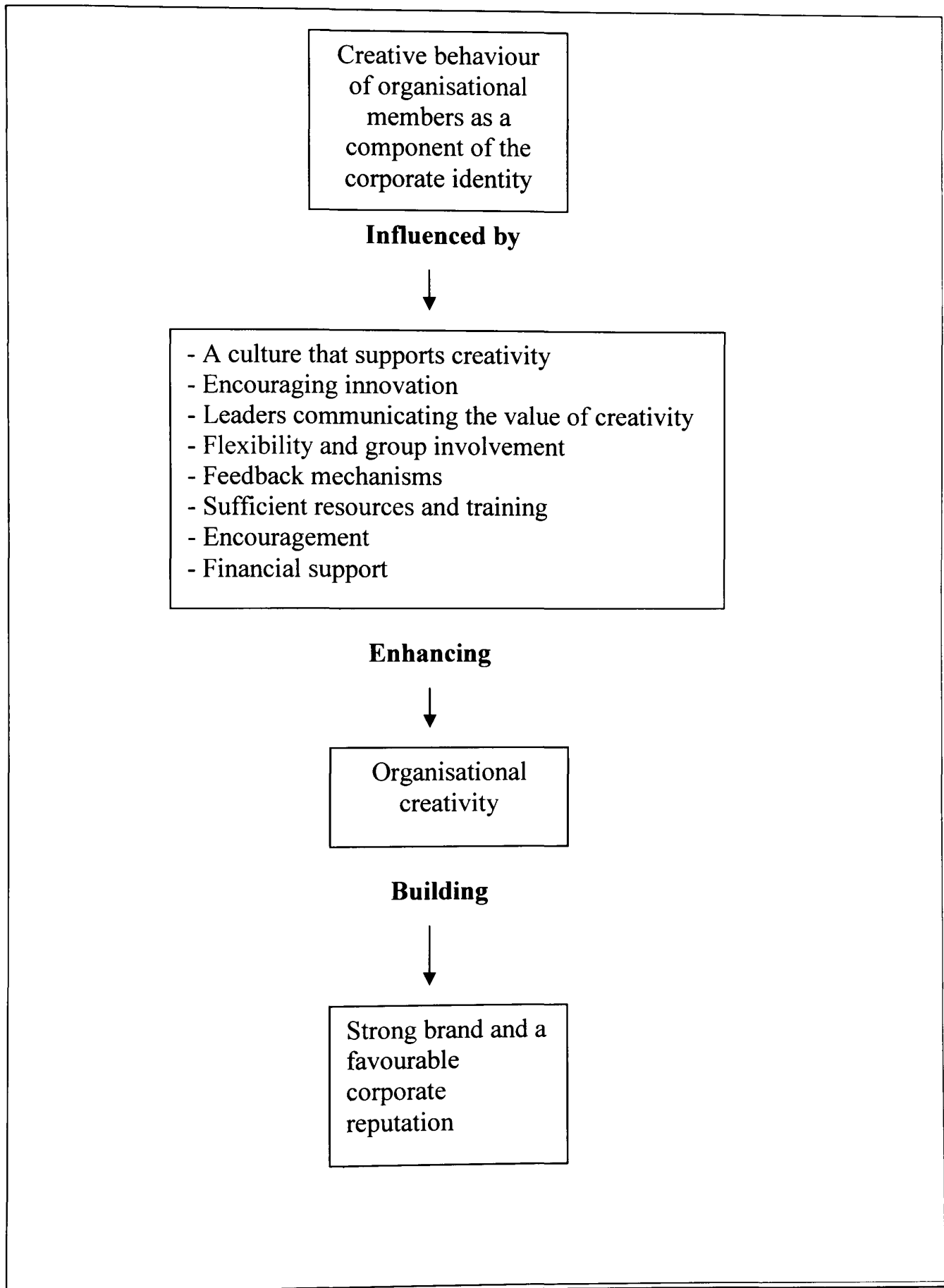
3.3.6 Creativity and the corporate brand

From the literature review conducted for this thesis it is evident that research specifically looking at creative organisations and their corporate brand is somewhat limited, to date, but there are a few empirically based and notable exceptions.

Ensor et al (2001) and Andriopoulos et al (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000; Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2001; Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000) have all highlighted that brand building within creative organisations does not tend to rely on formal marketing activities. A shortage of marketing skills and skills relating to the development of customer relationships are often also apparent (Jones et al 2004). Such organisations, where ambiguity is a component of the service offered and task faced, as already discussed within the previous subsections, often need to rely upon referrals from previous and current clients, media publicity and industry awards to gain future work. In such cases, creative reputation or creative brand image becomes a core factor in the building of the corporate brand. Thus, behaviour of the

employees and the way they interface with their clients becomes a key component of the overall corporate brand, and their behaviour is potentially influenced by a number of identifiable factors. Thus the extent to which they identify with the desired corporate identity leads to an effect on the images they project to clients and other stakeholders (Kennedy 1977; Post & Griffin 1997; Saxton 1998; Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2001). It is here that the link between individual and organisational identity and identification, as discussed earlier in this chapter is made with the overall corporate brand. This link is also indicated within Figure 3.6 below.

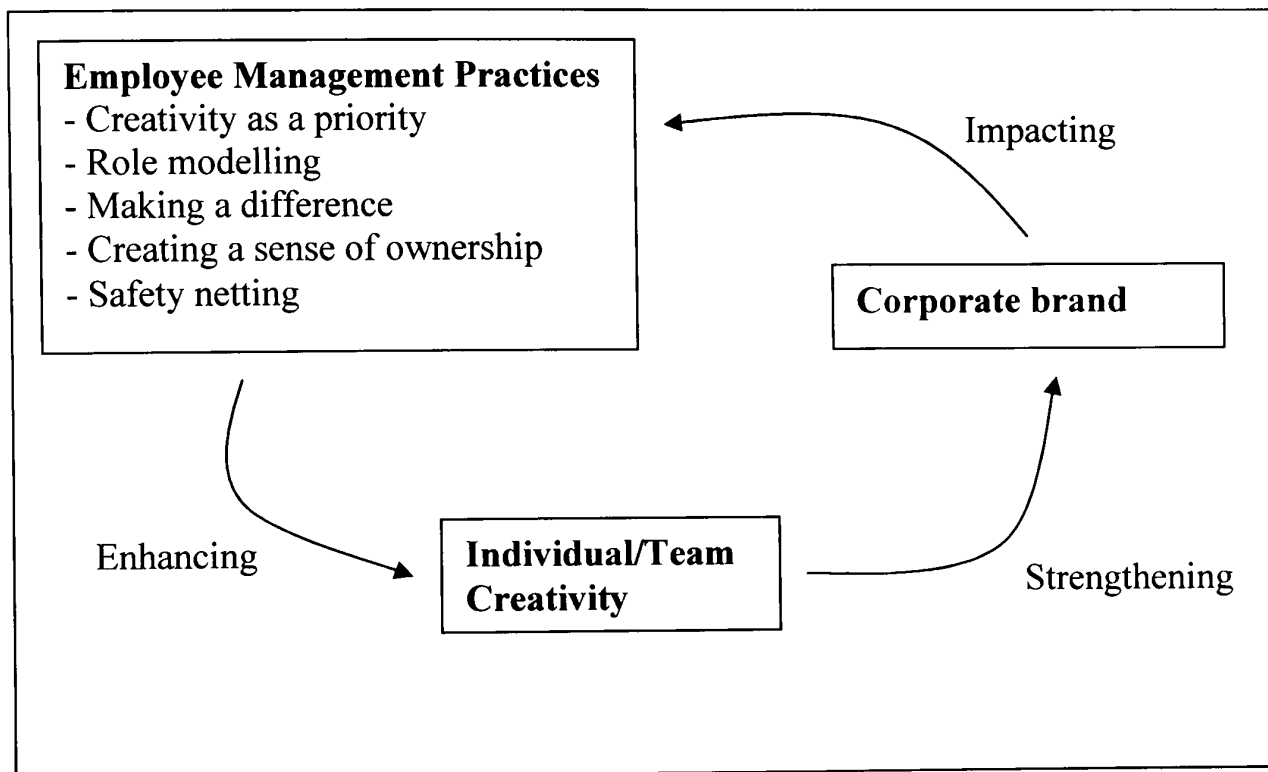
Figure 3.6 Internal perspective of brand building within creative organisations



Source: Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2000: 365).

Another proposed framework (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000) outlining interrelationships between employee management practices, individual/team creativity and the corporate brand is presented below in Figure 3.7. This once again highlights the importance of creativity to the corporate brand, seen here as a priority.

Figure 3.7 Managing interrelationship between employee creativity and corporate brand building in the creative industry

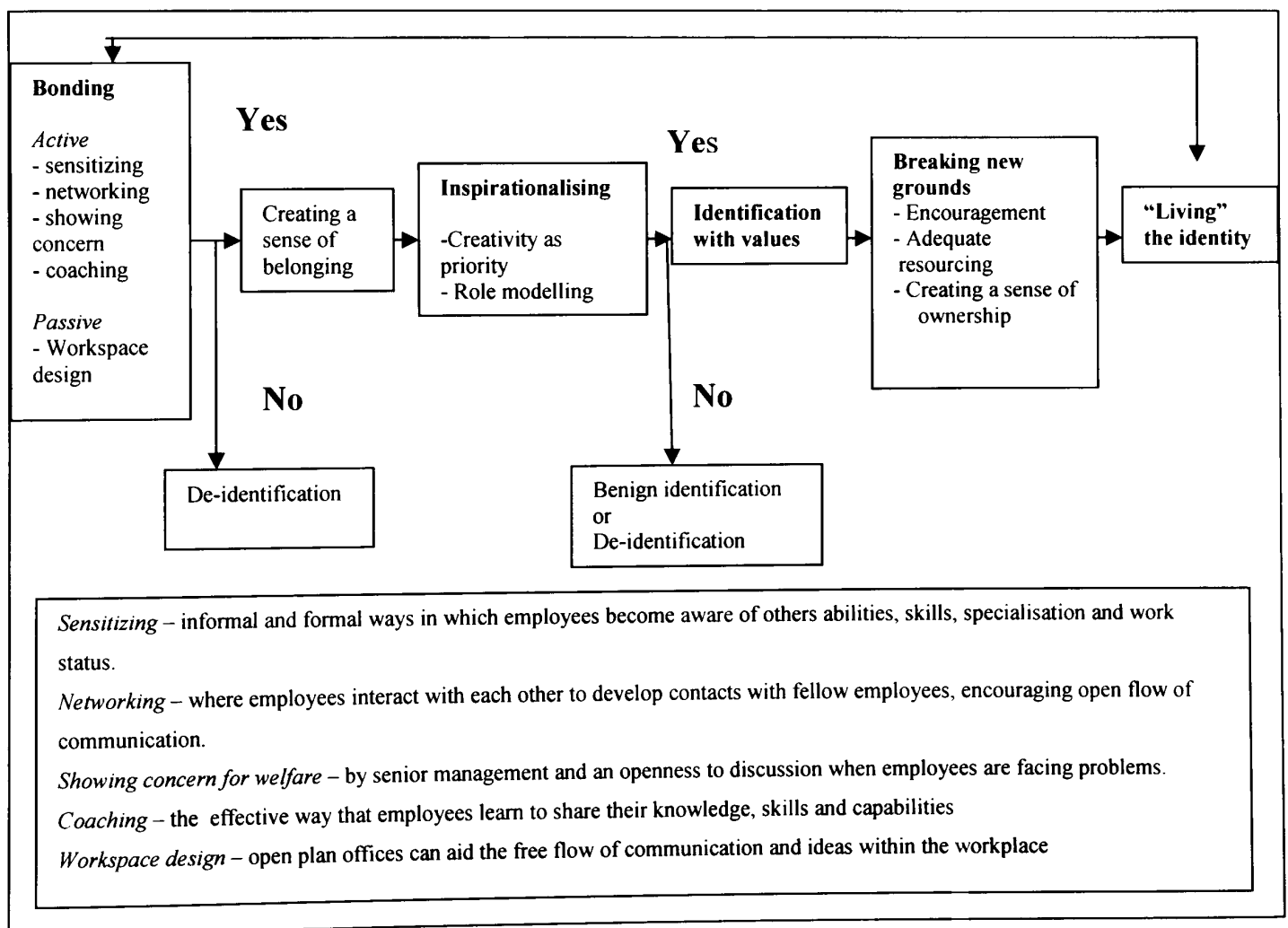


Source :Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2000: 367).

Empirical and inductive work based on a grounded theory approach to the data has also produced a number of factors that are seen to impact on employee identification and the corporate brand. This is seen in Figure 3.8 below. Within the Figure, bonding refers to employees associating with others who they identify as sharing similarities. A creative organisation that encourages bonding processes helps to signal that the company values its employees and the encouragement of discussions. This in turn may lead to less of a tendency for cliques and stereotypes to form, and it may also lead to a heightened sense of belonging, and it also helps to shift employees from the individual to the collective level in their working lives. However, the employees may still need encouragement and guidance in order to align with the key values of the organisation. In the case of this model, this is aided by providing

differing forms of inspiration, namely through the direct infusing of a belief in the power of creativity, alongside role modelling by more senior members of the organisation. A final level of bond strengthening can be seen via the creation of a reputation for breaking new ground, thus promoting a positive image of the company as figuring at the forefront of creativity rather than a follower. To achieve this, relevant and adequate encouragement and resourcing are seen as vital, alongside the need to create a sense of ownership in the creative process and outcome. The model also indicates the risks of not achieving adequate levels of bonding at any given stage within a creative organisation via either benign levels of identification or even worse, de-identification.

Figure 3.8 Managing employee identification with the desired identity

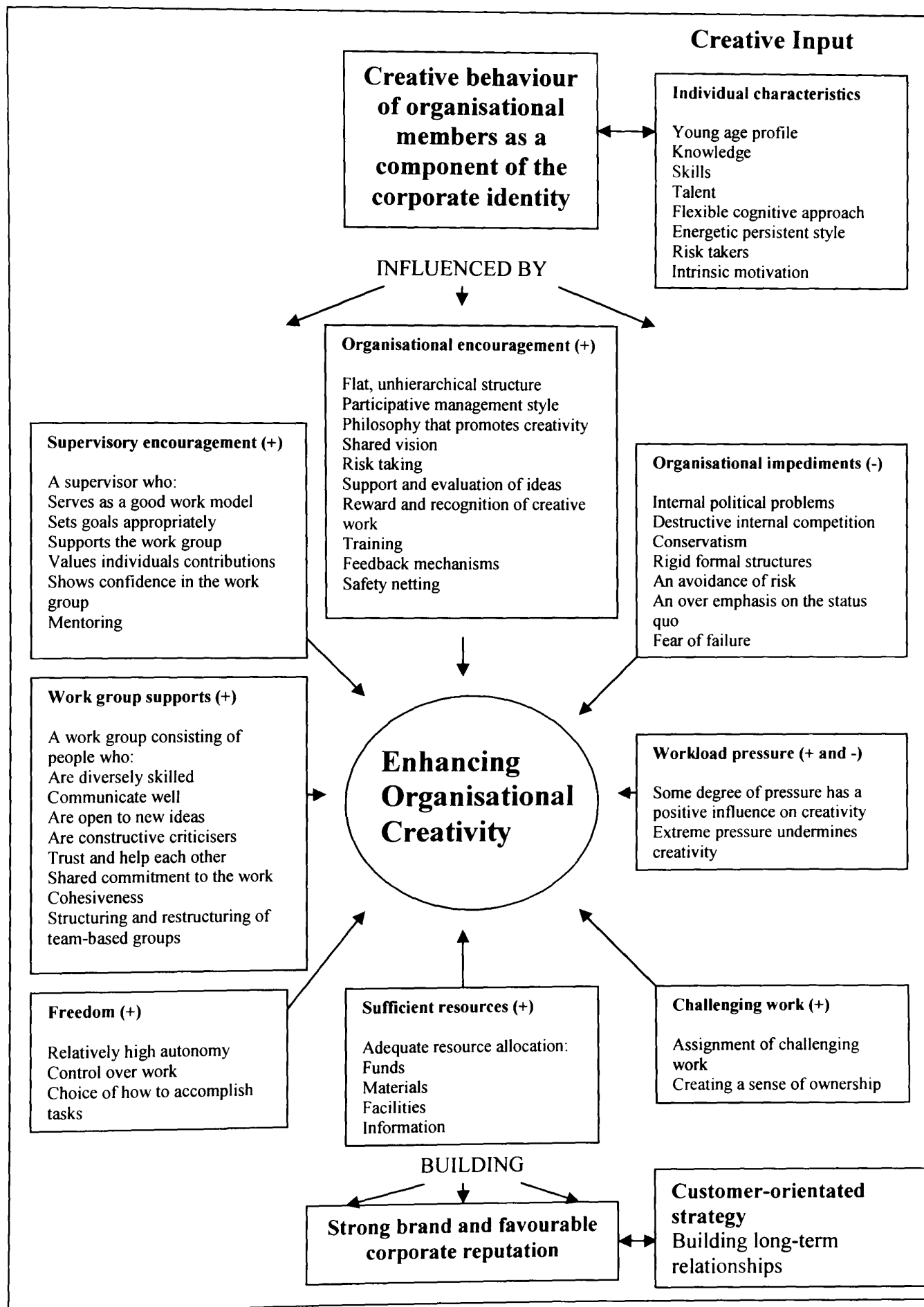


Source : Adapted from Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2001)

Additionally, Band (2002) building upon work by Amabile (1995), has presented a model based on empirical research within the advertising industry, containing a

larger number of additional factors and variables that are not present in the models provided by Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2001). Each of these additional factors are thought to impact on creativity in relation to the corporate brand, as seen in Figure 3.9 below. Within this model it is the behaviour of the employees which is linked directly to the way the organisations' corporate brand and identity will ultimately be perceived by the clients. Beyond the employees individual characteristics, the model highlights how creative employee behaviour can, in turn, be influenced by a number of positive or negative organisational factors. These factors include supervisory encouragement and work group support offered via: leadership style and role modelling; mentoring; appropriate goal setting; offering challenging work and project/task ownership. Additionally, supervisors need to ensure creative freedom through high task autonomy as well as sufficient resources to support the creative process. On an organisational level the business philosophy, structure and management style need to be suitably aligned to promote creativity. A culture also needs to be maintained based on a shared vision and propensity to take risks, along with relevant and timely rewards and recognition of creative work.

Figure 3.9 Brand building in creative industry sectors



Source: Band (2002: 42) based on ideas from Amabile (1995)

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has looked at existing bodies of literature focusing upon creativity and the corporate brand and as a result has : defined creativity and types of creativity; set the boundaries for the scope of review; synthesised and discussed relevant creativity/brand research literature and provided a comprehensive overview of the area. Figure 3.10 at the end of this chapter maps out this overall review.

The earlier sections defined creativity with particular reference to the organisational level. This was followed by a review of the link between employee identification and creativity. The next sections looked at organisational and extra-organisational factors in relation to creativity. The latter sections linked the previous subsections with the corporate branding literature where relevant. Its aim in this assessment was to outline the work that has been conducted to date at an organisational level in relation to the corporate brand, and to identify areas for further empirical investigation within creative organisations as outlined below. It was noted within the review that there has been relatively little empirical research that has covered all levels of creative employees within an organisation, rather than owners and senior managers. In addition the dimension of time has been largely ignored by past creativity researchers, and is probably the result of most main stream researchers seeing creativity as an outcome rather than a process. Research looking at the dynamic process of creativity as it unfolds over time, perhaps for a project that may span months or years, is relatively rare to date (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999).

It was also noted that there are advantages from bringing clients ‘backstage’ within a creative organisation, such as adding valuable client based knowledge to the people and teams that conduct the knowledge work, and the client may also learn something that they can grow from or take back to their own organisation (Sutton & Kelly 1997). Research has also identified that this may help to improve the client-supplier social relationship, thus potentially leading to lower client switching. Although many creative organisations already bring clients back-stage in order to improve the client-supplier social relationship, more research on this aspect, particularly within the business-to-business context, has been called for (Bettencourt et al 2002).

In addition, this review has highlighted that issues of employee identification are relevant to the corporate brand. However many studies that have attempted to look at the processes of identification within organisations have often used such a broad-brush approach and that the subtleties and complexities of the dynamics of these processes have rarely been adequately captured (Brown 2001). Some identification studies have been conducted at the conceptual level, but there are relatively few studies addressing processes of identity construction at the personal level, where people often engage in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that help them to produce a sense of coherence and distinctiveness (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003). Therefore more research has been called for upon 'identity processes', focused upon individuals and organisations *becoming* identified rather than *being* identified. An inductive research approach with a research strategy based upon grounded theory, thematic analysis or discourse analysis for example, may be ideally suited to help uncover some of these more subtle factors and dynamics (Andriopoulos 2000).

This review has also uncovered a number of authors investigating issues relating to creativity and the corporate brand. For example, Band (2002) has presented a conceptual model based on her own empirical research and previous work by Amabile (1995). Her model contains a number of additional factors and variables that are not present in the models provided by Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2001), with each thought to impact on creativity in relation to the corporate brand. It is therefore possible that more undiscovered factors may yet be found to impact upon creativity and the creative corporate brand than have been identified to date. In light of this, Band (2002) and Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2001) have each called for further empirically based research within creative organisations to reinforce, refute or add to the academic developments that currently exist. Useful research questions within this creative context would include: a) what factors are involved in the corporate brand building and maintenance process, from both an individual and organisational perspective; b) why and how do creative individuals impact upon the corporate

brand; c) why and how do clients impact upon the corporate brand. Finally, to summarise the identified avenues for future research :

- Empirical research is needed that covers all levels of creative employees and not just owners and senior managers.
- More research is needed upon identity processes, focused upon individuals and organisations *becoming* identified rather than *being* identified, to help investigate the subtleties and complex processes of identification within creative organisations and their impact on the corporate brand.
- Building upon current research in the area, such as client switching for example, further work is needed on the behaviours that may occur behind-the-scenes (backstage) which may still impact on the social relationship between the client and creatives, particularly within the business-to-business context.
- The dynamic process of creativity as it unfolds over time, perhaps for a project that may span months or years, is worthy of further investigation.
- Greater use of inductive research approaches within creativity research has been recommended, using for example research strategies based upon grounded theory, thematic analysis or discourse analysis.

Next, Chapter 4 will outline and discuss the inductive and emergent research methodology as used to collect and analyse the data in an attempt to address the research aim and objectives as set out within Chapter 1. Chapter 5 will move on to present the analysis and synthesis of the collected data. Chapter 6 will discuss those findings in relation to the above literature review and then conclude this thesis.

Figure 3.10 Summary and overview of literature review



Chapter 4 : Methodology

4.1 Introduction, chapter structure and objectives

The aim of this chapter is to outline and justify the methodological approach selected and used for this thesis project.

This chapter will begin with an overview of the thesis research activity followed by a presentation of the line of argument and reasoning upon which this research project was set, and thus the specific research perspective that was taken. This will include consideration of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings for the thesis, as well as a justification and clarification of the method/s selected for the collection and analysis of the project material. Following this, specific issues and activities which formed part of the overall process will be discussed. Additional examples of this process in action, and any other supporting discussions of relevance will be included in the Appendix where appropriate.

The rest of this chapter is divided into several sections :

- 4.2 Outline of overall thesis research activity
- 4.3 The value of theories and models from a qualitative perspective
- 4.4 Reflexivity
- 4.5 Philosophical and methodological underpinnings
- 4.6 Selection and justification of case study approach
- 4.7 Primary research
- 4.8 Ethical considerations
- 4.9 Research limitations
- 4.10 Chapter summary

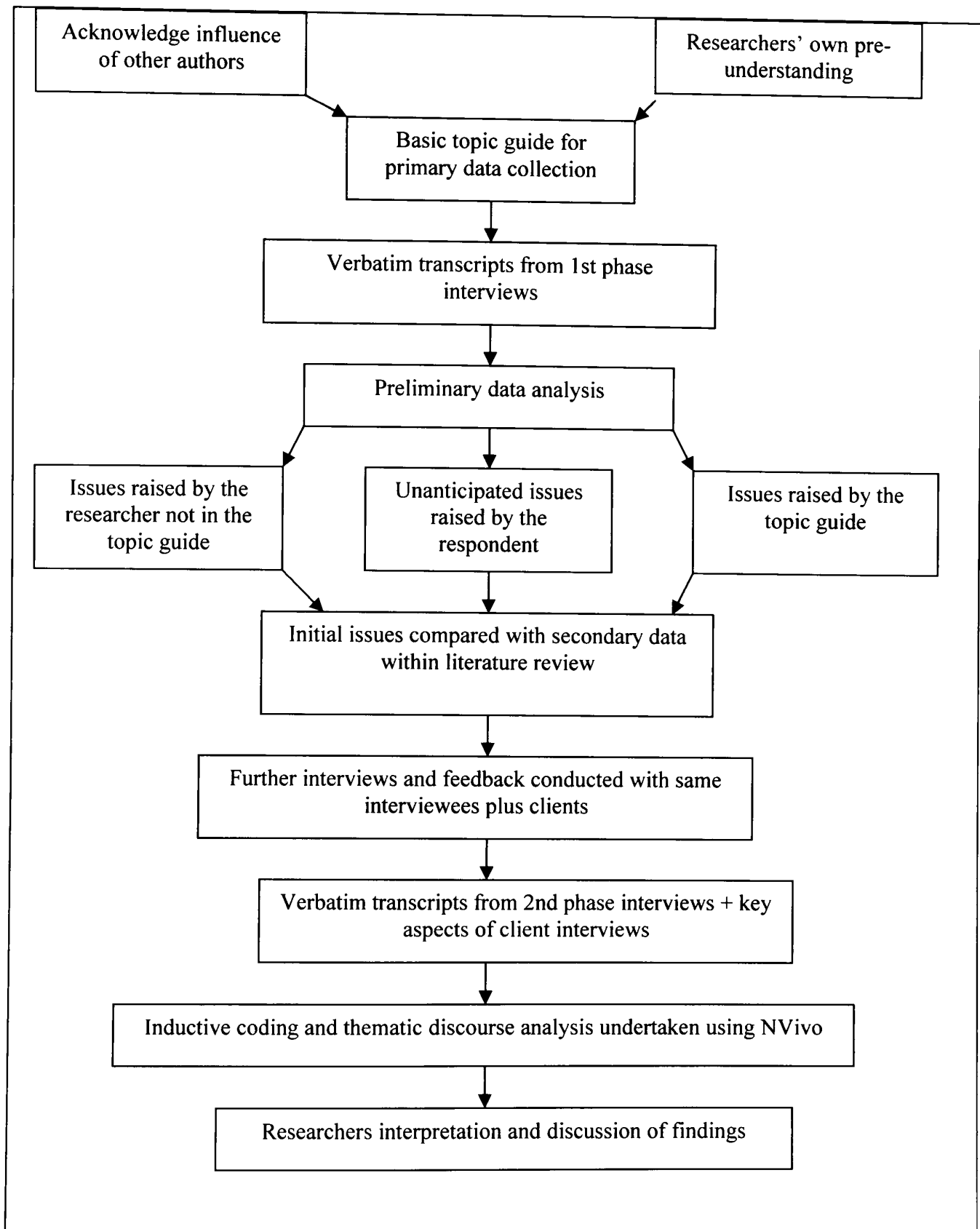
4.2 Outline of overall thesis research activity

4.2.1 Methodological orientation

Apart from the literature reviews conducted for the main topic of research as discussed within Chapters 3 and 4, an extensive review was also undertaken within various methodological and philosophical texts as part of the overall process. Additional and specialised methodological courses for particular aspects of the research were sought and undertaken internally and externally to the supporting University as deemed necessary by the researcher. These included courses at the summer school for social science data analysis and collection at the University of Essex. Courses included ethnographic methods, qualitative data analysis, interpretative methodologies for analysing text and talk, qualitative interviewing and approaches to discourse analysis. Funding for some of these external courses came via the ESRC (Economic & Social Research Council – UK) as part of a competitive doctoral studentship award. All of the above activities were undertaken in an effort to increase understanding and sensitisation towards issues of concern when using inductive research techniques, as undertaken for this thesis.

The general methodological approach followed was the systematic analysis of phenomenological data as put forward by Lowe (1996) and Andriopoulos (Andriopoulos 2000) as outlined within Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 The systematic analysis of phenomenological data



Source: Adapted from Andriopoulos (2000: 36) and Lowe (1996)

4.2.2 Approach to the literature review

The literature reviews contained in Chapters 2 and 3 were conducted in several main phases. During the first phase a broad overview of organisational creativity and corporate branding was undertaken shortly after the first collection and analysis of interview data had been completed. This helped to focus subsequent visits for further data collection around topics that had initially emerged from the data, with links added and additional perspectives put forward where found within the pre-existing literature.

The interviews had been analysed via the use of discourse analysis using coding techniques and key theme identification leading to thematic network analysis as discussed later in this chapter. During the second period of interview data collection, feedback and reflection on the original analysis was conducted with the original participants, as well as additional client participants being identified and further observations being made.

Thus the literature was approached in a manner allowing theoretical concepts and discussion to emerge through a combination of a pre-understanding of over-arching theories and previous work in the literature (Balmer 1999), alongside emergent perspectives and interpretations taken from the field participants (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2000).

Although organisational creativity and corporate branding are growing topics for research in their own right within marketing, as outlined within Chapter 2 and 3, previous material that had attempted to look at a combination of these perspectives was found to be very limited. Moreover, what existed sometimes lacked an indication of suitable empirical rigour to support the convincing discussion that had been produced. Therefore material from within other fields was also uncovered and selected for inclusion within the review. Due to the research angle taken, this additional literature was found mainly relating to social psychology, sociology, human resource management and organisational behaviour, alongside marketing.

4.2.3 Guiding argument for approach taken

As part of the methodological process, a review of methodological material published in the area of management and business methodology was undertaken, including but not limited to (Silverman 2000, 1997; Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2000; Sanders 1981; Bloor 1997; Glaser & Strauss 1967; Halfpenny 1979; Kincheloe & McLaren 1994; Melia 1997; Miles & Huberman 1984; Patton 1987; Strauss & Corbin 1990; Van Maanen 1983) and some recent PhD Marketing thesis undertaken by previous authors in the fields of corporate culture (Wilson 1995), corporate identity (Balmer 1996) and organisational creativity (Andriopoulos 2000). Some of these authors have highlighted that a mix-up often occurs between ‘technical’ aspects of some research (often using a mixture of terms from both qualitative and quantitative approaches), alongside an “apparent lack of understanding regarding the overwhelming influence of paradigm and philosophy” (Dootson 1995: 186).

With this in mind, the methodology which will shortly be discussed for this thesis can be described as interpretative and anti-positive (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Knights 1992; Martin 1992; Smircich & Calás 1987). Here positivism is understood to mean a particular approach to the creation of knowledge using research that emphasises the model used by the natural sciences, where the scientists normally adopt the position of

“the objective researcher, who collects facts about the social world and then builds up an explanation of social life by arranging such facts in a chain of causality... the underlying logic is deductive” Finch (1986: 7) citing Hughes (1980).

Thus positivism is seen as “the idea of the objective and neutral search for connections, a process in which data and the testing of hypotheses are pivotal” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2000).

The research contained within this thesis draws mainly from the naturalistic research paradigm looking at the individual as a whole and believing that reality is multiple, interrelated and determined in context, as opposed to the rationalistic paradigm which searches for rules which govern and explain reality (Dootson 1995). Here, humans acting within a capacity as researchers and their use of sensibilities (via methods such as interviewing, observing and analysing) are best suited to this task when trying to uncover and make sense of meaning within a certain context.

Normally proposed as a contrast to positivism, the main characteristics of naturalistic research is that it draws upon alternative philosophical traditions where ‘symbolic interactionism’ (Woods 1983; Finch 1986) has been of particular relevance and where ‘causes’ have taken the back seat to ‘meanings’. Thus naturalistic research rejects the natural science model in favour of one that attempts to uncover the meaning of social events and processes (Cook & Reichardt 1979), built upon the lived experience from the ‘actors’ point of view (Bryman 1984), and are “felt to be concerned with understanding human behaviour from the actor’s own frame of reference” (Corner 1991: 726).

Finch (1986: 7) has introduced the term ‘interpretivist’ to refer to the underlying epistemology for work of this kind. Thus, it is at the epistemological level that the ‘oppositional’ nature of qualitative versus quantitative research has been most apparent.

At the level of technique, it is normally the case that qualitative research encompasses techniques which are not *mainly* based upon statistical techniques, and being particularly well suited to use with small-scale analysis and/or where the researcher attempts to get to know the social world being studied at first hand. Thus techniques such as interviewing of an in-depth and unstructured or semi-structured nature are seen as appropriate, as used for this thesis. Techniques such as these have their roots in social anthropology, where the emphasis is one of studying social life in natural settings (Burgess 1984; Finch 1986; Popkewitz 1981).

In reality, conducting research without actually calling on techniques from both quantitative and qualitative approaches, at least to some degree, would be extremely difficult (Crompton & Jones 1985). In addition, it has recently been argued that focusing on the line that distinguishes between quantitative and qualitative, tends to draw attention away from other aspects which should perhaps be seen as more crucial and relevant (Alvesson & Deetz 2000).

4.3 The value of theories and models from a qualitative perspective

Qualitative research is often described by contrasting its features and characteristics to a more traditional (or scientific) orientation. It is therefore important to indicate that due consideration has been given to these differences. These features and the differing characteristics are usefully summarised below in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. Table 4.1 indicates that a qualitative approach is more appropriate where the focus of research is phenomenological and emergent, directed towards the quality, nature and essence of phenomena rather than a focus on more predetermined and quantitative aspects such as how much and how many. It also highlights that qualitative research is best suited to objectives based upon discovery and understanding than prediction and confirmation, as are the objectives of this thesis.

Table 4.1 Points of comparison between qualitative and quantitative research

<i>Point of Comparison</i>	<i>Qualitative Research</i>	<i>Quantitative Research</i>
Focus of research	Quality (nature, essence)	Quantity (how much, how many)
Philosophical roots	Phenomenology, symbolic interaction	Positivism, logical empiricism
Associated phrases	Fieldwork, ethnographic, naturalistic, grounded, subjective	Experimental, empirical, statistical
Goal of investigation	Understanding, description, discovery, hypothesis generating	Prediction, control, description, confirmation, hypothesis testing
Design characteristics	Flexible, evolving, emergent	Predetermined, structured
Setting	Natural, familiar	Unfamiliar, artificial
Sample	Small, nonrandom, theoretical	Large, random, representative
Data collection	Researcher as primary instrument, interviews, observations	Inanimate instruments (scales, tests, surveys, questionnaires, computers)
Mode of analysis	Inductive (by researcher)	Deductive (by statistical methods)
Findings	Comprehensive, holistic, expansive	Precise, narrow, reductionist

Source: Merriam (1988: 18).

Further, Table 4.2 outlines quantitative research as primarily orientated towards testing theory through concise and narrow topics of investigation often looking at cause and effect relationships. In comparison, qualitative research allows more for discovery with a focus upon more complex, holistic and subjective areas of investigation, where the basis of knowing is through shared interpretation, communication and observation.

Table 4.2 Characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research

<u>Quantitative research</u>	<u>Qualitative research</u>
<p>Hard science</p> <p>Focus: Concise and narrow Reductionist Objective</p> <p>Reasoning: Logistic, deductive</p> <p>Basis of knowing: Cause and effect relationships Test theory Control Instruments</p>	<p>Soft science</p> <p>Focus: Complex and broad Holistic Subjective</p> <p>Reasoning: Dialectic, inductive</p> <p>Basis of knowing: Meaning Discovery Develops theory Shared interpretation Communication and observation</p>
<p>Basic elements of analysis :</p> <p>Numbers Statistical analysis Generalization</p>	<p>Basic elements of analysis:</p> <p>Words Individual interpretation Uniqueness</p>

Source: Burns & Grove (1987: 36)

Recognition that a qualitative approach would be better suited to the research for this thesis led to a number of implications for the way the research was approached from outset based on the aspects highlighted above. For example, it was identified early in the study that repeated face to face interviews would need to be undertaken over a period spanning several months and at multiple levels. In addition the emergent and evolving nature of qualitative research led to an identified need for the researcher to

undertake a number of additional specialised courses before the data collection and data analysis phases were attempted (see section 4.2.1). Qualitative research requires an emphasis over depth of access via relatively small sample sizes compared to those using a quantitative approach. It was therefore important that organisations were identified and access negotiated that would allow a sustained and adequate level of access to match this requirement.

Another key observation for this thesis when considering the quantitative orientations presented within both of the Tables above are that the assumptions are based on there being “a single, objective reality – the world out there – that we can observe, know, and measure” (Merriam 1988: 17). Qualitative research however does not presume that there is a single objective reality, but that multiple realities may exist, driven by personal interaction and perception, which needs interpreting as a phenomenon (phenomenological), rather than measuring. Here “beliefs rather than facts form the basis of perception. Research is exploratory, inductive, and emphasises process rather than ends” (Merriam 1988: 17).

To summarise

“if using a purely inductive research approach, then the researcher collects the data, and then builds theoretical categories and propositions from relationships discovered among the data... contrasted to deductive researchers who hope to find data to match a theory, inductive researchers hope to find a theory that explains their data” (Goetz & LeCompte 1984: 4).

As a result of the above discussion, it can be stated that this thesis aims to investigate meaning and significance, rather than to predict and control (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindell 1994; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates 2001).

4.4 Reflexivity

The role of *reflection* on the way language is used during the collection of data via interviews, and the selectivity often introduced by the researcher during the analysis,

can and indeed has often been overlooked, even in some of the qualitative approaches used to date. Here many qualitative researchers are said in effect not to be qualitative enough (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000).

A useful example of this tendency towards positivist assumptions is the qualitative approach known as grounded theory. It has been argued that although this approach uses descriptions and theory that has been empirically generated from previously collected data (i.e. grounded or inducted), as opposed to using a deductive hypothesis testing approach, one of grounded theories central criteria of “good research” is still that of verification as called for in more positivistic approaches. From this verification perspective, grounded theory is more easily seen as a scientific method that meets the criteria for doing good science: significance, theory-observation compatibility, generalisability, reproducibility, precision, rigor and verification (Strauss & Corbin 1990).

From another perspective, Silverman (1997), a well versed qualitative researcher and author, has stated that for qualitative research to be “good” it should at least demonstrate why it should be believed, and that the problem in focus has theoretical and/or practical significance, i.e. it must show that it is ‘*credible*’. This credibility can be justified in qualitative research by proving the highly rigorous collection and analyses of research data, alongside the inclusion of participants via feedback from any analysis made. This thesis has attempted to include these aspects of credibility as discussed elsewhere within this chapter.

Others with a more reflexive approach to their research, have also argued that an over emphasis on the rigorous collection and analysis of data is simply a form of dataism or that of a data-driven approach (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000). Here even ‘credibility’ should not be allowed to block out other important elements where “the criterion of confirmation through data should be played down relative to what books on method (qualitative and quantitative) normally suggest... empirical material should be seen as an argument in efforts to make a case for a particular way of

understanding social reality, in the context of a never-ending debate” (Alvesson & Skoldberg 2000: 276).

Data, when taken from a reflexive perspective, is seen more as an enabler in support of interpretation, rather than material that unambiguously leads up to it. This is a *fundamental* difference in comparison with some of the other main stream approaches to qualitative research as outlined above, and it is the guiding approach used within this thesis.

From this reflexive perspective, ‘theoretical usefulness’ is also one of the goals, ideally distinguished via the ability to help with the assembly and interpretation of observations as an aid to an explanation, whilst also leading to new paths for further knowledge and further reflection. Here theoretical concepts or a model has a value if it can establish a theoretical or practical usefulness. However this does not mean it must have acceptance to be useful (Alvesson & Berg 1992).

A realistic assessment of practical usefulness may be achieved by understanding ‘usefulness’ as a matter of providing knowledge foundations for a comprehensive and perceptive understanding of conditions, situations and mechanisms which influence and can influence actors in an organisation (Alvesson & Berg 1992).

Taking into account the preceding discussion of reflexivity within interviews, for the interviews conducted for this research, due consideration was given to (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates 2001) :

- how the interviewer’s questions and style influence the answers given
- how the identity of the researcher also influences interpretation and analysis through the knowledge and world view brought to the data

4.5 Philosophical and methodological underpinnings

This section will discuss the selection of the guiding philosophy, as well as other assumptions used in an effort to draw clearer, relevant, and defensible boundaries for what would be, and would not be seen as within the research spotlight for the thesis. The emergent, and time consuming process of consideration, selection, justification and implications of these deeper aspects as part of this research project, will all be delineated and expressed as succinctly as possible.

4.5.1 Ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions

As a background to all social science, there are “a set of ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions” (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Burrell & Morgan 1979). Melia (1997: 29) has already highlighted that “the link between what a researcher does and the philosophical position set out to justify the method is often problematical” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2000: 7).

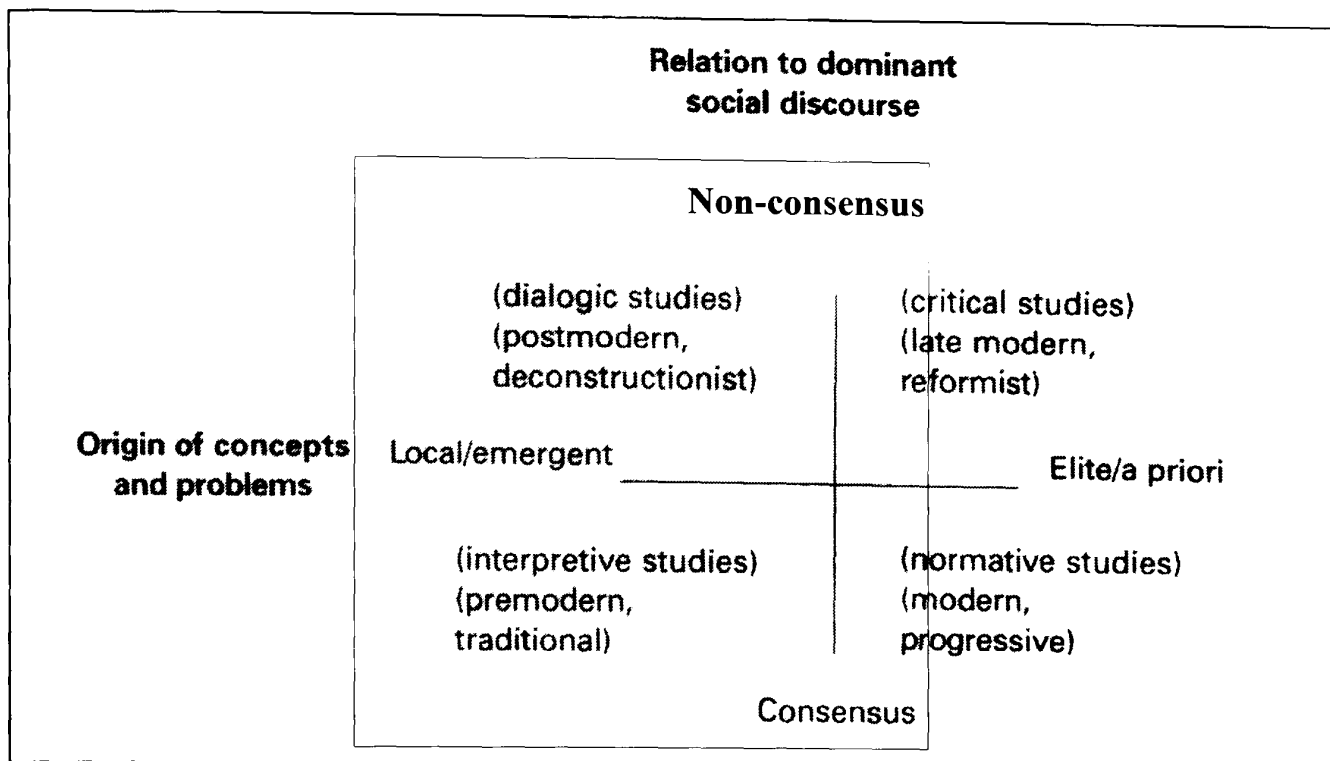
One model that captures this perspective well, particularly with respect to social discourse within an organisational context, has recently been produced some 20 years after Burrell & Morgans (1979) original model as seen in Figure 4.2 below. This model rather than compartmentalise off the researcher in one paradigm or another, introduces the use of particular lines of assumptions and understandings rather than paradigms, which are used for new classification purposes. As a result, it tries to step beyond the normal contrasting of paradigmatic differences which is most often used in traditional qualitative defences, and the common framing scales such as quantitative/qualitative, objective/subjective, or science/humanism (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). Its relevance for inclusion in this thesis is that it helps to visualise the researcher’s own understanding of the philosophical and methodological orientation and perceived perspectives taken, compared to others using the same categorisation.

As further seen below, the guiding perspective, or lens, through which this research has been conducted is that more akin to both the ‘consensus/non-consensus’ and ‘local/emergent’ quadrants within Figure 4.2 (rather than research where the researcher has conducted a full review of the literature and thus approaches the field

from an elite/a priori perspective of previous research and findings looking to fill in gaps).

A non-consensus relation is one that challenges any guiding assumptions such as espoused values or normal routines (see Appendix 3 - Table 1). For example in the context of this thesis project, rather than just look for consensus in the way a corporate brand is formed, it also takes an 'opposite view'. Here creativity and corporate brand building is seen through a lens that focuses the researcher on any inherent fragmentation in the process. It is the effort that members put into forming and maintaining a common perception and meaning for the corporate brand (and also their resistance and ways of resistance) and the reasoning behind doing so, that is of interest to this thesis. Issues of representational validity take a back seat to that of observation of these issues. This is another reason that this research can be described as interpretative and anti-positive (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Knights 1992; Martin 1992; Smircich & Calás 1987).

Figure 4.2 - Relevant contrasting dimensions of representational practices in relation to this thesis as indicated by bordered sub box



Alvesson & Deetz (2000: 24) as adapted from Deetz (1994) (see Appendix 3 Tables 1 and 2 for labels)

In addition to consensus and non-consensus discourses being used as a focus within the interview phases and analysis, the data collected was also of a local/emergent nature (see Appendix 3 - Table 1). In other words a conscious effort has been made right from the outset to underpin the project with concepts developed “*with*” and “*in*” relation to the organisational members. As a result the findings have been actively and openly “*altered*” via participant feedback on the findings during various phases within the research process. This is in stark comparison to some other research approaches using a more elite or a priori approach, where concepts have been brought “*to*” the primary phases by the researcher, and which are then applied “*to*” the members of the organisation, and remain “*unchanged*” by the process via any form of participant post evaluation or feedback.

Another way to consider this is via an ‘Etic’ versus ‘Emic’ approach to the analysis. Etic analyses uses an imposed frame of reference on any analysis conducted, most

often from prior literature reviews. Emic analyses allows the researcher to work within the conceptual framework of those actually studied (Silverman 1993, 2001; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates 2001). This thesis, as will be seen in Chapter 5, has attempted an Emic approach.

As a result of this specific piece of reflexive research focused on a balance of both conflict and consensus, the choice then becomes not which of these perspectives to choose from one or the other quadrant in Figure 4.2, but one of getting the balance correct, of choosing the right moments for use of perspectives from any of the chosen two quadrants (Deetz 1992; Alvesson & Deetz 2000).

4.5.2 Plurality of voices

Against the background set out in the previous subsections of this chapter, it can be seen that those interested in a reflexive approach to research at the empirical level need to ensure that an allowance is made for several voices to come through from the research site, in a sensitive manner, which has been termed the pluralistic ideal.

Thus it was important during the analyses and interpretation phases of the project to openly challenge early or dominating interpretations with other interpretations, between the dominant and the alternative/s. One way to encourage multiple interpretations in later phases of the research, is to choose two or three differing perspectives on the research or themes within the research from outset, and then to think out which question would need to be asked to encourage this process, or at least which perspectives and even topics should be used as a background guide. This approach was specifically followed by the researcher for this project. These attempts can be seen within the example that has been provided of one of the initial exploratory interviews within the Appendix of this thesis. To allow multiple perspectives and tensions to develop, it was also important to ensure that the material was not synthesised at a stage deemed too early to allow this, as assured to some extent via the multi phase data collection and analysis approach used for this thesis, as outlined elsewhere in this chapter.

4.5.3 Analytical triangulation – completeness through triangulation

Within qualitative approaches to research, and particularly when using case studies, one commonly accepted way to approach the data more rigorously is through a multi-method approach. To design a multi-method approach to qualitative studies without critical consideration of the convergent but distinct methodologies and traditions that may be invoked, means a real risk of also creating a ‘qualitative quagmire’ (Barbour 1998: 356).

One multi-method approach of particular interest is that of triangulation. Close inspection of the methodological literature for this thesis has uncovered that there are various views and a lack of clear consensus on the purpose of the general approach to research known as ‘triangulation’, especially when used for qualitative based research studies, (cf Campbell & Fiske 1959; Denzin 1970; Jick 1979; Corner 1991; Dootson 1995; Sandelowski 1995; Barbour 1998; Barbour 1999; Knafl & Breitmayer 1991; McDowell & MacLean 1998; Breitmayer, Ayres & Knafl 1993). For some the purpose of triangulation is mainly advocated as a confirmatory or verification strategy as an aid to reduce biases and to ultimately converge on a single reality (Sandelowski 1995). Others have pointed out that not all paradigms in the qualitative domain subscribe to the tenet that such a single reality exists to be focused upon in the first place. Hence the underlying assumption of triangulation used in the way discussed above may not be applicable to many forms of qualitative studies. In particular, those taking a post modern perspective have highlighted the fixed point of reference often used by positivist research, and hence the use of the term triangulation, does not match their understanding of the world where :

“the central image is the crystal, which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations... and angles of approach. Crystals are prisms that reflect and refract, creating ever changing images and pictures of reality. Crystallization deconstructs the traditional idea of validity, for now there can be no single or triangulated truth” (Denzin 1994: 482).

Based on this perspective an alternative purpose can be stated for triangulation which is based on the belief that:

“triangulation, however, can be something other than scaling, reliability, and convergent validation. It can also capture more complete, holistic, and contextual portrayal of the units(s) under study” (Jick 1983: 138).

For the purpose of this thesis, this statement is understood to mean that by using multiple approaches to the *analysis* of the data collected (and not necessarily or exclusively through a mixture of *both* quantitative and qualitative approaches) it is hoped that a multiple number of views or holism will be uncovered. In addition a more accurate definition as understood for this thesis is that

“in triangulation, a comparison is made by looking at the same problem in different ways. The findings from alternative sources enable researchers to make more subtle and sophisticated analyses: any marked differences can be highlighted, investigated and explained” (Barbour 1998: 359).

4.5.3.1 Types of triangulation

Although this thesis has highlighted a lack of consensus as to the appropriate purpose of triangulation, there is better consensus on the types. Most authors follow the convention as outlined below by Denzin and the idea of four types of triangulation (Denzin 1970: 295):

1. *Method triangulation* – different methods are employed to address same phenomenon. Often broken down to: *within method* (two or more variants of same method are used e.g. mixing open and closed questions in a questionnaire); *between method* (differing but complementary methods are used e.g. semi-structured interviews and questionnaires); *holistic* (both within and between method approaches used, possibly helping completeness by bringing data out into the open that may of remained hidden).

2. *Data triangulation* – using different data sources for the same phenomenon or similar focus, provides rich collection of data designed to reveal similarities and differences (Mitchell 1986; Dootson 1995). An example of this would be via data collected via both interviews and observations or questionnaires, or secondary data collected from organisational literature such as company reports or other forms of written communication.
3. *Investigator triangulation* – different researchers in the same project.
4. *Theoretical triangulation* – a range of theoretical models or frames of reference are considered in the same body of data, such as models and theories developed from a sociological perspective as well as psychological perspectives.

Janesick (1994) has put forward the case for an additional type termed *interdisciplinary triangulation*, which is where a number of differing theories from differing disciplines are used on the same study (thus an extension of theoretical triangulation outlined above). A final type of triangulation would be the use of two or more forms of triangulation from the list above, and this has been termed *multiple triangulation* (Burns & Grove 1993).

The application of triangulation in studies faces a number of barriers and criticisms. Amongst the barriers of successfully using triangulation are: the rigid adherence by some to different epistemological positions, the amount of time and money involved, and the skills (or lack of), of researchers who are often best at operating via one approach, but less frequently good at operating via many approaches (Nolan & Behi 1995).

Critics have also highlighted how triangulation as an approach used to overcome the deficiencies of so called ‘single-minded’ approaches to inquiry is not without its problems. The implication by some authors that the “more-is-better” or “combinationist” (Corner 1991: 721; Duffy 1987; Sandelowski 1995) and

‘assimilation’ philosophies involved with triangulation may mean that in effect, any and every research combination may end up being designated as triangulation, rather than a strategy that has been thought through and then deliberately selected to achieve the purpose of “completeness” through triangulation.

The next section of this thesis will outline how a strategy has been thought through and selected from outset to help achieve the aim of completeness through triangulation.

4.5.3.2 Strategy of implementation – multiple triangulation

The overall analysis within this thesis has been approached in a spirit similar to a concept first introduced by Jick (1979) known as ‘holistic triangulation’. Here, not only is an attempt made to ensure the phenomenon is examined from multiple perspectives, but also that the strategy helps to enrich the researcher’s understanding by allowing “new and deeper dimensions to emerge” (Corner 1991: 723). In addition, by following the differing forms of triangulation as outlined below, the strategy was an attempt to move the analysis above personalistic biases that may stem from single methodologies (Denzin 1970: 307).

1. Data triangulation (data collected from three separate case studies)
2. Theoretical triangulation (differing theories were used for comparison against findings).
3. Interdisciplinary triangulation (theories from differing and distinct disciplines were used)
4. Multiple triangulation (more than one triangulation method used as above)

4.5.3.3 Discourse analysis

The methodology included the application of the general approach to the data known as discourse analysis. Discourse analysis can describe very different research activities with different kinds of data, therefore it is best understood as a field of

research rather than a single practice. For the purpose of this thesis, and building upon various definitional ideas from Wetherell, Taylor & Yates (2001: 5), one loose definition is that discourse analysis is "the close study of language in use and furthermore the look for patterns... patterns in language or patterns in activity".

Further, the use of discourse analysis can be potentially delineated via 4 main approaches as presented by Wetherell et al (2001: 7) :

1. The study of language in use to uncover how it varies and then to relate any variation to different social situations and environments, or different users. This use focuses on the variation and imperfection of language as a system. The patterns may be described in terms of vocabulary, structure or functions.

2. A focus more on the *activity* of language *use* rather than the language itself, with language seen as a process that is studied to investigate the *interaction* between parties (at least two) in a particular interaction, in the search for patterns in the language actually selected and used by the parties. Here the language users are understood as being constrained to some extent by what has been contributed earlier in the interaction. An example here might be that of an interaction between a doctor and a patient, with the patient potentially being constrained by the contributions from the Doctor and perhaps visa-versa.

3. The search for patterns in the language associated with a particular *topic* or *activity*. Examples would be a focus on religion and terms and meanings around it, or alternatively language associated with an occupation. This understands language as situated but within a particular social context rather than a particular interaction such as that found in number two above.

4. The search for patterns within a *much larger* context such as those known as 'culture' or 'society', with a particular interest in how language is important as part of much wider *processes* and *activities*. It also often attempts to look at consequences and effects of these patterns in the wider context.

This thesis has applied discourse analysis primarily under point three above, using an approach more specifically termed ‘thematic discourse analysis’ as discussed more fully later in this chapter. The use of thematic discourse analysis lead to the generation of codes and key themes which emerged from within the source of research material to aid with thematic network analysis (from interview transcripts, audio recordings, observation notes and other materials produced by, and/or collected from each organisation during the various field visits).

4.6 Selection and justification of case study approach

4.6.1 Case study approach

Based on the research objectives set out earlier in this thesis, the case study approach is appropriate because

“a “how” or “why” question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control.... allowing the development of a rich explanation for the complex pattern of outcomes and in comparing the explanation with the outcomes” (Yin 1994: 9, 115) and as such a case study:

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when,
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

In addition, the case study design is seen as useful where the researcher is aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of a situation and is one more of discovery than confirmation, and of the process and context, than any outcomes. Using this approach, the context as well as the relevant forces outside and around the unit being studied, is taken into account (Merriam 1988). Cronbach (1975: 123) calls this an “interpretation in context”. Thus the case study approach was selected, because of the interpretative pertinence it added to the metatheories being used as previously discussed.

4.6.2 Case study interpretations

According to Bromley (1986: 38) “the aim of a case study is not to find the correct or true interpretation of the facts, but to eliminate erroneous conclusions so that one is left with the best possible, the most compelling, interpretation”.

Thus by undertaking qualitative interviews, the researcher intends to limit possible misinterpretations of the questions asked by checking for understanding, and to limit what is possibly a somewhat more superficial exchange of information often obtained in more quantitative techniques (such as self completing questionnaires), and to gain real insights on “how individuals construct the meaning and significance of their situations from the complex personal framework of beliefs and values they have developed” (Burgess 1984). In addition, using a qualitative paradigm will allow for the research to be focused on “discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied” (Merriam 1988: 3) .

4.6.3 Critique of the case study approach

In the past there has been considerable debate over the mixing of the more traditional quantitative methods with that of qualitative methods within case studies. Merriam (1988) has discussed how the case study has become a catchall category for the types of studies left over which do not exhibit clearly that they are of the form of experimental, survey or historical research. Others have also highlighted that if not careful, the case study becomes “an undefined dumping ground for non traditional studies of all kinds” (Kenny & Grotelueschen 1980: 29).

Case study research to some includes “fieldwork, ethnography, participant observation, qualitative research, naturalistic inquiry, grounded theory, exploratory research, phenomenology, and hypothesis generation” (Merriam 1988: 5).

Indeed the adoption of the case study as a form of empirical enquiry, may be viewed by some as a less acceptable approach, when compared to others such as experiments

or surveys. This is based on a number of academic viewpoints (Yin 1994) as outlined below:

1. The perceived possibility of lack of rigour in application, via the allowance of biased viewpoints, or equivocal evidence, which duly impacts on the findings and conclusions.
2. The inability to allow for scientific generalisations to be made.

However, logical counter arguments have been put forward for both of these somewhat traditional viewpoints within the previous subsections of this chapter at both the ontological and epistemological levels.

In addition, biases can easily enter into other research strategies, such as experiments, questionnaire design or historical research (Yin 1994; Rosenthal 1966; Sudman & Bradburn 1982; Gottschalk 1968). Merriam (1988) has highlighted that some academics believe all social scientists are engaged in case studies, in the sense that “observations, whether in an annual census or of an individual, take meaning from their time and place, and from conceptions held by those who pose the questions and decide how to tabulate” (Cronbach 1982: 75).

4.6.4 Case study procedural stages

In a case study, five components of a research design are especially important (Yin 1994):

- 1. Clarification of the type of research questions.** This was obtained from the multistage literature review and exploratory interviews, and these emerged from within the data for this thesis as outlined earlier.

2. Its propositions (if any) are clearly stated. Because this research is exploratory in nature, a purpose (rather than propositions) has been clearly stipulated in the earlier Chapters.

3. Units of analysis. The unit of analysis for the research is both the individual and the case study organisation within which they are situated.

Two more stages in the design include the logic linking the data to the propositions (or purpose in this case), and the criteria for interpreting the findings. These have been covered elsewhere within this chapter and Chapter 5.

4.6.5 Preparation for case study data collection

Case studies are seen by some researchers as an easy strategy to follow. However

“in actuality, the demands of a case study on a person’s intellect, ego, and emotions are far greater than those of any other research strategy. This is because the data collection procedures are not routinised....the skills required for collecting case study data are much more demanding than those for experiments or surveys” (Yin 1994: 55).

These skills include (Yin 1994: 55) :

- feeling comfortable with asking questions which may lead to even more questions than direct answers, but which later may aggregate towards a deeper line of research and understanding of the topic;
- the ability to use sensing and observing alongside listening in interviews, without biasing the collection of data;

- the sensitivity to ensure the correct balance between adaptiveness, flexibility and rigour (thus not allowing unknown gaps or biases to creep in) as the case proceeds;
- to be able to interpret the information as it is collected (based on a good understanding of the theoretical issues), and to know when important clues need to be followed up, or when not to deviate beyond the acceptable;
- to be open to contrary findings, especially if they produce “documentable rebuttals”(Yin 1994: 59) rather than attempting to substantiate a pre-conceived position, which may introduce a bias.

4.6.6 Modes of analysis

In order to ensure that the analysis phase would be one of high quality, the researcher constantly asked a number of questions as outlined below, throughout the research activity to ensure an adequate level of rigour. Answering these questions helped to ensure that a number of principles were not ignored. These guiding principles, are the foundation of any good piece of work in the field of social science (Yin 1994: 123) :

- 1 Has all the relevant evidence been used during the analysis ?

To encourage for all relevant evidence to be used as collected during the primary phase of data collection, a number of steps were taken with regards the handling, presentation and access of the data to the researcher. As discussed more fully elsewhere within this chapter, all interviews were fully recorded and transcribed into a verbatim textual format by the researcher with no third party transcribers involved. Each transcription was read through several times and early stages of analysis included the use of white boards and key theme analysis to help gain an understanding of what evidence was available. As more data was collected

during the later phases of data collection the transcriptions were linked into CI-said and QSR NVivo software to ensure that easy and open access remained available to the ever growing corpus of collected interview material.

2 Have all major rival interpretations been included in the analysis ?

After each phase of data collection and transcription the analysis and interpretations were compared to the pre existing literature from a number of fields as already outlined earlier in this chapter. Alternative interpretations were identified where apparent. The various alternative interpretations were then presented back to the original interviewees in subsequent phases to gain comments from their perspective and to help select the interpretations which best matched the organisational context, employees perspective and previous literature where available.

3 Has the most significant aspect been addressed in the analysis of the case ?

As discussed later in this chapter, the transcribed data was analysed using coding approaches and key theme analysis within QSR NVivo software. Whilst time consuming, this process led to the generation of many concepts of interest within the collected data. Once all concepts had been identified of interest, the most significant aspects were identified by using content analysis and ranking in relation to frequency of discussion within the data. The most significant aspects and themes as delineated at the end of this process have been presented for discussion within Chapter 5.

4.7 Primary research

4.7.1 Selection criteria and approach for case studies

The three case study organisations were geographically located within central London, England.

London was selected due to its relative high density of creative organisations within the UK and its dominant role in the creative industries both as a location for enterprises and as a major cultural influence (DCMS 2000; Drake 2003).

The specific types of case studies were chosen on their ability to demonstrate that their competitive strategy was based upon a highly customised service to clients in the form of a creative solution, which primarily relied upon the employee's own knowledge and skills base. For commercial confidentiality reasons none of the three case study organisations are openly identified within this thesis and are known respectively herein as Architects, Branders and Designers.

Primary reason and justification for selection:

a) primary source of income is via creative ideas leading to solutions of which their clients are aware and use to distinguish them from competitors. Examples include innovative commercial buildings, complete corporate identity overhaul, internal and external brand changes.

b) providing a spread of examples from a reasonably new start up (Brand consultancy - 18 months) and size of approximately 10 employees; through to two intermediate start ups via a Design agency of 5 years and size of approx 13 employees, through to 20 years plus and up to 150 employees (Architectural practice – London office). All were classified as business-to-business small to medium size enterprises (see Chapter 2 Subsection 2.2.1 for a definition of SME's).

c) each having well known, major and successful clients within the client base and each having won awards within their respective industries.

d) adequate, timely and repeated levels of access allowed along with full access to live client relationships where asked for.

e) they use creative inputs, outputs and processes occurring within a primarily project-based environment.

The three organisations were initially approached via various third parties to introduce the research topic and potential request for access to follow. These third parties either worked within the organisations concerned or had worked with them in some way previously. The researcher had no direct or indirect contact or knowledge of any the three organisations before the outset of the research. The third party contacts were known to the researcher as either previous colleagues or contacts made via a corporate branding research based web site. Once the third party contact had made the initial request to allow access for the author of this thesis, a letter was sent directly to the owners or directors by the author with an introduction and outline of the request in more detail.

Details of the access requirements, time schedules, and access phases required were also outlined. Requests were also made for potential access to clients later in the research from outset (this had to be further negotiated with each case organisation once trust had been built between the researcher and the case study organisation during the initial interviews). This process of negotiating and gaining access took several months to arrange for all three organisations.

Generating interest in the research, and finding a sponsor within the company is a tactic advocated by many authors (Bryman 1988; Van Maanen & Kolb 1985). The offering of feedback, perhaps via a verbal presentation or some other action leading to “need fulfilling” is also advocated (Bryman 1988). This was of particular relevance with respect to the case organisations for this research project, whom were

each giving up much time and resources to the project which spanned a total of seven months of repeated access to both themselves and to a limited extent their clients.

As the research was reflexive, feedback occurred naturally to participants throughout at each subsequent interview phase to allow the participants to add their own reflections on the analysis and findings as the process unfolded.

4.7.2 Case study background and structure

(a) Designers: This organisation had been in existence for approximately 5 years at the time of the interviews and had grown to 13 people plus administrative staff. The company had been set up by two directors who had worked together on previous projects within other companies prior to the set up. The structure of the organisation was fairly flat, with two supervisors taking up position under the two directors, with the rest of the employees broken up into senior and junior creative designers. The office was located within London and all employees including the directors worked together in one open plan space, side by side. The atmosphere within the office during each visit always seemed upbeat, relaxed and fairly harmonious with employees dressed very casually in jeans and t-shirts in the main. Clients who had also visited the office has reported the same feeling and observations to the researcher.

(b) Corporate branders: This organisation was a relatively new start up of approximately 18 months at the time of the interviews and consisted of approximately 10 people including administrative support. The company had been set up by 3 directors who had worked together at United Distillers for a number of years beforehand. The structure of the organisation consisted of one managing director and two directors, but each seemed to have an equal say into the running of the organisation. In addition to the 3 directors the employees consisted of a senior consultant, and other senior and junior analysts and consultants, along with admin/secretarial support. The office was located within London, spaced over two floors, with mainly meeting rooms and reception on the entrance level and open plan

offices with the directors working alongside the other employees at basement level in fairly cramped conditions. The atmosphere in the office felt noticeably more formal and ‘business like’ than the designers discussed above, with employees dressed mainly in suits.

(c) Architect practice: This organisation had been in practice for over 20 years and was the largest of the 3 case studies with approximately 150 employees within London, and 250 within the UK. The offices were spread over many floors of an office building with the practice as the only occupant. The structure consisted of a director followed by a board of senior directors, with divisional directors below them. At divisional level a formal structure of managers and supervisors above senior and junior architects and engineering teams was evident. Most offices were open plan for the majority of employees, with the directors partitioned off from the rest of the employees. The atmosphere in this organisation on research visits was a mix between more formal business and relaxed, with the senior managers and directors dressed in business attire, and more junior employees dressed both formally and informally.

4.7.3 Data collection

The primary field research with the three case studies and data collection was conducted in three phases over a time span of approximately seven months during 2000, with a total of 36 interviews ranging in time span between 25 minutes and 2 hours.

1. The first phase consisted of two weeks of visits to the three case study creative organisations to conduct initial exploratory interviews. The interviewees included owners as well as senior, less senior and junior members of each case study organisation. Individuals were carefully selected for this first phase because they were responsible for either the management of, or were actively involved within the ‘creative organisation – client relationships’.

2. The second phase occurred 3/4 months after the first phase of interviews had been transcribed and analysed. These interviews once again spanned several weeks, and depending on the individuals' availability, included the same members as initially interviewed wherever possible.

3. The third phase of interviews with clients occurred 2/3 months after the second set of interviews had been given an initial analysis, as an aid to help drive the topics of discussion more appropriately within these one off client access interviews. This third set of interviews were directed at those within the client organisation responsible for, and interfacing with, the creative supplier-client relationships for each of the three creative case study organisations. The clients included senior members of some well known names within the UK, including British Airways, Slazenger/Dunlop, Abbey National and Diagio. These clients were located in offices within London itself or in several locations within 100 miles of that location.

Table 4.3 Research access to Architect case study

<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Duration</u> <u>(mins)</u>	<u>Transcribe</u> <u>time (hours)</u>	<u>Transcript</u> <u>size (words)</u>
Director A	March 2000	38	5	5741
Director A	July 2000	45	6	5256
Director B	March 2000	70	9	10143
Director B	July 2000	45	5	4442
Director C	March 2000	50	7	6938
Director C	July 2000	25	3	2454
Marketing manager	March 2000	70	8	11193
Marketing manager	July 2000	45	5	5463
Senior supervisor	March 2000	55	6	7740
Senior Supervisor	July 2000	45	5	5871
Junior architect A	July 2000	55	7	7047
Junior architect B	July 2000	60	9	8723
TOTAL		603	75	81011

Table 4.4 Research access to Designer case study

<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Duration</u> <u>(mins)</u>	<u>Transcribe</u> <u>time (hours)</u>	<u>Transcript</u> <u>size (words)</u>
Director	March 2000	65	8	8800
Director	July 2000	60	7	7351
Senior supervisor	March 2000	45	6	6216
Senior supervisor	July 2000	65	7	7963
Senior creative employee	March 2000	25	3	2741
Senior creative employee	July 2000	55	7	6970
Junior creative employee (A)	March 2000	45	6	6118
Junior creative employee (A)	July 2000	50	6	6429
Junior creative employee (B)	March 2000	40	4	4587
Junior creative employee (B)	July 2000	45	5	5439
<u>TOTAL</u>		495	59	62614

Table 4.5 Research access to Branding consultancy case study

<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Duration</u> <u>(mins)</u>	<u>Transcribe</u> <u>time (hours)</u>	<u>Transcript</u> <u>size (words)</u>
Managing director (A)	March 2000	66	8	8965
Managing director (A)	July 2000	90	6	11956
Director (B)	March 2000	60	6	4521
Director (B)	July 2000	55	6	5234
Senior consultant * Left after March	March 2000	65	7	7948
Junior employee (A)	March 2000	50	6	8186
Junior employee (A)	July 2000	45	5	5312
Junior consultant (B)	March 2000	60	7	6395
Junior consultant (B)	July 2000	55	6	5634
<u>TOTAL</u>		546	57	64151

Table 4.6 Research access to client organisations

Position	Date	Duration (mins)	Transcribe time (hours) (key aspects)
Diagio	September 2000	90	3
Slazenger/Dunlop	September 2000	60	2.5
Abbey National	September 2000	75	3
West Partnership	September 2000	45	2
British Airways	September 2000	65	2.5
TOTAL		335	13

Access to the secondary organisations (clients) had been requested and granted in principle when the case study organisations were initially approached. The tentative agreement for access to clients was an important prerequisite for the initial inclusion of each case study organisation within this study. Only after some time within each of the three case study organisations was enough confidence established leading to unrestricted access to these clients and the live and ongoing supplier-client relationships.

All three phases of interviews were conducted either during, or shortly after normal working hours as available, with observation opportunities being taken between interviews while remaining within their offices and workplace environments wherever possible. The interviews were generally intended to explore the issues already uncovered from each prior visit to the literature using a relatively unstructured approach in the early phases. This allowed for an initial unforced emergent perspective from the personnel of the case study organisations, rather than a forced perspective from that of the researcher. This approach was undertaken in an effort to sensitise the researcher towards sharper contextual insights of both the topic area and the creative case study organisations during this initial exploratory phase of research. This overall exploratory approach is similar to what Turner (1985) has termed “to botanize”, in other words, to allow the collection of data in an emergent manner which leads to sharper research questions as a result of the process, rather

than going into the field with set questions or concrete preconceptions of what *will* be found.

According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe (1996), interviewers need to be able to listen, and to refrain from projecting their own opinions or feelings into the situation, which is often difficult, since one way to obtain trust is to empathise with the respondent. The interviewer needs to listen to what the interviewees want to say, and what they do not want to say, without helping them (Mayo 1949).

However, this perspective barely scratches the surface of the much deeper issues that face researchers whom are interested in a more reflexive approach to their work. Here identities introduced within the interview can be, and frequently are, problematic as they fix and exclude, and often lead to a certain form of story-telling if allowed to form as an unintended side effect of the interviews themselves. Thus it was identified that there was a strong need to avoid conducting interviews akin to “talking questionnaires” (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Potter & Wetherell 1987) as sometimes used by quantitative, and even some qualitative approaches. Such interviews take little consideration of how the researcher affects the deeper identity dynamics in the interaction episode, through their acts, physical presence, appearance or accent for example. Also, such interviews take little consideration of what effect the interview in itself may have had, via for example, whom else the interviewee thinks is going to be interviewed, the interviews setting, timing, themes or even the order the themes are discussed.

Realisation of these many threats prior to the outset of the interviews lead the researcher to actively build in approaches and methods to try and avoid evoking undesired identities within the interviews as much as possible. For example, steps were taken in an effort to avoid establishing what may be typically seen as more traditional identities evoked by many in organisational interviews (such as managers, subordinates), in an effort to allow multiple voices to be present for the reasons outlined elsewhere in this chapter. In addition it was always possible that there were competing constructions of identity that needed to be allowed to voice themselves.

but which were discourses clearly not part of the organisational culture itself (and may even be perceived as a negative discourse in relation to the organisation, but positive with the outside social world). As an example, careful wording was used to avoid setting the interviewee within the frame of a manager whom has subordinates, or subordinates whom have managers, but rather the issues were termed such as senior or junior members, whom may have to be dependent on others both internally and externally to the organisation for their own results, reputation, career enhancement etc. This allowed space for the possible emergence and voicing of an alternative perspective of how “dependence” was maintained and nurtured and controlled for example.

However, an interview is not a natural social occurrence, therefore it was unlikely that all forms of identity fixating as eluded to above, resulting purely from the interview as a process, could be controlled or indeed avoided. Thus, apart from the steps taken by the researcher to limit such potentially biasing effects, there was an enhanced need for reflexive consideration of the identity dynamics throughout all interactive episodes conducted for this project (Alvesson & Deetz 2000).

Focused reflection on the expression of the researcher and interviewees identities were made before, during and after any interaction as part of the data collection phases. Particular attention was paid to the way the researcher may of contributed to a particular identity in the interaction, via the questions used (words and/or phrases used, metaphors), or the responses made by the researcher to answers from the interviewee (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). Of course this could not be rationalised completely, nor could the interviews be conducted in some mechanistic manner, or the interviews and interactions would probably not have been maintained for very long. Active attempts were made by the researcher to reflect as much as possible throughout the process on these aspects and the possible effects that may have occurred as an unwanted aspect of the process. Physical or mental notes were made of these reflections as they occurred wherever possible, and due consideration was taken of these when the main interviews were later transcribed and the identity tracking was undertaken.

There are 3 reasons for considering first-person reports such as interviews as legitimate sources of background material for this thesis (Amabile 1983b: 6):

1. main focus of research is not directed at introspections about thinking processes but on a report of the social factors that impinge on creative employees and the apparent or less apparent stimulation or inhibition on their work and the potential impact on the corporate brand.
2. the sources are only used to create themes about social factors, and not as tests of hypotheses.
3. although some interviewee reports may be idiosyncratic, if certain factors are repeatedly cited as important by creative employees, it is likely that a real phenomenon is being identified.

4.7.4 Specific approaches built into the interview phases

The exploratory interviews were started by outlining the broad interest of the project, followed by asking the informant what questions they thought should be asked (Bryman 1988).

Backing this up, wherever needed, the researcher used a topic list (as an aide memoir – see Appendix 5) rather than structured or semi structured questions in an effort to ensure it was the members' own identity positions, frames, and terms of reference that were given space to feed through, rather than set questions, where the interviewer's identity or frames and terms were forced or encouraged onto the interviewee (Bryman 1988). General guidelines included questions such as "tell me what you think about", and "based on your own experience here" as an aid to get respondents to answer in terms of what was important for them rather than that of the interviewer.

Answers to these topics and questions were then compared and concepts that evolved then formed the basis for further data gathering in later phases of the data collection

as already outlined, but in a manner that was designed to leave room for other answers and concepts to emerge (Strauss & Corbin 1998).

Approaching the field without prior knowledge of the literature or the industries being studied may be seen by some methodological approaches as rather naïve. However it is to some extent that naivety that an inductive approach seeks. From a practitioners point of view this approach can also be seen to provide benefits, as one senior interviewee stated during an interview collected for this thesis:

“ no I think it is quite interesting that you approach your research from a what you might call a naive standpoint about the business because you don't come with any baggage about how you think it might be being done, becoming and say well I haven't a clue so that's actually quite good because the conclusion that you will draw will be very valuable” (Architect director – A).

4.7.5 Observations and opportunistic aspects

Using a reflexive approach, it was apparent that there was also a need to be opportunistic, rather than simply relying on the pre-planned aspects of the research in the field, thus making the most of extra empirical material collection possibilities, in an emergent manner and as such opportunities may arise. In particular during the second phase, access was sought and gained for observation in between interviews whilst being in the offices and workplaces. These aspects were included to allow for the observation of the dynamics in the process in real time rather than purely relying on static accounts from the interviews (Bryman 1988). In addition, the observations brought up leads worth following up, such as additional interviews, and, perhaps more importantly, helped to give the researcher a feel for the situation, organisational climate and context. This is similar to the ‘evolved’ approach used by Bresnen (1985), although to a much smaller scale.

Observation was also used in each of the first two data collection phases wherever possible, as a compliment to the interviews also conducted during that period, to help

add alternative perspectives and to help any interpretations to emerge in a reflexive manner. This allowed the researcher to note extra information as relevant to the study. For example observations and notes were taken relating to the way that employees often talked to each other about both their own organisation and their clients and ongoing projects. Other observations included the way that employees spoke with clients on the phone during calls to and from the office. Strauss (1987) has termed this type of research activity as ‘hanging around and listening in’ (Anderson-Gough, Grey & Robson 2000: 1154).

4.7.6 Transcription

Some authors, especially within grounded theory, have recommended that interviews are not recorded to ensure the interviewee feels more relaxed, potentially leading to increased candidacy (Glaser & Strauss 1967). However relying on the making of records during the interviews may also create an unnecessary and dangerous distraction to the matter at hand. In addition some researchers advocate transcripts being prepared by a professional typist using a transcribing tape recorder, due to concerns to investigators whom undertake self transcribing possibly inviting frustration and an early familiarity with the data that does not serve the later process of analysis (McCracken 1988). However, getting others such as secretaries or research assistants to transcribe when not involved with the collection of the original interviews may lead to doubts regarding the accuracy of such material for later analysis. Patton (2002) has cited an example of transcribers at one university who estimated that 20 per cent of the tapes given to them “were so badly recorded as to be impossible to transcribe accurately – or at all” (Patton 2002: 380). Third party transcription of this kind has often lead to three problems as outlined below by Buchanan et al (Buchanan, Boddy & McCalman 1985):

1. Someone unrelated directly to the research is involved, and the recordings may be seen as boring, leading to possible opportunities for error due to loss of concentration.

2. If the sound quality is poor (perhaps due to background noise not immediately obvious at the interview site), it may be difficult to transcribe correctly, and transcribers may not realise they have in fact introduced an error.

3. When transcribing, it is best if the language used (acronyms and jargon such as used in business and academia) are fully understood.

In an attempt to limit possible misunderstandings, errors of fact, omissions or interpretation as outlined above, the full verbatim transcription was undertaken by the author of this thesis with no third party assistance.

The transcription process consumed approximately 8 working weeks to create in full with approximately 210,000 words generated in total from across the three case studies, plus additional content generated by the reflective diaries and client key theme transcriptions. These were detailed transcriptions complete with word repeats, mistakes, gaps of silence, interviewer/interviewee overlaps, and other aspects for the transcription, rather than sanitised, shortened, hurried or third party transcribed versions as sometimes condoned or used by other research methods. Thus transcriptions were not tidied up in any way during the transcription, nor were they transcribed away from their context by someone not actually present and asking questions at the interview. Although extremely time consuming to conduct the transcriptions personally and in such a detailed manner, it is argued that the data can thus be presented for analysis based on as accurate an original transcription as humanly possible, as is required for the appropriate later use of analysis of that material based on inductively generated concept creation as shortly discussed.

The full transcription process was not treated as mere technical detail that simply had to be meticulously conducted prior to the analysis phase beginning, but was understood as part of the overall analysis process itself. For example the process leading to the production of the transcripts meant that close and repeated listening to the data was already being undertaken, and interpretation of the material had already

begun, and the researchers awareness of the interview texts was greatly enhanced as a result even before any coding or node creation was subsequently started.

4.7.7 Computerised Qualitative Data Analysis Programs (QDA's)

Once transcribed the interview transcripts were transferred into computer software for text storage and as an aid to (not replacement for) the analysis of the data as discussed more fully later in this thesis.

The use of Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA's) programs are helpful whenever data is important, and if correctly used help to make the research easier and better. QDA's generally allow the researcher to quickly retrieve data which has been coded. According to Miller & Dingwall (1997), QDA's allow the researchers to apply types of analysis (even quantitative), which before their introduction, were not possible with text, conversational and interview data.

The use of a QDA is no substitute for good methodology or the development of good theoretical insight, "its contribution is not to think, but to keep data and their contexts close at hand as we think" (Miller & Dingwall 1997: 96). Computer aided analysis software is no substitute for hard thinking about the meaning of the data (Silverman 2000).

It was important when selecting the QDA to use for this thesis, to approach it strategically, matching the needs and type of data-management with the strengths of the available programs. These needs and type issues will come from the research questions, and the logical identification of the type of data sought to help with the development of ideas (Durkin 1997; Miller & Dingwall 1997).

Careful consideration was given for the selection of the specific software to be used after looking at the strengths and weaknesses for all the major programs as well as some less well known software available on the market at the time prior to the analysis. Atlas-ti and NVivo for example were both identified as programs more

attuned to content data coding purposes and NVivo was eventually selected. Another QDA program was also selected and used alongside NVivo, namely a less well known package called C-I-Said. C-I-Said does not primarily fall into the same category of program as Atlas-ti or NVivo. C-I-Said originated from a need for a program within the psychological and therapeutic fields, where it is used as an aid to working closer with transcribed data whilst also attempting as much as possible *not* to move away from the transcribed data's original source (the actual interview episode via the recording). The program actively tries to avoid the stripping associated with other programs by linking tightly throughout with the original recorded interview and sound file – paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence if/as needed.¹ This allows the researcher to remain close to the original data in the form of linked sound files and sub-segments of transcribed text, thus further helping with overall reflexivity and context. Discourse analysis, coding and thematic network analysis, as described later in this chapter, were then used as the main methodological aids in the analysis of the collected and transcribed data.

4.7.8 Coding and thematic discourse analysis

The interpretative nature of discourse analysis means that the researcher does not seek to exhaust categories as may occur within theoretical saturation such as for example with grounded theory, but is a way to initially generate categories through the way individuals use language. Thus the end point does not come through a saturation point, but because it is judged that there is sufficient data for the making and justification of an interesting argument as presented later in this thesis (Wood & Kroger 2000; Phillips & Hardy 2002). The overall aim of using discourse analysis is

¹ Underlying the development of C-I-SAID is the recognition that the investigator who studies complex data based upon interviews or dialogues is, as the investigation progresses, often increasingly divorced from their source data. The source data is likely to be video or sound but they may find themselves only studying one component, often a transcription, without reference to the speech from which the document was made. They may find themselves moving away, even from the transcription, if they resort to numerical analysis in order to capture complex underlying patterns. Statistical packages separate the source data from the coded data which they analyse and thus the link between the results and the original data often feels tenuous. C-I-SAID has been designed to provide methods which allow the investigator to use the tools of both qualitative and if required quantitative analysis, whilst retaining the links to the source data. (Source: <http://www.code-a-text.co.uk>, 2001).

to identify ‘some of’ the multiple meanings which may be assigned to texts. Thus more systematic labour saving forms of analysis are counter productive for discourse analysis, as these lead to a rapid consolidation of categories, such as content analysis using statistical word counts.

Taking the discussion above into consideration, in the first stage of the analysis, the data produced from transcription was broadly coded both factually and heuristically. Heuristic codes were used to reflect the author’s own theoretical concepts relating to various segments, and factual content was also included to highlight specific aspects relating to that piece of text (Silverman 2000). Initially, the transcribed material for this thesis was read through manually to identify and gain an understanding of the general thematic structure. The manually identified themes from this stage were transferred across to white boards to help gain an overall view of the data. Following this, and using the capabilities within the software previously mentioned, the transcribed interviews were coded to produce inductively generated concepts leading eventually to key themes. An overview of the coding process is indicated in Figure 4.3 below. This process is discussed in more detail with examples within Chapter 5.

Figure 4.3 Coding process during inductive analysis

Initial read through text data	Identify specific segments of information	Label the segments of information to create categories	Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories	Create a model incorporating most important categories
Many pages of text	Many segments of text	30-40 categories	15-20 categories	3-8 categories

Source: Thomas (2003: 6) as originally adapted from Creswell (2002)

Hence codes for this thesis as presented within Chapter 5 were created “up” from the data early in the coding process, as ideas emerged from the data, rather than “down” from prior ideas, project designs or theories (QSR 2001: 58, 59).

The next stage was the use of thematic network analysis. Thematic analysis can be categorised into ‘form-oriented’ analysis involving routine word counts and ‘meaning-oriented’ analysis focusing on underlying themes in the texts (Smith & Taffler 2000: 627). This thesis has adopted the meaning orientation.

To help systematise the extraction of the themes from the material, a thematic network approach was introduced working at the following three levels (Attride-Stirling 2001) :

1. lowest-order premises evident in the text (categories or sub themes)
2. categories of basic themes grouped together to summarise more abstract principles (organizing themes)
3. super-ordinate themes encapsulating the principal metaphors in the text as a whole (global themes)

These steps taken above are further outlined with reference to Figure 4.4 below, starting with the transcription of the texts through to the comparative analysis of the themes identified.

Figure 4.4 Coding process: from interview transcripts to thematically structured and ordered text segments

Step	
1	Transcription of texts
2	Interpretation of each text = single case analysis
3	Interpretive comparison of single cases = comparative single case analysis
4	Development of codes, i.e. a system of thematic categories
5	Allocation of codes to text segments
6	Compilation and interpretation of all text segments with the same code (analysis of themes)
7	Analysis of relationships between codes (comparative analysis of themes)

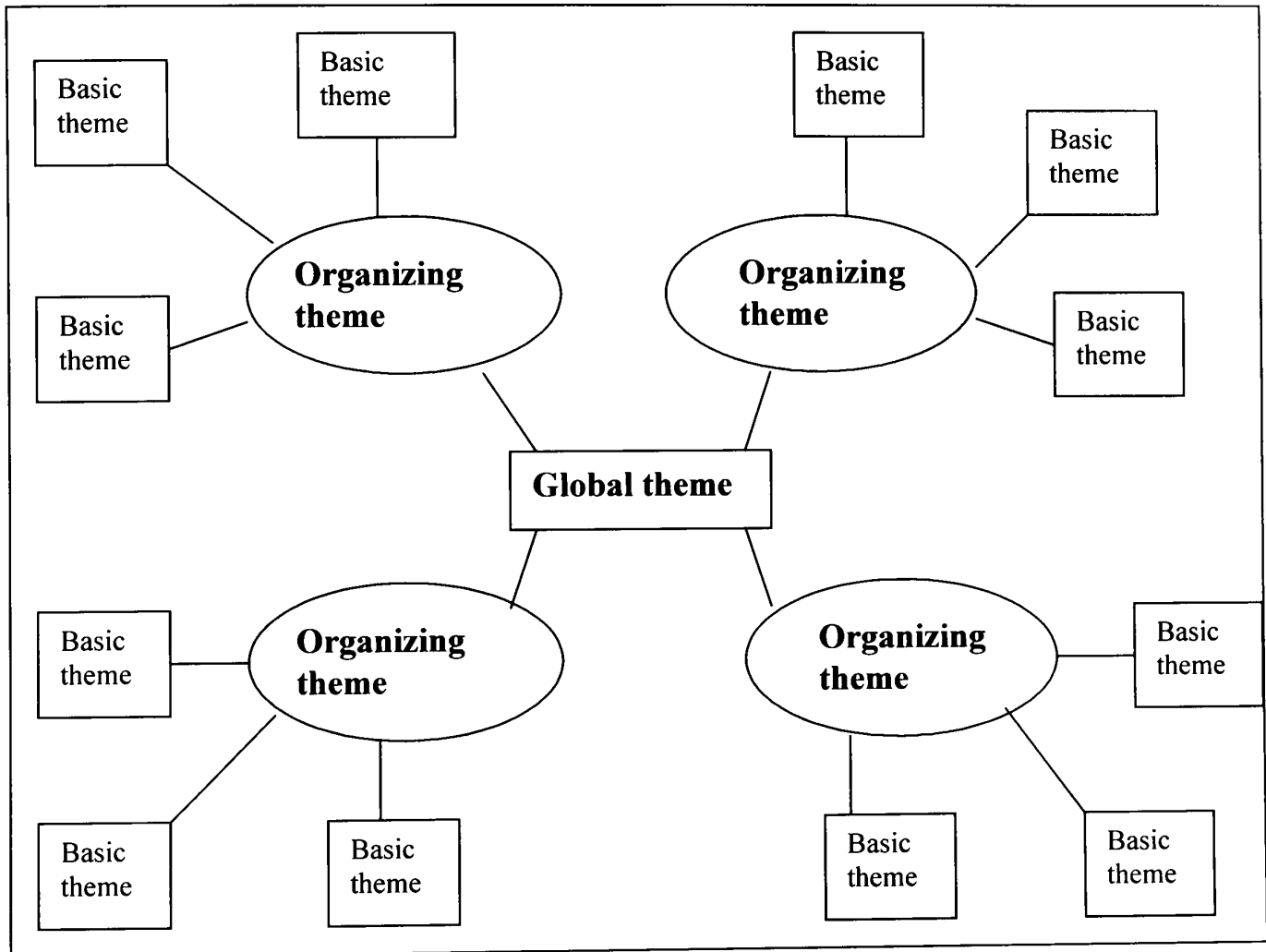
Source: Kuckartz (1995: 160)

The process ultimately led to the initial creation of 262 codes from within the corpus of the material that had been collected as presented within Appendix 6. The more significantly occurring of those codes, i.e. those that appeared as a common code in a minimum of four or more individual interviews, were selected for further analysis and discussion. This selection process led to 58 codes being selected for further consideration out of the original 262 identified. The 58 codes were then structured into thematic network maps within Chapter 5 by basic themes and organising themes in a manner similar to Figure 4.5 below. Basic themes were those derived from the data as the most lower-order or backing statements which on their own say little about the text on the whole, but when read within the context of other basic themes represent an organising theme. Thus an organising theme is a middle-order or higher order theme that collects and organises basic themes into groups or clusters of similar issues for presentation as more main ideas. By taking these organising themes together a global theme can be constituted, which ultimately encompasses the principal metaphors found in and supported by the corpus of the collected data. Thus a thematic network is created by using the basic themes as the starting point and working inwards toward a global theme through organising themes (Attride-Stirling

2001). An overview of the general thematic discourse analysis process that has been applied is further outlined by Figure 4.6.

Chapter 5 (analysis and synthesis of data) will further outline in some detail the rigorous analytical technique used for the coding and creation of the themes including examples of the process in action, before moving on to present the findings.

Figure 4.5 Structure of a thematic network



Source: Attride-Stirling (2001: 388).

Figure 4.6 Steps in analyses employing thematic networks

Analysis stage A : Reduction or breakdown of text

Step 1. Code material

- (a) Devise a coding framework (inductively or deductively)**
- (b) Dissect text into text segments using the coding framework**
- (c) Conduct inter reliability coding checks through independent judges**

Step 2. Identify themes

- (a) Abstract themes from coded text segments**
- (b) Refine themes**

Step 3. Construct thematic networks

- (a) Arrange themes**
- (b) Select basic themes**
- (c) Rearrange into organizing themes**
- (d) Deduce global theme(s)**
- (e) Illustrate as thematic network(s)**
- (f) Verify and refine networks(s)**

Analysis stage B: Exploration of text

Step 4. Describe and explore thematic networks

- (a) Describe the network**
- (b) Explore the network**

Step 5. Summarize thematic network

Analysis stage C: Integration of exploration

Step 6. Interpret patterns

Source : Adapted from Attride-Stirling (2001: 391)

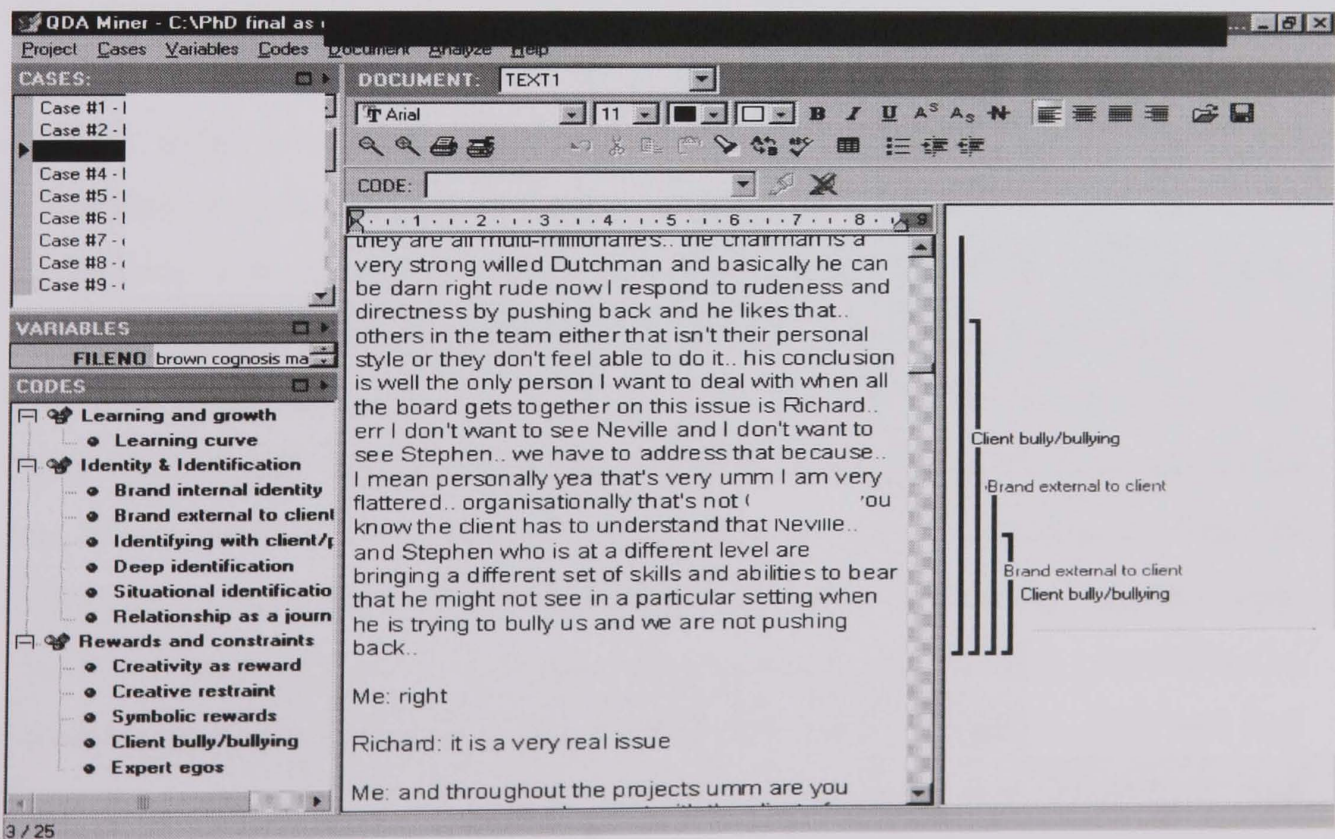
4.7.9 Coding reliability checks

As already highlighted, this research is interpretive in approach and therefore credibility is preferred over any measure of reliability. However it was felt to be prudent to ask a minimum of two qualified research academics to check and judge the relevance of the selected codes as discussed in this thesis, upon which the interpretations have been based. Both coders are experienced academic researchers at Doctoral or post Doctoral levels, from within the fields of marketing or anthropology. Both were versed with qualitative methods in their own previous research. Each were separately given the descriptions of the sub categories (sub themes) as discussed elsewhere in this thesis for checking within the data. Each judge worked independently and at different times from the other but using the same data and software, with no discussion or contact between the two at any time. Discussions were held with each coder regarding the descriptions to check for understanding. In addition, a trial run was made using one interview by each of the coders to allow them to get used to the software described below. As NVivo (version 2) does not allow for inter-reliability checks to be conducted from within the programme, an alternative was introduced at this stage, namely 'QDA Miner' from Provalis Software (Provalis 2004). Within the programme, the inter-coders agreement tool was used to compare the consistency of coding between the two coders based on each coding the same 20% sample of transcribed interviews from across the case studies.

The simplest measure of agreement often used is the proportion of concordant codings and locations within the data out of the total number of codings made between the two judges. Because of its simplicity, this is an approach often used in qualitative research to check for inter-coder reliability. In other words, if the coders agree 80% of the time then the result is a coding accordance of 80%. Unfortunately, it has also been highlighted that this commonly used measure often yields spuriously high values because it does not take into account chance agreements that occur from guessing by judges (cf Krippendorff 2004). Several adjustment techniques have been proposed in the literature to correct for the chance factor. One of these, namely 'free

marginal adjustment' was therefore selected and used for this thesis. This adjustment assumes that all categories on a given scale have equal probability of being observed and therefore takes this into account when producing the final percentage of agreement between the coders (Provalis 2004). Within qualitative research, coding agreement levels of 90% or greater is seen as being very sound. However, with exploratory research as is the nature of this thesis, where the codes were inductively generated along with their descriptions, and not taken from pre-existing literature or hypothesis, a lower figure of greater than 70% is normally acceptable. In addition, in relation to the free marginal figure, a figure of greater than 0.7 is seen as significant for such research. The inter-reliability reliability rating outcomes for this thesis, following the above procedure (see Appendix 4), led to agreement of 86.4% using a simple percentage rating, and 0.73 using the adjusted free marginal calculation. Both of these figures are greater than the minimums required as stated, and the codes as presented to the judges and inductively created within this thesis are therefore deemed to be reliable. Figure 4.7 illustrates the software during one of the coding checks.

Figure 4.7 Screen illustration of QDA Miner during coder inter reliability checks



4.8 Ethical considerations

Each of the three case study organisations were made aware from outset of the broad topic and nature of this research. As this thesis investigates live business-to-business relationships, and for further reasons of commercial sensitivity, each of the three case study organisations have requested to be reported anonymously within the body of this thesis.

Each individual had volunteered to sit the interview and to allow the interview to be recorded and transcribed for research purposes. In addition each individual was assured that generic names would be used so that no one individual or their comments could be easily identified.

Observations made in between interviews were within the normal open confines of the organisations office environment and were not undertaken during commercially sensitive times or within restricted areas.

4.9 Research limitations

The inductive approach outlined within this chapter has meant that much of the researchers experience was built up as the methodology and analysis actually evolved, rather than approaching the data and study as an ‘a priori’ expert in the techniques to be used. This has meant that a major learning process had to be undertaken with many false starts and blind alleys before the methodological approach was eventually selected and used correctly. In addition, for a large part of this research project, ambiguity had to be faced over the exact direction and likely outcome as is often typical in the nature of such qualitative work. Thus, due to the non expert status of the researcher at the outset of this project, and the inherent ambiguity, a significant portion of time was taken as various courses were undertaken and qualitative techniques were explored, as potential possibilities to underpin the thesis during the early years of this project. Whilst a great deal was learned about various methodological techniques and their advantages and limitations, as well as the researchers own limitations, there is little doubt that the

time could have been more efficiently used, had the researcher been appropriately experienced from outset.

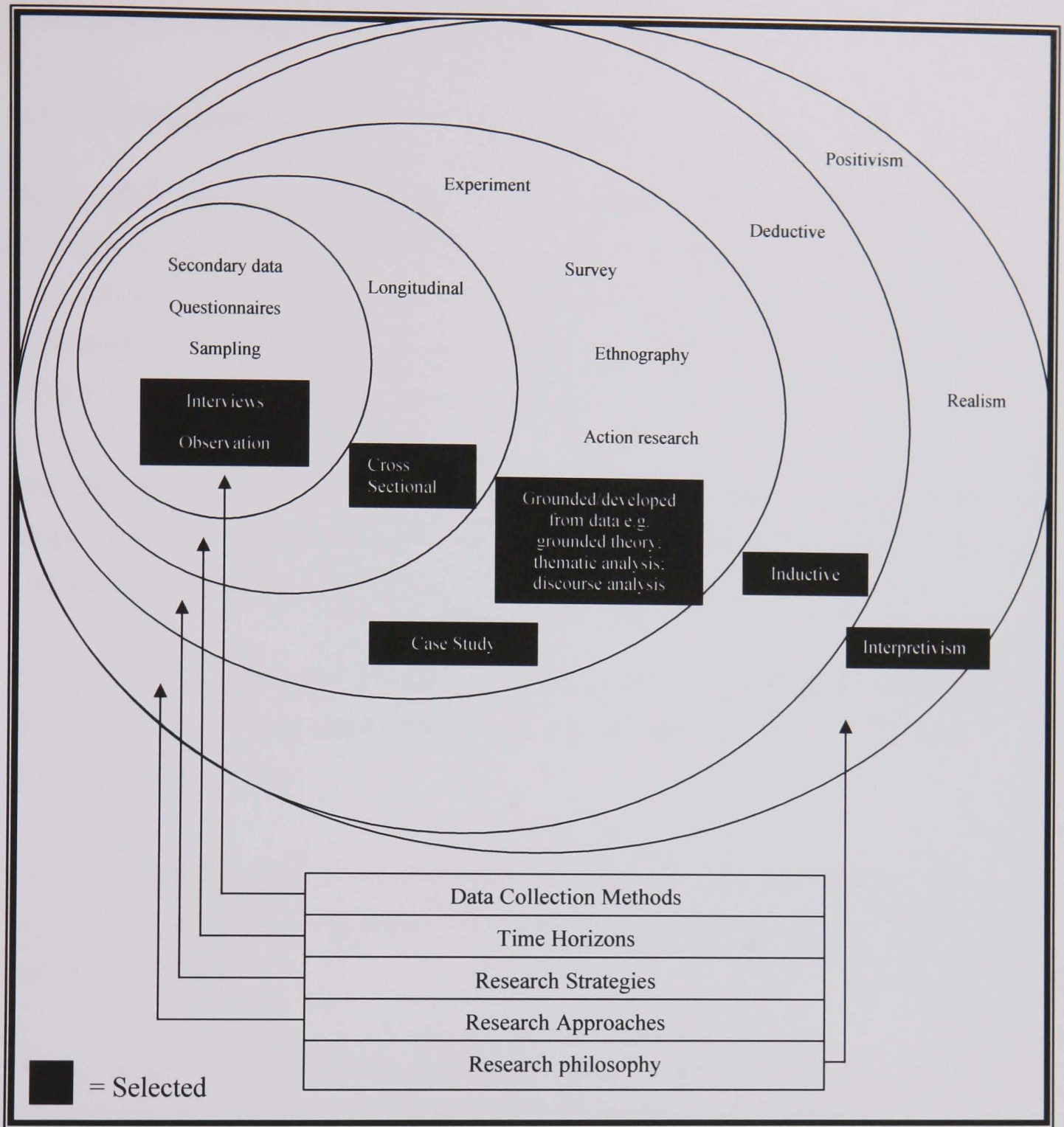
This research is based on three case study organisations located in London. As seen later within Chapter 6, this research could therefore be extended out to a wider selection of creative organisations than has been included here. In addition, as the research was wholly located within the United Kingdom, research which is more internationally focused would help to uncover any similarities and differences in the findings due to cultural differences than this study has been able to address.

Due to problems with gaining appropriate access to live and ongoing client relationships, as well as the normal time limitations set for the completion of a thesis, the research presented here is limited in the actual number of clients selected and included for discussion. The client perspective of the relationship is therefore limited. Future research could extend out to more clients if suitable access was allowed and more time available, to enrich this aspect of the research.

4.10 Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter was to outline and justify the methodological approach selected and used for this thesis project. This chapter began with an overview of the thesis research activity followed by a presentation of the line of argument and reasoning upon which this research project was set, and thus the specific research perspective that was taken. This included a consideration of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings for the thesis, as well as a justification and clarification of the method/s selected for the collection and analysis of the project material. Following this, specific issues and activities which formed part of the overall process were discussed. The overall research path as presented within this chapter has been summarised within Figure 4.8 below. The next Chapter will present the inductive and empirically based research as collected and analysed according to the above methodology.

Figure 4.8 Summary of selected research path for thesis



Source : adapted from Saunders et al (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2003: 83).

Chapter 5 : Analysis and synthesis of data

5.1 Introduction, chapter structure and objectives

This chapter will present the inductive and empirically based research findings, grounded in collected evidence from three case studies plus a number of their clients. The analysis of creativity and corporate branding in this context offers scope for rich qualitative data to develop research and questions that differ from those addressed in most of the traditional literature (Kazanjian, Drazin & Glynn 2000).

The use of a qualitative and inductive approach to the data as contained in this chapter has been discussed and justified within Chapter 4, but to summarise, it is seen as relevant here because (Kazanjian, Drazin & Glynn 2000) :

- a) the research is interested in looking at the individuals engagement in creativity, therefore it is important to understand the process phenomenologically and from the respondents' perspective
- b) an in depth qualitative methodology is more effective than surveys for investigating sensitive or less transparent/intangible phenomenon's such as creativity and corporate branding
- c) the research is concerned with key theme identification and theory enhancement/development than testing existing theory through hypothesis

Four main themes emerged from the data based upon a larger number of sub themes and these findings are discussed at length later in this chapter.

To protect their identity as already discussed within Chapter 4 (section 4.8), the company names have been suppressed and replaced with generic terms of either Branding, Architects or Designers (indicated within brackets). In addition, the

relevant level of the individual has been presented, but no personal identification has been included.

Throughout this chapter, the term ‘creatives’ can be determined to mean owners or employees who work within a creativity based organisation, and whom are directly responsible in some way for producing creative processes and/or outcomes. The rest of this chapter is divided into several sections as follows :

5.2 The process of data analysis

5.2.1 Macro level analysis

5.2.2 Micro level analysis

5.2.3 Analytical technique for synthesis of data

5.2.4 Analytical example

5.3 Thematic analysis

5.3.1 Themes

5.3.1.1 Identification

5.3.1.2 Development

5.3.1.3 Internal rewards

5.3.1.4 Brand evolution

5.4 Client findings

5.5 Chapter summary

5.2 The process of data analysis

This section and subsections focus upon the analytical process and techniques used to inductively generate categories from the data. Representative examples of this process using some of the inductively created categories are also presented.

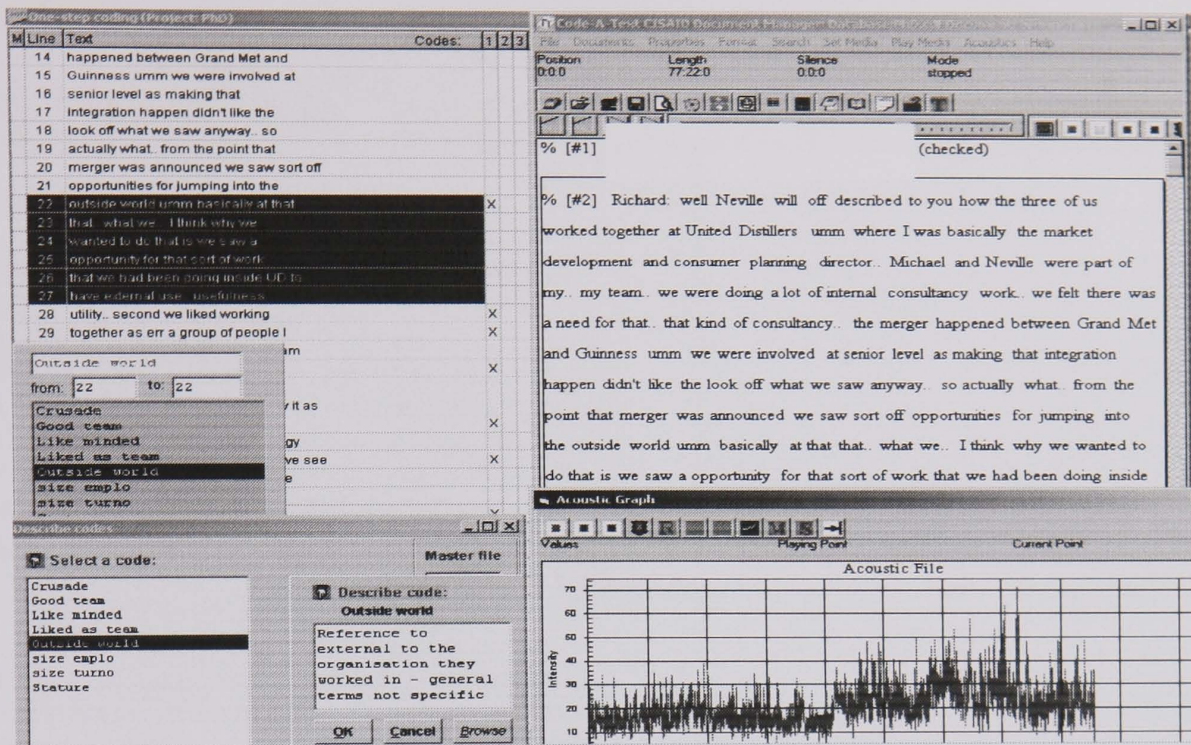
5.2.1 Macro level analysis

After verbatim transcription as discussed within Chapter 4 (subsection 4.7.6.), the material was systematically read and reoccurring themes were gathered and noted on large white boards. This allowed an initial insight into the data to be taken from a macro perspective.

After this initial orientation stage, the transcripts were imported into CI-Said, as also discussed within Chapter 4 (subsection 4.7.7). Here the interview transcripts were manually hyperlinked to each discourse segment within the original interview audio file. Access was therefore provided to both the text of the transcript and the audio excerpt of the discussion for each particular segment. This helped to facilitate continual closeness to the context of the original data (recorded interview).

Once each transcript had been hyperlinked to the original sound file, the transcripts were reread, with further aspects of interest drawn out of the material to help with the topic guides for later interviews. Figure 5.1 provides an illustrative screen shot of CI-Said during the initial analysis of an earlier thesis interview.

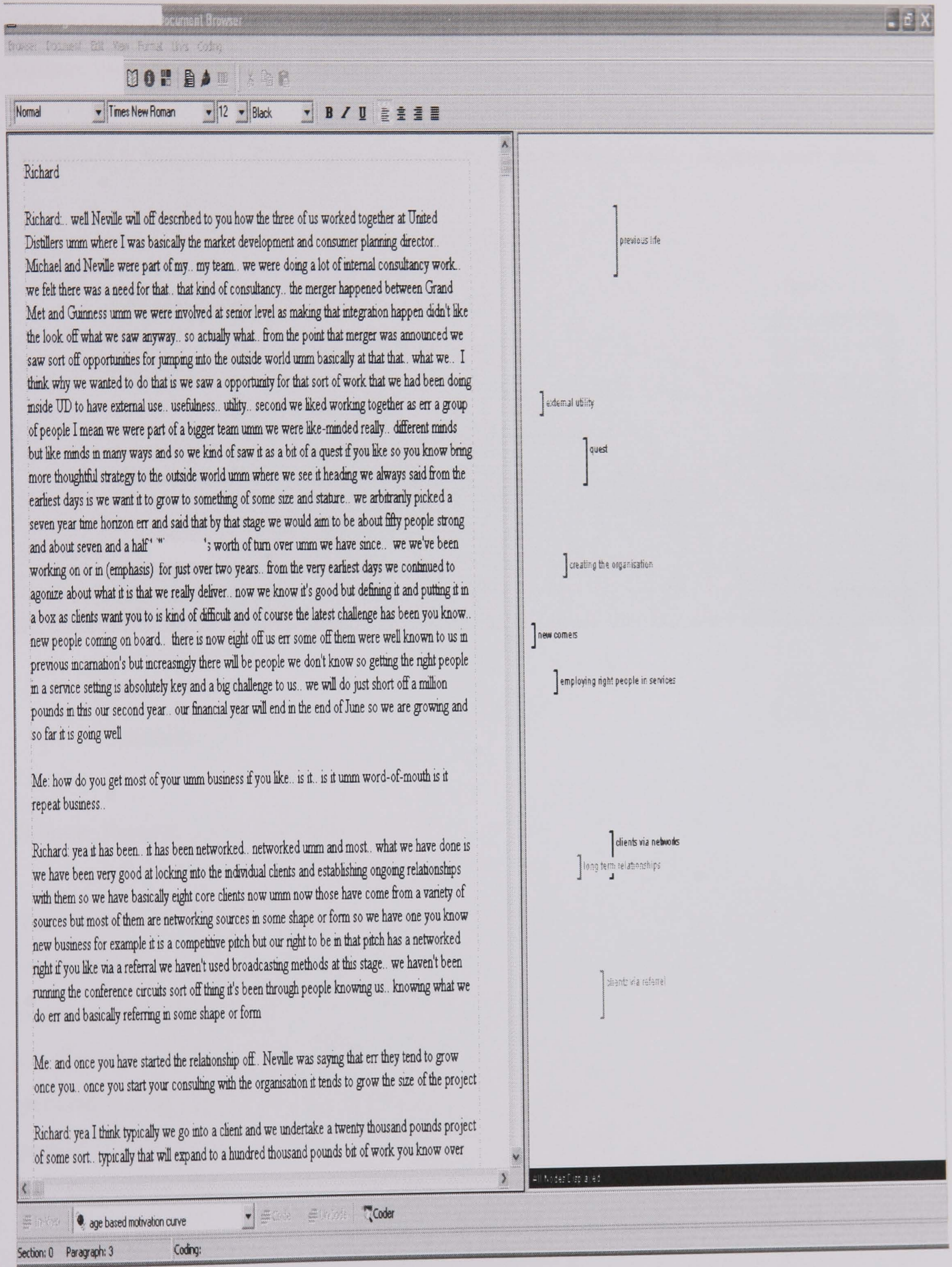
Figure 5.1 CI-Said software used for administration of early interview analysis



5.2.2 Micro level analysis

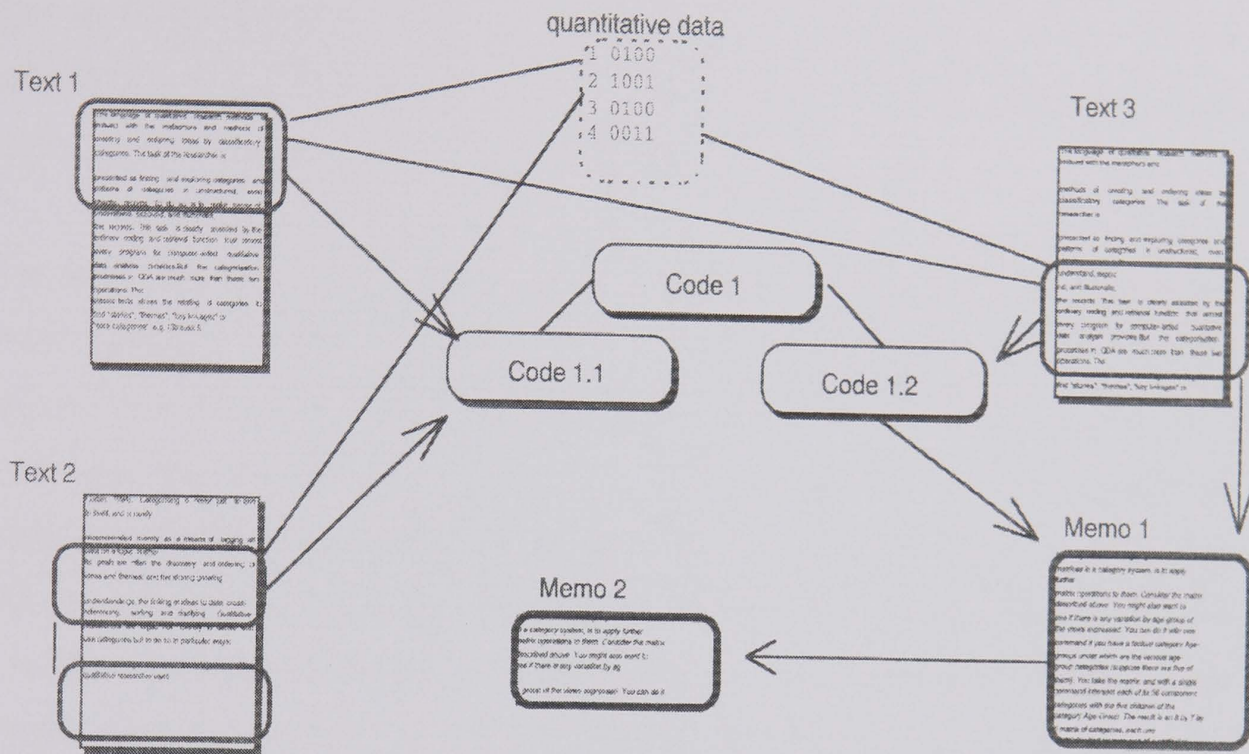
After the macro level analysis had been completed and further interviews conducted and transcribed, all transcripts were imported into the software package known as QSR NVivo. This software offered more advanced administration aids for analysis than CI-Said, such as detailed coding and node creation tools (nodes are locations on the computer for storing the category and any links to material coded as relating to that category). This allowed for detailed exploration of the themes identified earlier via the white boards and CI-Said, alongside the uncovering of additional ideas and themes. In this way, all of the interview transcripts were consequently ‘micro analysed’ (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 57) by scrutinising them line by line, while inductively developing and applying analytical level codes and associated theoretical memos to represent identified categories, patterns and themes along the way (Richards 2005). An example excerpt from one of the interviews showing the initial analytical coding as applied alongside the transcript, has been provided in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2 Excerpt of a coded thesis transcript within QSR NVivo



These codes and their associated notes are similar to 'open codes' and 'theoretical memos' found within grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin 1998). Figure 5.3 visually outlines this general coding process.

Figure 5.3 Network of linkages between text segments, codes, memos and data



Source: Prein & Kelle (1995:65).

The coded categories (and their associated memos) were saved within NVivo at various nodes. These nodes were later re-ordered, merged and edited in a number of ways to help visualise and locate the analytical themes and concepts within the data as discussed shortly. By the end of the initial coding process, 262 inductively generated and coded categories had been created from the corpus of text over a period of several months. These have been outlined within Appendix 6, ranked by the number of times identified within the data, and spread across the number of interviews. Some of these appeared as little as once within only one interview. However, as discussed below, other coded categories were far more common and frequent, indicating a possible link to noteworthy phenomena existing within the data.

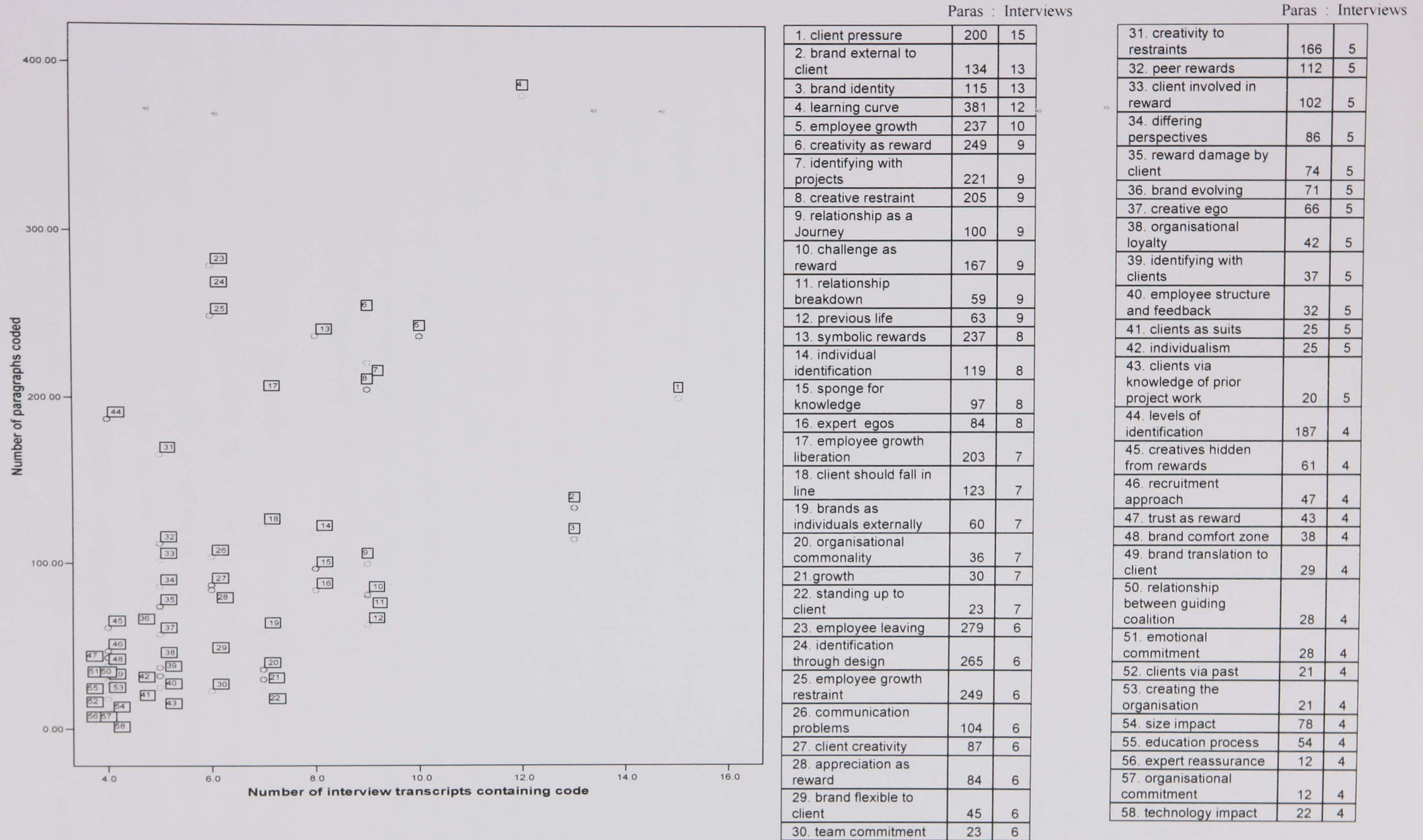
5.2.3 Analytical technique for synthesis of data

At the end of the micro level analysis outlined above, NVivo's search facility was used to undertake content analysis of the data to investigate how frequently the codes appeared within the data. Fifty eight of the original 262 codes were found to be apparent within a minimum of 4 or more interviews. These were deemed by the analyst as frequent enough to warrant inclusion for further investigation. The 58 selected codes are indicated within Figure 5.4 below, ranked by the number of times occurring within the data and the number of interviews.

NVivo was next instructed to create individual coding reports, pulling together the relevant passages of coded textual discourse passages relating to each of these categories from across the body of original interviews. By using NVivo to administer this process, the specific coded passages of discourse for each category could be quickly identified via hyperlinks back to the original interview transcript. In addition, where needed, the researcher also used CI-Said to move to the identified segment of text to allow an instant repeat of the audio captured within the original interview for that exact segment. In this way, the researcher remained close to the original source of the data throughout all stages of the analysis in order to set the textual excerpts within their original context (original interview), despite the more remote coding steps being undertaken. This aided the reflexive aspects of the research.

Once generated, each coding report was carefully read through to identify any new meanings or interpretations for the category, aspects which were perhaps not previously evident when the coded excerpts had been dispersed.

Figure 5.4 Common codes (nodes) identified within 4 or more interview transcripts



As coding proceeded, notes were made within memos for each category (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Miles & Huberman 1984). It was important to remember that memoing in this way should allow complete creative freedom and not be overly concerned with format and style, so as to allow ideas to be initially formulated. To help with this process, analytical questions were also asked of the data such as: where was this phrase apparent in the rest of the transcripts; what was happening in that situation; what might that mean. The next stage investigated any consequences of the coded text i.e. when that particular discourse is used what effects may it have. Finally the impact on an interaction or action level was identified where apparent i.e. a consideration of what this discourse may mean for the way people interact or react (Richards 2005).

As the review of the 58 reports continued, it was also noted that many of the categories linked or had some form of relationship to other categories. In other words, they were seen by the analyst as categories that had a 'similarity' to other categories (Richards 2005). Where this was discovered, comments were made within each of the relative categories memo, and the relevant categories were clustered visually together using NVivo's modelling tool (positioning of nodes on free standing or interconnected visual maps). Here the clusters of categories around organising themes or phenomena (constructs) meant "looking for repeated patterns of happenings, events, or actions/interactions that represent what people do or say, alone or together, in response to the problems and situations in which they find themselves" (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 130). This process was a form of abstraction, which built upon the earlier coding categorisation, but moves beyond the identification of patterns in the data by collapsing the empirically generated categories into higher-order conceptual constructs (Spiggle 1994).

This process continued using the software's inbuilt modelling facility to help visualise the process at each stage, while still allowing the researcher to link through to the original discourse underpinning the grouping and construct development when necessary. This approach is similar to that of 'axial coding' within grounded theory, where categories are related to other categories creating higher order categories along the lines of their properties and dimensions. As seen shortly, although the discourse

and text provided clues about how the categories related, it is important to note that the linkages and sorting leading to the creation of higher order constructs occurred not at a descriptive level but at the conceptual level, and were made by the researcher and not the software (Richards 2005). Hence the aim of coding in this manner was to

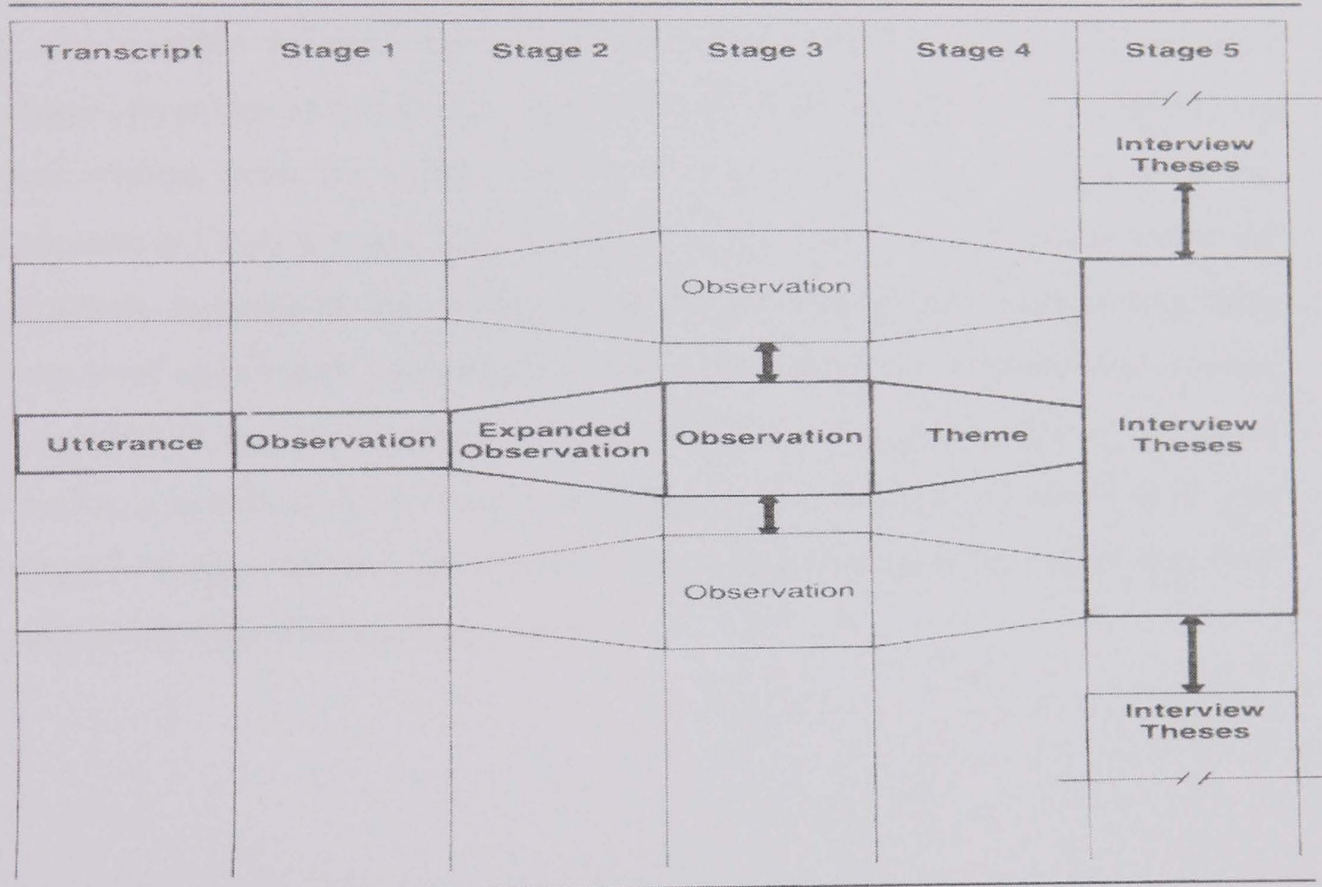
“look for answers to questions such as why or how come, where, when, how, and with what results, and in so doing uncover relationships among categories. Answering these questions helps us to contextualize a phenomenon, that is, to locate it within a conditional structure and identify the ‘how’ or the means through which a category is manifested” (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 127).

The general stages to the analysis are outlined below within Figure 5.5. as presented by McCracken (1988: 42) :

- Within stage 1, after transcription, the individual utterances were judged (coded) with little concern for their relationship to other aspects of the text. During this stage the researcher is mainly interested in the “intensive relations of the utterances and the meanings contained within its range of implications.. no attention should be paid to the utterance’s ‘extensive’ relations” (McCracken 1988: 44). This is similar to an archaeologist, sorting material of importance from that less important without concern for how that material will be assembled later.
- Within stage 2, the observations created within stage 1 are developed and expanded within themselves, according to the evidence within the transcript, and then according to the previous literature which may be read and introduced at this point for comparison.
- Stage 3 examines the interconnections created within stage 2, with the focus shifting away from the transcripts towards the observations of the transcripts themselves.

- Stage 4 takes the observations and expanded observations of the previous stages and subjects them in a collective form to collective scrutiny to identify themes.
- The final stage takes the themes as they appear in the interviews overall and applies a final process to outline the theory maintained in the overall argument.

Figure 5.5 General stages of analysis



Source: McCracken (1988: 43)

5.2.4 Analytical example

Against the analytical outline discussed within the previous subsections, the generation of open codes, memos, categories, sub themes and organising themes for this thesis, can now be explained, by referring to a number of examples taken from the analysis and presented below.

5.2.4.1 Inductive process

As coding progressed, segments of discourse were initially identified and coded inductively, along with the creation of their associated theoretical memos. An example of this process is given within Table 5.1 and 5.2 below. As additional segments of discourse were identified relating to the two example codes, they were also coded appropriately. Often these additional segments added richness to the existing code memos (theoretical memos) which were updated to reflect this richness, such as the addition of behavioural properties or conditional properties. Thus, by finding additional excerpts of text fitting these codes and constantly comparing the excerpts as they grew within the coding reports generated by NVivo, it was possible to see any similarities and differences. This constant cross comparison of data also helped to add conjecture to the theoretical memos which was often missing from the earlier versions of the memos. On some occasions the conjecture led to new codes being created to match newly identified phenomena not adequately captured by the existing codes. As new codes were created, or existing codes were significantly updated, the original transcripts were revisited and recoded as required. It was thus important to constantly compare the excerpts of discourse linked to a specific code category as soon as any new excerpts had been coded. This helped to reduce the amount of data for recoding each time the memo has been updated or a fresh code and memo created.

Table 5.1 Example of open coding and category theoretical memo

Source of data : Early interview with design supervisor (Design agency)

When I first started here... looking at other companies' work and thinking ah you know actually they are pushing it on... and so you are always going to develop and grow... and like I said I think it is about a sense of thinking you are always progressing or learning something new... there is no point in sort of staying somewhere where you are not getting something out of it umm which is what led me to move on both times

From this excerpt an open code was drawn and created termed employee growth.

Explanation of code: Refers to the need to develop and grow as a result of the working experience. Lack of growth opportunity often led to a search for a new organisation if not resolved.

Indicator: External challenges and learning opportunities are strong motivators for remaining in any particular creative organisational environment.

Table 5.2 Example of open coding and category theoretical memo

Source of data: Interview with junior designer – B (Design agency)

I remember saying I will work there for nothing to get a job there and I was really happy to... you know in the first year... year and a half... two years salary... they could have paid me you know... nine grand a year or whatever it wouldn't mattered... it was the skills sets that I was being given access to... Simon, Sean, Mason and Tim you know... that was worth 300 times what I was being paid obviously... it's a collection of knowledge... pure knowledge that is all you are interested in...

From this excerpt an open code was drawn and created termed sponge for knowledge.

Explanation of code: Refers to the need of employees (often junior) to soak up as much knowledge about the creative process as possible from other perceived experts around them. This is a priority over financial or other compensation during this period.

Indicator: Access to respected and experienced managers is sought for gaining knowledge which is seen as a major motivator.

In addition, as the theoretical memos were created, a constant comparison was made to other memos and where appropriate, new categories and memos were created from these memo comparisons. This approach has been termed ‘coding on’ to new categories by calling on the existing categories and their memos (Richards 2005). For example, by making a memo comparison between the two categories outlined above in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 (*employee growth* and *sponge for knowledge*), it was noted that they were similar in some ways and that a dynamic aspect of these two categories was apparent but not adequately captured by these categories individually. Therefore a new category was created based on these two subcategories, which highlighted this dynamic aspect. This new category was termed the *learning curve*. Once this had been created, linking on a conceptual level to the original categories, the beginning of a cluster of sub themes (located as nodes within software) were set relating to the organising theme which encapsulated the main aspects of these categories which was termed ‘**Development**’. After comparison of all other existing categories with the newly created organising theme, a number of additional categories were identified as also appropriate to group under the new organising theme, as presented for example within Figure 5.6 below (discussed in full within section 5.3.1.2). Where apparent, the links were noted in the respective theoretical memos as above and the nodes were also linked as part of the ‘Development’ organising theme visually initially using NVivo’s modelling capabilities. Hence, by using the same approach as presented within the subsections and examples above, four organising themes were identified, each based on a larger number of sub themes. In this way the coded categories and organising themes were reconsidered as the material built up and “this process of revising coding, and ‘coding on’ to newly discovered categories, makes coding a process of discovery rather than merely description” (Richards 2005: 98). A summary of the exact analytical steps taken with the empirical data for this thesis has been outlined within Figure 5.7 below. Table 5.3 presents seven of the sub themes to indicate the tracking approach used to ensure relevance of each of the 58 sub themes across the spread of interviews.

Figure 5.6 Example introduction from 'Development' organising theme (see 5.3.1.2)

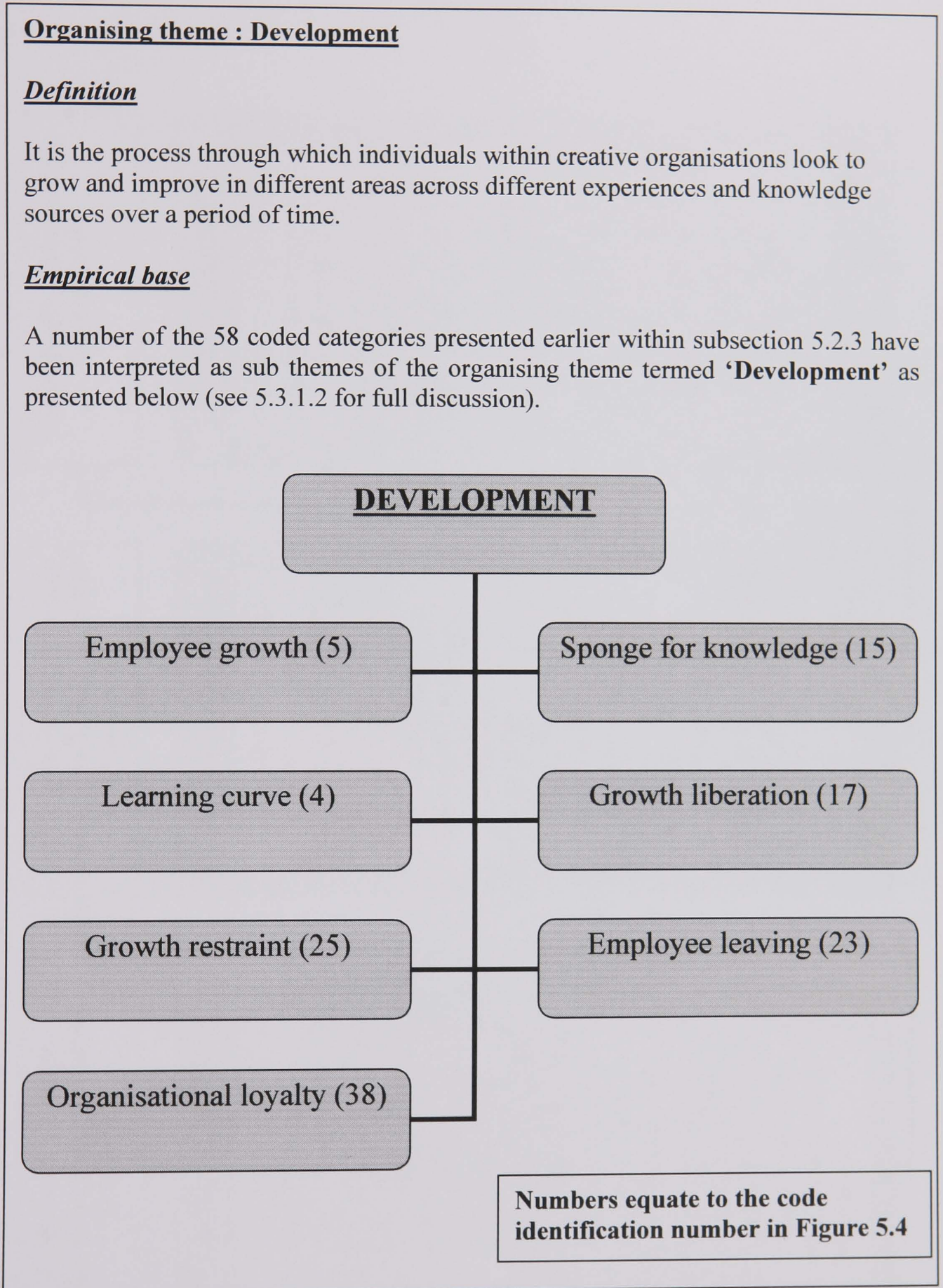


Figure 5.7 Map of inductive technique and process applied to thesis data

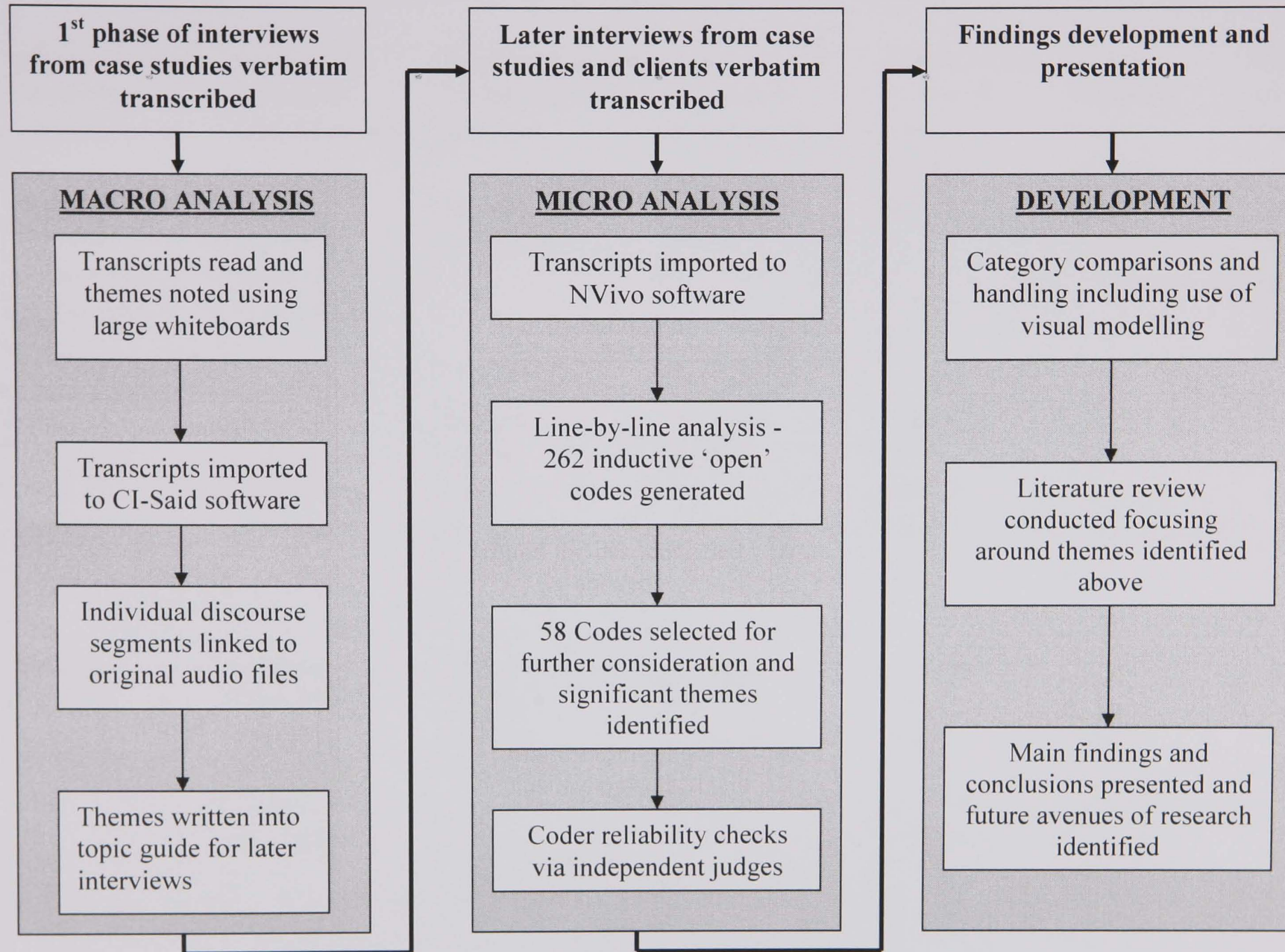


Table 5.3 Example of sub theme inclusion tracking across interviews - checking for relevance (7 examples of 58)

<u>Relationship journey</u> 100 instances across 9 interviews	<u>Learning curve</u> 381 instances across 12 interviews	<u>Creativity as reward</u> 249 instances across 9 interviews	<u>Creative restraint</u> 205 instances across 9 interviews	<u>Symbolic rewards</u> 237 instances across 8 interviews	<u>Expertise</u> 84 instances across 8 interviews	<u>Identification</u> 221 instances across 9 interviews
<u>Branders</u> Director A Sn consultant Jn consultant B <u>Designers</u> Director (x2) Supervisor Sn creative <u>Architects</u> Director A Director B	<u>Branders</u> Sn consultant Jn consultant A Jn consultant B <u>Designers</u> Supervisor Jn designer A Jn designer B <u>Architects</u> Director A (x2) Director B Comms mngr Jn architect A Jn architect B	<u>Branders</u> Jn consultant A <u>Designers</u> Director Supervisor (x2) Sn creative Jn creative <u>Architects</u> Director A Director B Jn architect B	<u>Branders</u> Director B <u>Designers</u> Supervisor Sn creative (x2) Jn designer A Jn designer B <u>Architects</u> Director A Director B Director C	<u>Branders</u> <u>Designers</u> Director Supervisor Jn creative <u>Architects</u> Director A Director B Comms mngr Jn architect A Jn architect B	<u>Branders</u> <u>Designers</u> Supervisor Sn creative (x2) <u>Architects</u> Director A Director B Director C Comms mngr Jn architect A	<u>Branders</u> Director A Director B Sn consultant Jn consultant B <u>Designers</u> Director <u>Architects</u> Director B Comms mngr Supervisor Jn architect B

5.3 Thematic analysis

This subsection will discuss in detail the four main themes identified within the collected data along with their supporting sub themes, as developed according to the process outlined within the previous subsections of this chapter.

Concept discovery and development as presented shortly was enhanced via the constant recoding and combining of sub themes under organising themes and searching the original data again in an iterative manner to build upon the previous searches.

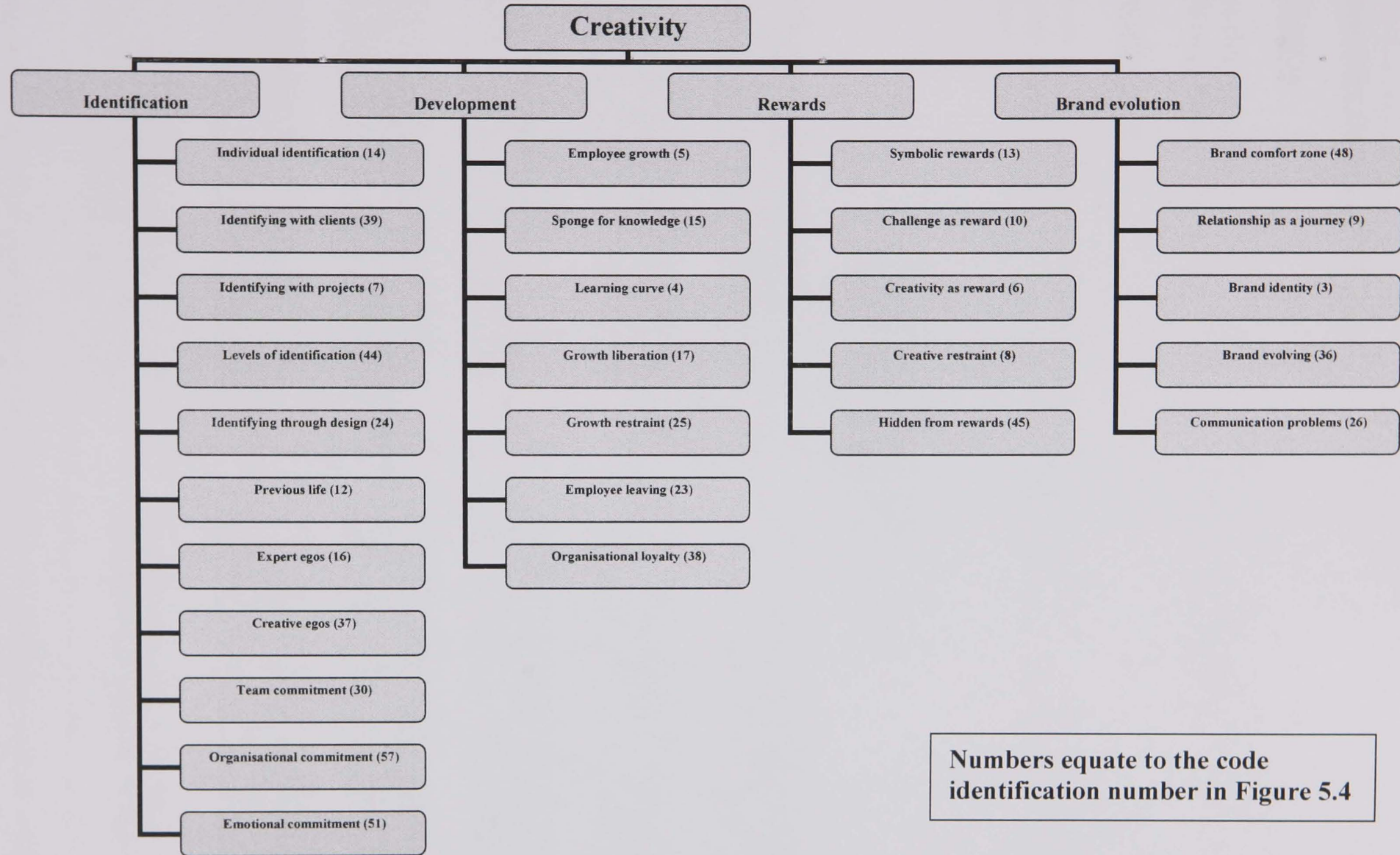
The four organising themes are presented based on a number of the more significant sub themes originally selected within Figure 5.4 above, as: identification; development; rewards and brand evolution. Figure 5.8 below presents a map of these inductively generated themes and supporting sub themes.

Subsection 5.3.1 will discuss each of these in detail. Chapter 6 will then discuss these findings further in relation to the pre existing literature as presented within Chapter 3.

5.3.1 Themes

The following subsection will discuss in detail the four main organising themes identified within the data.

Figure 5.8 Organising themes and sub themes



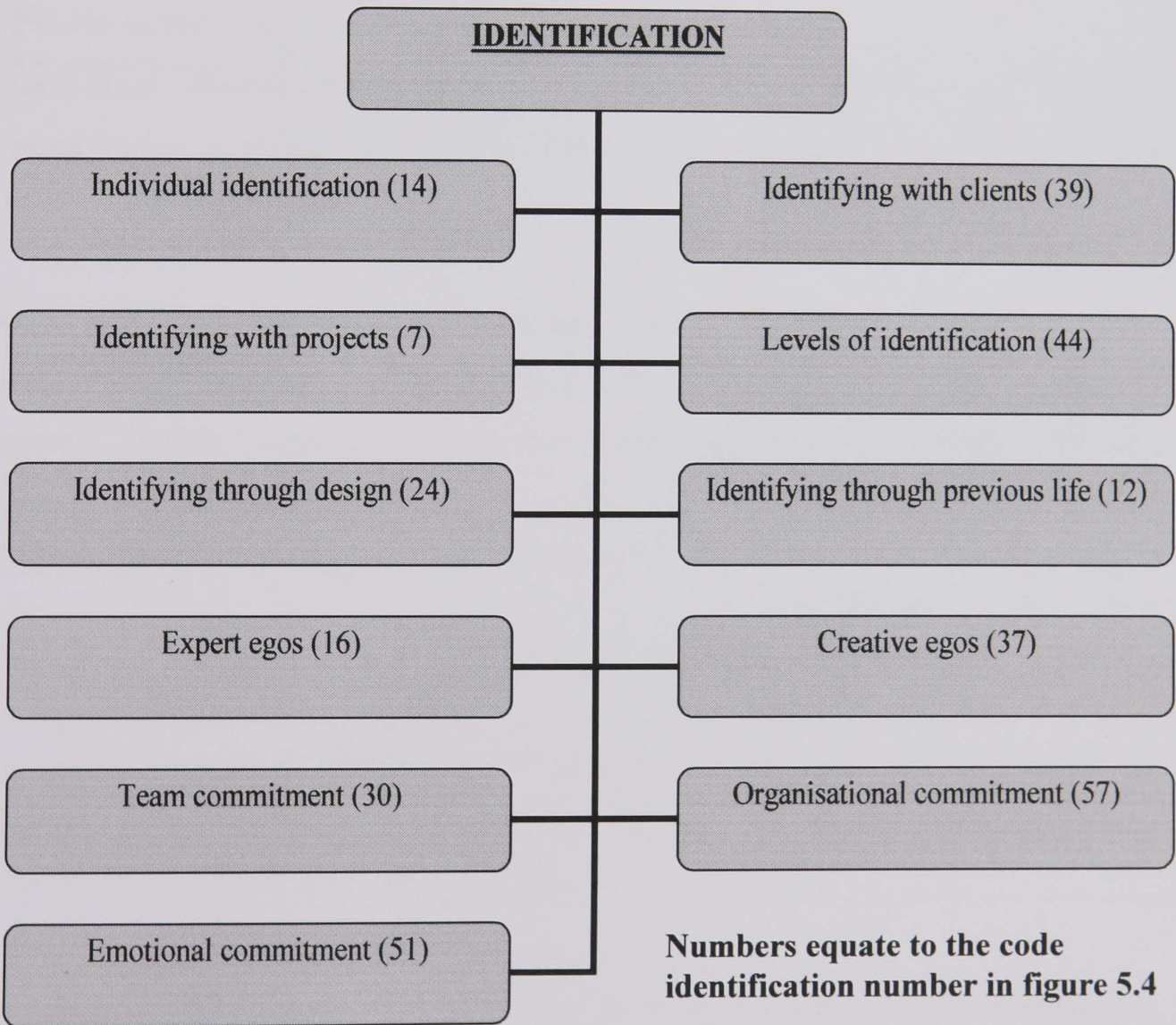
Organising theme : Identification

Definition

This theme captures various forms of identification apparent within the data, each with implications for creative organisations and their corporate brand.

Empirical base

Eleven of the themes presented earlier within subsection 5.2.3 have been interpreted as sub themes of the organising theme ‘**Identification**’ as presented and discussed below.



Within smaller creative organisations there are often no dedicated units or sections tasked with interfacing with the clients. As a result, various individuals may interface

with a client at any one time, and often from all levels within the organisation. It emerged that this often created multiple images of the way the organisation was perceived in relation to its corporate brand. This organising theme encompasses these multiple images and the reasons underpinning them, as discussed below.

Expert egos (sub theme 16), creative egos (37) & individual identification (14)

Expert ego: refers to instances where the expert ego is evident. For example, attempts by clients to overly control the creative process would lead to friction due to the challenge the experts perceive.

Creative ego: refers to excerpts where a creative ego is evident, meaning the need to feed a desire to create something, something new, something different, something that leaves their own personal mark on the world.

Individual identification: refers to excerpts which indicate some form of identification is taking place focused mainly on an individual level rather than a wider organisational level.

Egos, particularly the expert ego, and individual identification issues were often evident during the interviews. Whenever the clients attempted to control the creative process, friction would be evident between the creatives and the clients, with the creative ‘expert’ ego seemingly under direct threat. This is indicated by one of the design supervisors when discussing their clients:

“when they start to say you know umm I know that we need to have this picture here I know it should be that type face it should be that colour.. that's where obviously any fragile ego of the designer starts to be umm bashed and that's where it starts to break down and the client and designers sort of start to get a bit umm agitated and think that they are trying to be told how to do their job which nobody wants and again the relationship does start to erode”

In addition, a more specific ‘creative’ ego was evident within the data, meaning the desire to create something new and different, that leaves their own personal mark on

whatever creative product they are working upon. For example, one of the architect directors stated:

“they learn rapidly at the outset because it's all new and they come back from college full of creative ideas.. haven't got a clue how to put them in place.. you start somewhere small and eventually expand into something wider err and all the young guys and girls want.. aspire to have their own project to run that's what they all want so that they can make their mark if you like.. it's part of the ego centred sort of feeling that we all have as creative people I guess.. if you can create something of your own you can say that mine.. sounds almost like a selfish thing but it is ego”

Despite their own egos, creatives indicated that they like to encourage creative input from many of the clients, as long as this does not threaten the creatives own position or ego, and this was often a difficult balancing act. This is highlighted in the following excerpt taken from a design supervisor:

“they still have to be smart.. they can't just let you do what you want there still has to be a level of creativity and imagination on their part however umm if you have got one that can understand the work that has gone into it and likes what it is and lets you say make decisions make creative decisions for them then that's brilliant and for a good relationship. Clients where they start to think they know better than you.. that's where again it starts things start to break down”

Due to these expert and creative egos, the organisation was often thought to be seen as a mixture of individuals with many single visions. One of the supervisors within the design agency highlighted this aspect of the creative corporate brand:

“I think you have all sorts of different characters and personalities like the way Mason deals with a client is totally different from the way I deal with a client so I don't think there is a common view of (Design agency)... the company is full of a lot of single visions” Design supervisor

Single visions could sit at any level within the organisation and were even apparent at the senior layers of the case studies' guiding coalitions. More importantly, these single visions risked being perceived directly by the clients externally, creating in effect multiple identities and images of the creative organisations corporate brand.

One of the branding directors aptly describes this phenomenon when discussing the other two directors and himself within the organisation:

*“Michael will say well I don't know what I am going to do with it okay... I will come along and say you know... Neville will say where is the humanity in that and Michael will then say that's far too complex to do anything with... now that is an issue and it is an real issue .. so there is all sorts of complex dynamics inside that guiding coalition that will affect the way that the brand translates to customers”
(Branding director - A)*

The control of such single visions within a creative environment was also an issue within the interviews, leading to the important question of ‘what is control in a creative environment’, and should control be autonomous or internally generated, a further point made by the same branding director:

*“there are bounds between control and creativity if you like err and you can say well those are not opposites anyway but... we are trying to get to this thing which is the sort of very essence of what we are what we can do and what makes us different what excites us... that should be sufficient to condition expectations as to what is and isn't right for us but allow a great deal of leeway of people to express that in a way that is precisely right for them... right for the occasion or right for the client”
(Branding director - A)*

Interestingly and linking to the discussion above on creativity, identity and control, many of the creatives indicated they avoided any attempts made by management to make them formally identify with the creative organisation, and were more comfortable within organisations that avoided forcing such identification management upon its employees. For example, one of the junior architects stated:

“we are a big firm and there is no.. there is no sort of forced umm attempt to make every body feel like one big family or one big team and I think I quite like that umm you know because it is just.. we are not you know.. that is contrary to Gansler which was another big firm.. they were very American about trying to get everyone you know get a real sort of you know.. we are great we are marvellous we are all one big family or one big team.. and you thought well no we are not frankly (laugh) and that sort of annoyed me”

Identifying with projects (sub theme 7) & clients (39)

Identifying with projects: refers to excerpts indicating that the creatives identify with specific projects more than their own employing organisation.

Identifying with clients: refers to excerpts indicating that the creatives identify externally with the client organisation more than their own employing organisation.

In addition to 'identifying with the clients' as discussed shortly, some creatives indicated they often 'identify more with the project' they are working on than their employing creative organisation. This is particularly relevant in relation to corporate brand management, as many of the projects within creatively based organisations can last many months or even years, with multiple and varying levels of team members throughout. Under such time frames, managers frequently highlighted that family/team relationships built up, and were often actively encouraged. However, this also led to a downside in that conflicts often occurred if those allegiances became threatened through enforced project change, as indicated clearly by one of the architect directors:

"a team can last anything from between a year and three years depending on the scale of the project.. people might transfer from group to group to make things happen but there's the general idea is to try and keep the core of people together so that there is a certain.. family or team relationship builds up.. now within that then you get some sort of allegiances been created and people like working for you as a director and therefore sometimes (laugh) quite an interesting conflict comes up err when you transfer somebody out of the team" (Architect director A)

Managers were also aware that identifying with particular projects sometimes led to friction between employees, as reinforced within the following excerpt taken from one of the branding directors:

"you have two consultants, a brought in analyst which is fine because I can give that analyst work now and then you've got a senior consultant and that senior consultant actually has got a little their... foot in both camps.. and that has started too... there has been a certain amount of jockeying for position and ownership of involvement with projects and the like between the two consultants and the senior consultant..." (Branding director A)

Junior members in particular preferred the more interesting projects and a lack of access to such projects sometimes lead to frustration and the employee leaving. This is driven by the need to be doing more than they are currently doing. In some ways this links to challenge being seen as a form of reward, as discussed further in a later section. Senior management were clearly aware of this dynamic occurring, as indicated by one of the architect directors:

“some projects that we are doing.. people will be very fulfilled because they are great projects to work on and there are others which are more mundane.. all the young guys will want to do more than they are actually doing.. they want to be running a project they want to be designing the building and when they come in here they often don't do that.. everyone has to learn .. well some people will leave, they get sufficiently frustrated that they leave and they go somewhere else” (Architect director A)

At times, the creatives indicated that they found themselves identifying externally with the client organisation more than anything else (sub theme: identifying with clients), causing a potential conflict between differing values within the client organisation and the employing creative organisation. This is outlined by one of the senior branding consultants:

“I feel the need to empathise very closely with a client umm but trying to make sure that the.. that the (branding consultancy) values are still upheld... for me personally I would have to feel very close to the client otherwise if you don't that is when you can.. the barriers can come down between you and err all sorts of problems can start to arise”

Some of the directors believed that employing people with client side experience would help those employees in their intended boundary spanning role interfacing within the client-supplier relationship. Interestingly, the collected data also indicated that this increased the likelihood of such creatives also identifying externally than internally with their own creative corporate brand. This is seen, for example, below with a senior branding consultant, who often identified with the client more than

their own organisation due to them falling back to their prior knowledge and experience of living in the client world than the particular client per se.

“do I feel closer to the project than the client or do I feel closer to the project than (Brand consultancy) I am not to sure which on... I think it does phase and I think it is almost a case of if you are working on a part of a project that gets very involved with the clients I find myself starting to feel close... you know part of the client world... which is probably also me falling back into my old world as well and trying to think of it from their point of view and I probably almost pull myself back out of it at times...” (Senior branding consultant)

It was also noted in the data that one way that project identification and client identification appears to be managed in relation to the creative organisations own corporate brand, is through regular internal meetings as well as open plan and informal office lay outs and informal team structures, as indicted by one of the junior branding consultants:

“I wouldn't consciously say I have ever thought this project I am so focused on this project that the rest of the business is meaningless... not meaningless but takes a second role to my immediate project objectives... I think that is largely because we meet fortnightly sometimes on a weekly basis so we are always aware of everyone's issues involving their work and the possibility that I will have to move perhaps somewhere else and someone else will move over to help me out so we are always aware of the fluidity within the office” (Junior brand consultant B)

Team commitment (sub theme 30), organisational commitment (57) and emotional commitment (51).

Team commitment: refers to excerpts indicating a higher level of commitment to the team than the organisation as a whole.

Organisation commitment: refers to excerpts discussing individual commitment to the organisation and its mission and/or vision.

Emotional commitment: refers to instances of an expressed emotional form of commitment to the creative organisation. This was linked into the way individuals seemed to relate with others and their work in general.

It was evident within the data that creatives often felt commitment at work, to either their immediate team or their organisation, and at times the commitment was expressed as an emotional one.

Turning firstly to team commitment, the directors and owners indicated that team work was a major aspect of creative work. This is highlighted by one of the branding directors:

“there is here a very very strong team commitment umm you know one of the values that we do here is not just an espoused value.. the belief that the team always wins umm and that we should support one another and the teamwork is you know gets a better result is very very strongly held and it's a recruitment criteria..”

Creative employees, themselves, also often indicated a higher level of commitment to the team than the organisation as a whole, especially teams where all individuals were seen to be equal in some ways. For example, one of the junior architects stated:

“in a way architecture is also.. it's group work it's teamwork it is never individual work unless you have got your own practice .. err in a way a successful company always has successful teams behind them.. successful teams that work together because that's a very important part of the whole companies identity and success and therefore it's in a very good architectural practice you don't have a hierarchy you don't have a director and you don't have the summer trainee when it comes to design.. everybody is on an equal level”

It was also apparent that within some of the smaller case study organisations, commitment to the organisation and its vision rather than just the team was a primary requirement from senior management (sub theme : organisational commitment). For example, this is highlighted by one of the branding directors:

“I think that the need to.. you know to do great work.. is somehow hard wired into people that want to be part of this.. and if it wasn't they wouldn't.. they wouldn't be comfortable with us nor we with them.. I think there is a higher level of commitment to the partners as a group of three.. I think there is a high commitment to what it is that the partners have in common and what the partners want too achieve and deliver”

Commitment was also often qualified as an emotional form of commitment with the organisation (sub theme : emotional commitment), and this linked into the way that individuals seemed to relate with others and their work in general. For example, one of the branding directors stated:

“I think there is a very very strong level of commitment umm to (Branding consultancy).. that is a common theme around here and if it wasn't.. if that commitment wasn't there I don't think individuals would find us a very comfortable place to be because it's kind of.. it's expected and it's.. and people that don't look as though they are going to evince that are screened out during the recruitment process basically we want a high level of commitment.. emotional commitment”

Equally, as seen below, the junior members of the organisations also indicated that their commitment could be seen in terms of an emotional form of commitment:

“I think there is an emotional bond.. I think probably the emotional bond is stronger and more important to some members of the staff compared to others but that's you know they are all different characters so I don't think that's necessarily that surprising.. I think there is definitely.. I think it depends on the way they think...”
Junior Branding consultant.

Levels of identification (sub theme 44), identifying through design (24) & identifying through previous life (12)

Levels of identification: refers to excerpts where a distinction was evident between differing levels of identification.

Identifying through design: refers to excerpts which indicate the individuals are identifying with the design ethos offered by the organisation.

Identifying through previous life: refers to excerpts where employees indicated that their experience of life before joining the creative organisation has a bearing upon the way they currently relate with the organisation and their peers.

Within the data, a distinction was evident between differing levels of identification, as appropriately outlined by an excerpt taken from one of the branding directors.

Here the concept of identifying in a mainly 'exchange' based way through more immediate 'situational' factors such as increased effort for immediate financial compensation or additional time off, is compared with the perception that there is an alternative, more abstract, long term and 'intrinsically rewarding' way of identifying with work and the organisation, through example its values, mission and vision:

“that it is sort of hygiene factors vs. motivation factors and the like.. the situational level is the easiest one to describe and err to embrace the deep structural.. I mean that is where the magic lies in the deep structural identification and how you get to it.. and that is a very complicated.. I don't want to be part of something where it is about a transactional relationship which ends up in pounds shillings and pence.. working hours.. holiday days and stuff like that.. I don't really want to be part of an organisation where that.. all the primary motivation.. that sort of stuff.. that is all necessary but not sufficient to me..”

However, it was also apparent that some of the creative organisations are set up specifically to react to external situational factors, and this is likely to impact on the way that employees identify with the organisation. For example, this may also lead to multiple identities and images being perceived by the clients, as discussed later in this thesis and as highlighted by one of the architect directors :

“yeah I find it difficult to think we are a deep structure organisation umm I think that's inwards looking.. whereas I don't think we are.. I think we are outward looking umm that's just as a gut reaction to that err so therefore it's situational the other one situation did you say... it is related to people... clients... situations... places... projects... it is all those things that are the influencers and the structure... the organisation is structured to meet those” (Architect director A)

It was also identified that even within creative organisations that have been set up and structured to encourage more situational identification, others within the organisations have usually been tasked or feel the need to consider the issues relating to deeper levels of identification, particularly within any guiding coalition. This is outlined in the following excerpt from one of the architect divisional directors, discussing the board of directors that sit above him. One implication of this is a heightened risk of a disconnect from a corporate branding perspective, between those client facing

employees who are more situation driven, and those offstage senior management and owners who may be identifying with more long term and deep structural aspects of the organisation and its future:

“people like me are more situational I guess because we are more driven to client requirements project requirements without thinking necessarily about the whole thing behind me the whole structure behind me umm there are other people who are thinking on a different... on a wider scale maybe that's not the right words but a more cultural level to try and generate the best from within..” (Architect director A)

Many of the architect and design creatives indicated that they identified mainly with the design ethos offered by the organisation than other aspects such as financial rewards (sub theme: identifying through design). This is captured in an example excerpt provided by one of the junior designers:

“I think that everyone here again gets different things off each other umm and I think that's quite an important thing to do as well but primarily I think it is about producing good graphic design and you know it's not about being here for financial gain because all the designers here know that they could be working in a big organisation and be earning a lot more money”

It was identified that previous life, for example through work, education and career experience, often leads to common ways of thinking amongst the creatives employees, and this impacted upon the way they also identified with one another (sub theme: identifying through previous life). One of the branding directors highlighted this when discussing the mixture of employees in the organisation:

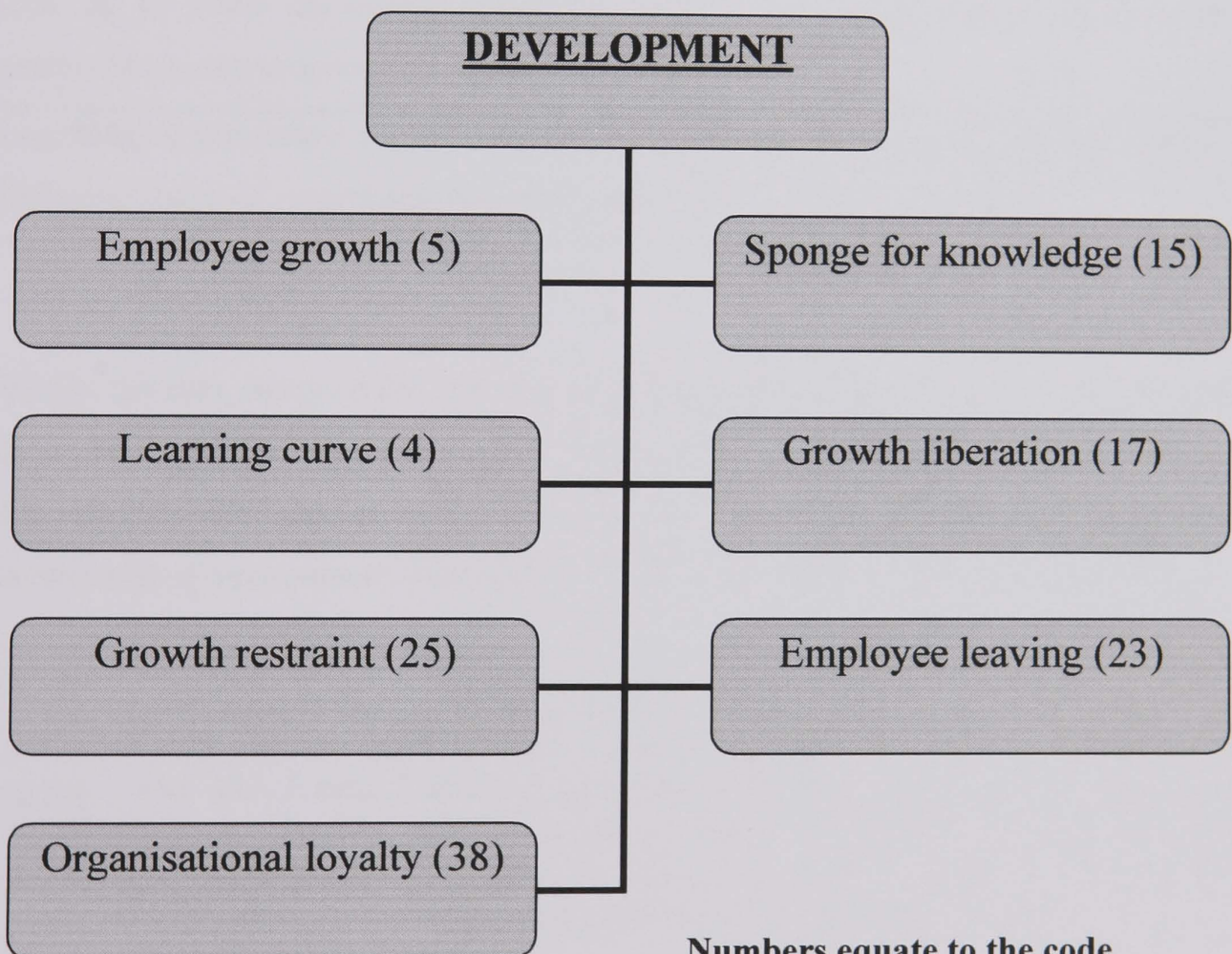
“it is interesting that there is a mix of largely biology.. geography and media studies employees.. it's all about the context and networks and relationships.. things with bigger things if you like and I think in some way that might help I mean a lot of the metaphors that we are using in our branding work and our organisational development work would be evolutionary metaphors.. ecological metaphors”

Organising theme : Development**Definition**

This is the process through which individuals within creative organisations look to grow and improve in different skill and knowledge areas across various experiences. Lack of access to such opportunities is seen to impact upon organisational loyalty and also the corporate brand.

Empirical base

Seven of the themes presented earlier within subsection 5.2.3 have been interpreted as sub themes of the organising theme '**Development**' as presented and discussed below.



Numbers equate to the code identification number in figure 5.4

The potential for employee development was a key emergent theme in relation to the way the creative organisation's brand was perceived internally. These developmental needs were apparent from the most senior through to junior levels within the creative organisation, including that of the owners and directors. Lack of development opportunity often led to a stated reduction in organisational loyalty, to the extent that the creative employee would consider leaving the company.

Employee growth (sub theme 5), sponge for knowledge (15) and learning curve (4).

Employee growth: refers to an expressed need to develop as a result of the creative work environment. Here learning opportunities are reported as strong motivators.

Sponge for knowledge: refers to excerpts which indicate the need by creatives to soak up as much knowledge about the creative process as possible from other perceived experts around them.

Learning curve: refers to a dynamic aspect in the search for growth and knowledge. Differing forms of growth and knowledge are needed across a time line.

Within the data, many of the creative employees expressed the need to develop and grow through their current and future working experience. Here, learning opportunities were seen as strong motivators for remaining in any particular creative organisational environment. For example, one of the design supervisors stated that:

“when I first started here... looking at other companies' work and thinking ah you know actually they are pushing it on... and so you are always going to develop and grow... and like I said I think it is about a sense of thinking you are always progressing or learning something new... there is no point in sort of staying somewhere where you are not getting something out of it umm which is what led me to move on both times... it's growing and continuing to be interesting now”

Senior members of the organisation were just as likely to indicate the same need to continue to develop as the junior members, and in some cases the senior members had given up stable and reliable forms of employment within larger organisations in

the search for such experiences and growth opportunities, as expressed by one of the branding directors:

“we began to realise largely from the consultancy we were working with that we were doing some new and interesting things in new and different ways.. and saw the takeover, or the merger between IDV and UD as an opportunity to get out and create our own thing which we did umm 18 months ago.. umm so a lot of what we do is highly interactive... we think we are pretty close to the front end of quite a lot of stuff” (Branding director -B)

Growth, however, meant differing things to different individuals. For the designers in particular, and to a lesser extent the branders, a small size firm and the associated easier access to senior members, often facilitated increased learning opportunities when compared to working in a larger organisation:

“I think yeah definitely from a personal perspective I am learning and developing and one of the bigger reasons why I joined here was I got the impression from the interviews that Richard, Michael and Neville were all very intelligent impressive people with vast experience who were keen to develop their own staff... one of the big things to me was that this was a place that I could actually go and sort of suck out you know knowledge from the people that I am working for” (Junior brander - B)

Conversely, as expressed by one of their directors, architects often feel that being part of a larger organisation meant an opportunity to be involved in high-quality designs and larger projects, which excites the younger employees in particular:

“People come to work here because they want to work for a company like ours umm because they equate that with err high quality of design umm a large office... and therefore we are doing large projects and that excites the younger guys in particular... they want to come here and work in this involvement and get that experience” (Architect director - A)

Due to the need to learn, creative employees, particularly during the earlier years of their apprenticeship, try to soak up as much knowledge about the creative process as possible from other perceived experts around them (sub theme: sponge for

knowledge). This was considered more important than financial compensation. As one example, a junior designer stated:

“I remember saying I will work there for nothing to get a job there and I was really happy to... you know in the first year... year and a half... two years salary... they could have paid me you know... nine grand a year or whatever it wouldn't mattered... it was the skills sets that I was being given access to... Simon, Sean, Mason and Tim you know... that was worth 300 times what I was being paid obviously... it's a collection of knowledge... pure knowledge that is all you are interested in... because you can go through your whole career and never be around people like that... it is like being around oh God... I don't know you know I suppose around people like God and think of myself that you know people really influential people in the 20th century” (Junior designer -B)

In addition to individual growth and the need to soak up knowledge, a dynamic aspect was evident within the interviews. What was evident was that different forms of growth and knowledge were often sought along a time line (sub theme: learning curve), as indicated below by one of the design supervisors:

“I think it is a very interesting sort of err a very interesting company indeed and I think you can learn from things from others here and expand better and become better at different things I mean obviously like I said as you grow up as a designer your talents change and you have to do certain tasks in different ways and I'm sort of still learning and still finding things out and that's what's nice about it”

Upon first arrival within a creative organisation, the more junior employees frequently spoke of feeling intimidated by their more knowledgeable and experienced seniors. However, due to their overriding interest and need to soak up their seniors' knowledge, over time, the whole learning process led to less intimidation and demystification:

“you put these guys into a massive.. you know they were a bit up here as gods.. like it sounds terrible and umm and over time now you know you kind of that god like status drops... (whereas now) because that sponge effect has come across into me there's only so much they can give you umm and obviously when you are new around it... it is like... it is a massive... you know they are really wringing out the sponge if you like umm and it's just draining straight into you umm and obviously you get used to... it is only now little parts if you like or droplets left” (Junior designer - B)

Growth liberation (sub theme 17), growth restraint (25), employee leaving (23) and organisational loyalty (28).

Growth liberation: refers to excerpts where creatives feel the organisation offers the correct expertise and form of culture to encourage employee growth.

Growth restraint: refers to instances where a form of glass ceiling appears for various reasons which impedes the creatives from gaining more knowledge and personal growth.

Employee leaving: refers to employees indicating a reduction in loyalty to the extent that they would consider leaving their creative organisation due to lack of creative control and growth opportunities.

Organisational loyalty: refers to employees indicating an issue which impacts on their level of loyalty to the creative organisation.

Creatives often highlighted the importance of feeling that the creative organisation will be willing and able to offer the expertise to learn from, while also proactively implementing a culture which encourages growth to occur (sub theme : growth liberation). Within the data, there were also instances where a form of glass ceiling frequently appeared which impeded the creatives from gaining additional knowledge and personal growth (sub theme: growth restraint). When this occurred, management often tried to move the creatives into more managerial directions in the hope that they would find fresh challenges to motivate them. If the managers were successful in bringing these creatives over into a more managerial role, it helped shape the company and allow it to grow from the inside. This also prevented the firm from needing to recruit externally for such posts. However, for many of the creatives, management and administration roles were not often seen as an attractive avenue to pursue. It was also at this point that a creative employee may elect to move to another organisation to find fresh creative challenges and knowledge, thus rejecting the less creative and more managerial option offered by their current organisation. This is highlighted by one of the architect directors:

“that presents a problem because you find people who have reached their glass ceiling if you like in terms of sucking in the knowledge and you then have to take a view whether they are able to make the next step which might be the responsibility based jump.. nothing to do with creativity any more but are they able to take an extra responsibility for 19 people or managing clients whatever it might be and that takes them another step up err they can absorb all the knowledge in the world but that they may never get any further because of their inability to take the next.. more of a administrative leap”

Thus, creatives indicated that they suffered a reduction in organisational loyalty to the extent that they considered leaving their creative organisation due to lack of creative control and growth opportunities (sub themes: employee leaving & organisational loyalty). For example, a senior creative designer stated:

“creative pressures is worse for me I mean my point.. my take on it is that the frustration and anxiety are the worst feelings that you can have at work because when you are designing and you want to do it that way.. you know your gut instinct is let's just do it to try it and if someone is saying no to you because they don't like it.. because it is down it is down to a matter of taste at the end of the day.. then it's difficult you know I mean I am.. I am the oldest member of staff here so I am thirty one this year and I guess yea one day it will be my turn to leave the nest... unless I am given.. unless I was given the opportunities that they would say oh yea you go and do it then we trust you.. then it will ultimately end like that..”

One of the junior architects highlighted that from their own past experience, practices with older directors were often associated with a lack of growth and development opportunity, which eventually impacted on the junior architects loyalty in a similar manner to that above.

“and that's what happens in some of.. especially some of the practices were maybe the directors are older.. so at some stage they give up developing and sort of it produces the same things year after year.. and that would be for instance one reason why I would completely change a company unless the company gives you an opportunity to develop something.. and I think that's a very common thing that happens is that first you go into a company and in a couple of years when you have learned the way they do their things and their design and you realise that this doesn't lead anywhere it doesn't change it doesn't develop you.. I would absolutely go away” (Junior architect - A).

In some ways this links to the learning curve theme presented earlier within this organising theme, where a perception that once the learning and growth opportunities have flattened out, creatives tend to become less loyal. However, this was not always the case. In some situations, the learning curve was seen to be reaching a plateau, but some employees remained within the organisation.

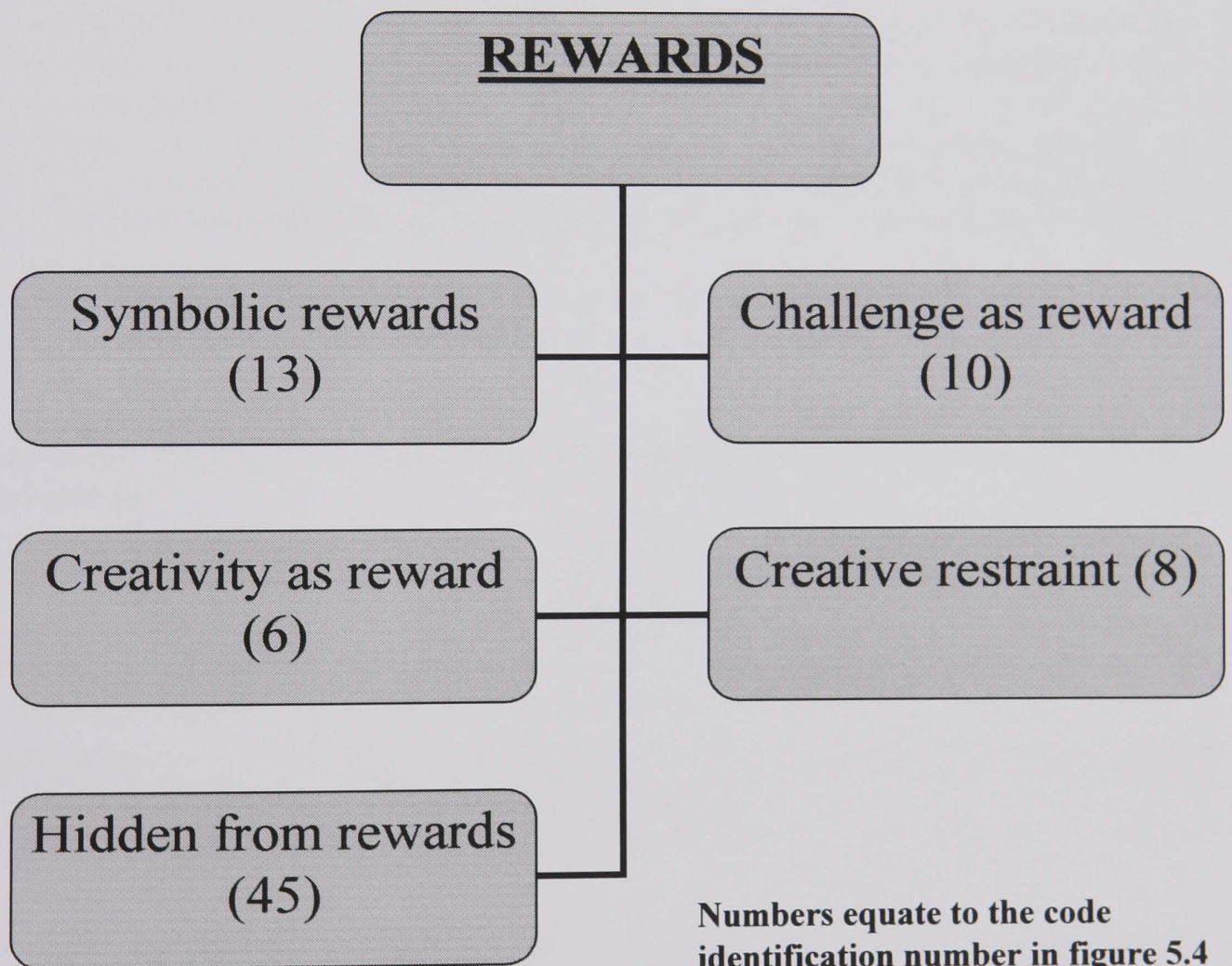
Upon further analysis of the data it was noted that this was because it was still seen as useful for their own creative reputation, to have worked in a particular organisation for a longer period of time, even if they were not learning new things, or even if they were not having much creative freedom. This can be seen as a form of reputation effect within more prestigious creative organisations, increasing loyalty even for some of the knowledge and ‘growth-hungry’ creative employees. However, it is also worth noting that in some smaller or less well-known organisations, that reputation effect may not be there to hold the creatives after their learning had ended. Interestingly, this was not always the case within the data. Some of the creatives stated that they preferred their current and lesser known architect practice. Although it was less prestigious, its guidelines were also not as rigid and still had access to large projects, which put their organisation on a balance with the more prestigious organisations, within which the level of creative space would have been less.

Organising theme : Rewards**Definition**

Rewards of various kinds frequently emerged as relevant to the creative process. The rewards sought varied in type, and the management of such rewards presents particular problems within these kinds of organisations.

Empirical base

Five of the themes presented earlier within subsection 5.2.3 have been interpreted as sub themes of the organising theme '**Rewards**' as presented and discussed below.



Theme discussion – Rewards

The scope for creativity within the organisation is another frequent theme within the interviews. Managers were aware of this, and frequently highlighted that the best form of reward they could offer was a form of nurturing employees towards the same objectives. A number of forms of rewards emerged within this key theme. Some rewards were found to enhance organisational creativity and the resulting perception of the corporate brand. Others had the potential to produce a negative impact on both creativity and the corporate brand. The senior managers and directors often found the issue of rewards difficult within creative organisations:

“rewards kind of complicated... it is complicated for us... we have touched on it in the past err and we have had our fingers burnt a few times by rewarding individuals because actually you know it is not about that because then you get into the whole sort of dark territory of well he has got something and actually you have not exposed that and so it's not... and I guess there is no easy way of doing it because you... if you stood on the table and said look we are giving him like an extra two hundred quid because he worked over the weekend or whatever then it still breeds something it still you know it is just not a good policy” (Design director)

Symbolic rewards (sub theme 13), challenge as reward (10), and creativity as reward (6)

Symbolic rewards: refers to excerpts where the creatives indicated that they valued rewards which were not of a physical or financial kind.

Challenge as reward: refers to excerpts where there is an expressed need by the creatives to be given increased challenge as a form of reward.

Creativity as reward: refers to excerpts where the freedom to be creative, in both process and outcome, is highly valued by the creatives.

Rewards for the creative employees were quite frequently indicated to be of a non physical or financial kind (sub theme: symbolic rewards). Trust in the creatives being given the flexibility to undertake their job without unnecessary levels of restraint or challenge to their expertness from the client was a common theme to emerge in relation to the way the relationship was often moulded, and in some ways

was perceived as a way of being rewarded. For example, the design supervisor stated:

“what it comes down too I suppose is trust that's what it comes down to is.. is do you as a client trust me to do your design.. and that's what you are coming up against that's the problem.. the fact that you do or don't have that trust thing moulds the whole sort of situation with a client..”

Positive verbal rewards or pats on the back were often perceived as a greater or equal reward compared to any other form of rewards within the creative organisations. For example, excerpts taken from one of the junior designers as well as one of the design supervisors indicated this:

“the reward.. well obviously the reward can come over in somebody just saying something to you.. somebody doing something for you or somebody giving you something umm you know physically or emotionally supporting and feeling some instance.. and it is a sort.. and yea it can be in all sorts of ways” (Junior designer)

“well verbal reward you know if somebody has done a good job then that is good at every stage it doesn't cost anything to say brilliant you did a good job you know well done you know, just someone sort of taking time out to talk to you about the way a project has gone or something has happened you know it is too easily done it doesn't take... you don't have to be a rocket scientist to work out to the fact that you do that sort of thing which is nice at the end of the day in a weird way you know it sort of out weighs any sorts of financial reward if you... because you feel valued in their eyes and that makes you grow as a person at the end of the day which is great” (Design supervisor)

Although positive verbal rewards or pats on the back were often perceived as a greater or equal reward as compared to other forms of reward within the creative organisations, it was evident that such rewards were not always offered from the management level. Sometimes a lack of people management and perception skills within some of the senior creatives led to this, as further highlighted by the same design supervisor:

“what I have sort of generally found at (Design agency) is that you do have to ask for that sort of thing which always leaves a bad taste because you want somebody else to sort of do it... and other companies where I have been at they have been a bit quicker off the mark.. you have got to be quite perceptive to sort of think yea somebody has done that and they have worked harder than they should you know and they need to be rewarded for it and I think that is a good thing to do.. (Design agency) isn't great at doing that umm which is about the directors in charge umm who at the end of the day aren't particularly good at managing people and that's what it comes down to you have got to understand people and understand relationships”

In many industries, title or position may be perceived as a form of symbolic reward within the organisations. Interestingly, for many of the creative employees interviewed, this was not such a significant factor, or only of secondary interest. Many of the creative employees also indicated that access to increasing challenges was seen as a form of reward. Equally, it was noted that being challenged via a prestigious project or job was also an attractive and symbolic form of reward, as highlighted by one of the junior architects and a design supervisor below:

“I would much rather you know be known to be appreciated you know.. the reward is knowing people you know trust you to do things.. more challenging more different more umm perhaps you know potentially on the surface more nicer project you know it has more design in it more you know it is more interesting umm yea I mean that is effectively yeah I think that pretty much sums it up but I would you know the reward is getting given work that means you know that you feel like your developing and enjoying it as well.. I have come up with a couple of ideas that I wanted to do and I will probably be given that opportunity to do what I want to do... so it is very... it is very rewarding... very challenging” (Junior architect)

“I would imagine that because of the hierarchy of the company umm say it is like a prestige job or something like that comes in and because of the hierarchy of the company and because of the way graphic designers are everyone wants to get their claws on it of course you know the bigger you are the more you're going to get from it and so I could quite see how somebody more junior might feel that you were rewarded” (Design supervisor)

Being given more challenge and responsibility, for example, with regards facing the clients and presenting material to the clients at key stages of the relationship was also seen as another form of symbolic reward. Interestingly, at least for the smaller creative organisations, a type of glass ceiling in relation to employee empowerment

and control was often reported, where the owners or directors seemed reluctant to hand over enough control or power to allow creative employees to achieve all of these rewards. This also relates to the learning curve discussed earlier within this chapter (see Development theme 5.3.1.2). This proved to be a significant issue for some employees:

“I work hard at it and would like to think that I had got a certain level of trust from them for every project that I work on... now I am never going to get to the stage where they are going to hand over the reins of a whole project to me and expect me to do it because they won't ever get to that level... so I think I have now reached the stage of sort of maximum growth almost I don't know where else you could go because you know because it is such a small company you know you get to a certain position and that's it where can you go... so and that's why although they might think that by letting you alone it is symbolically rewarding while you are running a project... at the key points in that project... key presentations... key decisions... they wouldn't be able to hand over the most symbolic gesture that they could which is ultimate trust in what you are presenting and what you are deciding is what it comes down to.. that would be the biggest gesture... but that won't happen here.. and for me that is the key point where your company can grow and can change and expand and you can... you can move on and that is why I think that this company at the minute would have difficulty doing that because of that key stumbling block” (Design supervisor)

Often the rewards sought also depended on personalities as well as stage of life and age. For example, junior employees and senior employees seemed more attracted to symbolic rewards, with older employees, perhaps with young families to support, were more likely to desire more financially based or time off rewards:

“there are bonus schemes depending on how long they have been with the company how senior they are umm I think a lot of junior staff and more younger staff want to actually have the vehicle to prove themselves so they are very keen to be strategically involved in projects to either design them or run them or you know rather than just to be sort of drafting fodder so from that point of view a lot of them... because they don't particularly have... are of a younger age many don't have families or they have not been in a position where they are used to certain financial rewards.. they get their kicks almost out of getting the project you know.. so their actually driven more by their project and the quality of the art work and the quality of the design and the product... I think some people... other people obviously are maybe more driven by financial things because they have got families and you know mortgages and things” (Architect director C)

Feedback and comments relating to a creatives work from colleagues and peers both within the organisation and externally from the same industry were much valued by the creatives, and were seen as an additional form of symbolic reward where present, as indicated by one of the architect directors:

“the interesting thing about architects is that they measure their success by the comments made by their peers rather than anybody else so when one of our buildings appears in the trade press or one of the journals and is all over the front cover and someone reviews it and says it's a great building.. that counts more than anything else”

Creative freedom in both process and outcome was also highly valued by the employees. This emerged as a powerful reward in itself for most of the individuals studied, and impacted upon the way they identified with the organisation internally (sub theme: creativity as reward), as highlighted by one of the design directors:

“we are in a kind of industry that one of the big rewards is how much err you facilitate their own individual expression of creativity and actually by demonstrating that.. you know you get rewarded because actually what at the end of the day you.. you know you achieve.. you actually you know.. you get a piece of print or it actually manifests itself at the end of the day”

Junior employees also frequently indicated this aspect of the ‘creative’ ego was present and that they aspired to run their own projects. Therefore, one form of reward was to feed that ego as highlighted by one of the architect directors below:

“You start somewhere small and eventually expand into something wider err and all the young guys and girls want... aspire to have their own projects to run that's what they all want so that they can make their mark if you like... it's part of the ego-centred sort of feeling that we all have as creative people I guess ... if you can create something of your own.. you can say that's mine... sounds almost like a selfish thing but it is ego... it is err and that is what they want to achieve so in a way the reward we can offer... the best reward we can offer... is to nurture them towards that”

To some degree the size of the organisation also had an effect, with smaller organisations being seen as potentially more creative than the larger ones, which were often seen as followers and not leaders in terms of creativity:

“all the companies that I have ever come across that are doing what I term the truly innovative and creative work are smaller organisation's because I just think you've got more leeway to do that sort of thing... the bigger the organisation is generally they tend to be the sort of companies that are following a trend or a fashion rather than making it happen and certainly with (Design agency) and the other companies I have worked I have been in the role of creating a trend and a fashion than following it which is what the larger organisation's tend to do” (Design supervisor)

The need for rewards and the types of rewards were also reported to follow a typical cycle that could be mapped out, to some extent, in some senior managers experience:

“I mean I know what will happen because the whole thing is a cycle and I know that they will reach a point when their... they can't pursue this... they are not getting enough out of their own reward... the reward that the job you know... and I think the job comes down to this tangible... I have created this design... there will be a point when that isn't... isn't giving enough for them and they will have to look elsewhere to generate it which either will be as a individual or they will move to another agency another consultancy which gives them a different cut of that reward you know a different aspect to it.. or there will be a need to look or develop that individual... needs to develop themselves and the way to do that is either move or actually find a facet within this company that actually they really like doing” (Design director)

Junior members of the organisation also highlighted how their reward needs varied over time:

“my motivation has changed umm in terms of what I want to do when I first started I just wanted to be umm to get up to speed with everything as much as I could and be as professional as I could but now I have a mind set where I want to be more creative and more proactive in the jobs rather than just umm just kind of following what I was told to do I would rather... I would like to take more responsibility” (Junior designer)

Creative restraint (sub theme 8) and creatives hidden from rewards (45)

Creative restraint: refers to excerpts indicating some form of restraint to the creative process or outcome within the data.

Hidden from rewards: refers to excerpts containing comments relating to the creatives being hidden from receiving rewards either from the clients, or from other externally generated rewards for their work.

Complete freedom of creativity is rarely achievable within the commercial environment. This sometimes leads to reported frustration for the creative employees, particularly the younger and less experienced members. This was indicated, for example, by one of the architect directors:

“so it is a team working environment err and no matter how skilled the individual may be they also need to be part of a team err we can't have individuals umm causing conflict in the team so that one little problem err but the younger guys will come along out of University full of ideas full of inspiration from something they have seen somewhere else and want to apply it and there maybe occasions when that's the wrong time and the wrong place to apply that wide thinking because you might have a very fixed focus problem to deal with for that client”

In addition, complete freedom of creativity was not always seen as a reward by all members of a creative organisation, with some architects, for example, preferring to only get involved with the less creative aspects of the work:

“if I put it this way that architecture is ten percent design and ninety percent of it is err realising the project so ninety percent of it is more like purely technical work whereas you see if I think of graphic design it is probably the ratio is totally different and well of course when you do a campaign you have to work just as err a lot of it is pure hard work but it has much bigger percentage of creativity in it and you can think that architecture... a lot of people choose architecture not only for the creativity but also for the ninety percent of just realising buildings” (Junior architect - A)

In addition to creativity as a reward, restraints to creativity emerged as a key theme along with restraints impacting on the way the organisation's brand was perceived both internally and externally (sub theme: creative restraint):

“we would like to think there's enough room to be completely creative but there is a point that you reach when you have to have a more pragmatic approach and you reach a point where the cost of what you're doing and the time to do what you're doing becomes a factor because obviously a project a client comes along with a project he says I'd like this building it mustn't cost more than that and I'd like finished by this date and all those things have to be brought together.. and that's where there is a sort of managerial task and it is most difficult because you don't want to suppress the young guys who are full of new ideas, and make them fed up you got to encourage all that and yet make it fit those other two constraints and that's quite tricky...” (Architect director - A)

Commercial aspects created one form of restraint on creativity internally. The friction from commercial restraint from following clients specifications, wishes and approach were an obvious constraint for some projects within the data. This was noted as a potential problem for the creative-client relationship.

“some designers get quite precious about what they are doing but umm err I think you have to accept that you have to change tack particularly in corporate offices and there's... we don't have any like primadonnas as designers who say you know I'm the designer this is what I am recommending this is what you're going to have (laugh) so we tend not to recruit that kind of (laugh) talent.. with corporate clients they hate that sort of design well that's not true sometimes it can work I have seen it work actually and things have got through that I would never of dreamed would have got through but and it succeeded but nine times out of ten it doesn't (laugh)” (Architect director – B)

Positive client feedback was also often seen as an important intangible form of reward by creatives, and some clients were better at conducting feedback to the 'grass roots' designers than others. This is highlighted by one of the architect directors stating:

“to actually like the intangible reward of a project being successful and clients saying well done and all that sort of stuff umm sometimes they are very good at saying well done to the right people.. and it shouldn't be to me and people like me but it should be to the people who actually do the work and they are the ones that.. well feel best about the pat on the back.. not all clients but some clients are very good at that”

In relation to rewards, it was apparent within the interviews that disappointment or tension was often felt by some of the creatives if they were hidden from the client rewards (sub theme: hidden from rewards). This seemed to be a common concern within each of the creative case studies. One of the design directors highlighted this concern stating:

“I would love to know how the industry could be readdressed so that actually the people that do the hard work.. the creative work get the reward and a lot of the.. because I think you know like I said something like GO is pure graphic design but I also know that in that.. in that identity for example there's x million.. fifteen million at least that there will be three designers in some back office at Wolff Olins working their balls off to do something fantastic.. but the executives will be getting sixty or seventy k and all the rest of it”

Thus, voice and access to the clients was seen as an important aspect of the relationship. However, for some creatives this need for voice was sacrificed if doing so meant being given more creative freedom. In addition, voice and access to the clients was more likely to be seen as an issue within the larger organisations where the creatives were often hidden away from clients, working in teams and so not necessarily being client facing:

“It's all a little bit more free form here umm so actually all the designers umm liaise with the client at various stages of the job.. all the rest of the designers having contact you know all the way through the job up to the point of you know production and err implementation so it's not like anyone is shut off from the client which I think actually makes for a better... a better working atmosphere because once you get a notion that you are sort of kept away from certain decisions and err situations then it... it's I don't think it's a very creative atmosphere to have” (Design supervisor)

Interestingly, it was also noted that client feedback could unwittingly damage some of the more internal forms of reward for creatives. For example, the following excerpt taken from a junior designer indicates that as the result of a client expressing pleasure in the creative outcome, his own peers felt he had probably given in to the client too much:

“also in that case the client umm being the type of client that they are.. the fact that they were pleased with it meant they got what they wanted.. and that translated into being that they had got their own way on a number of issues which we tried to argue against.. so my peers were not happy”

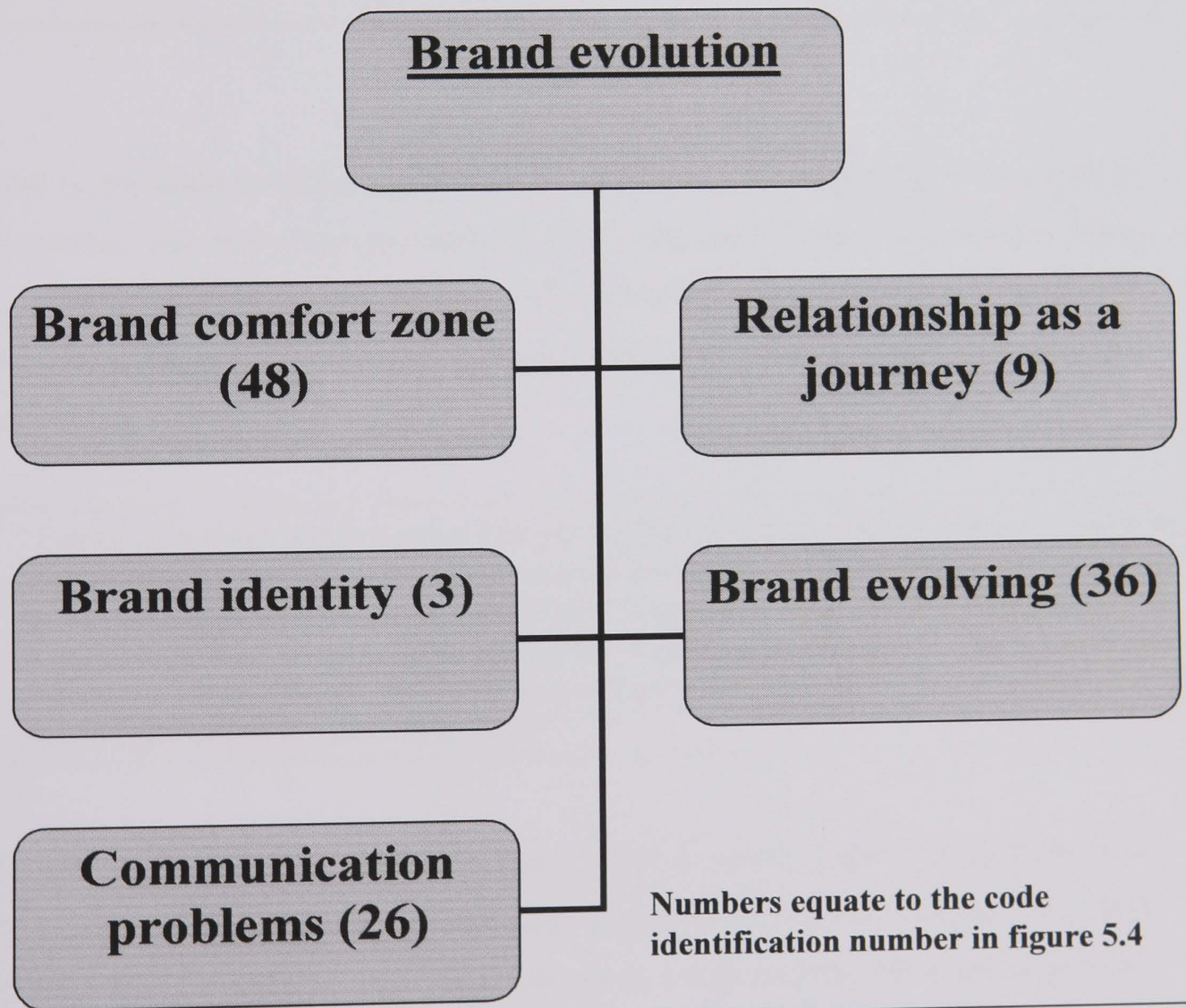
Organising theme : Brand evolution

Definition

As each of the case study organisations can be classed as a small to medium sized organisation, growth frequently came up as a key issue. Relating to this growth were factors linking to the evolution and management of the brand within the client interfacing context.

Empirical base

Five of the themes presented earlier within subsection 5.2.3 have been interpreted as sub themes of the organising theme '**Brand evolution**' as presented and discussed below.



The often close interface and relationship with the clients and the small to medium sized nature of the case study organisations meant a number of implications in relation to the evolving corporate brand, as discussed below.

Brand evolving (sub theme 36), brand comfort zone (48) and brand identity (3).

Brand evolving: refers to excerpts indicating the evolution of the creative organisations' brand.

Brand comfort zone: refers to excerpts indicating cases of the creative organisation being asked to undertake an activity which seemed to be at odds with their current vision.

Brand identity: refers to excerpts discussing the management of creatives in terms of following a common vision or mission.

Due to the small to medium size nature of the case study organisations, a common sub-theme was the evolving nature of the organisations brand (sub theme: brand evolving). This was something that all levels of the organisations had noted. The following example excerpt taken from the senior branding consultant highlights this evolution:

"I think also there is a sense because the company is new there is a sense of forming the company.. where are we.. where are we going and at the moment there is a lot of discussion about reinventing ourselves and actually the tangibility of what we are is.. is something that every body is wrangling with at the moment so that's again very different... I have always walked into a organisation that is established umm where everybody knows what the company is"

In addition, some of the employees had worked for much larger organisations prior to joining the case study firms. Some had clearly noted that the corporate brand had already formed in those larger organisations in comparison to the creative business start-ups they were joining, where the brand was under greater initial flux:

“because the company is new there is a sense of forming the company... where are we where are we going and at the moment there is a lot of discussion about reinventing ourselves and actually the tangibility of what we are is something that everybody is wrangling with at the moment so that's again very different... I have always walked into a organisation that is established umm where everybody knows what the company is... is there to do rightly or wrongly I mean it has not always worked for them but that is the case” (Senior brand consultant)

The management of creative employees in terms of following a common vision or mission was frequently highlighted as problematic within the collected data (sub theme: brand identity). For example the design supervisor stated:

“again it's about sort of being a design led terrible.. terrible breed of people.. myself included umm you know because your life is about design as I said you live it you breath it .. it is all these sorts of things that you feel very passionately about it and so it's the company is full of a lot of single visions and its umm the job of Sean and Simon to try and keep all those single visions going into same direction which is a very very difficult job very difficult indeed”

Due to the evolving nature of the SME brand, there were often cases of the organisation being asked to undertake an activity or task on behalf of the client which seemed to be at odds with their current vision (sub theme: brand comfort zone):

“I think if we were a stronger brand if we wanted to conduct our research in one particular and the client said well you know that's not what I was expecting.. we would probably stand our ground more so we might even of said it would be lovely to be in the situation where we can actually turn down a piece of business because it's not what we do” (Senior brand consultant)

Financial and other pressures often impacted on the choice of type of projects to take on or to decline, in terms of matching their internal goals or vision. This highlights a particular vulnerability for small business start ups in the early years in relation to their corporate brand's development. In other words, the smaller sized organisations did not always have the ability to control what work and projects they became involved with, and to some extent this meant that their corporate brand and ensuing

image was more malleable than they would have liked. In addition, during earlier stages of a business start-up, the creative organisation may not have identified which core area they wished to operate within or compete upon, adding to further malleability problems for the corporate brand.

“I think since I joined... I have wrestled with the idea of what are we and it has been acknowledged that up until now we tend to say... we will do whatever we can... whatever the client asks of us... which is sort of actually saying we are not very well defined because we are very malleable... and a brand isn't that malleable so umm I think that is where we are trying to get to... I think at the moment I think it would depend on the value that they were challenging... I think at the moment we would possibly take work and complete work which compromised some of our... of our core values because cash flow and turnover is important to keep us going.. but in a way part of the problem is because we haven't err defined a core area where we want to specialise it is hard to know what to turn down and what to accept” (Senior branding consultant)

This perceived lack of control also created tension for employees who had been attracted to the smaller organisation, mainly due to its stated overall vision and aims for the corporate brand. This ultimately returned to the subject of the clients having belief in what the creatives were trying to do, as well as collective and individual egos:

“We have to believe firmly in ourselves in order to communicate what we mean as the end point umm otherwise yeah they (i.e. the branders) are going to have to kind of back down and do it the way they want it done sort of thing even though we believe it's not the best way to do it... it is extremely frustrating... extremely frustrating because we umm it's... I guess it's if I am honest it is probably frustrating because you are then being kind of... you are then relegating yourself to a position of rather than equality and consultancy and advisor to the clients to being one who is being umm a dogs body effectively and that was never what (brand consultancy)... was set up umm and it is not something that I think we ever set out to do so” (Senior branding consultant)

Relationship as a journey (sub theme 9) and communication problems (26).

Relationship as a journey: refers to excerpts within the data that discusses the relationship between the creative and the client as similar to that of a journey.

Communication problems: refers to excerpts indicating something of a communications gap between the various parties.

Building a relationship with the client was seen as very important for each of the creative organisations. The relationship between the creative and the client was often discussed in the form of a journey, with the creative trying to travel along, and/or encourage the client to travel along the same path. This is highlighted by one of the design directors as well as one of the architect directors below:

“we assume people are going on our journey but the reality is that if you gave me that design.. I've already designed it the minute that you have given me the brief I am already out there.. but the skill is not getting to that point without them.. the skill is in taking them on that journey... and we find each time now we take them on the journey and they are incredibly respectful you know”

“our clients would be very disappointed if all they got was a sort of management service and not a creative service you see I think it is what the enjoyment of using designers and architects is that they actually want to be, they want to see part of the creative process you know to see the outcome or to be involved in the process of that, so if we were to take away and turn it into a sort of hidden book I think we would be missing our marketing or sales opportunity or clients satisfaction opportunity.. I think clients like to, they want to see a bit of the magic the sparkle obviously you then have to get a thing built on time and costs also, so it's got to be managed in terms of the sensitivity of that making sure that what is being created is appropriate for the client...” (Architect director - B)

Along the journey, the use by the client of overt and covert forms of control over both the creative process and the supplier's service offering was often raised within the interviews. It also brought into view the creative's attempt to increase their own power and control within this relationship. The resulting tensions and potential impact on the creative supplier's corporate brand was also apparent. For example, clients could impact on the relationship through their approach to communication or

feedback. A lack of feedback was seen as a more significant problem than negative feedback (provided it remained constructive). Other forms of negative feedback from the clients were seen to have less of an impact or were more likely to be ignored, if they arose due to internal or commercial constraints forced upon the creatives beyond their control:

“people are used to having you know umm negative...not negative but alternative views expressed and are used to responding to that umm and would find it difficult to work without it to be honest because you... the worst thing is if you don't get any feedback from the client just says well you are the designer you just do it and then when he takes delivery of it doesn't like it... so you really want the client to become part of the decision making process” (Architect director - B)

“if the client's happy with you then (Architect practice) tends to be happy with you but sometimes you know a client can be dissatisfied because but you're... you may be working in a commercial constraints that are actually forced on you from (Architect practice) so (Architect practice) are a... are happy with you even though the client may be you know miffed that you don't necessarily you know jump every time they ask you to because you know the fee might not cover it and the like so err but you do get you do get feedback from the client does get back to you” (Junior Architect)

The relevance of the source of feedback as well as forms of feedback also appeared to vary across situations for the creatives:

“I have only worked with one client and I think the feedback from that client is fairly key to the success of umm all of us in the team since we don't have many other... you know our team is predominantly working for that client and so I think umm they are a difficult client and sometimes you get positive and sometimes you get negative umm you know the fact they are continuing to ask us to do work is usually the reasonable sign that they are not that displeased I mean it's very difficult frankly to you know to be never to piss a client off in architecture... there will always be problems... it is how you deal with those problems I think that is more important than whether you are perfect or not” (Junior Architect B)

Turning to relationship dissolution, it was apparent that one of the case studies (designers) were more likely to walk away from the client if continuing problems

were faced, and this seemed to be based partly on who initiated the relationship, but also linked back to the client having trust and belief in the creatives (see organising theme Rewards section 5.3.1.3). Creatives in general also indicated a high level of tenacity in trying to bring the client along with them in the process of the journey to help convince them that the idea was the right one before any ensuing dissolution. The dissolution, if it occurred, was often linked to perceived loss of control over the creative process from the creatives perspective:

“Generally somebody has asked (Design agency)... a client has asked (Design agency) to solve a problem so they are the ones with a problem... it is very rare that we will go to them and say we have got a solution for something they are not aware of at the moment... we come away and start relationships and do creativity and all these sorts of things like that sort of umm progress... and it is a constant sort of like you know umm conversation and relationship which sort of builds up and then sometimes does break down.. if it gets to the point where more often than not it comes to the point where the client ends up driving the creativity... and the minute that starts happening the relationship is irrecoverably broken down and it is the fact that you have to walk away from them rather than them walking away from you” (Design supervisor)

On reflection, the above may be seen within the context of a reputation effect, namely that the designers as a corporate brand felt they had a fairly good reputation for what they provided and would, as a result, only flex so far to accommodate the clients. The other two case studies did not have their reputation built in the same way, on the contrary, the architects had actually built their reputation for complete flexibility to suit the clients’ requirements:

“There can be that tendency for a designer to think that they have got the right solution and if a client says I don't like it or I can't afford it umm that can be... that sometimes can be negative but umm most of us here are pretty realistic about you know well it is the client's money and therefore you bend and respond to what the client wants but at the same time you want to try and encourage the client to see the right way... no I wouldn't say we have walked away because one of the selling points of this business is that we tailor our products to suit client needs.. we as a business are used to bending to suit client's requirements...” (Architect director - B)

Internal belief in the creatives' own expertise is often overshadowed or played down as a result of interacting with the client. This impacted, to some extent, on the relationship and the need for the creatives to gain some of that belief back in order to take the clients along on the creative process or 'journey', as joint partners and participants. Part of the problem in the relationship also appears to be that there was the perception on behalf of the client that there was no way of tangibly or quantitatively defining the outcome for some creative processes or products, in either financial terms or alternatively, in more scientific terms. This was noted to be a particular problem for the designers whom found it difficult to quantify the impact of their creative output on the bottom line.

“actually when we make it science people sit up because if it starts to infringe on what they know about... so we are learning more and more to actually to treat this like a science and not just... not just arriving for them... but actually taking them on the journey... advertising command such high fees that they actually err basically they... it's... they are accountable through research and so they actually go... actually we are right because the campaign we launched two years ago we researched like this and shows the results of that campaign and actually shows it down to the fact that they generated x millions in profit that year... they have the fees to be able to quantify it whereas what we do is kind of not quantifiable because we haven't made it into that...” (Design director)

Communication between the creatives and their clients frequently surfaced as an issue within the interview data (sub theme: communication problems). Forms of coercion from both the client and the creatives were evident. Other issues relating to the communication process and patterns were also evident.

The creatives often referred to many of the clients as 'suits'. This reference encapsulated how they valued being seen as different in comparison with their business clients. This perspective also created something of a communications gap between the two parties. This is highlighted for example by the design supervisor and a senior designer below:

“I think it is about the sort of suits element of graphic design which I think we spoke about briefly before in that generally suits like speaking to other suits and some suits in companies are interested in speaking to real graphic designers because it is sort of.. it is a breath of fresh air for them because they have to deal with suits all the time.. generally the relationship starts off very well.. the only times that I have really felt that our relationship with clients has broken down is because we don't have that umm err level of err suit lead communication because we are not a hundred percent efficient at meetings.. meeting notes agendas schedules all the sort of marketing suit lead stuff”

“you tend to be perceived as... you don't tend to be taken very seriously unless you are sort of you know... unless you really do carry the... the weight in your visual perception and you have got a flash suit on so you are talking to them on the same level or you umm all you are a bit older or I mean I find... I don't find they... I don't find it nec... I don't find clients really take designers like me seriously even though I've achieved a lot in the industry you know I have got awards I have got an MA and all those sorts of things... I find it difficult you know... there is this sort of a barrier between you and them you know more often than not” (Senior designer)

The owners and employees within the three case study organisations were experts or the equivalent of apprentice experts. Aspects of expert or creative egos emerged as a key theme within the data. In addition, some of the clients were creative experts, or were experts in other fields, quite unrelated to creativity, leading to the uncovering of some interesting relationship dynamics. Creatives often spoke of desiring to take control and trying to force clients to accept things. This varied depending on the client's perceived level of knowledge. This was not the viewpoint of all creatives, and was reported as based on differing forms of personality and outlook:

“I mean there is a tendency for architects to try and force things onto clients and umm because some people are arrogant and think they know best... clients don't necessarily have the knowledge to or the experience to have you know to you know have solutions so I mean at certain times it can be a very positive thing because you are showing a client something he would of never thought of and he goes yeah that's great but if you have got a fairly educated client who knows what he wants umm you know it's err its basically just a bit sort of umm counterproductive trying to sort of buck the trend every time...” (Junior architect – B)

The expertise of the creatives often led to them interacting with the clients in one way but discussing them in a different way, behind the scenes. This often led to some distance forming between the creatives and clients. Informality within the briefing process at the start of the relationship also added extra problems due to increased uncertainty on the part of the client. Relationships where the creative could get a dialogue going with the client, and where the client was sympathetic with the creative process, were preferred to confrontation, but this was often not the case. In addition, clients were often seen as lacking forward vision, or progressiveness. This aspect also interlinks into the identity of the clients as individuals. Because of the commercial environment within which the creative process was undertaken, ultimately the creatives did not go against the wishes of their clients:

“there is you know we are I mean as architects we do tend to be very two faced about our clients you know we what we say to them and how we treat them and how we talk to them behind their backs is completely different I mean.. I think it is because you would rather not be you know sort of doing... you know you would rather be doing what you wanted to rather than what they wanted to do and also I mean they can just you know they have... know you... and it's often not... it's often the reason behind it is the briefing process you know is often incredibly informal so you will be working on something for weeks and weeks and then the client will just turnaround and say oh well I don't want that I want this...” (Junior architect – B)

5.4 Client findings

As part of the fieldwork, a limited number of clients were approached for each of the case study organisations. This subsection will discuss this data in relation to the themes identified above. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain if any of the sub themes and themes initially identified within the earlier interviews within the organisation, were evident externally.

Brand consultancy

The clients all indicated that creativity was very much a joint effort between the creative organisation and the client. Often the clients noted that the brand consultancy was less of a brand than a team of individuals that used common tools. In addition, credibility was preferred over the word trust, as the consultancy needed to gain and hold credibility with various representatives of the client organisation. It was also apparent that some members of the client teams frequently had to act as internal champions to support the work that the branding consultancy had suggested. The clients all indicated that they felt they held the ultimate power in the relationship, particularly the larger clients through financial power, and that, ultimately, the branding consultancy would give way to the client if pushed.

Design agency

The clients indicated that the designers frequently had problems communicating with the more business orientated members of the client team and this often led to friction in the relationship and arguments over the phone. The client noted that the designers' passion for their work meant that where disagreement occurred it was sometimes hard to get them to move to the middle ground, but that ultimately it was the client who held the power to force a shift. Some members of the client team indicated that they had sometimes acted as a champion for the designers internally and that the designers would not be aware of this. As a brand the client felt that the design agency were quite prestigious and that helped them to win over the client team in some arguments.

Architect practice

The clients frequently expressed some concern that architects in general often want to stamp themselves onto a project, but that this was more apparent with some practices than others. The client had chosen this particular case study architect practice because they had felt that they could control them better than some others which were perhaps more prestigious and whom were therefore less easy to manage or control.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the inductive and empirically based findings. Four organising themes along with numerous supporting sub themes were identified and discussed in detail, as summarised below.

Chapter 6 will discuss the findings further in relation to the literature review conducted within Chapter 3 and will also conclude this thesis.

5.5.1 Theme summary - Identification

As a consequence of expert and creative egos often underpinning the creatives' identity as outlined above, creative organisations appear at greater risk than many non creatively based organisations, of having fragmented and non-uniform corporate brands and identities. This may present a particular management dilemma with regards to corporate brand management for these types of organisations as discussed later in this thesis.

Also, as a consequence of creatives often identifying both with projects and their clients, problems are likely to occur in relation to managers being able to instil an overall corporate vision or guiding philosophy within their staff. This is particularly the case due to the long time frame for many creative projects, allowing creatives time to become wholly immersed in any particular project. In addition, friction between employees or between the employees and the creative organisation is often evident when moved away from a particular project or client. Junior members seem to be particularly vulnerable to dissatisfaction if not allowed to work on more interesting projects, often leading to a drop in organisational loyalty whenever that frustration does not ease.

Creatives also frequently express team or organisational commitment at work, and often the commitment was expressed as a strong emotional bond. This interlinked into the way that individuals seemed to relate with others and their work in general.

It was further noted that some of the creative organisations seek to employ those that have already had some client side experience to help with the role spanning and interfacing aspects of the business relationship. Whilst sound in principle, it was evident that by following such a strategy, these particular employees were also more likely to identify more readily with the client and client side world, than their own employing creative organisation. Senior management within the smaller case studies did not seem clearly aware of this dynamic when interviewed.

Finally, one reported way of counteracting the tendency to identify with the projects and clients is to ensure that open plan offices are used and regular internal meetings and face to face communication work is undertaken.

5.5.2 Theme summary - Development

Opportunities to develop and grow through their current and future work experience were found to be strong motivators for creatives across all levels of the organisation.

The relatively small size of the branding and design organisations in this study were seen as attractive to the employees, who believed that for these two industries at least, small size equated to greater opportunities to learn from organisations perceived to be at the cutting edge of their fields than larger organisations. For the architects however, larger size equated to working on larger and higher quality projects.

During the earlier years of the creatives' employment, access to experts and significant levels of knowledge and experience were very much desired. Under such circumstances, financial remuneration came second to such access opportunities. Therefore creative organisations that promised to offer a culture capable of transmitting knowledge and experience in a capable and supportive manner were deemed highly desirable.

During these early periods, the junior creatives often indicated feeling intimidated by their relative lack of knowledge compared to their more senior peers. However, over time this diminished, as did the levels of mystification they perceived in the creative processes overall. Thus it was noted that the search for knowledge, development and growth also had a definite dynamic component, following along a similar kind of time line.

A form of glass ceiling of creative knowledge and experience was normally reached by the creatives during their time within any organisation, forming a perceived growth constraint. Senior managers were aware of this pattern and actively tried to encourage creatives to take the next jump across into more managerial and administrative duties in the hope of offering fresh challenges. Many creatives disliked such career paths and were more likely to become less loyal and switch organisations at such points. If, however, the managers were able to bring their creatives across the divide, a positive impact was felt upon the shaping of the organisation, than would have been achieved if they had to recruit replacements from outside.

Interestingly, lack of development opportunities did not always lead to a lowering of employee loyalty over time. Employees within more reputable organisations for example were far more likely to remain beyond the end of their learning curve, due to the perceived benefits gained from working for a reputable organisation. In addition, it was found that some creatives even remained loyal to less reputable organisations once their learning reached a plateau, providing they still had a good degree of creative freedom, which they perceived was often on offer if working within some less reputable firms.

5.5.3 Theme summary - Rewards

A number of forms of rewards emerged within this key theme. The need for rewards and the types of rewards were also reported to follow a typical cycle that could be mapped out, to some extent, in some senior manager's experience. Symbolic rewards

were frequently indicated to be of heightened relevance for creative employees. For example, clients giving the creatives the trust to produce the creative product was seen as one important factor in the creative-client relationship. Positive verbal rewards or ‘pats on the back’ were also often perceived as a greater or equal reward as compared to any other form of rewards within the creative organisations, but were not always freely offered by the owners and managers. For many creatives, title or position within the organisation as a form of reward was only of secondary interest to increasing challenges. Comments from colleagues and peers were also highly valued by the creatives. Size of the organisation was also a factor, with smaller organisations being seen as potentially more creative than the larger organisations, the latter were often seen as followers and not leaders in creativity terms. However, there was also a reported downside within the smaller case studies where a form of glass ceiling was evident in relation to employee empowerment and control. It was also found that the rewards sought depended on personalities as well as stage of life and age.

Creative freedom in both process and outcome emerged as a powerful reward in itself within the case studies. Restraints to creativity also emerged as a sub theme, along with an impact on the way the organisation’s brand may have been perceived both internally and externally. Disappointment or tension was often felt by some of the creatives if they were hidden from the clients. This seemed to be a common concern within each of the creative case studies. Thus voice and access to the clients was seen as an important aspect of the relationship. However, for some, the need for voice was subordinated if given more creative freedom in exchange.

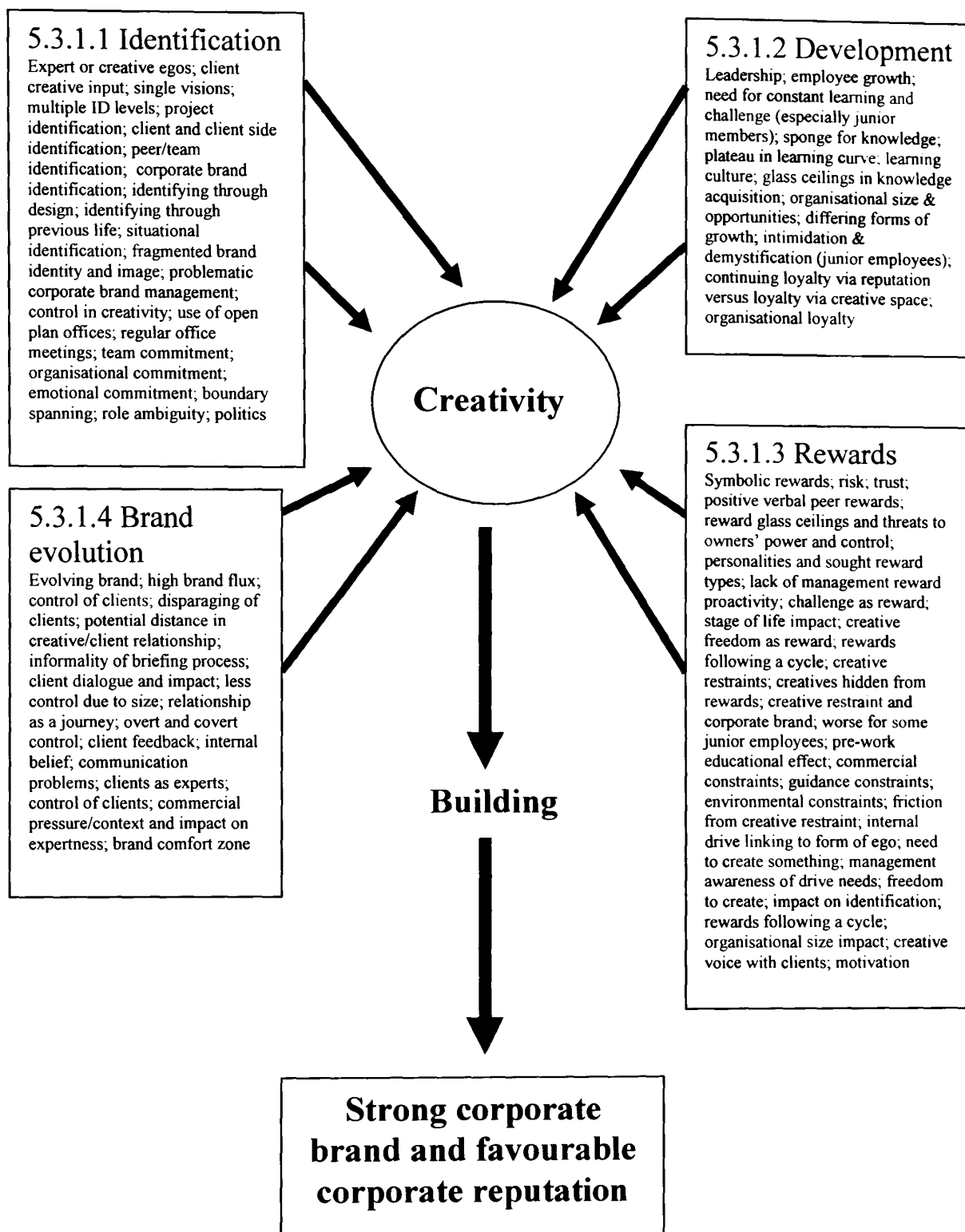
5.5.4 Theme summary - Brand evolution

Due to the small to medium size nature of the case study organisations, a common sub theme was the evolving nature of the organisations’ brand, where the brand was seen to be in a state of initial flux. This was partly due to the evolving nature of the SME brand, often with cases of the organisation being asked to undertake an activity which seemed to be at odds with their current vision. As a result, the management of

creative employees in terms of following a common vision or mission was problematic. Building a relationship with the client in a form of a journey was also seen as very important for each of the creative organisations. Along the journey, the use by the client of overt and covert forms of control were apparent. Creatives also attempted to increase their own power and control within this relationship. The resulting tensions and potential impact on the creative supplier's corporate brand was also apparent. Creatives also indicated a high level of tenacity in trying to bring the client along with them in the process of the journey. The dissolution if it occurred was often linked to perceived loss of control over the creative process from the creatives perspective and this may be linked to a reputation effect, namely that those creative organisations with a more prominent reputation for what they provided would only flex so far to accommodate the clients. However, it was also noted that this depended on how the organisations had been orientated. Internal belief in the creatives' own expertise was often overshadowed or played down as a result of interacting with the client. This impacted, to some extent, on the relationship and the need for the creatives to gain some of that belief back in order to take the clients along on the creative process or 'journey'. Part of the problem in the relationship was a lack of ways to tangibly or quantitatively define the outcome for some creative processes or products, in either financial terms or alternatively in more scientific terms. Communication between the creatives and their clients frequently surfaced as an issue within the interview data. Forms of coercion from both the client and the creatives were evident. Other issues relating to the communication process and patterns were also evident. However, ultimately, relationships where the creative could get a dialogue going with the client, and where the client was sympathetic with the creative process, were preferred to confrontation, but this was often not to be the case.

In conclusion, to summarise these four themes, Figure 5.9 below visually depicts the main findings as presented within this chapter.

Figure 5.9 Inductively generated outcome



Chapter 6 : Discussion and conclusions

This chapter concludes by discussing the findings and implications in relation to the literature. Future avenues for research will also be identified. The rest of this chapter is divided into the following main sections:

6.1 Discussion of findings and implications

6.2 Future avenues of suggested research

6.3 Chapter summary

6.1 Discussion of findings and implications

This study is empirically based, whereas, to date, much of the pre existing creativity literature at an organisational level is mainly non-empirically based and not situated around real life organisational research or settings. This has already been discussed within Chapter 3 (Andriopoulos 2000; Andriopoulos 2003; Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000). This thesis has attempted to address this empirical research gap.

However, as a result of its inductive and grounded underpinnings, whilst commonality for some aspects of the inductively generated themes discussed in this chapter have been found within the pre existing creativity and branding literature, it is apparent that this study does not fit directly with the traditional conceptual approaches of that literature. Therefore, a direct comparison is difficult. Also, overall, this study has a different focus to most of the existing published literature in the area. However comparisons are drawn where best available as seen below.

Chapter 3 aimed to synthesise and discuss the most closely related body of literature, as selected and justified within the literature reviews scope (see subsection 3.2). This was located primarily within organisational creativity theories, as well as more specific creativity/corporate branding theories, since that body of material accounts for a specific and manageable set of material dealing with creativity and branding at an organisational level. Table 6.1 below highlights in broad terms, how this study and its findings can be compared to the majority of others found within the existing creativity literature.

Table 6.1 Similarities and differences between established creativity theories and this study

<p><u>Pre existing models and theories for organisational creativity</u></p> <p>Main focus Variables; measurement; creative outcomes/process; individual or limited unit level analysis – (individual, team or organisational level and often one level of employees such as senior managers or owners and one sub section of creative industry); larger organisations</p> <p>Research approach Mainly conceptual; deductive; non empirical; often R & D and scientist focused; lab based</p>
<p><u>This study</u></p> <p>Main focus Multi level (individual, team and organisation plus all employee levels and various sub sections of UK creative industry); exploratory; sense making; SMEs</p> <p>Research approach Empirical; emergent/inductive; exploratory; interpretive; non R&D or science focused; real life</p>

Source: Adapted from ideas by Andriopoulos (2000).

For a number of reasons, as already outlined within Chapters 2 and 3, the management of the corporate brand via creative employees can face many challenges, some of which may be unique to these forms of organisation. Woodman et al (1990; 1993) have also contended that many scholars have approached creativity primarily, in a fragmented way, leading to shortcomings in their findings with “regard for many of the subtle nuances likely to be associated with such a complex process” (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin 1993: 316). They have also advised that it would be beneficial to disaggregate the construct of creativity from the broader construct of innovation which has been attempted within this thesis. The four organising themes outlined within Chapter 5 have uncovered some of the subtle complexities involved when taking a mainly internal perspective to creativity and the creative corporate brand as will now be discussed.

Practitioners within the creative industry, i.e. those that either own, manage or work within a creative organisation, can potentially benefit from the findings within Chapter 5, as they are grounded upon empirical research rather than purely theoretical work which has dominated the research literature to date (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000). By taking the full discussions of these points, as found in Chapter 5 and also tabulated within Appendix 7, owners and managers within creative organisations will be better informed to manage their corporate brand. Equally, they will better understand how to manage their client to improve the client-creative supplier relationship.

The themes identified within Chapter 5 also have a number of implications for the academic community as will be discussed below. By following an inductive approach based on interviews held across all creative levels within the three case study organisations, a wide number of potential effects on creativity and the ensuing corporate brand have been identified, which go beyond the findings of some of the previous studies within these same creative industry sectors (c.f. Ensor, Cottam & Band 2001). In addition, as the selected case studies were all classified as SME's and non R&D or science based organisations, greater insight has been made into alternative forms of creative organisations. This is when compared to organisations which have been traditionally studied to date. Indeed, recently there have been requests by various creativity and corporate branding authors in the field to broaden the contours of research in creative organisations (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000; Band 2002; Ensor, Cottam & Band 2001).

Amabile (1996) has looked at some of the personal and environmental impacts on creativity within organisations. Within that work it has been highlighted that there is a need to keep intrinsic motivation alive once found within creative individuals. The findings within this thesis have also highlighted how, at times, commercial pressures may negatively impact upon the internal motivation of creative employees. This would indicate that more research is needed to take into greater account the effect of such pressures on intrinsic motivation and, ultimately, on creativity and the corporate brand.

The findings have also highlighted how the pre employment higher education process may impact on employee motivation. It is postulated that the potential creation of a lack of self belief for some of the junior creatives when they first enter into a 'live' commercial environment is partly due to the educational process. This may have implications for the way that creatives should be educated in the future.

Taking on board previous work based on creative risk (Michael 1979; Nemeth 1997; West 1999; Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000) it is apparent that for some forms of creativity, especially where one is expected to 'think outside of the box', an organisational culture may be required which is diametrically opposed to one which encourages cohesion, loyalty, and clear norms of appropriate attitudes and behaviour. In addition, service attributes (Bateson 1989; Hill & Johnson 2003) are believed to take on heightened relevance within the creative industries due to their highly intangible, high-risk status for both the creative organisation and their clients. The empirical findings within Chapter 5 of this thesis concurs that trust in the creatives by the clients is indeed a key consideration (Crossan 1998). Here, trust in the creatives' viewpoints should have added importance and power to help with the potential stimulation of creative thought. This should be facilitated in the provision of autonomy and flexibility so that creatives can undertake the job without unnecessary levels of restraint or challenge to their expertise. The service and creativity literature also advocates that clients should be seen as partial employees of the supplying creative organisation (Lovelock & Young 1979; Mills & Morris 1986; Beard 1996; Sutton & Kelly 1997; Bettencourt et al 2002; Watt et al 2000). For example, they are seen as employees in the creative firm and are carried along as such, being educated, guided and supported by the organisation. This would help relation building. Once again the empirical findings within Chapter 5 support this point, that is, when clients have become involved in the creative process, and have challenged it without unduly restraining the creatives, it has helped to enhance the creative relationships. The 'trick' is balancing the coordination of internal and external group activity while avoiding group polarisation within the relationship. The ultimate aim is organisational unity without uniformity (Nemeth 1997).

Role ambiguity within the creative/client relationship has been highlighted within the literature as a potential problem (Sawyer 1992). Within the findings, some of the more creative employees felt there was often a barrier between themselves and the clients and they sometimes relied on others acting as middle men to overcome this. This was due to perceived communication problems that occurred through a lack of common business language and age differences between the creatives and clients, as well as perceived differences in visual communication, for example, via dress code. In some creative organisations, the owners, senior directors or dedicated employees, such as the account managers, often played this boundary-spanning role and this, at times, led to loss of voice and consequently resentment for some of the more junior creatives.

In the literature, organisational politics and power have also been identified as topics relevant to creative organisations and their relationships with clients (Kover & Goldberg 1995; Watt, Russell & Haslum 2000). Within the smaller case studies, issues of power and politics were particularly evident when the choice of what to do and not to do as a result of requests or pressure from the clients was somewhat limited. This was often due to financial vulnerability and a relatively smaller client base. This would seem to link to small business 'start-ups' and significant difficulty in the early years of the corporate brand development, where the organisation is not in complete control over the tasks it chooses to perform. The creativity and branding literature did not explicitly identify this connection.

Turning to issues of formal and informal socialising between the creatives and their clients, it was apparent both within the literature and the thesis findings, that higher degrees of socialisation is often seen as beneficial to the relationship (Watt, Russell & Haslum 2000). Within the findings, though, this appeared to vary through the lifetime of the project. For example, at times of fee billing, some of the creatives noted an increase in formalisation in both their own and the clients' behaviour. At this stage of the relationship a perception of objectivity was desired by both parties. This objectivity, driven by financial matters, temporarily altered the way the creatives and clients identified with each other.

Issues of multi-level sense making (Ashforth & Mael 1996; Ford 1996; Ford & Gioia 2000; Drazin 1990; Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999) were also identified within the literature. Within the thesis findings, multiple level employee identification emerged as a key theme. Project identification frequently emerged as being quite strong at some stages of the creative process, while at other times identification with the client as an individual or the client's organisation was reported to be significant in comparison with the creative's own organisation. Identification with the expert's field, peers and the overall internal corporate brand also emerged from the data. Owners and employees also indicated that they identified with a number of levels, based either on situation or non-situational motivators. Some of the creative organisations had been specifically set up to react to situational factors, and this was seen to impact on the way that employees were likely to identify with the organisation. This also led to multiple identities and images being perceived by the clients. Even within creative organisations that have been set up and structured to encourage more situational identification, there were still some members who had deeper levels of identification, particularly within the senior guiding coalition.

Issues of employee mission/goal alignment have also been considered within the literature (Robinson & Stern 1997; Koh 2000; Arad, Hanson & Schneider 1997; Ensor, Cottam & Band 2001). Within the empirical findings it was noted that the smaller organisations were seen to be a mixture of individuals with many single visions, often driven by their creative egos. Consequently, these particular creative organisations appeared to be characterised by fragmented and non-uniform corporate brands and identities. Consequently, corporate brand management may present a particular dilemma for these types of organisations. The findings also demonstrated that these single visions could sit at any level of the organisation and were apparent even at senior levels within some of the case studies' guiding coalitions. This would create significant problems for the formation of a consistent corporate image and brand if sustained. The control of these single visions within a creative environment was seen as a key issue for management, leading to questions such as 'what is control in a creative environment and should control be autonomous or internally

generated'. Some of the employees had worked for much larger organisations before they joined the smaller case study firm. In such cases they had noted that the larger organisation had already formed a corporate brand along with evidence that more effort is put into creating a common corporate way of doing things. However, the situation was different in the smaller and relatively newer start-ups, with less of a common emphasis on this being apparent. In addition, for the smaller creative organisations, the relevance and impact of their own single visions often related to the size of the client or project/account, with smaller clients more likely to become exposed to the creative organisation's multiple identities. Rather than being viewed as a problem, this multiple identity appealed to the client, and in some circumstances it added to client's perception of greater organisational creativity. To date, this somewhat counter intuitive finding is not explicitly articulated within the existing corporate branding literature.

Turning to the literature on knowledge worker identity, creativity and the corporate brand (Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000; Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000; Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2001; Ensor, Cottam & Band 2001; Fisher 1997; Rostan 1998; Alvesson 2000; Mumford et al 2002; Brown 2001; Albert & Whetten 1985; Gioia 1998; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003; Robertson & Swan 2003), it was apparent that a link has already been put forward between creativity, organisational identification and creativity. Within the findings, similar links were apparent. Some of the employees indicated that their creative organisation was seen more, by the client, as a collection of individuals than a brand. This often depended on how the original client-creative relationship had been generated. Relationships that had been formed between individuals before the creative organisation's existence, often continued. In these cases there was a tendency for the brand to be seen as a collection of individuals. Identifying with projects was also a common theme within the data. In particular, junior members preferred the more interesting projects. Frustration was often felt if they were not given access to such projects, in some cases leading to a lowering of organisational loyalty and intention to quit. Identification with the projects also frequently caused tension between employees within the creative organisation. Many of the projects within creative based organisations could last many years, and may

have multiple and varying levels of team members throughout their lifespan. Managers frequently highlighted that family/team relationships were thus built up and that if those allegiances were threatened through enforced project change, conflict sometimes ensued. In addition, it was noted that some of the creatives had worked on the client side before joining the creative organisation. Therefore, in some instances, they found themselves identifying with the project more than their own organisation. The effect was that one could tend to fall back on their prior knowledge and experience of the client rather than the particular project. To some extent, owners and management indicated that project identification could be reduced through regular internal meetings and open and informal office communications held on a daily basis. Open plan office spaces were another solution. Such office layouts were apparent within all three case study organisations.

Turning to development within the interviews, the employees frequently brought up the concept of learning: learning something new, something interesting and something from others. Employee growth was seen to underlie this, i.e. the need to expand to become better at different things and to better themselves. Literature that explicitly discusses this concept was not identified. The closest literature touching upon this finding was found within research on intrinsic motivation (Amabile 1983b; Amabile 1997). The learning organisation and self-driven career development literature may provide some tentative links to the topics addressed above but these areas are outwith the boundaries of this thesis.

Within the empirical findings, working in small sized organisations in the case of the branding consultancy and design agency was seen as a definite advantage to most employees when it came to opportunities for learning. This satisfied individuals' intrinsic motivators. Growth, however, meant differing things to different individuals. The designers in particular, and to a lesser extent the branders, often equated a small size organisation with opportunities for higher quality, increased creativity and a feeling of being more cutting-edge. Conversely, the architects felt that being part of a relatively larger SME meant there was an opportunity to be involved in high-quality designs and larger projects. In particular, this seemed to

excite the younger employees. Junior employees within the architectural practice frequently mentioned that they aspired to run their own projects. This also linked to their creative egos and rewards as discussed below. The implications of this for academics is that more research may help to discover if generalisations can be made for each creative sector in relation to the size of organisation sought by creatives for specific growth benefits.

Junior employees frequently spoke of feeling intimidated on their arrival to the organisation, and highlighted the urgent need or desire to suck knowledge from their seniors and their work environment as quickly as possible. It was also noted that over time this knowledge gathering process led to a reduction in intimidation and a demystification of both the creative processes and the way their seniors achieved their outcomes and status. Reaching the ‘glass ceiling’, that is, not being able to continue with their knowledge gathering within creative SME’s was also identified within the findings. The problems this represented have also been identified in the literature, from a management viewpoint. A link was also established between the ‘levelling off’ of the learning curve and some employees staying on within the SME in spite of this. This phenomenon was due to the perceived organisational reputation effect for the employees’ own image. In some smaller or less well-known organisations the reputation effect may not have been present to hold the employees after their learning had ended and they may have been more likely to leave. For other creatives the reputation impact was less relevant as they preferred their current and lesser-known organisation because although it was less prestigious, it allowed them more creative space. This was as a consequence of a reduction in set guidelines. Further research investigating the prestigious reputation effect versus creative space, in relation to their impact on creativity and the corporate brand may provide beneficial research areas, as outlined later in this chapter.

For over 25 years the reward impact on creative motivation has been apparent (Sansone & Harackiewicz 2000; Lepper & Henderlong 2000; Amabile 1983a; Amabile 1984; Amabile 1990; Amabile 1997; Amabile 2001; Lovelace 1986; Watt, Russell & Haslum 2000; Hennessey 2003). The message to date is clear, the “impact

of environmental factors on motivation and creativity is significant and highly complex” (Hennessey 2003: 267). Within the empirical findings the senior managers and directors within the three case study creative organisations often found the issue of rewards difficult. The need for rewards and the types of rewards were often reported to follow a typical cycle. The reward basis also often varied depending on the form of identification the individual employee may have at any given time in their tenure. Creativity as a form of reward frequently surfaced within the findings via an internal drive that linked a form of ego to the need to create something of their own. Managers were aware of this drive in the creative employees, and frequently highlighted that the best form of reward they could offer was a form of nurturing towards the same objectives. To some degree, the size of the organisation impacted on this, with smaller organisations being seen as more creative than the larger organisations. The latter were often seen as followers and not leaders in creative terms.

For some creatives, voice and access to the clients was seen as an important aspect of the relationship and being hidden from the client was sometimes seen as a problem. This was especially if the client was unaware of the individual employee’s input. In addition, voice and access to the clients was more likely to be seen as an issue within the larger organisations where the creatives were often hidden from clients working in teams and so not necessarily client facing. For some creatives, the need for voice was less important than being given more creative freedom, if that freedom arose because the client did not have direct access or input to the creative team to impose unnecessary restrictions.

To some extent, the literature has discussed the barriers to creativity (c.f. Amabile 2001) and includes the information-processing model (Jones 1987) which looks at barriers to creativity such as value blocks: this is where an individual’s values block creativity. The types include perceptual blocks through overlooking opportunities or non identification of threats and self image blocks due to lack of self confidence to resist anti-innovation (King 1990). Restraints to creativity also emerged as a key theme within the empirical findings in this thesis, along with the impact of restraint

on the way the organisation's brand is perceived both internally and externally. Creative restraint was of particular concern for the junior creative employees on joining the organisation from higher education. This linked with the pre-work educational process and the unrealistic expectations that had been created as a result of that education. This partly created a lack of self belief or self confidence to face up to some clients who were resistive to the creatives' ideas. The forms of managerial guidance and the organisational environment could also enable or hinder creativity. Overall, the friction from creative restraint was seen as an issue for the creative-client relationship. Some clients were seen as an obvious constraint for some projects.

By comparing the thesis findings with the research on feedback (Amabile 1984; West & Farr 1989; King 1990; Deci & Ryan 1987; Zhou 1998; Zhou & Woodman 2003), appreciation (Glassman 1986), locus of control (Shalley & Perry-Smith 2001) and perceived fairness (Shalley, Gilson & Blum 2000), it is apparent that many rewards within a creative organisation may be symbolic rather than physical or financial. Management support and recognition can have a substantial impact on creativity (Oldham & Cummings 1996; Tierney, Farmer & Graen 1999; Zhou & Woodman 2003). Within the empirical findings, some rewards were found to enhance organisational creativity. Others were reported to have potentially negative impacts on both creativity and the corporate brand. Positive verbal rewards or 'pats on the back' were often perceived as a greater or equal reward to other reward forms within the creative organisations. However, it was evident that such rewards did not always come readily from management, which sometimes created resentment amongst the employees. In addition, title or position within the organisation can be perceived as a form of symbolic (and financial) reward within many industries. Interestingly, for many of the creative employees interviewed, this was not a significant motivator. Being given a prestigious project or job, or being given more responsibility e.g. facing the clients and presenting material to the clients at key stages of the relationship, were often seen as a greater form of symbolic reward than titles or position. Within the smaller creative organisations, a form of glass ceiling was often reported, where the owners or directors seemed reluctant to hand over

enough control or power to allow middle ranking employees to take on more responsibility or prestigious work. Some of the creatives felt that the overall growth of the organisation and its corporate brand would be restricted due to this ceiling, and could potentially have a negative impact on their own identification and loyalty with the organisation. For a relative minority, less symbolic and more tangible/financial rewards were deemed as more desirable than symbolic rewards, such as pay increases and bonuses. Managers indicated that the form of rewards sought (whether symbolic or tangible/financial) often depended on personalities as well as age.

As discussed within Chapter 3, previous research relating to creative leadership (King 1990; Andriopoulos & Lowe 2000), expertise (Dunham & Freeman 2000; Mumford et al 2002), social support (Scott 1995) and role modelling (Shalley & Perry-Smith 2001) has concluded that due to strong creatives' professional identity, leaders in such organisations can not lead primarily through normative approaches. Therefore, leaders in creative organisations need to be seen by employees as highly 'credible' in order to be able to exert influence. Here, the leaders' creative expertise and problem-solving skills can form a powerful influence on overall group performance. Leaders lacking this perceived 'expertness' would probably find it difficult to represent the group in an adequate way, communicate easily or effectively with the group, be able to appraise the needs of their employees, develop staff in a suitable manner or be able to monitor and assess their group members interactions adequately (Mumford et al 2002). Leadership charisma and its impact on creativity within a creative organisation was not identified within the general creativity literature. However related research on transformational leadership (Jung 2001) has found that such leadership has a positive impact on creativity. Therefore, a potential area of future research could be charismatic and transformational leadership within the creative organisational context.

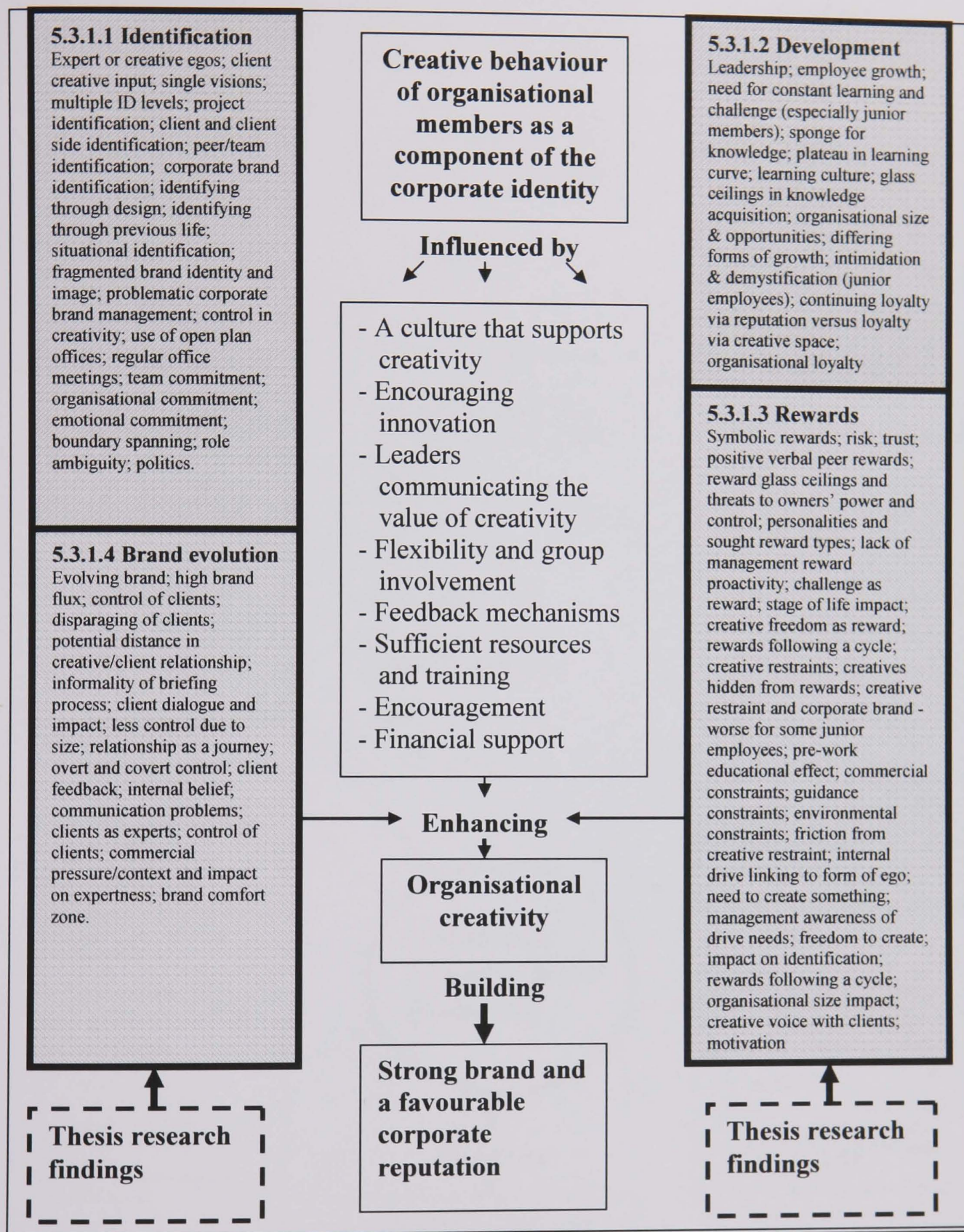
The literature has also outlined the impact of boundary protection (Kover & Goldberg 1995) and creative social control (Woodman & Schoenfeldt 1990; Wolff 1979) within a creative context. The findings indicated that clients often lacked forward vision or progressiveness in comparison to the creatives' own viewpoint.

Where this happened, creatives often spoke of a desire to take control to try and ‘force’ clients to accept the creative experts’ suggestions. This perceived creative expertise often manifested itself in creatives interacting with the clients in one way but discussing them in a different way behind the scenes. This led to some psychological distance building up within the client-creative relationship in some of the case studies. It was also noted that relationships where the creative could get a dialogue going with the client and where the client was sympathetic with the creative process were preferred, as opposed to confrontation, but this didn’t often happen. However, because of the commercial environment within which the creative process is undertaken, the creatives did not ultimately go against the wishes of their clients.

By moving on to directly compare the four inductively derived themes with some of the specific creativity/corporate branding models and theories identified earlier within Chapter 3, it is possible to see where these themes add new perspectives and knowledge to such existing models, as well as corroborate with existing empirically based knowledge.

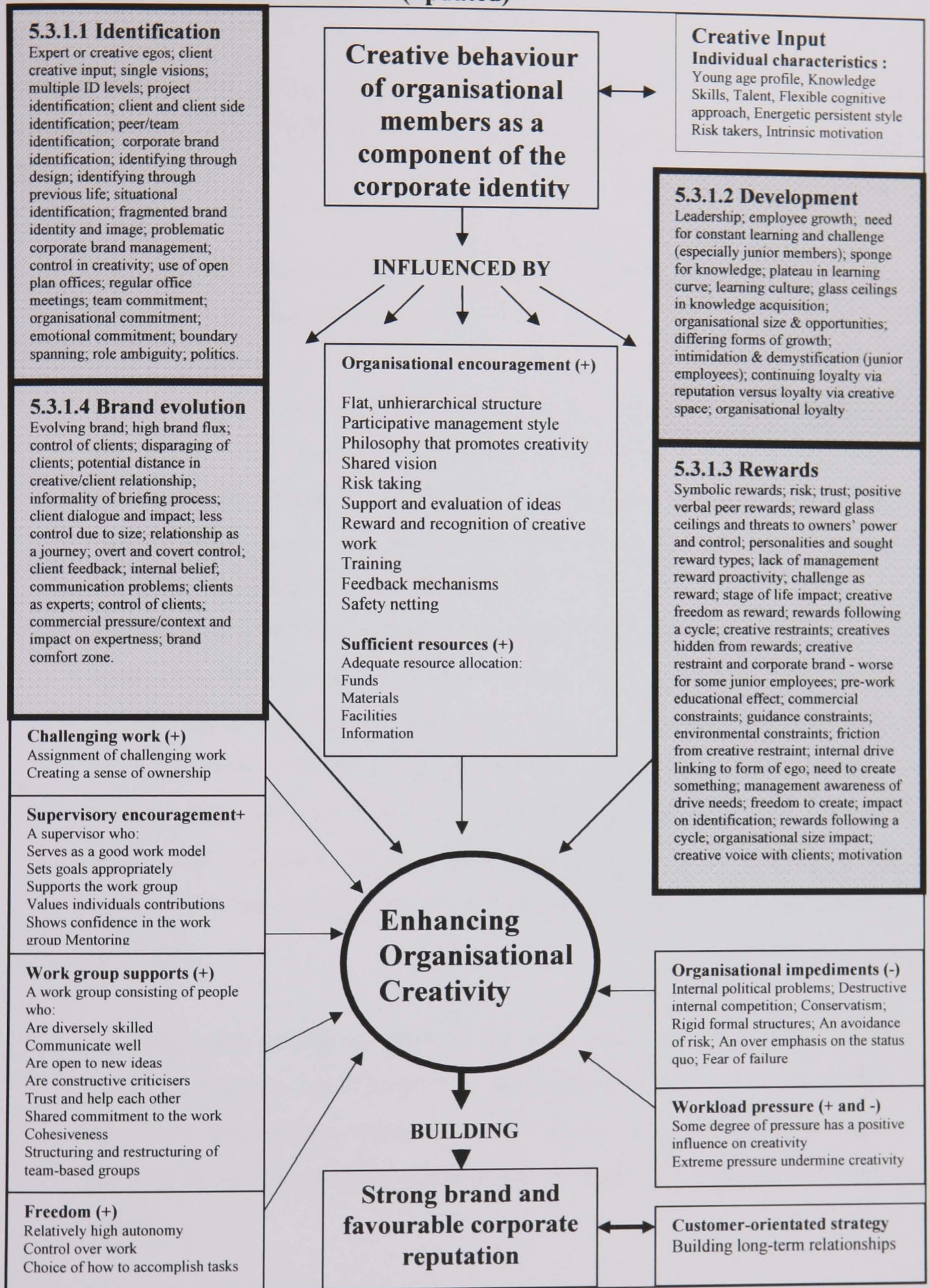
As noted in Chapter 3, research focusing specifically upon organisational creativity and its impact on the corporate brand is relatively limited to date. However a number of studies have been uncovered and identified as relevant to this thesis. These include two key models and theories as presented and discussed by Andriopoulos et al (Andriopoulos & Gotsi 2000) and Band (2002). The four inductively derived themes have thus been directly compared to these two models within Figures 6.1 and 6.2 below, and each model has been upgraded/modified to reflect the additional findings as indicated. Hence, as will be seen, this thesis has empirically added a substantial level of new knowledge and findings relating to the internal perspective of brand management and brand building literature within creative SMEs.

**Figure 6.1 Internal perspective of brand building within creative organisations
(updated version based on research findings)**



Source: adapted from Andriopoulos & Gotsi (2000: 365).

Figure 6.2 Brand building in creative industry sectors (updated)



Source: adapted from Band (2002) p 42; Amabile (1995)

6.2 Future avenues of suggested research

The literature review and findings contained within this thesis have uncovered a number of interesting avenues for future research in relation to creativity and the corporate brand.

- Empirical research is needed that covers all levels of creative employees and not just owners and senior managers.
- More research is needed upon identity processes, focused upon individuals and organisations *becoming* identified rather than *being* identified, to help investigate the subtleties and complex processes of identification within creative organisations and their impact on the corporate brand. Shifts in individual identification over time could be examined by assessing members' identification at different points in the life of a project team, in individuals tenure with the organisation, and/or in terms of crises or other punctuation points. Future research avenues could “thus test whether individuals who strongly identify with their occupational community might correspondingly be more responsible to ‘situational factors’ designed to affect their creative engagement” (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999: 303). The impact of any shifts on the management and growth of the corporate brand could then be identified.
- Building upon current research in the area, such as client switching for example, further work is needed on the behaviours that may occur behind-the-scenes (backstage) which may still impact on the social relationship between the client and creatives, particularly within the business-to-business context.

- The dynamic process of creativity as it unfolds over time, perhaps for a project that may span months or years, is worthy of further investigation. In general, longitudinal research could be conducted as creativity is often a protracted process (Drazin, Glynn & Kazanjian 1999; Dewett 2004). Aspects that could be looked at include willingness to take risks (WTR). For example, taking or not taking risks may lead to certain consequences which modify future behaviour. Do other contextual factors, other than feedback or success, impact on this and what, if any, effect might this have on the creative corporate brand?
- Greater use of inductive research approaches within creativity research has been recommended, using for example research strategies based upon grounded theory, thematic analysis or discourse analysis.
- More multi culture research needed. It was evident that most research on creativity is from the USA, although the USA only accounts for around 6% of the world's population, therefore global generalisations with reference to creativity from much of the current research may possibly be inappropriate (Martinsen 2003). For example, can the intrinsic motivation principle of creativity be applied to populations in differing cultures around the world, especially those not following the western traditions and concepts? Does the expectation of an extrinsic reward undermine creativity in these differing cultures as they do for many western countries? Is there a common link between motivation orientation and creativity performance for all individuals in all cultures? (Hennessey 2003). In addition what is the impact of any differences upon the creative corporate brand?
- Person-environment (P-E) fit and the impact on creative output/outcomes within creative organisations has been looked at recently by Livingstone et al (Livingstone, Nelson & Barr 1997). This is an avenue that is worth further exploring. Also job-environment fit (J-E) is another area for potential studies. Future research could look at the interaction between personality, job

structure and organisational policies for work positions that require different levels of creativity, as well as how these variables affect commitment and performance. This has recently been looked at by Shalley et al (2000). Links between the above issues and the formation of the creative corporate brand could potentially be identified.

- Does an individual's mood impact on creativity? Positive moods have been shown to enhance levels of creativity and negative moods have been shown to inhibit cognitive flexibility and decrease performance quality on creative tasks (Murray et al. 1990; Vosburg 1998). Shalley et al (2001) have called for more research focused upon mood and its impact. The impact of mood on the creative corporate brand during service encounters is also a possible future area of study.
- Gender, ownership and creativity. Each of the four case study organisations selected for this thesis were owned and /or directed by men. Chusmir & Coberg (1985) and James et al (1999) have found that women tend to orientate towards socially directed creativity and males towards more object and abstract creativity, indicating a possible masculinity-femininity dimension for effects on creativity as an avenue for future research. It may therefore prove fruitful to investigate if there is any impact through the owners gender on creativity, which feeds through to the way the corporate brand is formed and managed within creative organisations?
- What about emotion and where people know they are supported emotionally to take risks, to be open, share ideas, to potentially fail with no fear of reprisals as in creative work? Emotions of an individual can impact on the mood of a work place via positive or negative emotional characteristics (Lofy 1998). What is the impact of emotion or emotion work in a creative setting or on the corporate brand?

- The impact on creativity via charismatic leaders/leadership is an area worthy of potential research. Mumford et al (2002) have indicated that such research would help us to understand how charismatic characters may impact on employees, and thus also the corporate brand. The ensuing creativity in such settings through enhanced motivation and intellectual stimulation is also of interest. In addition, the potential negative impact of charisma is also worthy of further study, where such leaders, especially when highly visible within the organisation, may in fact restrict the autonomy of the group from pursuing their own vision of the project work.
- Creativity and conflict. Research could ask questions related to the incidence of conflict in different creative occupations. It is not clear whether creative conflict is a phenomenon limited to artistic domains, or whether it emerges only in professions where strong adaptive influences, like commercial pressures or strict codes of conduct also operate. A comparative study of achievers in different creative fields, perhaps rated for artistic content and for the salience of adaptive influences, would increase our understanding of the conditions that produce creative conflict and of the dynamics of creative development (Gelade 1997). The impact of these aspects on the corporate brand could also be identified.
- Role ambiguity and clients. Future research questions have been set by Beard (1996). For example, do the creative boundary spanners show they are sensitive to indications from clients that they are experiencing role ambiguity? Do they think abstractly that some clients are just bad to work with? What are the overall and differing effects of role-sending behaviours and feedback directed to clients? What type of role ambiguity do the creative boundary spanners experience and why? Is there a high turnover rate in boundary spanning roles during the lifespan of a project and what is this impact on the creative corporate brand?

- Unsworth (2001) has put forward a similar matrix of creativity types: expected creativity, proactive creativity, responsive creativity and contributory creativity. As already discussed, within Chapter 3, this thesis has focused upon case studies dealing primarily with the reactive (responsive) form of creativity. Putting construct difficulties aside, Zhou & Woodman (2003) have put forward a request to investigate the potential differences in the factors that contribute to creativity and the creative process across all of these categories. This offers potential avenues of fruitful research. In addition, the impact of differing forms of creativity on the corporate brand may be worth investigating.
- The empirical findings for this thesis noted that in some smaller or less well-known organisations the reputation effect may not have been present to hold the employees after their learning had ended and they may have been more likely to leave. For other creatives the reputation impact was less relevant as they preferred their current and lesser-known organisation because although it was less prestigious, it allowed them more creative space. Further research investigating the prestigious reputation effect versus creative space, in relation to their impact on creativity and the corporate brand may provide beneficial.

6.3 Chapter summary

This chapter has concluded this thesis with a discussion of the main findings and implications as derived from the empirical data in comparison with the pre existing literature. Identified avenues and areas for further research have also been identified and outlined.

In summary, this thesis has set out to provide an initial understanding and insight into aspects of the corporate brand within business-to-business small to medium sized enterprises (SME's) located in the United Kingdom (UK). It has specifically investigated how organisational creativity interrelates with the corporate brand taken

from a mainly internal owner and employee perspective. The adopted approach was exploratory, qualitative and inductive. The outcome is the presentation of various organising themes and sub themes.

It is hoped that the concepts and findings identified within this thesis will be relevant to at least three communities. The academic community will benefit from new insights based on inductively generated findings, specifically focusing upon business-to-business SME's in the UK creative industries. These findings have been outlined in detail within Chapter 5 and summarised earlier in this chapter. The four identified themes and sub themes highlight the interlink between employees, how they create meaning and the relevance of that meaning to the corporate brand. The 'identification' theme for example, has captured various individual and organisational identification issues apparent within the data, each with implications for the creative organisation and their corporate brand. The 'development' theme uncovered some of the ways through which individuals look to grow and improve across different experiences, and also outlines how the lack of such opportunities may affect organisational loyalty and the corporate brand. 'Rewards' of various kinds also emerged as a major theme relating to the creative process and the corporate brand. The rewards sought varied, and the management of such rewards presented particular problems within these kinds of organisations. Finally, issues relating to the growth of the organisation frequently emerged in relation to the corporate brand, as encapsulated and discussed in detail within the theme termed 'brand evolution'. Research questions relating to each of these themes and sub themes have also been presented within subsection 6.2.

The practitioner community will benefit from greater insight into some of the ways that the corporate brand is enhanced or devalued from an internal perspective. This will allow the organisation to make better informed management decisions. Appendix 7 outlines in detailed tabular format the issues and aspects that managers need to be aware of when attempting to manage their creative employees in relation to their creative corporate brand. These main aspects can be broken up into seven practitioner perspectives, namely: relationship dynamics; organisational and

individual identification; learning curve and growth; creativity as a form of reward; restraints to creativity; symbolic rewards; experts and expertise.

Finally, an improved understanding of the process of creative service delivery may assist both providers and consumers in attaining a better product and greater satisfaction.

As highlighted within Chapter 2, while not necessary for all types of jobs and organisations, a 'winning creative idea' that stands can have a large impact on sales. (Blair 1988; Buzzell 1964; West 1999). It was also shown that most organisations can benefit from creative ideas that help to improve quality or productivity or client satisfaction (Williams 2004) and that the enhancement of creative performance within employees is a necessary step if organisations are to sustain a competitive advantage (Amabile 1988; Oldham & Cummings 1996; Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby & Ferron 1996). The findings within this thesis have therefore helped to identify some of the competencies required from both managers and their employees relating to creativity and their relationship with clients.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Example of transcribed interview plus a reflective diary entry

Branding director – Corporate branding consultancy

Name of company has been replaced by (branding consultancy) within this transcript.

Me: in some of the previous interviews with yourselves and the other case organisations it has been mentioned that the process of working with the clients is like taking them on a journey... can you explain a little more about what you mean in that context for (branding consultancy)?

Director: what you are referring to there I think it is what we call the pre-search... the pre-search process... a good example of this was the work that we have done with Dunlop because their point of entry was at umm we've got a value proposition for the Dunlop brand umm I think it's eight eighty five percent right but it's not quite right for the time so we need to change and so we need your help in changing that and we said basically okay if you want if you are typical of an organisation of your sort then you will be sitting on top of a lot of existing research material umm some of which you will have left behind because companies do their research and scatter it behind them like confetti so we said basically let us sort out the ten or twelve best pieces of research done over the last five or so years let us review that err and let us... and that's to do with us helping them make sense and look a fresh at the structured learning they have already got and at the same. In parallel with that we do um depth interviews working to a structured discussion guide which is really encouraging the people who are going to be part of making the strategy or approving the strategy getting their perspectives and their experience and learning insights out on the table umm the result of that from Dunlop's perspective is that they came to an understanding that actually their real problem wasn't so much about the proposition err it was about the organisation's internal belief in their ability to change things err the guy that said it was eighty to eighty five percent right... rapidly revised it to sixty five percent (laugh) and at one stage through to forty percent or whatever so clearly the proposition wasn't quite right... they came to understand that and came to understand the bigger task was to think about the enemy within and lack of belief and self-confidence so I mean that is a journey of a sort I guess but it is helping them to make sense of the starting condition you know the initial state umm because most work that we do in some way shape or form is about change err as an initial state and as a sort of umm desired state if you like and the change between the two is what should determine the program after the sense making a... our feeling is and our finding is that they often pay in adequate attention to defining the initial state.

Me: of course that is going to be a very important part of your entire process really... because if you don't bring them on board at the beginning then you are probably going to be fighting a losing battle for the whole thing.

Director: yeah I mean people like to be listened too people do... are repositories of experience and knowledge umm and going through that process of pre-search is part and parcel of getting people to the table in err for the first sort of formal planning session to start feeling that they have begun to contribute so it's sort of part of the process of building alignment overtime.

Me: right okay are there any examples where that has not gone to plan or where it was very much more difficult than you would have expected and what had caused it?

Director: yeah well the example that has not quite gone to plan (laugh) is with the computer... the IT services company where their problem is overtly about corporate branding um and we've been through that pre-search process with extensive board and non-executive interviews and extensive employee interviews in groups in four different countries and extensive customer interviews umm there was very little structured err research to read... ohh there were external interviews as well with analysts like us and anyway so they got involved and the members of the board then got together for this workshop where they basically had the private notion that they weren't going to succeed unless they defined precisely what it is that they are where they want to go and what makes them different umm they were involved in pretty much the normal pre-search process but there were so many forces in play that were causing them as a group to umm move away from alignment and coherence that frankly they couldn't... they weren't able to sort of collapse it into a sense making state in one easy hit umm so I mean that project at the moment is in abeyance not least because they have made a major acquisition in between times and we have said to them the point at which you make a major acquisition is the point at which your lack of clarity on the corporate brand is going to come home to roost as a real problem umm but they have kind of got very locked into that err and we are sort of waiting to see if we are going to move forward or not with that project... I think the other thing about that particular group of people were... we have got this very simple construct of the four worlds four thinking styles... left brain right brain form facts feelings futures (?) very very left brain as a group... normally when you assemble a group of ten people... you will have representatives across the... you will find you have a whole brain group... with this group they were err ruthlessly left brained so they hated Neville for example who is like yellow here (pointing at model) a fantasist and idealist a futures person... yet I think in retrospect that group wasn't perhaps in the market for a journey of collective self discovery... that group may be would rather have had an answer that they could then have had an argument about.

Me: it is interesting that you have used that particular organisation umm because the next question that I have got for you was that with the IT service provider umm in the last interview you said that they only wanted to work with the one person and err that you were trying to find ways to work around that... maybe it hasn't moved forward anymore because of what has happened to that organisation... and you used the words... we are waiting to see if our ways of working around the edges of it get kicked back so my question to you would of been two months down the line how did you get on with that... did any of that get kicked back at them. I suspect that you haven't moved that far forward if they have been doing merges and acquisitions in between.

Director: yeah we will know I think in the next week or so whether this is going to move move forward I mean frankly the chairman the main man there is a particular kind of person and sometimes you have got to stand up and fight with him and of the people involved with that project the person prepared to stand up and fight from our point of view was me and that was down to the fact that I got really cross with him

and I thought he wasn't listening and I told him so and he loved being slapped around a bit... what we have tried to do is to ensure that in the meetings that are happening around the edges while this decision is pending you know... continuing to keep Neville involved and continuing to keep Steve involved... you know... just won't accept frankly that they only want to... you know... only want to deal with one person because if they are only dealing with one person they are not dealing with the corporate brand are they at the end of the day... and respect for different mindsets and respect for different skill sets umm it is important...

Me: which goes back to this fact once again that you feel they are more left brained and won't accept any others views or perceptions or whatever...

Director: yeah... I mean my point... I can hold my own with the left brained person because that's where I come from err and they respect that... but you know you have got to have some respect for the other areas of the brain and the contribution that they make.

Me: yeah... umm... yeah we talked a little bit last time about err the type of people that work here at (branding consultancy) and you used the words umm they like to be intellectually stimulated umm and we also talked about an emotional bond almost with (branding consultancy) err two different things slightly of course but... in some of the interviews yesterday umm I noticed that there were other issues there apart from just being intellect... and you were quite right... have been right in everything you have said mostly but the intellectual stimulation umm from the more junior staff perspective do you think that is all they are after... the intellectual stimulation or is there other aspects from that that they are looking for from your perspective... that's a hard question... not a very good question but...

Director: well

Me: I mean they are here because they like to be intellectually stimulated but do you think there is something else they want out of it apart from just...

Director: oh yeah I mean people... my perspective is that people want to be part of something that they feel is... they contribute too where they have got a emotional bond there umm...

Me: What about taking from though... from their perspective taking...

Director: what do they take from the organisation or...

Me: yeah I mean they are being intellectually stimulated but what else do they do you think maybe they are taking from the whole umm experience... what do you think they will be looking for from a junior perspective.

Director: stimulation... growth... development... excitement... umm the sort of collegial atmosphere of umm like-minded but not necessarily the same (laugh) kind of people... umm a place where it's lots of fun actually.

Me: and do you think it is fun or...

Director: do I think it is fun (laugh)?

Me: yeah well I mean to be intellectually stimulated isn't always fun is it

Director: well people...

Me: it has to be a fine balance

Director: ...people make... have different definitions of fun umm and oh what can I say about that umm it's I don't think you could create an organisation that's just about having fun for example umm ultimately intellectual stimulation should be part of the kind of the buzz that people... that attracts people to this sort of company and if it's not then presumably they will (laugh) be attracted elsewhere umm I mean what we do try and do is we have social events and things like that and that's not in the sort of... we have to have a social... you know structuring a social event... it's because the partners err each of the partners feels err a bond that's umm about more than just sort of partner employee sort of... yeah everybody in this little business matters to me in some shape or form. It would be the same for Michael, it would be the same for Neville... sometimes all the partners aren't equally good at projecting (slight laugh) that and expressing that you know I am a case in point but I don't know... I am waffling?

Me: no no

Director: am I on the right sort of...

Me: no it's really good... it's a common question... I mean it goes back to the type of people you have got in the organisation you know knowledge intensive intellectual... it's the same for the architects, it's the same for the designers I mean it can't just be the intellectual stimulation... it needs to be as you say fun and you know what does that mean to different people... how do you handle it how do you manage it and if you don't manage that aspect correctly maybe that causes or creates problems with the way people identify with the organisation... so that is where it is coming from the question really... it is not so much specific to (branding consultancy)... but for me it is an interesting one I mean you know if you think back to University I mean that's quite intellectual and stuff and it can be fun and sometimes it can... it's not fun you know.

Director: yeah

Me: and what happens to you when it is not fun... how or what do you start to think about... how do you relate to the organisation when it is not fun you know and that...

Director: well that is an interesting question because if it's not... whatever fun is... if it's not fun for everybody... I am sorry... if one person in an organisation is not having fun consistently not having fun it's unlikely that they are going to be happy

and unlikely they are going to stay err there are occasions when nobody in an organisation like this one is having fun... you know there is a rhythm to fun and I think the issue is about how if... how aligned those rhythms are in the... in the team and there will be occasions when you know most people are reasonably happy about the way life is umm but one person sort of is not aligned with that... is not in that mode... now if you recognise that... when you recognise that you can try and understand why and hopefully try and do something about it umm ultimately there is a limit to the things that you can do about it and sometimes that person is just out of sync and then from their point of view it is best that they are not part of something like this... from our point of view it is best they are not part of something like this... we owe them a obligation to help smooth the transition back into here... I mean it is not... I don't know the impression that you have of this organisation but it is not a Darwinian organisation I don't think and I wouldn't want to... you know be part of something that was very competitive umm it is a supportive it can be a very very supportive environment... I mean we have had some real problems recently I mean you must of picked up on that... I have been very unwell... Neville has not been one hundred percent and Michael has put a fishhook through his eye. And the way that people have rallied around you know kept the business going and supported one another and supported the partners at certain points in time have been great.

Me: umm oh yeah there is not... once again it is a general question for all three organisations I will be asking this time because I just think it is an issue for the types of organisations you are where you have intellectually you know bright people and what happens when they stop... maybe fun is not the right word... but you know when they stop enjoying it or what's causing that... and more to the point how does that affect the way they identify with that organisation... because I think it happens. I mean my background is quite you know I have been to a lot of... through a lot of intellectual organisations I guess and I have seen it almost time and time out... some people they seem to stay identified with an organisation for ten years and others they last about a year and it starts to wane and it's I think it's something to do with as you touched on there maybe something to do with the learning curve that you are on.

Director: yeah

Me: and once the learning curve to you starts to pewter out... but maybe there is a lot more to learn... that is another issue... starts to pewter out and they start to identify with the organisation in a different way.

Director: umm

Me: so in other words they put up with much more or whatever in the beginning... ahh yeah I am learning... and once they start to think they are not learning because they are intellectual then there starts to be an issue there and I think that knocks on to the way that they identify over time... that is another issue but...

Director: yeah... well the important... important thing from our perspective is to... that we should grow... not necessarily in pounds shillings and pence but grow in terms of numbers and types of people because that creates opportunities and frankly

if there was sixteen of us right now there would probably been more than double the number of opportunities for people to find their own particular areas of enthusiasm and expertise umm so it's growth both in terms of numbers of people and therefore a richness of interaction... diversity and interaction within the organisation and secondly there is the quality of what you are doing the quality of work in the last six months err things because of illness and things like that we've been more inclined to accept work that has been there rather than to say well we can do that but we choose not to do that... so part of redefining what we are is to be able to take a much clearer stand in terms of the work that's in and the work that's out and my sense is and this is probably wrong it is probably a personal... it's probably driven by my personal circumstance but I feel that we are on the cusp of our second wave... If you look at our ???? you know... the date... it's there... we have been consciously or sometimes subconsciously preparing to catch that second wave and that releases once you get into that it releases a whole...a new wave of enthusiasm and excitement and commitment and energy and fun.

Me: and problems.

Director: and problems (laugh) yes yeah well let's emphasize the fun let's emphasize the enthusiasm and the energy that can happen.

Me: yeah I am just thinking along the lines of small-business research that I have done... what happens to small business once they reach a certain size and they start to expand again and again you start to hear all sorts of problems that no one has ever thought about... it is quite interesting... but that is a whole different ballgame...it's all about you know the partners start to maybe lose a bit of their control that they used to have and things like this or the owners of the organisation you know it is very much being looked at by people and I think it is quite interesting once you start to get a bit bigger umm more so for family owned organisation's because they really... once they start to lose control you know all sorts of strange things start to happen because they don't want to lose control.

Director: umm umm

Me: or they don't want that much control to go.

Director: what is control in an environment like this?

Me: what I think for... once you start to get into much bigger you start to have to bring in the professionals if you like... the marketers to finance people.

Director: umm the business development director...

Me: and it doesn't fit usually with the culture of the organisation that it has grown from... very well-known.

Director: umm

Me: and it creates a lot of problems and the trouble is to grow to a certain size you need those people because you just can't... you can't handle it you need specific skills to get through the amount of work that fast if you like.

Director: err hum

Me: a certain skill set and you just can't you can't no matter how hard you try you will have to take these people on and if you do that you start to lose a bit of control... a little bit of the politics start flying and all this you know where the partners or the owners start to feel they are losing control... you know there is a whole area of research on it if you want to look at that just look at small-business research.

Director: umm

Me: because I think if you are aware of some of those issues before you start to expand you might be able to avoid some of them or if not recruit for the right reason... you build in what it is you're looking for the your finance director or whatever... that is what a lot of small companies go through when they get to about the two-year point... if you last beyond the eighteen-month point they reckon you will last five years or more that is the starts... so you have done okay... because most have folded in the first eighteen months to two year point err and after that you have got the other issues of expanding but anyway enough of that... It is because I was a tutor on that course is why I know so much about that... It is not really my research area.

Director: but there are bounds between control and creativity if you like err and you can say well those are not opposites anyway but... we are in a network... is now a dominant metaphor driving err you know... thinking in business and the rules for making... how you make help networks realise their potential... If in three or four years' time we were behaving like a boids... yeah you know boids they wheel... they are computer-generated sperm... swarms or flocks that set them going and they just behave like flocks but there is no leader there there are three or four... you can set up those on the basis of four very simple rules... and if we you know if that's where we get to with boids then that would be great because yeah and I suppose in my role there are sometimes elements of control enters the leadership that I have to assume... don't therefore automatically assume that that is where I get my kicks... it's learning or trying to collapse it all down to the you know the single pithy sentence or thought or ideas and you know I think we are almost there now... it's like if we do agree and sometimes I think the partners won't necessarily agree that we are about change... about brand business and organisational change you know that will mean that to Neville and that to me and that to Michael you know and so I mean different things to different people... we are trying to get to this thing which is the sort of very essence of what we are what we can do and what makes us different what excites us... at the point that we have got that though it's right that you do that (hand gesture opening) again because that should be sufficient to condition expectations as to what is and isn't right for us but allow a great deal of leeway of people to express that in a way that is precisely right for them... right for the occasion or right for the client and that's the... it is making that transition... and that... that has been our journey (laugh)

over the last you know eighteen months a journey to there (drew a circle returning to beginning)... that is now the challenge.

Me: how are you looking at that circle is it umm you are having discussions within (branding consultancy) with everyone that is here or...

Director: it's a mix of... yeah now that's a good question because we have looked at it in a number of different ways you know last November we looked at all the stuff we had done for clients and we said what are the common features so that was a kind of a almost a bottom up way of looking at it... we have also started move into that experiential area which is a very fertile world... we have also had to subconsciously... well we have been working on it subconsciously... I have most certainly err so I've had sort of new thoughts... we've then started to talk in quite vague and confused terms to clients to see what their reflections are what more thoughts they have... we've chosen in the last four to five weeks since we have got closer and closer to this thing to keep the conversation amongst the partners at this stage not because we want to cover the fully baked cake but because there is a time... this is the time that we have got to sort of stand back-to-back against the area... we have got to be clear what the area is and at that stage once we can agree on that... that sorts of sets a non-negotiable parameter if you like... then it's then everybody can influence the final collapsing of the way functioning ????? If you like... and we... I will be... we will be alive to the possibility that they are not negotiable... some areas of the non-negotiable have to become negotiable... if it feels right if it seems right... so in a sense the partners have umm decided to go through a period of talking amongst themselves for a while because just throwing it out for... you can't just throw... scatter the bread on the waves and think that you know part of the loaf is going to get to Madagascar... you have got to set some sort of boundary conditions.

Me: umm... vision problems

Director: it may be Shaun... when we get to that that one person feels that's not right for them.

Me: no I was going to say that... I mean it is obvious to me that three partners with completely different mindsets maybe three different views on things umm you don't have a common vision at the moment and that is what you are looking for and err I am wondering if it will arrive you know...

Director: where it's a stand... you know it will... it absolutely will with that I really believe in that quote and parts... bits of this are starting to filter in and have effects on our conversations that we are having with everybody and the good aspects of that are being picked up and played with which then brings it back in... like I was talking to somebody the other day who has sold his business in the last eighteen months... two of them set it up... and he said our business model was we were one company we had slightly different areas of expert expertise but the main thing is we competed like hell and it was a very successful because Mark achieved this so Clive achieved that... so they said... I said that is completely different from our circumstance where we set great store by hard thought and census and guides... and it bloody difficult sometimes

but when you get to a good outcome and you usually do that around client specifics and you get to a good solution... the client really sticks and we will get there because we got there before we left UDV in the first wave... it is unthinkable that we won't get there.

Me: umm interesting days ahead... umm OK I have flagged this entire area up here (last interview notes) just let me reread it... It is the question about umm I mean you are changing staff over time and projects whether the clients saw it as a major issue... and yeah we got onto the issue of commonality... commonality has probably come through umm but with different individuals that you get different expressions of those commonalities... that sort of conversation umm and it was due to with whether the umm individual expression becomes particular or removed from the common values.

Director: right

Me: and you said you hadn't really faced that within the organisation where you know there was definitely a conflict starting to come through from someone's values... their own values and the values of the organisation and we talked a little bit about the three partners the three mental models and the three perspectives... which I think is what you are grappling with now... it looks like it is coming right to the surface now umm so I wanted to talk a little bit more about the expression of these commonalities... differing expressions of commonalities is such a rich sentence to me.

Director: did I say that... God knows what I meant.

Me: well I will reread the whole thing because it is hard for you without it I think... without knowing the detail of what the question probably was... so the question was... So do you feel that the umm clients see the changing of staff over time as a major issue... and you reply was... I do not think clients see this as a major issue in the here and now... I think that we talk about it like this... I mean we are aware of it I mean there is a very very strong commitment and I mean it is one of the values that we believe... I mean it is not just an espoused value we believe that the team always wins... umm intellectual rigour... determination to get the best possible results and a desire to work very closely in collaborating with the client... I think those are the commonalities but within that there are different expressions of those commonalities... and the issues become if the individual expression becomes particularly or far removed from the common values... umm and that is not an issue that we have come up against yet although you have to appreciate that there are three partners three mental models three perspectives three skill sets...

Director: yeah I mean the... well I am pleased that I said that at the time because I still feel that's true... there is a... we are very deeply client focused... I think it was after we had the first conversation where I opened a forum for all of us and I said you know what is your evaluation of our behaviour... the way we behave tells us what... and somebody said we are ??? invoice... and I had to hold myself back from this because that is... that is a manifestation of keeping track... and if an invoice has gone

out... good it enables us to become closer to what we can become... and so what I did I actually spent a lot of time watching what people did and frankly the thing that people do they agonize over getting things completely right... they agonize over getting everything completely right for the client... they agonize over getting everything completely right for the client for the time that they promised... and if you see the behaviour at play it is absolutely... so so you know client focused... intellectual rigour and a commitment to a team solution I believe are the central values. Now different people will have different views of the relative importance of those three things...

Me: okay

Director: and I will almost... I will always be very strongly oriented towards the team and the intellectual rigour umm Michael would always be strongly oriented to the team and the client focus... Neville will always be more oriented more strongly in point of fact behaviour to intellectual rigour and client focus now sometimes... and the question then becomes if you are playing those three you know... spinning those in slightly different ways... if you're not careful sometimes you will let one of those values go a bit adrift and you know so it might be that at some stage for example that Neville's best contribution to the organisation and the organisation's best contribution to Neville's future is that Neville kind of sits a little bit outside and one side of the dominant thrust of the organisation is a very very specialist resource or a piece of ???... err but might be that umm the same thing might happen to me or the same thing might happen to... am I on the right sort of tracks here... is this telling you stuff... so I think it is like an elastic... it is like an elastic band... If I... a metaphor for a brick and the egg attached to one another by an elastic band and if you have got... the egg is an individual and if you have got an individual with values and what they think are important flying away from the brick in some way... what happens... one of three things... at the point of which the elastic band will stretch... one) the brick moves... probably just a bit but the brick moves... well great they have done something useful for the brick... two) the egg comes crashing back to the organisation and smashes on the brick which is less desirable and another scenario is the elastic band gets cut and the egg flies off... now ideally we want the elastic band to move the brick... and for some... all we have to make sure...

Me: surely there is a fourth possibility there though... where as you pull on the egg against the rubber band away from the brick the egg will then shatter... still within the rubber band it still you know it has not gone off I mean you have the three but the fourth to me would be that the egg will just crack because the brick want crack but the egg shell is still within the rubber band as a mess you know broken.

Director: at that stage any possibility of the egg influencing the brick is completely...

Me: yes but it is still within... I mean I am taking it that the rubber band will be the boundaries of the organisation if you like... I am guessing that is what you're metaphor is?

Director: yeah

Me: but to me you have then got this broken thing still within... it has not just shot off somewhere and it's out of the picture you know.

Director: oh right... okay you might be taking the metaphor a touch to far... my point here is... you have got a brick with eggs and a elastic band like that (drew sketch of eggs around brick moving in different directions to counter act each other or move brick in a certain direction as a result) nothing potentially... nothing goes anywhere... the issue is... you know I don't know I mean the compensate off those is probably a bit more like that than it is like that... so it's getting its getting helping that get itself soaked itself out in a way that is just right and it sustains forward momentum.

Me: but I mean once again just to labour my point... if in your scenario err what you are saying is maybe you might come to the state where one moves off... just moves of away from (branding consultancy) lets say yeah and this snaps (rubber band) and they disappear if you like to start a new thing or whatever which is common in organisations but to me what would happen if you kept just pulling and pulling and then it just breaks (the egg) but it is still attached I mean it is still within the organisation I mean that quite often happens... you know they... well it might go on for a year but that's the case you know and what effect would that have on the whole organisation... maybe not at partner level... lets take it down a level or two that could be happening to an employee but they are still attached to the rubber band for... well for a period of time you know.

Director: if that's the latter situation in other words v rather than p applies (drew a formula) then it's no good for the egg and it's no good for the...

Me: (branding consultancy)

Director: and that situation may well come to pass...

Me: I mean if that was an employee situation then you would probably both come to a agreement to disagree and that would be an end to that and you would sort things out but it is not so easy if it is partners I wouldn't of thought because a partner is a partner... and if a partner doesn't want to break off or something you know but they feel they can't contribute anymore because they have a perspective in a slightly different direction... the shell just breaks err I am not saying that's happened here and I am not saying it would happen but it would be very interesting... there must be organisation's where it has and that would be an interesting case to research wouldn't it if you could get in there to uncover... I mean to me that is quite an interesting... I will remember that for future research actually because that would really affect the whole dynamics of the organisation.

Director: but you know that this is an issue... I mean this is a metaphor that has a bearing on real life and then the issue becomes what is objectively happening here vs. what is going on in people's minds... (long pause)

Me: good okay we will move on I think from there umm

Director: actually has that point landed... (lowered voice) it's so typical for three partners to get sick in different ways... I get sick in a way that umm science cures...

chemicals and radio waves and radiation waves... Neville gets sick in a place up here you know... Michael puts a fish hook in his eye... I mean it is like... you know back to the old model... I have been sick that way... Neville tends to get wobbly that way and Michael who is very practical... I mean it is weird isn't it... it is weird... so and what is going on in People's minds... and the perception becomes the... everything here and that is a... you have touched upon a issue that you know other people are very well aware of and don't want to see that situation (broken egg shell in rubber band in diagram)... you know I mean if there is a guiding coalition then you have to ask you know where is... what are the relative strengths of these things umm (drew on diagram and showed me result)... In terms of the relationship.

Me: yeah it's interesting stuff isn't it the network and stuff.

Director: you could spend all of your time thinking about this (laugh).

Me: (laugh) exactly there is a thesis in there... if I ever make a doctor I will put the student onto that.

Director: (laugh)

Me: umm ??? It is definitely an area to look at umm one of the questions that I asked last time from your perspective what do you think members of (branding consultancy).

Director: sorry can I just stop you there for a minute... when you work on your thesis on this and the relative strengths of relationships between members of the guiding coalition don't forget to include in this instance the fourth man... the relative strength of the relationship of the fourth man... and that is the brick... the business as a whole you know if (branding consultancy) was a person and he was present at a board meeting... so yeah...

Me: and the relative strengths between here here and here (pointing at three partners with the brick) the figures here here and here that's what you are saying is it... could you put figures on that then (diagram)... I mean don't do it but could you in reality could each partner put a figure on each of those to what they see as this (relationship).

Director: I am sure they could if they were asked.

Me: what I would wonder then is what does that figure mean... these figures are strengths of relationship or are they figures that show alignment of thought or are they alignments of underlying philosophies...

Director: probably all off those actually (laugh)... a complex muddle off all those things.

Me: that's what I would do I would break it right down... that's all well and good but let's break it down... what does that figure mean... It might be ten different things and

I would go back to those ten different things because then you get to analyse your own organisation.

Director: yeah you would have a diagnostic tool potentially.

Me: ... yeah probably not so diagnostic... but you could do it.

Director: umm

Me: but it would be painful... you would have to look at relationships to go through that and really bring everything out of the cupboard you know to say... oh that's interesting you see this in a completely different score to me and then you ask why is that you know so you use the figures to flag up that there is an issue and then get into the substance... which is my whole thesis really... I am very quantitative in my approach but I am qualitative in the PhD which is quite useful so now I can understand figures and that easily but I want to get below it... that's what you could do it's what I would do with that but I think it would be quite painful or you could... say you had that in there (pointing at diagram) you could do that bit first... well that's quite personal actually but then you would have to go through the whole thing again for this and see what each one's view on you know what that number is and see what each one's view is I think that getting the overall number is a problem you wouldn't be able to... you could have an overall number and then work backwards to ten different numbers for each of those numbers or else have ten different models and not start with an overall number I mean the overall number is very subjective.

Director: the numbers I just threw on as a sort of relative strength expression of a very complex and qualitative thing.

Me: oh yes there is a thesis in that you could keep the PhD person busy for years looking at that.

Director: but that's what we do... we find new ways of thinking about things on the run... that's what we do and it is very difficult to express that.

Me: it would be interesting to err I find a lot of people that have gone through the Website are always looking for examples for the same thing as them and they are always begging the for it to give them an example and I don't know it because I am not out there doing these things so I can't give them it you know... well I could spend a week looking for it but I am too busy... but I feel so sad for them... because there must be other organizations just like you or very similar with three partners or whatever very similar issues that have done it and sorted it or whatever...

Director: yeah well it's a different... I was talking about Clive and Mark earlier on and it would be the third man would it... I mean that would be much more simple set of dynamics to work out but when you think about...

Me: the trouble with the fourth man is also umm it is effected by the external of the client's perception of what the fourth man is you know you've got what you think the fourth man is.

Director: yeah

Me: but then... I mean you can be your own people if you want you can just... I am Neville I am Director I am... the fourth one just can't be you know it can't be at this stage of your development it can't be probably even what you want it to be even if you could all agree what you want it to be because the clients will still affect it.

Director: yeah and there is also the fourth man who we live within.

Me: (over the top still talking about client) the fourth man is a schizophrenic.

Director: (laugh)

Me: you know because it's clients your driven by what the clients at the moment anyway by what the clients... I suspect that you always will be actually unless you are like... I think even Wolf Olins... Wolf Olins just do... they don't do everything they just do specifics on the job whereas the design consultancy I am working with they are much smaller than Wolf Olins but they took on the task similar to what Wolf Olins could off took on but they ended up doing everything and they realize on reflection now they should never of done that... They did everything I mean everything they were ever asked they did it and it was a big project for them the RAC and err they realize now that Wolf Olins would just say no just do these five things and someone else can do the rest.

Director: yes because those are the things that they can do exceptionally well.

Me: they have obviously worked out... or I suspect the things that they being a cynic maybe I don't know because I haven't interviewed them but I think they have got to such a size now that Wally Olins is more or less in his retirement umm I think it is the case of what they can get the most margin from umm without going over the top in what they are spending maybe... a bit of that it is not just what they are good at... I am sure they are probably good at most things but I think they have worked out a fine art... we can do these five things extremely effectively with a big margin for us and we won't touch the other stuff.

Director: yeah

Me: but I think that comes with size once again.

Director: well it comes back to the conversation about us defining our thing because one of the things that will help us to do is excluded some of the stuff we shouldn't be doing and it also enables us to take a stand you know I mean one of the things that I have discovered about myself is that I am best in talking to clients when I am actually I have got a bit of a soap box.

Me: when you believe in what you are saying.

Director: it's umm you know ultimately we do a lot of intellectual stuff but ultimately the stuff that we are doing has got to make a difference and not just about people's minds you know things like ??? and stuff like that now that matters you know I can talk of a subject of escaping from flat land... flat land strategy and Michael and Neville wouldn't feel comfortable with that metaphor so that kind of becomes my stand on my interpretation of that thing but providing... it is back to the diversity with a shared perspective...

Me: yeah but I mean the clients would probably want... I don't know... you have spoken to the clients... some of the clients want to one particular person OK to me that is a client problem more than anything else you know if you have got an entire team as you say they should somehow convinced they need the entire team's input and if they can't be convinced then we will drop the client... but you can't at the moment because you've got to you know... for me well that is going to be a disaster because it is just a road to nowhere really... the way I would see it growing is from what I am hearing is... if you get enough clients that would take a multiple team each of you would run a certain team that looked at things in a certain way and maybe be involved in the project at a different time at different stages or you would all do it together if you had to or you would break up the experience that the client had into stages but I would imagine that most organisations that are growing... little departments almost form and then you start to hit subcultures when a company gets bigger you know I can't see any other way off tackling it once you start getting bigger.

Director: well one thing you have to understand he said didactically (?) is that most clients come in here OK and what happens is they phuum (hand gesture) umm occasionally it all gets... it can get a little bit sort of... which is something which frankly fills me with well disappointment I find that very disappointing and I don't like it at all but there is... so this sort of thing about the company and they only want him is saying as much about you know the person that is saying that is as saying about me or about the company as well it is tensions like that I will be perfectly honest with you... although it is a great un-discussible although Michael and Neville know it... ultimately I don't really wants to do client stuff... that is not where I am going to get my buzz... oh I will do the sort of float in and sort off QC and a big meaningless conversation about where the world is going umm and that kind of client stuff is OK but you know getting stuck into the nitty gritty stuff of clients is increasingly not where I want to be and you know I am sort of I am more in the... and it's not right saying I am a ??? person but... I am off I am off on another tangent?

Me: no it is interesting... okay umm yeah we talked last time about what you thought people here identify with inside (branding consultancy) and there were a couple of things that came through from the interviews yesterday that were quite interesting and we have got here that you think there is a very very strong level of commitment to (branding consultancy) which is a common theme and if it wasn't then people here would probably find it quite uncomfortable and eventually probably leave umm and you have got here that it is kind of sort of expected umm the interesting thing I want

to ask actually to get the long way around to the point is you have here... they are screened out in the recruitment process... and you said that... people who don't look like they are going to evince that process are screened out in the recruitment process... so the question is how... how are they screened out... how do you know if they are going to sort of fit?

Director: the truth is we don't know we can't know they are going to fit we can only at best we can feel we can chew it that they are going to fit... we can use umm tools like umm Myers Briggs type err analysis to help us understand the person but even though I mean you don't hire on the basis of a Myers Briggs type... it only fuels a discussion it enables you to sense...

Me: some companies do unfortunately but you are right.

Director: yeah some companies do now that in our most recent example where we haven't used the tool at all and I feel that maybe we should of done umm so we will not get it right every time... what is most important is that it's very clear that the situation where it has arisen where we clearly got it wrong that we manage our way through that in a way that is right for the residual group and the person that through no fault of their own didn't gel umm and then that we learn from that experience and get more focused.

Me: while we are on the subject then the most recent I take it you are talking about what the analyst...

Director: no he is there... the senior consultant is the most recent person.

Me: oh right okay the interesting question that I would have for you that came through the interviews yesterday was that most of the people that you have employed here you knew already.

Director: yeah

Me: there is one... there is only two...

Director: well there is three people that we didn't know from Adam basically and the three of us and the two people we knew.

Me: so what I am thinking about is that err the way you've umm applied your recruitment process umm well I mean yeah part of it is just people you knew so you didn't really need to go through the recruitment process if you like.

Director: yeah so that's the majority.

Me: and then two people that weren't people that you knew before.

Director: three.

Me: three OK that includes Una.

Director: that was Una who was very early on umm and was immediately and instinctively right for us err and Simon and Jacqueline who we searched for if you like and umm yeah.

Me: now OK... no I think we will go onto this later on I think... but to me it is quite interesting that half the organisation has been informally recruited and the other half has been sort of formerly recruited or maybe not as formerly as most companies do...

Director: and we've got to learn about... we have got to learn more about... because it is all going to be here in the future isn't it (pointing at part of organisation diagram - partners) I mean there might be some more coming in here... but the vast majority is going to be coming in here in this sort of area of formal recruiting and we have to learn as we go especially from those instances where if one makes as one will at some stage... make a mistake... I mean one of the things one of the conditions that we applied when we were looking for umm that senior consultant... well... to date we have said we only take people with client side experience and that comes out half a feeling that that is somehow... that somehow adds value from a client's... you know we have walked in your shoes der da de dar de dar... talking to a recruitment person the other day she said well you know for your next senior consultant perhaps you should relax that condition and my immediate reaction was... no that doesn't feel right and she said the thing that really matters is that the three off you... the three partners have got client side experience you know providing you can then transfer the mind set that comes... arguably when you are paying serious sums of money for a senior consultant umm what you need at the moment is umm consulting experience more than client side experience... to which we say yeah so when we go next into the market at that sort of level (drew 65 thousand on sheet) err we will relax that criteria and that will scare the knickers off us... well it scarce the knickers off some people.

Me: yeah but if they have client side experience already then they are already cultured in a certain way of dealing with client's aren't they maybe that was their point you know by taking someone who hasn't had client side experience gives you more chance to do what they have told you that you should try to do and I mean everybody carries baggage with them don't they you know from one relationship to another whether it's an organisational relationship or personal relationship or something you know you carry things with you so umm how can you have... maybe I am being a bit naive here with the terminology being an academic but how can you have someone with consulting experience that hasn't had client side experience.

Director: by client side experience I mean having worked in a client organisation.

Me: right

Director: and there are just loads of people in the consulting market that have never been inside a client organisation you know particularly in the big err strategy houses... Booz Allens... Bains... Mckensy and this lot you know they come straight

out of MBA straight into a world-class consulting organisation umm twenty five year old MBA's that are telling you know dyed in the wool production directors how to do their business I mean I find that actually quite offensive as a former client... as a former client it was offensive err when I was subjected to that so we kind of said well we won't subject our clients to that and we have then trolleyed that down to a conclusion therefore everybody that joins us should have worked in a client environment directly and I think what we are saying now is you know as we move forward and you know at senior levels we shouldn't insist on that... it is up to us to ensure that the people that we take on board are going to err interact appropriately with the sorts of clients that we have... but right now for example we could... somebody coming in from the outside world that has been err you know at that sort of level in a consulting environment has almost certainly something to teach us about business development.

Me: in a MBA sort of a way... you guys... have any of you done MBA's?

Director: no

Me: right okay... umm there is something here about err I asked you a question about giving people enough space to make an error in what they are doing and it is all about allowing opportunities to maybe fail if you like and then handling that appropriately so people grow...

Director: it is unreasonable for us not to have that perspective because we are doing that ourselves all of the time (laugh) I am making mistakes every day.

Me: I was going to ask for an example... I am not sure I have an example of that and I like examples so I can go back and think about it... so I mean do you want me to reread the thing or are you okay with that...

Director: what an example of a circumstance in which people have made a...

Me: what maybe and then been given the space to sort of grow from that and err...

Director: I am well I can't think of a visible error from a client's perspective because you know that's... that would get kind of screened out umm I am not sure there... I think the people that are most prone to making errors at the moment are the partners actually umm but then at least we were re-orientating and learning quickly I think one of the things that I have learned though thinking of one particular umm person at that sort of level umm who is doing a lot of work in a particular area for a particular client in a particular way working very closely with a particular client and it just didn't seem to be good enough and and it landed... it ended up with a sort of beating up umm and almost a judgement that was sort of unduly restricting you know that person can apparently do that sort of thing but can't do this sort of thing umm subsequently what we have learned from that person is that providing you sort of lay out some tram lines and then just get the fuck out of the way frankly... that person delivers very very good work umm I say it is not a direct answer to the question.

Me: no no it's ok... that's fine... good ok umm I must rush through these, I have got so much stuff to get through... I will get off the academic stuff in a minute but I just want to go back over the interview you know it is like a good chance of learning some deeper stuff... now something that came through in umm your analyst there actually... good interviews yesterday with these guys and I enjoyed it very much... umm and there is a commonality umm I don't know if you remember we... I discussed with you the fact that you were all bio-sciences and chemistry and geography and Michael was Media studies and it is quite interesting that the common connection there is this growing of organisations and stuff... connections and relationships... but the more obvious one to me would be that you have recruited very much from Oxbridge Cambridge umm Edinburgh whatever... maybe on that level it is too simplistic but in the interview it came through that maybe that there is a commonality amongst you at that level that maybe allows you to interact much easier than if you had people on board from other sort of universities that are more different in their approach or something like that... does that make sense... I don't know if you have ever thought about it like that.

Director: I can post rationalize it... it it's never been a subject for real discussion and I would... but it would make sense that were we are recruiting people into an environment that is very team oriented and with a collegiate kind of spin to it that you would favour people that have been in that sort of environment outside umm err in the past but it is not an overt kind of policy thing.

Me: no it is not in your decision criteria.

Director: no... I am wondering if it should be though (laugh) now you have mentioned it.

Me: well there you go I mean it is certainly came through from the... but well should it you know that is the question I guess... if you want to be a creative organisation or something umm sometimes you need a maverick thrown in there to... well maybe not a maverick but a maverick that you can get on with if there is such a thing but you know these are issues which once again if you are recruiting from a...

Director: well this changing thing umm you know at the point of re-invention one component of that would almost certainly be strategic visualisation in other words not just thinking in reams of text and stuff like that but actually you know how do you help clients err think or feel or see visually sometimes... we had a conversation yesterday between the four of us on a particular piece of client business... we are not very good at that and the...

Me: I know just the man for you.

Director: well if you do you should effect an introduction because we are definitely in the market for that sort of thing... now having said that... that sort of person is really likely to be quite different to most of us and then the question becomes you know how do we accommodate... how do we help that sort of difference thrive so that's going to be a very interesting exercise... those people that we have worked

with... we have worked with one guy in the outside world whose strength is in that area err he talks the language of strategy but he thinks and presents visually but we haven't been able to work with him...

Me: no I know just the man or I think I do anyway... MBA-ers are like that but he is a certain sort of MBA er as well umm we can talk about that later on maybe... I don't know if he is in the market or not...

Director: no I would be fascinated to err... even if he is not just to meet and talk to him...

Me: um where are we here... okay good.

Director: yeah I ought to be winding down in the next ten minutes or so...

Me: I think what we will do is move forward to some of the deeper issues that have come through from academia and I would like to talk more on a experience level if you like to see if you think any of these issues are relevant or not... umm part of the literature talks about umm identification being on different levels... the situational level and what they call deep structural identification umm now...

Director: somebody's defined what a deep structure is have they?

Me: well to them deep structure identification is where there are umm employees and employer act together to benefit each other yeah.

Director: urrhu

Me: Whereas a situational identification could be something like along the lines of whether you identify with a client or a particular project... another way of looking at it is that err how is it rewarded or how is it encouraged so situational identification could be on an economic level you know level of pay or bonus or whatever and that sort of thing or you can have deep structural identification which is err moral along the lines of being included in meetings or given more responsibility or umm sort of along those lines and I just wanted to ask you do you think that would be a relevant way of looking at you know identification... could you be that simplistic umm because that knocks on to one other stage that for instance some organisations if you were to have a like you know some way of showing to the employee that they have done very well but not in a financial manner umm you know because it would have absolutely no effect umm like for instance I worked in Motorola one summer in the sort of packing phones and things just for a student job something to do now if they had suddenly of given a employee umm a nice you know handshake you know well done that is really... we really appreciated that work... I am not sure it would of done much for any of them... it would of done for me but for many of them it wouldn't done because they wouldn't of trusted them because they have never identified deeply with that organisation so it is pointless even trying to do that stuff yeah umm...

Director: I understand the difference... I sort of broadly understand the difference between what you are saying is deep structural identification and situational identification I mean another cut on that is it is when you think about how you apply that it is sort of hygiene factors vs. motivation factors and the like... the the situational level is the easiest one to describe and err embrace the deep structural... I mean that is where the magic lies in the deep structural identification and how you get to it... and that is a very very complicated... in terms of the language one of the things I find is because I like the notion of deep structural identification... I have talked at clients (laugh) occasionally about the deep structure of change umm it's a sort of... it is academic speak though.

Me: it is pure academic stuff that I am reading.

Director: right yeah... but I mean those two things are different... they are different things I recognize that... the implications of organisations that you know are able to lock into and motivate umm deep structural identification vs. situational identification... in a sense McKinsey you know that big names do the situational stuff but it's not that they don't do the deeper structural stuff but that is something where the real magic... magic lies...

Me: yeah... good.

Director: I mean we would like... I don't want to be part of something where it is... we talk about a transactional relationship which ends up in pounds shillings and pence working Hours holiday days and stuff like that... I don't really want to be part of an organisation where that... all the primary motivation you know the reason that people go ??? that sort of stuff... that is all necessary but you know satisfying that is all necessary but not sufficient to me... I felt a deep structural identification with Guinness in United Distillers that it is why I stayed there for fifteen years it was the point at which it all changed and and it was all moving into transactional and situational mode that I decided inter alia that I didn't want to play.

Me: if we can go back to Guinness then very briefly umm can you give me some examples of umm well from the literature here I mean... did you have events where you all shared and where the events you know they followed on from one another so as an organisation did you as members of staff or employees share these events in a sort of logical order...

Director: umm Guinness the brewery was what I would call a limbic organisation in other words it was kind of pragmatic umm doing was ticked err and caring about the brand about the product and about one another whilst not spoken in those terms was deeply... was rewarded and was rewarding and there was a whole err stream of ways in which that was encouraged fostered reinforced... not as part of a grand plan or strategy but quite umm just quite naturally and and you know the most obvious manifestation of that would be that people would go out and drink together umm but that trolleyed into all sorts of things... workshops and bonding sessions and outward bound and things like that all reinforced it... UD although part of Guinness PLC was a different kettle of fish the whole thing was much more transactional... thinking was

rewarded a great deal more than the feeling and doing in many instances... levels of trust were much lower so all the... a great deal of thought had been given to what the UD way should be and how you structure of programs and experiences and bring people together to show learning and stuff like that but it wasn't quite the same the magic was never there and the big challenge for organisations like that is how they get beyond that how they get into deep structure rather than superficiality or in our terms how do you get from flat land to you know transforming peaks... if you can work that out academically you had better drop me a copy of the paper (laugh)... so if we can translate that into practice.

Me: umm okay because your time is pushed I think we will cut it here

Interview 102 mins

Transcription: 10.5 hours

Transcriber : S. Powell

Example of reflective diary entry

Reflective PhD diary entry immediately after 1st interview with managing partner (director A) at branding consultancy

Context: This interview was conducted the day after my first interview with (branding consultancy) and another Director (Director B). It was conducted within the organisation's own building and in an open plan office with others around us. He seemed quite relaxed and keen to discuss the topics throughout, leading to a longer than anticipated interview session.

He is an articulate interviewee with an indication of a high degree of intelligence from the way he handles himself and the often thoughtful answers he provided during discussion. Often he took the lead from me for the interview to make sure I understood exactly what he meant, and also to make sure that a point that was important to him was not lost on me. He was frequently worried that we were moving off track, which was interesting as I did not really specify a track to follow apart from the loose topic guide, and often I had to reassure him that all was fine, no matter which direction he went in. Many of the interviews were conducted with other people from the company close by. However I perceived a relatively limited impact from this with some quite open and frank answers and discussions, only occasionally did he lower his voice. With hind sight it may have been better to have tried to find an isolated location. This was not possible in this case as the space available was limited (plus this gave me an opportunity to observe interactions between colleagues around him in the work space).

The interview was recorded with permission using the mini disk, and apart from when I adjusted the recording levels after a few mins, at no time did he indicate that he was uncomfortable with the mini disk running, and whilst I looked for any signs, I did not perceive it as having affected the interview or his responses in any way.

Interview reflection: It is obvious that there are tensions between the three directors whom seem to have similarities and differences that they are each aware of. In addition, I detected that there may be tension between the new senior consultant and other more junior staff in the organisation from this interview. This is interesting, because the senior consultant was not known to the directors and most of the junior staff before the employment, whereas most others were known to them in some capacity.

Before translation it was obvious that he did not like what he saw with a recent merger in his previous organisation, and that he and the other two directors felt an urge to "create their own thing". As with the previous interview with one of the other Directors he mentioned that he saw the setting up of (Branding consultancy) and what it was trying to achieve, as a "quest". He mentioned this near the start of the interview and the end.

When discussing why projects with clients often start of small and then grow, he gave differing reasons than those given by the other director earlier. There was also a link in that he saw this as risk reduction on the part of members of organisations. He also gave different reasons for why organisations feel they need (Branding

consultancy's) help than those given by the other director. As the other director, he highlighted that fear may be a key driver for their clients, fear that they need to get it right, a source of potential insecurity (relationship may be built on insecurity).

It was obvious that he felt employee loyalty was to the firm rather than any professional calling. He stated that emotional commitment was important to the organisation from employees, and that this was screened for in recruitment interviews.

Also, it was apparent from the interview that the more junior members wanted, and often formally demanded more structure, but that he felt that was less liberating. It seemed to be an experience/age issue as to how this was perceived.

Clients are spoken of apparently on two levels. There are the senior clients and the "de facto" front line clients. This would indicate that perhaps there were different forms of relationships between these two levels of clients and the organisation.

He stated that he felt that what distinguishes between naive research and really useful research is the extent to which it is grounded and behavioural.

He was also interested to see if organisations are starting to see (Branding consultancy) as a brand rather than a collection of individuals.

He mentioned that he did not want the organisation to be seen as an organisation dealing with aspects that led to low margins, thus a financial perspective may be evident in his view of how (Branding consultancy's) image is judged either internally or externally.

It was obvious that he often sits on the border of what he termed a comfort zone of the things he would like to see (Branding consultancy) tackle and the things clients want them to do. It was noted that due to their relatively small size this often meant that (Branding consultancy) did not always get a choice.

He also highlighted that there was complex dynamics inside the guiding coalition that he perceives will affect the way the brand translates to customers.

He also spoke of an emotional bond with clients that was good and also bad.

Reflective PhD diary entry immediately after 2nd interview with managing partner (director A) at branding consultancy

Context: This was my follow up interview after the 1st with Director A. It took place again in one of the offices within (Branding consultancy) with two of the more junior staff present in the room behind a temporary barrier. In addition, other members of staff occasionally entered the room. The employees seemed engrossed in their work and were working hard so the impact of their presence was limited. At times when discussing sensitive issues relating to the employees or other directors in the room, Director A noticeably lowered his voice or used hand signals to communicate. Thus on reflection, although the presence of others has probably had a limited effect on the discussion, it may have been better to have insisted that a separate room or space be found. This was difficult to secure at (Branding consultancy) as space was at a premium with the Directors not having separate offices. Director A was relaxed during this interview which ran considerably over the amount of time I had requested. He seemed open and keen to discuss the issues that I raised. The interview was recorded with permission using the mini disk, and he seemed to forget it was on and seemed relaxed. At no time did he indicate that he was uncomfortable with the mini disk running, and whilst I looked for any signs, I did not perceive it as having effected the responses in this interview which were quite candid.

Interview reflection: When discussing the process of working with clients as being like a journey where you need to bring them on board - he highlighted that people like to be listened to and that they are repositories of experience and knowledge and that going through this was part and parcel of getting people to the table.

However, he also discussed that some client groups were perhaps not in the market for a journey of “self- discovery” and that some groups would rather have an answer that they can then have an argument about.

It was also apparent that the chairman of one company is a man who he feels needs to be stood up to, and that is why the chairman may prefer to interact with Director A because he is not afraid to stand up to him... “he loved to be slapped about a bit”. This created problems in that he tried to also ensure that other members of (Branding consultancy) were also involved in some way, otherwise they would not be dealing with the corporate brand. He felt it important that clients should respect the different mind sets and skill sets that (Branding consultancy) could offer, but that client did not always see it that way.

With reference to junior employees and the issue of what it was they look for within (Branding consultancy) he replied that people want to be part of something that they contribute to and once again where they have an emotional bond. After further prompting he also stated that from a junior perspective, stimulation, growth, development, excitement and a sort of collegial atmosphere with like-minded, but not necessarily the same sort of, people as well as a place where it is lots of fun were also important.

I stressed that intellectual stimulation may not always be seen as fun. He noted that

there were different definitions of fun and that intellectual stimulation should be kind of the buzz that attracts people to this sort of company, and if not they will presumably be attracted elsewhere.

I asked what if employees or individuals were not having fun (whatever fun is)? It was discussed that an organisation such as this is not always fun, and there are times when no-one is having fun, that there is a rhythm for fun and that there is an issue about how aligned those rhythms are within the team, i.e that sometimes some people are not aligned with the rest of the team and having fun, and the thing was to try and recognise that, try to understand why and try to do something about it.

We touched on the issue of a learning curve, and perhaps the fun stops once the learning curve flattens out, and that perhaps people start to identify with an organisation in a different way.

We also discussed that part of redefining what they are is to be able to take a clearer stand in terms of the work that's in and the work that's out. He felt they may be on the cusp of their "second wave", which will release a whole new wave of enthusiasm, excitement, commitment, energy and fun. He preferred to avoid the problems that this second wave may also cause, preferring to emphasis the positive aspects when challenged about possible loss of control by directors as they grow. He asked "what is control in an environment like this".

He went on to discuss that there are bounds between control and creativity, and that they are not opposites but that people are in a network and it is about how to drive or help networks realise their potential. He introduced the concept of boids, free wheeling sperm, swarms or flocks that set them going and they behave like flocks with no leader.

Went on to highlight that not all partners will agree on what it is (Branding consultancy) is there to do, and that they are trying to get to the thing which is the very essence of what they can do... and also what makes them different and excites them. Once they get to that point though he felt it right that they then open up again (?) because that should be sufficient to condition expectations as to what is and isn't right for them as an organisation, but also allow a great deal of leeway for people to express that in a way that is precisely right for them, right for the occasion or right for the client and that it was making that transition that has been (Branding consultancy's) journey over the last 18 months, like a journey in a circle back to a starting point. [Conceptual note - how does this fit with Alvesson and also Balmer and work of others, is there anything similar in their work].

We discussed how they attempt to monitor this and it was discovered to be a mix. They had looked at all the stuff done with clients and what the common features were, a kind of bottom up way of looking at it, and also what he called the experiential area which was fertile ground, this was not really discussed further. He had also conducted discussions with clients, often in quite vague and confused terms to clients about what their reflections were and what more thoughts they may have (my thought: external image aspect coming in here). He had also discussed with the

other partners to try and decide what are their non negotiable parameters, but are at the end or during that process the partners may not be able to negotiate on this.

We also discussed “differing commonalties amongst them” from last interview.

He highlighted how people agonise over things to get them absolutely right around the place after watching them all for a while.

He introduced the metaphor using a brick, elastic band and an egg. Discussed how there are three scenarios: either the egg pulls the brick in one direction or another, or the egg comes crashing back to the brick, or the rubber band breaks and the egg goes flying off. He highlighted that you could have senior members of the organisation pulling in different directions and nothing goes anywhere, or perhaps in one direction. He highlighted that the differing partners had become sick in some for their characters quite typical ways recently, and that what is going on in people’s minds, and the perception becomes everything at (Branding consultancy). I discussed the possibility of measuring or somehow identifying the relative strengths of differing members, and he also introduced the concept of the 4th man, the organisation they live within, the brick, if (Branding consultancy) was a person and it was at a board meeting (used he). We discussed that if you wanted to look at the figures what would they mean, strengths of relationship, alignment of thought or alignment of underlying philosophies.

He highlighted that was what they did, find new ways of thinking about things on the run, and that it was very difficult to express that.

We moved on to discuss recruitment and how they attempt to screen out (from last interview) people that they feel will not “evince” themselves in the organisation. He stated that they could have used a Myers Briggs type test just to fuel discussion, but they have not. In their most recent recruitment they now wish they had, because they perhaps do not “gel” (talking about the senior consultant). He also highlighted that it was important for them to manage the situation now for that individual, so that that it works out to what is right for the individual and right for the group, but that they should then learn from that experience and get more focused. He went on to discuss that one of the criteria they used in recruitment was that they had client side experience, because that gave them the feeling that somehow added value for the clients, that “they had walked in their shoes”. An external recruitment person had told them since that they should relax that, and recruit someone without that experience and that if paying such serious sums of money (65,000 written down for me) it is the consulting experience they are after, and that the Directors could impact the client side aspect onto the consultant. He said that their immediate reaction was no that did not feel right, but were later persuaded that next time they go into that market that is what they will do.

We discussed the commonality of background that had come through from my interviews, all from similar sorts of Universities, Universities of similar standing and perhaps approaches to study etc. He said that by post-rationalising it, that had never been a subject for real discussion, but that it would make sense that as they recruit

people into an environment that is very team-orientated and with a collegiate kind of spin, they would favour people that have been in that sort of environment outside, but that this was not an overt policy, not one of the decision criteria, but that on reflection maybe it should be. We discussed that this may affect creativity if they are all so similar, and perhaps a maverick would be best for them. He highlighted how they were not good in getting ideas across to clients visually, and that they were thinking about finding someone to join them. It was also noted that person would be quite different from them most likely, and then the question becomes, how do you accommodate, how do they help that sort of difference to thrive, so that was going to be a very interesting exercise. They had worked with one guy in the outside world, who's strength was in that area, whom talks the language of strategy, but whom thinks and presents visually, but they had not been able to work with him.

I introduced the concepts of deep structure identification and situational identification, and he asked me if someone had defined that. I explained the difference and he said they were similar by cutting it a different way and talking about hygiene factors vs motivational factors. He said the situational factors was the easiest one to describe, but that it was in the deep structural where the magic lies, and how you get it is very complicated.

He explained that he would not want to be a part of any organisation where it was a transactional relationship, pounds shillings and pence and holidays and stuff, that is all necessary but not enough to him. He felt deep structural identification with Guinness in United Distillers and that is why he stayed for 15 years and it was at the point where that changed and it was while all were moving into transactional and situational mode that he decided inter alia that he did not want to play.

We then discussed Guinness and his time there. He said it was what he called a "limbic" organisation. Doing was ticked, but caring about the brand, about the product and about one another whilst not spoken in these terms was deeply rewarded and rewarding, and done in a whole stream of ways in which that was encouraged, fostered and reinforced, not as part of a grand plan or strategy but quite naturally and the most obvious manifestation of that was that people would drink together and that trolleyed into all sorts of things, workshops and bonding sessions, outward bound and things like that all reinforced it. But UD although part of Guinness was a different kettle of fish, much more transactional where thinking was rewarded a great deal more than feeling and doing in many instances, levels of trust were much lower so a great deal of thought had been given to what the UD way should be and how you structure programs and experiences and bring people together to show learning and stuff like that but it was not quite the same magic. The big challenge for organisations like that is how do they get beyond that, and how do they get into deep structure rather than superficiality or in their terms, how do they get from flat land to the transforming peaks (asked me to drop him a paper on that if I worked that out - so that they can translate that into practice !).

Appendix 2 - Example of NVivo coding report (2 pages only)

Document 3594 characters.

Section 0, Paragraph 161, 2139 characters.

Julian: umm there is a very real feeling in the organisation and I am talking about retail now because I can't talk or speak for others but I presume it is the same that the, some members of the board directors do not show their appreciation for the team and members of the team such that the team feel that they are actually numbers and that what they really do does not actually count umm I know of one.. one individual who was brought in thirty one projects in the year and never once had a well done and thank you very much for what you're doing from the team.. from.. from the board directors umm and that is.. leaves a nasty taste in the mouth on the one hand because you know that I know that the team is working really hard and does some really good projects but they don't get as much recognition for it as I would've liked for them to of got from the board whereas other divisions err which are more commercial based do because traditionally **** was a commercial practice in the sense of office business centres etc and retail is fairly new umm that leaves a bad taste in the mouth and a bad taste makes people want to leave and needs to be changed and it has been raised to the board directors or a certain individual on the board directors and they are aware of it but obviously they on the one side say yes we know that it's not right what we are doing but it's a huge organisation and if I just went around shaking everyone's hand I wouldn't get the work done that I should be doing, and that is probably the big stumbling block umm so far as team to directors is concerned it is one of a few practices that I have worked with where there really is an open door that the team can always go to a director and speak to them about their issues and generally umm they are very amenable and I think that that is really wonderful because it just loses it between the directors up to board directors umm it would be nice occasionally for them to come around and see how you're doing and well done that sort of thing good project umm rather than you having to go and ask them what do you think of.. so has that answer to your question

Section 0, Paragraphs 179-181, 1455 characters.

Me: umm do they start to identify with the project have you ever noticed them identifying with the project a bit more than anything else or

Julian: yes, well using BT as an example once again they are fairly short projects and it would be very easy for us to umm sit back and say right does four people know the BT inside out now so we will leave them on it, but that would not help them because they would get bored and so we try and turn them over and put them onto different projects so but there are individuals and there always will be who prefer doing a certain type of work ASDA there is one individual there that if we took him out of ASDA he would probably freak out so he likes doing that so we keep him on it so yes and no yes they can identify with and yes they do identify but we don't just say fine you know they are doing a good job on that one we try and keep on monitoring how they are progressing and how their mood is changing and if it's starting to get not nasty but you know they start making noises we try and move them around and

fill their places up but as I said for me the most important thing is the team and if the team is not working effectively then we need to change it and do something to make that team more effective and make that individual feel they he is worth something or she is worth something and I don't care if someone says that is all piase and wonderful and pie in the sky.. it is something that I try and do

Document 1560 characters.

Section 0, Paragraphs 165-183, 1560 characters.

David: yea exactly.. I mean they are getting a reward of course they are because they are directors of the company.. but their motivation might be slightly different

Me: and then their view is longer

David: is longer definitely longer.. the view at this level my level is relatively short.. it is project.. tends to be project based.. we are trying to institute a change in the company.. where the people at my level move to the long game and and umm devolve responsibility for the short game behind us err as the business grows we can't keep doing the short game and hope to fulfil the wish of the company to grow and get bigger and umm stronger.. so we are moving.. we are in the transition now trying to move to the long game

Me: umm interesting months ahead then

David: very interesting and it's difficult because we all like doing the short bit (laugh)

Me: yea you will lose that

David: yea you will lose that immediate buzz

Me: you will become the director of fluffy stuff or something

David: director of fluffy stuff.. to actually like the intangible reward of a project being successful and clients saying well done and all that sort of stuff umm sometimes they are very good at saying well done to the right people.. and it shouldn't be to me and people like me but it should be to the people who actually do the work and they are the ones that.. well feel best about the pat on the back.. not all clients but some clients are very good at that.

Appendix 3 - Tables for Figure 3.1 (Chapter 3)

Table 1 showing the characterisation of Figure 3.1 labels

<u>Consensus</u>	<u>Dissensus</u>	<u>Local/emergent</u>	<u>Elite/a priori</u>
Trust	Suspicion	Comparative communities	Privileged community
Hegemonic order as natural state	Conflicts over order as natural state	Multiple language games	Fixed language game
Naturalization of present	Present order is historicized and politicized	Particularistic	Universalistic
Integration and harmony are possible	Order indicates domination and suppressed conflicts	Systematic philosophy as ethnocentric	Grounded in hoped for systematic philosophy
Research focuses on representation	Research focused on challenge and reconsideration (re-representation)	A theoretical / weak theory	Theory driven / strong theory
Mirror (reflecting) dominant metaphor	Lens (seeing/reading as) dominant metaphor	Situational or structural determinism	Methodological determinism
Validity central concern	Insight and praxis central concern	Non foundational	Foundational
Theory as abstraction	Theory as opening	Local narratives	Grand narratives of progress and emancipation
Unified science and triangulation	Positional complementarity	Sensuality and meaning as central concerns	Rationality and truth as central concerns
Science is neutral	Science is political	Situated, practical knowledge	Generalizable, theoretical knowledge
Life is discovery	Life is a struggle and creation	Tends to be feminine in attitude	Tends to be masculine in attitude
Researcher anonymous and out of time and space	Researcher named and positioned	Sees the strange	Sees the familiar
Autonomous/free agent	Historically/socially situated agent	Proceeds from the other	Proceeds from the self
		Ontology of 'otherness' over method	Epistemological and procedural issues rule over substantive assumptions

Source: Alvesson & Deetz (2000: 26, 29) as adapted from Deetz (1996).

Table 2 showing prototypical discursive features for Figure 3.1

Issue	Discourse			
	Normative	Interpretive	Critical	Dialogic
Basic goal	Law-like relations among objects	Display unified culture	Unmask domination	Reclaim conflict
Method	Nomothetic science	Hermeneutics, ethnography	Cultural criticism, ideology critique	Deconstruction, genealogy
Hope	Progressive emancipation	Recovery of integrative values	Reformation of social order	Claim a space for lost voices
Metaphor of social relations	Economic	Social	Political	Mass
Organization metaphor	Marketplace	Community	Polity	Carnival
Problems addressed	Inefficiency, disorder	Meaninglessness, illegitimacy	Domination, consent	Marginalization, conflict suppression
Concern with closure communication	Fidelity, influence, information needs	Social acculturation, group affirmation	Misrecognition, systematic distortion	Discursive
Narrative style	Scientific/technical, strategic	Romantic, embracing	Therapeutic, directive	Ironic, ambivalent
Time identity	Modern	Pre-modern	Late modern	Postmodern
Organizational benefits	Control, expertise	Commitment, quality work life	Participation, expanded knowledge	Diversity, creativity
Mood	Optimistic	Friendly	Suspicious	Playful
Social fear	Disorder	Depersonalization	Authority	Totalization, normalization

Sources: Alvesson & Deetz (2000: 32) as adapted from Deetz (1996)

Appendix 4 - Summary of coding reliability checks by two independent judges

Summary examples of coding inter-reliability checks

Coders agreement as percentage using adjusted free marginal

CODE	AGREE PRESENT	DISAGREE	PERCENT	FREE MARGINAL
Brand internal identity	22	4	84.6%	0.692
Power, trust & communication	8	1	88.9%	0.778
Creative restraint	4	0	100.0%	1.000
Experts and expertise	6	1	85.7%	0.714
Identifying with client/projects	12	4	75.0%	0.500
Learning curve	18	2	90.0%	0.800
Symbolic rewards	8	1	88.9%	0.778
TOTAL	108	17	86.4%	0.728

Excerpt from coder agreement/non agreement table generated by QDA Miner

Case	V a r i a b l e	Category	Code	Coder	Agree with	Disagree with	Text (start only)
Case #2 - beard July 2000.txt	T E X T 1 0 1	Identity & Identification	Identifying with client/projects	Coder A	Coder B		I suppose you would umm.. I suppose if it is a smaller client or a more low-key client you would presume...
Case #2 - beard July 2000.txt	T E X T 1 4 3 1	Identity & Identification	Identifying with client/projects	Coder A	Coder B		yeah I think so I mean I think that if there is a client presentation featuring a umm a...
Case #2 - beard July 2000.txt	T E X T 1 6 7 0 1 4	Rewards and constraints	Experts and expertise	Coder A	Coder B		it is difficult because generally somebody has asked.. generally somebody..

Appendix 5 - Examples taken from inductively generated topic guide as used for later interviews (2nd and 3rd phase)

Power, trust and communication

- How important is trust in the relationship between you and a client i.e. a client trusting you to get on and not tell you your job or to control too much the process or outcome (they feel they know better than you). Is this partly to do with the creatives ego being fragile in some sense. Does trust in their ability become a personal thing. Does it happen for other reasons such as power from a clients perspective, or is it due to ambiguity of roles on each parties side.
- How do you build that trust. In what ways can the client undermine that trust. Do you have examples ?
- How important is a level of creativity and imagination on the part of a client ?
- Can the organisation make clear decisions re what work to take and not take as far as clients go. Why or why not. How does that make you feel.
- Have you ever walked away from client. If so why – was it because they came to you in first place. Has a client ever walked away from you, if so why.
- Is the belief in your own expertise ever overshadowed or played down as a result of interacting with the client. If so why (is it because not taught belief or how to communicate it)
- Is part of the problem one of perception, as there is no way of measuring tangibly the outcome of a creative process or product, or is there in your case via market research after delivery, and if so what is the difference that makes to how you defend yourself.
- What about negative feedback, have you had that and how does that impact on the relationship. What about unpleasant feedback or behaviour from a client, have you had that.
- Is the feedback from the client more or less important than the feedback of your peers
- Do you ever feel there is a barrier between creatives and the clients that need the help of others to jump. Does this vary by type of client (i.e. if creative experts themselves or not) . If so why is this, is it a visual perception thing (suits) or is it communications.
- Have you ever felt bullied by the client or have you ever bullied the client. In what ways have you tried to gain back power or control if lost.

Brand and individual identity

- Do the clients see you as a group of individuals or as a brand
 - Do all the employees here, particularly the creatives have the same view of what this organisation is. Or is it full of single visions and if so is someone trying to make them all go in same direction. If so how.
 - Do the clients see this and is that size dependent (project or client size or low-key, less money/risk client), more personal with smaller size so they see the above more)
 - Is there a guiding coalition at the top or face of the organisation and is that coalition in tune or do they have differences that maybe mean the clients see multiple identities.
 - Are there bounds between control and creativity, and are they opposites anyway
 - Does the organisation give out messages in some way to condition expectations as to what is right and not right. How ?
 - Is there a sort of non negotiable parameter within the organisation re what it is and is not and the sorts of tasks and projects it will undertake and decline. If so where did or does that come from and how is it communicated
 - Do clients have differing images of you because they come to you for differing things or needs ?
 - Is the brand malleable
 - If employees have to go against a core value of the brand for some reason, how does that make them feel, do they feel like dog bodies, do they fight back. Does the relationship with the client change.
 - Are there any subcultures within the organisation and if so do you think the client would perceive that
-
- Do some suits like to speak to the creatives because they find it refreshing and interesting
 - Do some relations not click at all and have to stay professional. Why does that happen ?
 - Is your brand responsive to each individual client in other words is your image driven by outside-in, being different things to different clients. If so how do you manage the trade off between client responsiveness and what your core brand is wanting to be ?
 - Have you ever come across "unbundling" where different employees or managers interpret things differently and that leads to lack of clarity that may feed through to the client ? Are these typical stresses that have to be managed.
-
- What do the employees here identify with – do they identify with the same things ? if so why ?
 - Do they identify with the organisation first or with the team or with the project. Do they identify with the client ?
 - Could individuals state what the culture is, and if so would it be the same ?
 - What happens if taken off or moved from a popular project ?
 - Does restraint on their creativity impact on the way they identify with the organisation. Have they left because of it and where did they go ?

- Have there ever been problems due to employees identifying with projects or clients more than the organisation – becoming part of the client world ?
- Does this phase through a project – and if so what causes it ?
- Do some employees start to do this because it helps build trust ?

- Deep structural identification v situational identification – which does the organisation aim for – how and why ?
- Are the relationships transactional within the organisation (pounds shillings and pence, holidays and stuff)
- Are there degrees between one and the other, not black and white
- Do you need to be at management level to get that deep identification stuff, or are managers driven more by external/clients needs
- Do some employees avoid deep identification – if so why ?

- Do you see deep identification as being a company which looks internally and situational as being a company that looks externally ?
- Do you feel that people with financial pressures and family pressures think more along the situational level – philosophical rewards become less important

- How do you feel ambiguity may impact on identity and identification – what about the management of ambiguity

Dynamic learning curve, employee growth, evaluation and feedback

- How important is it that you or other employees belong to an organisation that are pushing the boundaries, to help you/them to develop and grow ?
- Is it important to feel you are always progressing or learning
- Junior members, would you work here for little or no pay in exchange for experience ?
- Do you equate small size with cutting edge and creativity or do you see large organisations as offering more ?
- Why do employees come to work at this organisation
- Do employees especially junior ones – aspire to run their own projects, does this interlink in some way to their creative ego and rewards
- Do younger employees feel intimidated to some extent by their seniors
- Do they seek to extract or suck knowledge from their seniors and the environment – over time does this lead to less intimidation and demystification
- Do people reach a glass ceiling re ability to suck in knowledge and grow and if so why ?
- Are they offered a responsibility based jump – nothing to do with creativity any more such as managing teams or clients
- Do managers and employees see the extra responsibility as a growth reward ?
- Does reputation of a prestigious organisation have a moderating effect on how long an employee will remain once they have soaked up knowledge
- Do some employees trade lower organisational reputation for higher freedom in creativity ?

Evaluation and feedback :

- How do you conduct evaluation and feedback too creatives and how do you think this may impact on the corporate brand via their perception of this feedback
- What about client evaluation and feedback ?
- Do you think creatives tend to be harsh in their evaluative orientations to their work and to others
- What about impact from locus of control re feedback internal/intrinsic versus external/extrinsic
- Is it all about how feedback and evaluation is perceived and presented
- What about the effect of modelling on creatives (role models)

Creativity as a reward

- Are freedom to challenge or be challenged plus creativity seen as forms of rewards?
- What sorts of rewards do you feel you give/get in this organisation – can you give examples (physical – emotional – verbal)
- Are creative managers good at communicating and understanding people and relationships ?
- Which sorts of rewards are the most important - being told you have done a good job from peers or financial rewards and why ?
- Are rewards a complicated or difficult issue from a management perspective – a dark territory – upset some if reward others etc – fingers burnt ?
- Is there a time when intrinsic motivation and rewards are not going to be enough, when other sorts of rewards need to kick in – if so what kind of rewards and when ?
- Are rewards different for situational versus deep identification – how ?
- Do some people see power and position as a reward
- Are employees more relaxed and more creative and more proactive in their jobs ?
- Do people need other types of rewards because their job eventually stops them from being more challenged or creative ?
- Any instances of feedback from clients being seen as a reward
- Do you feel all employees feel they have enough face and voice and are they recognised enough by the clients ?
- Is creativity more important than being taken seriously by a client ?
- Does creative risk (psychological risk) impact on this – need to tolerate failure and to experiment
- How tolerant is the structure of this organisation to allow error when improvising

Creative restraint

- Are employees here pigeon holed into tasks and processes (restricted) or is it more free form. What are the advantages and disadvantages.
- Do all employees have access to/contact with the clients – how does this encourage or restrain creativity ?
- Can employees be completely creative and if not in what ways are they restricted ?
- Does this create conflict or tension – how ?
- How does this impact on the identification or brand perception internally – do you feel the client notes this ?
- Does productivity requirements restrict creativity
- Any sign of employees leaving due to creative restraint, to smaller agency perhaps
- Are peer views important – can peer comments restrict creativity ?
- How do you manage the creative restraints without crushing egos – do you lead them to the answer that you think they should come too ?
- Do clients ever complain that they think the creativity is being restrained (They want to see a bit of magic sparkle)
- How is creative restraint communicated – email, phone or face to face ?
- Are there examples where clients could not get on with an individual and that impacted on creativity
- Do some employees become precious over their creative process or outcome – is there friction as a result – any examples ?
- Does a critical environment exist and does that restrain or enhance ?
- Are junior employees restrained from fear in own ability at outset – a physical feeling
- Do clients only want to deal with the face or top person and not the creatives located at the grass roots

Symbolic rewards

- Do you use rewards other than those already discussed and if so what form are they and when ?
- Do both managers and junior employees see these as forms of rewards
- Who initiates such rewards
- What if such rewards are not in place, is this seen negatively by creatives

Experts and expertise

- Is the imposition of an external vision difficult with creatives and if so why ?
- Is credibility of the leaders and managers of high importance to creatives – and does this link to trust
- Are expert egos evident and what is the impact of these ?
- Do client egos impact on the relationship and process/outcome, and if so in what way ?
- What are the leader roles ?
- What social skills are required
- What about role modelling ?
- What about boundary spanning and also boundary protection

Appendix 6 - Code listing (nodes) and frequency within data

Node ranking by number of paragraphs coded (n=262)

<u>Node Name</u>	<u>Paragraphs Coded</u>	<u>Documents</u>
learning curve	381	12
employee leaving	279	6
identification through design	265	6
creativity as reward	249	9
employee growth restraint	249	6
employee growth	237	10
symbolic rewards	237	8
identifying with projects	221	9
creative restraint	205	9
employee growth liberation	203	7
client pressure	200	15
deep identification	187	4
situational identification	177	3
financial rewards	175	3
challenge as reward	167	9
creativity to restraints	166	5
organisational reputation	154	2
London effect	138	2
brand external to client	134	13
client should fall in line	123	7
individual identification	119	8
brand identity	115	13
peer rewards	112	5
communication problems	104	6
client involved in reward	102	5
relationship as a Journey	100	9
knowledge as a sponge	97	8
client creativity	87	6
differing perspectives	86	5
expert egos	84	8
appreciation as reward	84	6
creativity	82	3
corporate brand	81	3
size impact	78	4
reward damage by client	74	5
brand evolving	71	5
organisational identification	69	3
client facing loyalty	68	2
creative ego	66	5
previous life	63	9
creatives hidden from rewards	61	4
brands as individuals externally	60	7
relationship breakdown	59	9
corporate image	57	3

education process	54	4
relationship trust	54	2
entrepreneurial aspirations	52	1
employee challenge	50	3
recruitment approach	47	4
brand flexible to client	45	6
trust as reward	43	4
age based motivation curve	43	2
organisational loyalty	42	5
others agendas	42	3
brand parameters	41	3
brand comfort zone	38	4
identifying with clients	37	5
organisational commonality	36	7
face of the company	36	1
professional identification	34	2
employee structure and feedback	32	5
reward via taken seriously	32	1
relating to clients	32	1
growth	30	7
identifying with processes	30	2
brand translation to client	29	4
creativity at the boundaries	29	3
size	29	2
emotional commitment	28	4
relationship between guiding		
coalition	28	4
suppression of creativity	28	1
transactional reward	27	1
reward via inclusion	27	1
individual versus residual group	26	3
individualism	25	5
clients as suits	25	5
client joint project ownership	24	3
reward through valued	24	1
standing up to client	23	7
team commitment	23	6
organisational buzz	23	3
technological impact on image	22	4
clients via past	21	4
creating image with strangers	21	2
moulding creative ideas	21	1
individuality difficult to sell	21	3
creating the organisation	21	4
age impact on awards sort	21	2
good naive research approach	21	1
clients via knowledge of prior		
project	20	5
adding value	19	3
deep identification as influence	19	1
team should always win	18	3
team creativity	18	3
client personality clash	18	2

design as expertise	17	3
pushing creative boundaries	17	1
chaos avoidance	17	1
over service delivery	17	3
trust in relationship	16	2
at the cutting edge	16	2
main client focused upon	15	2
lack of respect for client contact	15	1
demystified	15	1
guiding hands	14	3
smaller client	14	1
identifying with director	14	1
creative glass ceiling	14	1
financial margins	14	2
employee attracted by design	14	2
reputation	14	2
identifying with team	13	2
hidden key decision makers	13	1
fragile egos	13	1
expert reassurance	12	4
delivery deadlines as part of image	12	2
bigger then person remembered	12	1
organisational comittment	12	4
challenging client	12	3
change via external experts	12	3
relationships in guiding coalition	11	2
change as reward	11	1
brick and egg metaphor	11	1
job predictability as negative	11	1
vision	10	3
image via multiple service offerings	10	1
clients via beauty parade	10	1
organisational brand	9	3
fun place	9	1
image via openness	9	1
brand as fourth man	9	1
core values	9	2
organisation external image	9	3
multiple images	9	2
quest	8	2
employee competitiveness	8	2
organisational bonding	8	1
organisational empowerment	8	2
loyalty to directors	8	2
organisational vulnerability	8	2
socialising	8	2
leaderless organisation	8	1
reward aspirations	7	1
interface as a journey	7	1
making client feel bad	7	1
objectivity versus peoples minds	7	1
identifying with aspirations	7	1

lack or quantifiable outcomes	7	1
creatives	6	3
clients via networks	6	3
image through architecture	6	1
find solutions on the run	6	1
organisational diversity	6	2
critical environment	6	2
responsibility as reward	6	2
clients via previous reputation	6	2
enemy within	6	3
image through service operation	6	1
process orientation	5	3
enemy without	5	1
client chemistry	5	1
client bonding through humour	5	1
client side experience	5	2
clients via referral	5	2
organisational control	5	2
fighting pre expectations	5	2
true to brand	5	2
creatives seen as aggressive	5	1
creativity versus administration	4	2
internal brand image	4	2
brand growth	4	2
emerging brand	4	2
relationship from bottom up	4	1
culture via reliability	4	1
image via reliability	4	1
freedom to design as reward	4	1
informal relationship	4	1
organisational fluidity	4	1
creative pragmatism	4	1
formal relationship	4	1
employee nurturing as reward	4	1
brand direction	3	2
image via agents as third party	3	1
alignment with organisational mode	3	1
identity vulnerability	3	1
appraisals	3	1
richness of interaction	3	1
organisational size	3	1
like minded people	3	1
professional relationship	3	1
collegial atmosphere	3	1
start of creative process	3	1
genetic identification	3	1
design as reward	3	1
professional client relationship	3	1
traditional business culture	3	1
client facing employees	3	1
influence over structures	3	1

group alignment	3	1
internal group dis-alignment	3	1
relegation of design	2	2
clients drive design	2	2
creativity in small groups	2	2
brand as individuals internally	2	1
senior client contact	2	2
design or marketing led company	2	2
disconnect -mid to higher levels	2	1
client insecurity/fear	2	1
competitor	2	1
additional research questions	2	1
high service delivery	2	1
new comers	2	1
sense of challenge	1	1
time upfront on projects	1	1
adding relationship value	1	1
skill based motivation curve	1	1
serving clients	1	1
social events for bonding	1	1
values	1	1
visionaries	1	1
running for the client	1	1
professional loyalty	1	1
pride	1	1
purchasing objectivity	1	1
seeking external perspective	1	1
good client results	1	1
identifying with job role	1	1
emotional client bonding	1	1
long term relationships	1	1
exceeding expectations	1	1
offering seen as pure service	1	1
left brain	1	1
external utility	1	1
internal reward problems	1	1
internal organisational journey	1	1
organisational rhythms	1	1
negotiated with client	1	1
multiple project handling	1	1
lack of appreciation	1	1
internal competition	1	1
intellectual stimulation	1	1
insular	1	1
image as mavericks	1	1
innovative	1	1
employing right people in services	1	1
defacto front line client	1	1
design as problem solution	1	1
design as solution	1	1
edge of chaos	1	1
boids	1	1

employee financial reward	1	1
flat land strategy	1	1
clients via size	1	1
downsizing impact	1	1
identifying with division	1	1
developing differing brain areas	1	1
brand as biology	1	1
conditioning of internal brand expectations	1	1
change culture through design	1	1
business drives design	1	1
opportunity	1	1
second wave of growth	1	1
transition back to mode	1	1

Appendix 7 - Table summarising main findings for practitioners

Table summarising main findings for practitioners

<u>Relationship dynamics</u>	<u>Organisational & individual identification</u>	<u>Learning curve and growth</u>	<u>Creativity as a form of reward</u>	<u>Restraints to creativity</u>	<u>Symbolic rewards</u>	<u>Experts and expertise</u>
Clients' trust & task flexibility	Creative employees often have multiple levels of identification: project, clients, peers, own corporate brand	Need to grow and learn very strong within creative owners and employees, particularly junior employees	Owners and senior managers found issue of rewards problematic within a creative organisation	Restraint on creativity impacted on the corporate brand, both internally and externally	Other symbolic rewards were evident, some enhancing creativity as well as the perception of the corporate brand, others having a negative impact overall	Aspects of expert or creative egos are evident within the data – both in relation to the creatives' expertise and the clients' expertise and sometimes friction between the two
Enhancement in process with challenging client involved - as long as not over constraining	Many single visions driven by creative egos leading to fragmented corporate brand, both internally & externally	Expectations and motivations for growth vary as move along a learning curve as does perception of the corporate brand	Creatives often report an internal drive that links to a form of ego and need to create something of their own	Creative restraint seen as a particular problem for junior and inexperienced employees	Positive verbal rewards perceived as a greater or equal reward to other forms of award – but not always provided by management	Creatives often desire to take control and force clients to accept things- varied depending on the perception of level of clients own knowledge. However, not always the case and was reported as based on differing forms of personality and outlook
Fragile egos – highly sensitive to questioning of expertise	Control in a creative environment is problematic – needs primarily to be autonomous/internally	Size of creative organisation often equated with learning/growth	Management aware of the above and awarded employees with greater creative freedom when	Commercial requirements formed one form of restraint on creativity	Title, position and promotion sometimes seen as a form of symbolic reward by	Creative expertise often led to interacting with clients in one way and discussing them in

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	generated	opportunities –smaller SME’s seen as more creative and larger as having more varied projects	possible		management along with their financial aspects – however the creative employees did not see these as the most significant motivators	a different way behind the scenes. This added the potential for distance to form and the management of emotions was also evident (management of own and potentially the client’s emotions)
Internal belief often overshadowed by interactions with clients	Size of client impacted on the creative organisation’s corporate image	Aspiration among juniors to run their own projects was high, linking to creative ego and rewards	Size of organisation impacts on ability of managers to be able to offer appropriate freedom as reward – smaller organisations found this more difficult as less projects offered	Creative restraint also disliked because of negative impact it could have on reviews by peers	Being given a prestige project or task was seen as a form of symbolic reward by creative employees, along with more responsibility in facing and presenting to clients at key stages of relationship	Informal briefing process at the start of the relationship creates problems due to uncertainty on part of client
Educational process pre working age impacting on self belief	Political aspects of client impacting on creative organisation’s own image	Junior members often felt intimidated by seniors on first arrival, but after sucking up knowledge felt less intimidated – demystification occurred	Greater freedom to be creative impacted on way employees identified with the corporate brand - reward basis varied depending on individual identification	Pre-work educational experience also added to problem for junior members on arrival - as no commercial restraints on creativity while had been learning	For smaller organisations a glass ceiling was evident where owners and directors reluctant to hand over enough control or power to allow employees to benefit from all forms of symbolic rewards	Relationships based on creative-client dialogue with a sympathetic client re the process were preferred to confrontation, but this was often not the case
High levels of tenacity shown to bring clients	Corporate brand still forming in smaller start ups – lack of	Glass ceilings for knowledge gathering	Level of desire for creative freedom varies	Forms of guidance and the environment could	Some employees felt the class ceiling above	Creatives often saw clients as lacking in

<u>Relationship dynamics</u>	<u>Organisational & individual identification</u>	<u>Learning curve and growth</u>	<u>Creativity as a form of reward</u>	<u>Restraints to creativity</u>	<u>Symbolic rewards</u>	<u>Experts and expertise</u>
along with ideas and process.	commonality or management of this this	identified – problem from management point of view re employee satisfaction and loyalty	depending on contextual aspects – often follows a cycle that can be mapped out during a career	also enable or hinder creativity.	would lead to a serious lack of growth potential both for themselves and the organisation and corporate brand if allowed to continue	forward vision or progressiveness, but due to commercial environment creatives tend to go with clients wishes
Client communications and feedback impact creative process	Creative corporate brand varying based on differing services offered	Once knowledge curve flattened some employees remained due to reputation effect of organisation on their own identity	Creative freedom not always seen as a reward by employees	Clients often source of external creative restraint	Some employees preferred less symbolic rewards (such as financial or other physical incentive) and this often varied both on employee personality as well as age	
Problems due to lack of measurable tangibility in creative process or product	Previous client relationships before SME formed leading to corporate brand seen as individualistic	Some employees remained despite glass ceiling even in less prestigious organisations due to perception of greater creative freedom	Creative voice and access to clients seen as important to some – problem if have no client facing responsibility, especially in larger organisations – creative ego also relevant here	Friction from creative restraint impacted on client relationship		
Lack of control over projects accepted due to commercial decisions of small starts ups	Identification with more interesting projects apparent within junior employees – lack of loyalty if not given enough		Some creatives prefer non-client access in exchange for greater creative freedom			

<u>Relationship dynamics</u>	<u>Organisational & individual identification</u>	<u>Learning curve and growth</u>	<u>Creativity as a form of reward</u>	<u>Restraints to creativity</u>	<u>Symbolic rewards</u>	<u>Experts and expertise</u>
Highly creative employees feel barrier between selves and clients due to verbal and visual communication differences	For longer term projects there was encouragement to identify within team as a family – led to allegiances and conflict if allegiances threatened via project/team change					
Age difference between creatives and clients impact	Previous client side experience of some creatives led to identification with that world and thus project by default at times					
	Balance between project identification and home creative organisations identity managed or controlled via regular internal meetings and open/informal office communication					
	Identification varied dependent on situation or non-situation motivators – some creative organisations structured to react to situational motivators – leading to potential employee identification problems					