University of Strathclyde

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Distributed Leadership: Teachers' Perspectives

by

Christine Smith

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements

for a degree of Doctor of Education

2018

Abstract

This study explores distributed leadership from the perspectives of teachers at different levels within a secondary school, (with the exception of the head teacher). Scottish Government policy is manifest in secondary education in the deployment of distributed leadership practices that seek to maximise output by harnessing the talents of the teaching staff. Aligning with neo-liberalist tendencies, there appears to be an ever-increasing migration of responsibility away from government agencies and into the hands of teachers. This is further evidenced by the prominence within policy of teachers' roles in relation to school improvement and an emphasis upon teachers' agency. The rhetoric used to promote distributed leadership includes notions of increased individual agency, equality, democracy, empowerment, inclusion and collegiality. Despite the above, contemporary theorists contend that distributed leadership remains an ambiguous concept. In order to explore what distributed leadership means to teachers operating within secondary education, this study seeks the perspectives of key professionals who operate at the levels of classroom teacher, middle leader (faculty head teacher/principal teacher) and depute head teacher. The study employs a mixed-methods approach using questionnaires, interviews and a focus group discussion within a case study design in order to investigate how teachers experience and understand distributed leadership, its aims and values. The principal results indicate that largely, teachers construe distributed leadership as leadership that is delegated or conferred by senior leaders through the school's systems, teachers understand distributed leadership in terms of the ways in which it has been engendered within the school, teachers experience leadership in a range of ways and teachers believe that distributed leadership has achieved many of its aims. Other results include caveats in terms of teachers' concerns in relation to exercising leadership. Such concerns include: issues of power and authority; teachers' sense of professional/personal identity; teachers' perceptions in relation to their abilities; workload - the influence of the conditions under which teachers have exercised leadership; incentives and perceptions in relation to how additional responsibility for leadership intersects with other duties.

Chapter (1) - Introductory Chapter

Part (1)

1.1 Overview of the Subject Area

What follows is a general overview of the field from which the issues investigated within this study will be drawn. Distributed leadership has been described as a collective social process, the contributions of individuals that influence the success of a team and a collective activity that is enabled through shared relationships between team members. Some theorists suggest that distributed leadership, in contrast to traditional forms of school leadership which are inherently hierarchical, is not static and is considered as a fluid, transient and emergent phenomenon. Although the term 'distributed leadership' was coined in the early nineteen fifties, its popularity has increased over the last two decades. During this time it has featured as a common theme within empirical literature and within Scottish Government educational policy discourse. The rhetoric used to promote the concept has been premised upon the notions that leadership should be seen as a group activity, distributed leadership harnesses the expertise of many individuals and the functions of an organisation cannot be fulfilled solely through the actions of senior leaders. Distributed leadership, in alignment with neo-liberalist ideology, chimes with contemporary societal demands for greater equality, democracy and agency. Despite its prominence within educational policy, distributed leadership assumes many forms and remains a contested concept. As such, it has been explored by many theorists in terms of the features that characterise the forms of distributed leadership that fall within the distributed leadership paradigm, how education policy and distributed leadership are operationalised within schools and the roles of senior staff in policy enactment.

1.2 The Focus of the Study

Whilst empirical evidence exists in relation to distributed leadership within schools, many studies appear to focus on primary school education. Such studies have, to an extent, explored the perspectives of teachers at different levels within primary schools for example, Heck & Hallinger, 2010, Spillane, 2005, Robinson & Timperley, 2007, MacBeath, 2006, Suraiya et al., 2013 and Torrance, 2013. However, a significant number appear to focus on the roles and perspectives of head teachers and senior leaders for example, Timperley, 2009, Spillane, 2006, Akdemir & Ayik, 2017, Anderson et al., 2009 and Harris, 2011. Fewer studies have investigated distributed leadership within Scottish secondary education and from

the perspectives of teachers at different levels, (with the exception of the head teacher). This study aims to contribute to the expansion of knowledge in relation to distributed leadership by exploring it from the perspectives of teachers within secondary education including, classroom teachers, middle leaders and depute head teachers. The following outlines the assumptions that support this study and the theoretical basis from which it has evolved.

1.3 The Conceptual Framework for the Study

Ontology

Each secondary school teacher who participated in this study is considered to be the possessor of their own particular construct in relation to distributed leadership. Therefore, each individual is deemed to construe a version of reality that is unique to them. As such, a constructivist ontology is chosen as the conceptual underpinning for this study because it holds that teachers' experiences of distributed leadership derive from the perceptions and observations of each individual. Constructivism assumes that each teacher's interpretation of distributed leadership can be attributed to their unique experience in relation to it. In other words, a constructivist ontology assumes subjectivity in terms of the meaning each individual could attribute to the phenomenon of distributed leadership. Constructivism, as a suitable ontology, appears to align with the purpose and nature of this study because it recognises that the perceptions and beliefs of an individual, in relation to a given phenomenon, can change over time and may be ever-changing in accordance with different contexts. As the ontological underpinning for this study constructivism assumes that what can be known in relation to distributed leadership is constructed by each teacher as they interact with the phenomenon of distributed leadership and with other teachers. Constructivist ontology, based on the above assumptions, appears to support an interpretivist epistemology.

Epistemology

The paradigm of interpretivism, in alignment with a constructivist ontology, appears to recognise that social entities such as distributed leadership have, in themselves, no meaning other than the meanings attributed to them by each individual actor. This paradigm holds that multiple realities exist and that one teacher's construct, based upon their unique experience, can differ greatly from that of another. This study seeks to explore the phenomenon of distributed leadership through the eyes of teachers by enquiring into the subjective meanings attached to it by each. Synchronous with a constructivist ontology, an interpretivist epistemology assumes that multiple realities can co-exist and that meaning is continually

being created and negotiated as individuals interact with one another and with social phenomena. As such, the paradigm of interpretivism appears to support the nature of this enquiry and a constructivist ontology selected as its theoretical basis. The following provides an account of the principal issues this study seeks to investigate which derive from an extensive review of the literature. These key issues informed the research questions used to guide the study.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study, as discussed in section 1.2, seeks to explore the concept of distributed leadership from the perspectives of secondary school teachers who operate at different levels, (with the exception of the head teacher). Much of the literature focuses on distributed leadership within primary schools and on the head teacher's role. Distributed leadership, as previously noted, is a contested concept. Attempts to define and categorise the multiple forms of leadership that have come to be encompassed within the distributed leadership paradigm are evident in an expansive array of contemporary literature. Largely, as opposed to providing a basis for education policy formation, empirical work has followed policy. Despite the above, distributed leadership ideology features prominently within educational policy and, as such, it has been the task of head teachers, senior leaders and classroom teachers within schools to interpret its meaning. It is not, therefore, surprising that the head teacher's role features frequently in the existing literature.

Distributed leadership ideology has appeared within education policy over the last two decades and now would seem a suitable time to investigate how it has been received by secondary school teachers who have the responsibility of enacting it in practice. This study focuses on secondary, as opposed to primary education and on teachers' perspectives, as opposed to the perspectives of head teachers. In other words, as opposed to a top-down view of policy formation or on the implementation of leadership policy by the head teacher, this enquiry is from a bottom-up perspective. The principal areas for enquiry that arose from a review of the literature and which form the basis of the research questions centre upon how teachers at different levels within a secondary school experience and understand distributed leadership, its values and aims.

Distributed leadership has been characterised in many ways within the existing literature/policy. Essentially, the purpose of this research is to add to the body of existing knowledge in relation to distributed leadership and, in particular, to explore how it is

experienced and understood from the perspectives of teachers at different levels. The researcher, over the last few decades, has occupied a number of posts within further education which have involved team leadership. As such, her interest in distributed leadership emanates, not only from the insights this study may reveal in relation to the perspectives of teachers within a secondary school but, from what might be learned in relation to her own practice. This research based within a secondary school seeks to enable the researcher to expand upon the experience she has gained within further education. Although no assumptions can be made in relation to the outcomes of this research, the researcher hopes that the perspectives of secondary school teachers might have a bearing on aspects of her own practice and the practice of teachers within the study school.

Several Scottish Colleges of Further Education have merged. Consequently, within many of the new organisations which emerged, restructuring involving middle/senior staff has followed. For all staff members this has meant readjusting to new norms and ideas which will, over time, become part of the merged organisations. New teams have been formed as a consequence of melding the existing ones and the organisational arrangements which prevailed prior to the mergers have been supplanted. Such arrangements have included distributed leadership which, as the remits of middle/senior leaders becomes increasingly expansive, appears to have taken hold out of necessity. The central aim of this study, as previously noted, is to explore distributed leadership in order to glean insights into what this mode of leadership means to teachers. However, by eliciting the perspectives of teachers in relation to distributed leadership, its aims and values, the researcher seeks to inform her own practice. It is possible that more will be learned in relation to the ways in which this model for leadership has been received within secondary education, how teachers have adapted to it, the extent to which, if at all, distributed leadership has influenced educational 'change', and the nature of the obstacles, if any, which have emerged.

It is clear from the researcher's experience in further education that innovative ideas and practices are not universally welcomed by all members of staff. Over time, the attitudes and behaviours of individuals have become conditioned and embedded and "what works, in relation to educational change, is likely to be a combination of professionalism and personality, pedagogy and pastorality, mission and ethos" (Saunders, 1999, p.71). However, in tandem with school educators, college lecturers are seen as 'change agents'. The improvement and progress of organisations will rely upon 'step change' and a gradual acceptance of a new culture/ethos. Section 4.4 in Chapter 4 sets out the researcher's value

position and discusses the ways in which attitudes in her place of work have been shaped. The task of middle leaders in relation to distributed leadership, within such a climate, has been problematic because of the nature of the foundation from which everything else is expected to derive. Insights gleaned from this research may enable the researcher to make comparisons between the views of teachers within secondary education and those of lecturers within her own place of work, determine suitable approaches for her own practice/staff and decide whether, or not, changes might be appropriate in relation to the conditions under which people conduct their work. The study's outcomes may also reveal the extent to which teachers' understandings correspond with the rhetoric used to promote distributed leadership within policy/literature. Through this study, the researcher may glean an understanding of the nature of the changes, if any, which have occurred through leadership distribution and the processes which have helped teachers to make changes. It may then be possible to determine whether, or not, similar approaches could bring about 'change' within the context of further education.

1.5 Research Questions

1) How is distributed leadership understood and experienced by teachers at different levels within the school, (other than the head teacher)?
2) What is the perception of teachers in relation to the values which underpin distributed leadership?
3) To what extent, if any, do teachers perceive that distributed leadership has achieved its aims – (as understood by them)?

The following sets out and defines the terms used throughout this study that relate directly to the research.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Distributed leadership, as discussed within the Literature Chapter, has been used interchangeably with terms such as 'a distributive perspective', delegated leadership, shared leadership, democratic leadership and teacher-leadership. Theorists have attributed ambiguity and loose usage of the term 'distributed leadership' to conceptual confusion arising within contemporary literature which, in turn, has hampered empirical enquiry. However, for the purpose of clarity in relation to this study the term 'distributed leadership', unless otherwise

stated, is used throughout. It is chosen by the researcher because it is the term that is most commonly used by theorists within empirical literature and by policy-makers.

Throughout the study the terms used to denote teachers at different levels within a secondary school include depute head teachers, middle leaders and classroom teachers. The terms depute head teacher and classroom teacher are self-explanatory. The researcher has used the term 'middle leader' to denote teachers who operate at the level of faculty head teacher or principal teacher. What follows is a brief description of the methodology and procedures used in order to accomplish this study.

1.7 Procedures

The theoretical underpinnings for this study are summarised in section 1.3 of this chapter. A mixed-methods approach within a case study design is used in order to operationalise the study. This mixed-methods approach employs a questionnaire in the form of a Likert-scale (quantitative method) in order to initiate the process of data collection. The questionnaire is used as a pilot study. However, the main data collection tools are qualitative in nature and comprise of semi-structured interviews and prompts for use within a focus group discussion. The ways in which the research tools are utilised within the study are fully described within the Methods Chapter.

Deployment of the data collection methods follow a framework suggested by Plano-Clark et al. (2003). The framework includes an initial exploratory phase, an enhancement phase and a confirmatory phase. The application of this framework for the purpose of this study involves the use of a Likert-scale questionnaire as a pilot study (exploratory phase), semi-structured interviews in order to enrich data (enhancement phase) and finally, a focus group discussion in order to 'confirm' data achieved through the use of the pervious methods (confirmatory phase). The chosen methods aim to access teachers' direct experiences and understandings of distributed leadership and, as such, align with a constructivist ontology chosen as the ontological basis for this study. Each method seeks to draw upon teachers' perceptions gleaned from their interpretations in relation to distributed leadership and, as such, are deemed to be consistent with the paradigm of interpretivism chosen as the study's epistemological underpinning.

The process used in order to secure respondents is described fully in section 4.2 of the Methods Chapter. Additionally, the researcher's value position in relation to the focus of the

study is made explicit in order to heighten their awareness and understanding of any personal biases that could influence the research outcomes. Analysis of data derived from a pilot study using a Likert-scale questionnaire is accomplished through the use of a tabulated matrix. An exemplification of the matrix can be found in (Appendix, H). Thematic analysis is employed in order to derive themes from interviews and a focus group discussion. An exemplification of the process used for thematic analysis of interview and focus group data can be found in (Appendix, I). Data collection and analysis processes are described fully in sections 4.4 and 4.5 of the Methods Chapter. The processes employed within this research in order to ensure the 'trustworthiness' of data and of the results are fully discussed within section 4.6 of the Methods Chapter.

1.8 Significance of the Study

A review of the literature revealed gaps in relation to distributed leadership as construed by teachers operating within secondary, as opposed to primary education and in terms of the perspectives of teachers at different levels, as opposed to those of the head teacher. As such, the contribution this study makes to the field relates to the insights it reveals in terms of how distributed leadership is experienced and understood by teachers in secondary education. The study's value is in terms of enhanced understandings of distributed leadership as understood by secondary school teachers whose working lives are influenced by it at a micro-level as they strive to implement policy mandates that encompass it. Distributed leadership, as previously discussed, is interpreted in a number of ways. Throughout the empirical and policy literature the perspectives offered derive mainly from policy-makers or focus upon those whose role it is to ensure policy implementation. In other words, from those who form and implement leadership policy.

Much of the extant literature portrays distributed leadership, its values and aims in a positive and unproblematic manner. Although it is promoted by some compelling rhetoric, some theorists argue that such claims are, to a large extent, untested. Through this study insights gleaned through the eyes of teachers in relation to the ways in which distributed leadership, its values and aims have translated into practice can be utilised in order to inform practice. In addition, the study reveals whether, or not, the practice realities, as construed by secondary school teachers, align with policy rhetoric. This study's contribution is through the insights it reveals in relation to how distributed leadership has been received, experienced and understood by teachers in secondary education who are on the front-line of policy

implementation. It is acknowledged that the outcomes of this case study are not generalizable to all secondary schools. However, the insights gleaned from the study could serve to inform practice within other similar secondary schools and other similar contexts.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

A low response rate in relation to the pilot study using a questionnaire is acknowledged as a limitation of the study. As such, it is recognised that the views of teachers embodied in data derived from this study cannot be considered as representative of the views of all teachers within the wider population of this school. This case study's value is in the 'exploratory', as opposed to the generalisation. Its value, to a large extent, is in the insights that derive from respondents' data. As such, it is acknowledged that the views of teachers within this secondary school cannot be assumed to be reflective of the views of teachers within other Scottish secondary schools.

The researcher recognises that personal biases have the potential to influence the research results. Many theorists identify that 'researcher biases' can be reduced by making them explicit prior to the commencement of the research. In order to reduce such limitation within this study the researcher acknowledges personal assumptions in relation to the study's focus. Section 4.3 of the Methods Chapter contains details in relation to the researcher's value position. The following provides a brief overview of the organisation of the study and the chapters contained within it.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The contents of this thesis are organised within eight chapters that include: the Introductory Chapter (1); the Literature Chapter (2); the Methodology Chapter (3); the Methods Chapter (4); the Results Chapter (5); the Analysis Chapter (6); the Discussion Chapter (7) and the Conclusion Chapter (8). References and appendices follow the final chapter. The following provides an overview of chapters 1 – 8.

Chapter (1) – The Introductory Chapter

Part (1)

The first part the introductory chapter provides an overview of the subject area from which the study is drawn. It then discusses: the focus of the study; the conceptual framework; the purpose of the study and the research questions; the terms used throughout; the procedures

used within the study; the study's significance; its limitations and the organisation of the chapters contained within the thesis.

Part (2)

The second part of the introductory chapter explores Scottish Government policy initiatives that appear to have acted as a stimulus for the emergence of distributed leadership in Scottish secondary education. Policy is examined over the last two decades within a Scottish context and this discussion foregrounds a review of the literature that follows in Chapter 2.

Chapter (2) – The Literature Chapter

This chapter discusses the conduct of the literature review, the criteria used for selection of relevant literature, distributed leadership in a historical context, the concepts included within the distributed leadership paradigm and a rationale in support of this thesis based on gaps identified from the review of the literature.

Chapter (3) – The Methodology Chapter

This chapter discusses the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin the main research paradigms, considers the suitability of different paradigmatic stances for the purpose of this study and provides a rationale for the selection of the theoretical framework chosen in order to fulfil the purposes of the study and address the research questions.

Chapter (4) – The Methods Chapter

Within this chapter the research approaches and methods are detailed. The chapter discusses: the adoption of mixed-methods; the use of mixed-methods within a case study approach; the framework used in order to guide the process of data collection; the processes involved in preparing for data collection; the data collection methods employed; concepts in relation to rigour within this case study and the processes employed for the purpose of data analysis.

Chapter (5) – The Results Chapter

Largely, this chapter sets out the results of this study in relation to interviews and a focus group discussion. A questionnaire, as previously noted, takes the form of a pilot study and should be seen in this context. Within this chapter the results derived from the pilot study are compared with those obtained from use of interviews and a focus group discussion.

Chapter (6) – Analysis Chapter

This chapter builds upon chapter five, the Results Chapter, by demonstrating how, utilising the results of the data sets, the researcher arrived at the over-arching themes. The chapter provides an account of the inductive thematic analysis used within this study. Themes and their sub-themes are set out in terms of how each theme appears, how the theme is demonstrated in relation to each data source, the number of contributors to a particular view that derive from interviews and a focus group discussion and the extent to which themes can be supported by the available data extracts.

Chapter (7) – Discussion Chapter

Within this chapter the themes and their sub-themes are discussed in relation to each of the three main research questions and in relation to the literature. Each research question is followed by a discussion of the over-arching themes, sub-themes and literature that pertains to it.

Chapter (8) – Concluding Chapter

This chapter discusses the conclusions of the study and makes recommendations for the further research and future practice.

Introductory Chapter

Part (2)

2.1 Distributed leadership: Scottish Government Policy Imperatives

The following explores Scottish Government policy as a means of illustrating how distributed leadership has evolved and why it is considered as a worthy approach for school leadership. This thesis relates to distributed leadership as it is understood and experienced by teachers within secondary school education. As such, it is not the intention here to provide an exhaustive account of Scottish Government policy. However, this section seeks to explore Scottish Government policy initiatives that appear to be the stimulus for the emergence of distributed leadership in Scottish secondary education. The following traces the progression of policy over the last two decades within a Scottish context. In order to provide background

this discussion of Scottish Government policy, as it relates to distributed leadership, is foregrounded by an exploration of neo-liberal influences.

Many theorists contend that national policy has been shaped by wider global influences, and in particular, neo-liberalism. Currie & Locket (2011) recognise that neo-liberal influences have resulted in extensive educational leadership initiatives. Consensus amongst theorists indicates that the neo-liberalist agenda has driven economic and political changes within many countries as they strive to remain competitive. There is also agreement that neo-liberalism assumes many different forms in different parts of the world. Springer (2010) suggests that it is better understood in terms of its geographical location. Peck (2004) recognises that there is no pure or paradigmatic form of neo-liberalism and that the phenomenon should be understood in terms of geographically distinct hybrids. As such, this discussion does not seek to provide a comprehensive account of how neo-liberalism is characterised and manifest in different localities, but seeks to illuminate the concept in broad terms prior to focusing on its impact within a Scottish Government policy context.

Boas & Gans-Morse (2009) recognise that neo-liberalism requires to be examined if it is to serve as a way of understanding societal changes over the last few decades. McCafferty et al. (2010) identify that the term 'neo-liberalism' entered into global discourse after the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. They go on to cite some of its possible categories as: a hegemonic ideology; a policy and programme; an epistemology; a version of governmentality and a state form. From the early beginnings of the NAFTA neo-liberalism appears to have taken hold in a global sense. Consensus amongst theorists indicates that: privatisation of state-owned enterprises; the promotion of free trade; reduced state intervention in the economy; accountability for government budgets and free market capitalism comprise the policy foundations of neo-liberalism. Campbell & Pedersen (2001) suggest that the spread of neo-liberal influences has led to the decimation of public services and the prioritisation of economic over social goals.

The above policy imperatives appear to have been a reaction to previous liberal conceptions of state power as too interventionist. In characterising liberalist policy, Olssen, Codd & O'Neill (2004) assert that it: construed the state and market as separate entities; promoted welfare and free educational services; supported social change through welfare programmes; emphasised human needs and viewed people as only partially autonomous. In contrast,

McLeavy (2008) defines neo-liberalism, at a very base level, as the new economic, political and social arrangements that have taken hold within society that emphasise market forces, the role of the state and the role of the individual in terms of responsibility. Neo-liberalist arrangements appear to construe individuals as autonomous agents who are responsible for their own interests and who are not reliant upon the state. Campbell & Pedersen (2001) recognise that governments, through the neo-liberalist agenda, seek to relinquish responsibility for social change. The consequences of neo-liberalism are cited by Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill (2004) in terms of limited government support for social change and the dismantling of welfare services. Societal problems are perceived as matters that should concern individuals within society and not matters to be addressed by the state.

The changes brought about by neo-liberalism appear to be driven by austerity and the need to achieve change without reliance on additional government sourced resources. Neo-liberalist arguments appear to hinge upon the necessity for a more adaptive workforce in order to meet the requirements of a rapidly changing world. Schleicher (2012) identifies the need for a different type of workforce necessitated by rapid societal and technological changes that are happening world-wide. Distributed leadership resonates with these perspectives in terms of construing all teachers as 'leaders' who are able to influence 'change'. Spillane (2006) recognises that leadership, as distributed, engages all members of an organisation in work that is tied to the core work of the organisation and aims to influence the practices, knowledge and motivations of others.

Different approaches appear to be required in order to respond to the educational needs of young people. Amongst such approaches it would seem that the development of school leaders and of the school's systems is seen as pivotal. The perceived requirements for the knowledge and skills necessary to enable people to function effectively in the twenty first century appear as the catalysts for a renewed focus on education and upon the development of school leaders. Torrance (2013) echoes such notions and describes distributed leadership as a political remedy for school improvement and workforce reform. Distributed leadership is construed within policy as a means of utilising the talents of teachers whilst simultaneously contributing to the advancement of the school. Aligning with neo-liberal ideology, Mayrowetz (2008) recognises that school improvement is now predicated upon harnessing the collective capacity of the school staff and that teachers have an increased role in the achievement of the school's goals. This perspective implies a greater degree of staff

accountability for the success of the school. Such processes seem to align with neo-liberalist moves towards decentralisation. The success or failure of institutions such as schools is no longer seen as the responsibility of the government, but of those who operate within such institutions.

It appears that neo-liberalism is construed as an extension of market competition into every area of life. McLeavy (2008) identifies that neo-liberalism has been proliferated through attempts to instil its social practices and values in the population. Peck & Tinkell (2002) give a sense of the permeable nature of neo-liberalism recognising that it has a lasting impact because it is embedded in the practices of governance at local level. Evidence of the impact of such policies on the Scottish education system can be found in the Scottish Government: Governance Review discussed later in this chapter. It could be argued that 'Curriculum for Excellence', also discussed later in this chapter, serves to promulgate neo-liberalist values within children and young adults throughout their primary and secondary education.

The above has sought to provide the context within which policy developments in Scotland have taken place. It has aimed to illustrate how reforms within the Scottish public sector have been a consequence of global policy measures. Peck & Tinkell (2002) recognise that neo-liberalism cannot be construed as an end-state. In other words, neo-liberalism has no pure or universally recognised form. Springer (2016) suggests that it should be seen more in geographical terms, (as it applies within a locality), in that it assumes mutated and marginalised forms as it travels over the world. The views of theorists appear to suggest that there are certain strands of neo-liberalist ideology that are shared world-wide. However, there are regional variations in how parts of the ideology are manifest in policy within different countries. Such examples might be seen in the differences between the education systems in England and Scotland. Whereas tuition fees are necessary for students wishing to study in English universities, no such system has been enforced within Scotland. This thesis, as previously noted, relates to distributed leadership within Scottish secondary education. As such, the following section discusses distributed leadership and neo-liberal influences relevant to Scottish Government leadership policy.

2.2 Scottish Government Policy

The policy reforms that focus on school leadership appear to have been supported by more

comprehensive reform of the public sector. As part of a raft of public sector reforms those impinging upon educational leadership appear to have led to significant changes in the responsibilities of school staff which, in turn, appears to have contributed to the promotion of distributed leadership. The Scottish Government: Review of Scotland's Public Services Report (2011) endorses the notion of leadership at all levels within schools combined with increased levels of staff accountability. Such imperatives align with neo-liberalism in that responsibility, as opposed to residing within government institutions, is being transferred to the individual (McLeavy, 2008). In Scotland, over the last two decades, it seems that responsibility for the functions and the success of schools has been increasingly devolved to schools from government and local authorities. MacBeath et al. (2009) recognise the significance of increasing devolvement of power and responsibility to schools.

The above factors appear to have provided the catalysts for significant changes in school leadership. Recognition of the underperformance of some Scottish schools appears to have influenced policy trends over the last two decades. As such, subsequent policy imperatives centre on school improvement in terms of raising standards in schools, ensuring equity of experience and outcome for pupils irrespective of social background and raising attainment. The terms 'equity' and 'excellence', which some critics may find incompatible, appear frequently within policy and this issue is explored further in section 2.3. Some may argue that against a neo-liberalist backdrop, such ambitions for schools have not necessarily been supported in terms of financial resources. It has, therefore, been necessary for policy-makers and school staff to seek other alternatives. It would seem evident that schools are under increasing pressure by government to work within resources and to find creative solutions. Against this background school leadership and, in particular, distributed leadership, emerge as a potential solution. The above would seem indicative of the permeability of neo-liberalism, as an economic system, into areas of public life. Section 2.3 which follows briefly explores school effectiveness, school improvement and how such movements relate to distributed leadership.

2.3 School Effectiveness/Improvement & Distributed leadership

Although school improvement and school effectiveness may be commendable policy aims, theorists contend that neither is unproblematic in terms of the concepts themselves and their

implementation through the application of linear policy mandates to complex school systems. A subject of much debate, school effectiveness has been measured in terms of:

• pupils' achievement gains;

• a reduction in the achievement gap (Creemers & Kyriakides, 2012);

• quantitative generalizable certainties (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 58);

• scores on paper tests through which 'quality' can be quantified (Slee, 1995) and

• pupils' examination results deemed to be important educational goals due to the "high stakes" nature of United Kingdom (UK) public examinations as determinants of the future life chances of young people" (Sammons, 1999, p. 233). It is recognised by Bates, Lewis & Pickard (2001) that parental choice in relation to preferred schools is influenced by the introduction of league tables which publicise the exam results of schools in England. Although league tables of results are not published Scotland, such information is collated and distributed through the media. Many theorists contend that the UK Government policy strategies of the nineteen-nineties aimed at achieving the above priorities simultaneously undermined teachers and acted to deepen inequity.

Whilst some schools have been deemed to be 'effective' due to pupils' test scores, others have been labelled as 'low-performing'. Bangs, MacBeath & Galton (2011) recognise that a focus on high/low performance has created a market advantage for some schools which coupled with a culture of blame has, in turn, hindered disadvantaged schools and has acted to accentuate inequity. In such circumstances schools can adopt admission preferences, parents can collude and pupils with special educational needs can be steered away for "lack of fit" (Brighhouse, Tooley & Howie, 2010, p. 73). Ball (2017) reinforces the above views in that the imposition of performance targets has created competition between schools and a culture of 'performativity'. What the above suggests is that the public image of individual schools has been prioritised over the needs of pupils. Mowat (2019) recognises that market forces have caused schools to value some pupils more than others based on the 'added value' such pupils bring to the school. Ball (2003) supports the above recognising that performance measures have acted to narrow the curriculum as schools prioritise areas which heighten the school's status.

The school effectiveness movement is concerned with identifying variables within the school system which 'add value' to the school. Effectiveness measures have included "'value added' to pupils' test results based on effort in class, homework completion, attendance and behaviour and 'contextual value added' to account for pupils' prior achievements and individual school effects, such as the number of pupils taking free school meals" (Bates, Lewis & Pickard, 2001, p. 94). The significance of 'value added' measures is considered to be in terms of their usefulness in assisting teachers in determining how best to support individual pupils. MacBeath & Mortimore (2001) recognise that 'contextual value' characteristics are of significance in examining pupils' attainment in relation to contextual factors. However, in terms of 'school effectiveness' based on 'value added work', some critics identify that school-level factors associated with "worse/better performance are still underdiagnosed and schools are often differentially effective for some groups of pupils" (Saunders, 1999, p.78). The above factors cast doubt on the significance of 'value added' measures in relation to supporting pupils or assisting teachers in determining appropriate effectiveness measures. Saunders (1999) suggests that schools might identify when contextual issues arise, but fall short in terms of suitable actions in relation to appropriate learning. Additionally, 'value added' measures tend to focus on subject content, as opposed to emphasising pedagogic processes (Tatnell, Kereteletswe & Visscher, 2010). Chapman (2014) suggests that even if all factors which are deemed to make schools 'effective' were identified, it would still achieve marginal results in terms of the variation in pupils' outcomes. More coordinated holistic approaches, as opposed to a narrow focus on the school, will be required in order to promote equitable/effective learning experiences for pupils.

The notion of 'equity' recognises that some pupils are disadvantaged and that measures are required to redress the balance so that pupils can attain equitable educational outcomes. The terms 'equity' and 'excellence', as noted throughout this chapter, are commonly linked within policy. According to the OECD (2017) the concepts of 'equity' and 'excellence' are compatible. However, Slee, Weiner & Tomlinson (1998) argue that results driven school effectiveness measures imply a focus on the individual which, it could be argued, acts to deepen division and seems contrary to notions of 'equity'. In relation to 'equity', Harris et al. (2018) suggest that breaking the link between educational failure and socio-economic disadvantage is a challenge for policy-makers and practitioners. In addition, it could be argued that the aims of 'equity' and the delivery of 'excellence' for all are unrealistic and will

remain so for as long as inequity persists in relation to the socio-economic basis from which individuals embark upon an educational experience.

Sections 2.1 and 2.2 discuss devolved governance and greater accountability for schools/teachers. However, Patrick & Rollins (2016) recognise that the publication of what is deemed to be poor performance penalises schools and teachers whose pupils do not meet performance expectations. Bangs, MacBeath & Galton (2011) assert that such measures have acted to alienate teachers, the individuals upon whom the success of schools and pupils depend. Teachers are seen as both the "subjects and agents of change" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992, p. 36). However, a feeling amongst teachers of being ineffective as 'change agents', head teachers feeling burdened by a need to increase the effectiveness of their school and top-down approaches to school effectiveness have, in the view of teachers, implied "that they are inadequate" Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992, p. 104). The above seems indicative of policy prescriptions implemented by teachers into which they have had limited, if any, input. Additionally, the notion that teachers and schools can be held accountable for performance demonstrates the distance between education policy and the realities of schooling. Policy aims seem to ignore the influence upon pupils of family, peers, poverty and unemployment, amongst other factors.

According to Amzat & Valdez (2017) an enabling school culture promotes teachers' autonomy, empowerment and development. However, as the above discussion indicates, teachers' autonomy and empowerment are accompanied by responsibility/accountability for results. Schools/teachers, whilst they appear to be more autonomous, are still constrained through their accountability for results and, as such, aligned for 'blame' if expectations are not met. Aligning with the neo-liberalist agenda, Perkins (2009) recognises that such arrangements enable "the state to steer at a distance" (p. 89) – distanced from responsibility and blame. Indeed, the school effectiveness movement as a means of regulating education "is the antithesis of the empowerment it professes to offer" (Bangs, MacBeath & Galton, 2011, p. 27). Additionally, teachers' beliefs in relation to work/pedagogy which is worthwhile or important are undermined by a focus on the school's status and "activities tied to what will be measured" (Ball, 2003, p. 220).

It is beyond the scope of this study to explore, in-depth, school effectiveness and school improvement movements world-wide. However, Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) recognise that teachers require to be supported in terms of creating the conditions which enable them to be

effective on a daily basis. Such conditions involve inter-school, inter-district and whole-profession collaboration which seems to reflect some of the policy imperatives of Finland and what is now recognised as 'systems leadership' in Scotland. Sahlberg (2011) attributes the success of Finnish educational policy, and consequently the education system, to a holistic approach which includes sustainable leadership with a focus on learning and teaching. Darling-Hammond (2009) recognises that educational reform in Finland has resulted in significant improvement in pupils' learning and attainment. Trends appear to be towards the use of learning networks in order to increase development opportunities for school leaders. According to Sahlberg (2009) in-service training of school staff is a statutory duty and development is targeted towards school leadership. Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) note that in comparison to other countries teachers in Finland spend less time in the classroom and, as such, have time to discuss, reflect and develop judgement.

> The attributes which make some schools more effective than others include: a collaborative culture; mutual respect; trust; informal accountability between teachers; professional relationships; teachers being given significant responsibility for decision-making; parents/community involvement in the school; networks with other schools/institutions; distributed leadership; opportunities for skills development (Chapman, 2014); parental engagement; parent/teacher communication; a climate that favours learning and wellbeing; a reduced concentration of disadvantaged pupils in particular schools; an increase in teachers' capacity to identify and manage pupils' needs and the provision of resources for disadvantaged pupils (OECD, 2018). Reinforcing the above perspectives, Chapman (2014) notes that collaboration between schools can improve outcomes for pupils and that "it is no longer acceptable to hide in your classroom, school, town… replicating the practices of the past" (p. 11).

What seems evident is that the 'school effectiveness' movement has limitations in terms of punitive measures which act to discourage rather than foster teachers' contributions. Additionally, theorists question the extent to which measures such as test scores are meaningful if education fails to prepare young people for life and work. Reynolds & Parker (1992) recognise that lists of characteristics thought to define 'school effectiveness' do not provide a holistic sense of 'how' an effective school can be created. The above suggests that a focus on 'school effectiveness' results in a narrow understanding of the ways in which schools might be developed. Theorists have proposed a number of frameworks aimed at improving schools and, in particular, those which are contingent upon: teachers' sense of

shared ownership (Slee, Weiner & Tomlinson, 1998); the need for teachers to take ownership of pedagogy (Bangs, MacBeath & Galton, 2011); a commitment to ownership over 'what works and why' (Chapman, 2014) and accommodating individual teacher style so that teachers can, over time, take ownership (Perkins & Reese, 2014). Perkins (2009) proposes 'learning by wholes' in which he identifies "participatory structures" (p. 171). The following explores such concepts in relation to the perspectives of other theorists and in relation to distributed leadership.

School Improvement & Distributed Leadership

According to Perkins (2009) 'participatory structure' relates to the notion that an individual can learn from the mistakes made by others and from the feedback others have received or, as Perkins puts it, "learning their practice from another in a team" (p. 170). Such perspectives, as discussed in sections 2.3 and 2.4, attune with the idea of novices learning important aspects of their craft by beginning to learn on the periphery of a team (Lave & Wenger, 1982). Gradually, teachers "learn to play the whole game" and, with the support of others, move from the periphery to the heart of an initiative (Perkins, 2009). The above resonates with 'a distributive perspective' in the sense that learning and leadership practice can emanate from the interactions of leaders, followers and their situation. Additionally, 'peripheral participation' attunes with notions of the 'zone of proximal development' and with distributed leadership conceived as a medium for teachers' learning (Vygotsky, 1987). The engagement of teachers is considered to be pivotal in terms of a framework or strategy in order to sustain school improvement. As teachers become more familiar with an initiative/activity particular roles are assumed within the team which provides a sense of engagement "making the game worth playing" (Perkins, 2009).

Obstacles to learning can be overcome by "working on the hard parts" whilst using others as a "cognitive mirror" (Perkins, 2009, p. 171) and scaffolding in order to coach individuals (Woods et al., 1976). The importance of working with others who can offer insight in relation to novel approaches is referred to by Perkins as "playing out of town". Such situations may harness what Haregreaves & Fullan (2012) identify as the latent talent of an individual or 'human capital'. The above represents features of 'a distributive perspective' and also maps into 'shared leadership' in which people in teams influence one another towards the achievement of organisational goals (Raelin, 2016). It could be argued that learning within a team is limited by the knowledge/expertise of team members and might actually facilitate the

distribution of poor practices. However, Perkins (2009) recognises that "learning from teams… and other teams" assists teachers and organisations in overcoming the above constraints and others related to time, costs and group size (p. 191). Attuning with such views, Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) assert that teachers, as a group, can identify and respond to the needs of pupils. The above attunes with the concept of 'social capital' in terms of the benefits to schools of being part of multiple networks (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) and maps into the concept of 'systems leadership' which utilises the collective actions of head teachers for the purpose of school improvement and leadership development (Dimmock, 2016). Similarly, school 'improvement', as opposed to 'effectiveness', focuses on the performance of multi-organisational networks in preference to the achievements of individual organisations (Rowe & Chapman, 2015).

A further concept is suggested by Perkins (2009) which enables novices to "uncover the hidden game" by observing others, discussing strategies/issues as they unfold and, in the process, developing an understanding of their own learning. On a similar vein, Bangs, MacBeath & Galton (2011) recognise that individuals benefit from their use of social networks and through learned abilities, or 'educational capital', are better able to direct their efforts. However, it is suggested that consideration is given to the conditions under which teachers lead/learn. Learning is more meaningful and memorable if teachers'/leaders': relationships with learners are productive; attitudes are welcoming (Perkins, 2018); work informally with parts of the hierarchy; move between levels; connect and bond with individuals (Chapman, 2018) and if initiatives are permeable and transparent in order to enable new individuals to join (Perkins & Reese, 2014). Chapman's notion of leaders bonding with staff at different levels, it could be argued, might be a necessity in order to forge relationships and broker task delegation which is associated with 'distributed leadership' (Deflamminis, 2017 & Bierly et al., 2016). It is clear that school improvement is premised upon developing the capacity individuals within each school. However, some theorists contend that in order to achieve such aims, learning should be 'useful' in terms of its relevance to peoples' every-day lives (Perkins, 2018).

As discussed earlier in this section, the school effectiveness movement fails to account for what teachers themselves believe would increase effectiveness (Bangs, MacBeath & Galton, 2011). In order to sustain momentum in terms of school improvement predicated upon teachers' and, as such, organisational capacity a focus is required upon "what makes a difference" and "opportunities to learn what is engaging" for teachers (Perkins, 2018). Such

perspectives align with those of Dewey (1916) who positions learners as creators and explorers involved in 'active learning' which derives from the experience of living. It could be argued that 'learning from the conditions of life' coincides with 'a distributed perspective' in that the tools and routines of leadership are the products of teachers' leadership practice (Spillane, 2006). Dewey's approach emphasises theory linked to practice. The notion that 'leaders emerge' from a situation in which teachers lead collectively, as in a 'distributed perspective', could be aligned to the belief that "meaning derives from experiences as they occur" and as the individual engages with the world meaning is brought to it (Dewey, 1997, p. 49). Aligning with the perspectives of Dewey, Perkins (2018) emphasises the importance of considering how knowledge comes into being, how it connects with contemporary knowledge and how knowledge is then applied in real life situations. For example, teachers exhibiting, sharing and applying knowledge when leading collectively upon a project aimed at school improvement. Such instances exemplify theorists' assertions that theoretical knowledge, in order to be engaging, memorable and useful, must have an application in life (Whitehead, 1929). According to Whitehead (1929) knowledge which has no useful application in the real world is considered to be 'inert'. This view reinforces the notion that teachers' learning/leadership and development, as a basis for school improvement, requires to be rooted in practice.

Whilst this chapter focuses primarily on Scottish Government policy aims in relation to distributed leadership, the above exploration of school effectiveness/improvement movements provides context in terms of the issues associated with distributed leadership which are not limited to Scottish education. In an attempt to further contextualise distributed leadership the following sets out some of the main policy priorities in relation to distributed leadership and its relevance to Scottish education.

2.4 Distributed leadership – As Conceptualised within Policy

The Scottish Executive Education Department: Improving our schools (2000) sets out guidance for local authorities. In an endeavour to raise standards in education the duties imposed upon local authorities include:

- a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome in relation to pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- improvement in the quality of education in schools;
- and achievement of the priorities of the National Improvement Framework.

One of the key priorities identified is a requirement to improve school leadership. The above duties are underpinned by statutory guidance within The Standards in Scottish Schools Act, (2000). Emphasis within this legislation is upon reporting mechanisms that enable schools and local authorities to report on how outcomes for pupils have improved. School leadership emerges as one of the key drivers of school improvement and outcomes for pupils. In respect of both of these issues school leadership and the activities used to strengthen it are cited within this policy as crucial in order to create a positive impact. Coinciding with the neo-liberalist agenda, such policy measures seem to position schools as having greater autonomy in terms of acting within their resources, whilst at the same time being responsible for achieving policy aims.

The above, although no longer current, appears to serve to bring leadership to the forefront of policy developments. This work is an important starting point in relation to the notion of leadership as a potential mechanism for school improvement. An expectation for teachers to learn about leadership through experience has become a common thread within policy for almost two decades. However, the intervention of more senior leaders is both explicit and implied. The Scottish Government: Ambitious Excellent Schools Report (2005) identifies **"**that there is weakness in leadership in a small percentage of schools" (p. 2). The policy agenda appears indicative of neo-liberal tendencies in the sense that it focuses on helping young people to feel confident and ambitious in terms of their own future and the futures of others. In addition, there is emphasis on the importance of young people in relation to the economy. Mowat (2014) recognises that such imperatives have acted as stimulus for re-conceptualising school leadership. In order to realise the above aims**,** The Scottish Government: Ambitious Excellent Schools Report (2005) sets out the responsibilities of head teachers in terms of developing leadership in others, empowering people and teams and engendering collegiality. Whilst such policy imperatives appear to imply a greater degree of teacher agency the onus to initiate processes that enable others to exercise leadership appears to fall to the head teacher.

Other actions set out within this report include, heightened expectations of school staff, more freedom for teachers and schools and greater choices and opportunities for pupils. These aims seem to echo the aforementioned notions in relation to engendering ambition and social concern amongst young people. The transference or distribution of leadership, (teacher to pupil), is cited as an agent for achievement of such aims and crucial to successful schools. Aligning with the neo-liberalist agenda, such aims would seem to distance government from

their responsibilities for ‘change’ within schools. The Scottish Government: Ambitious Excellent Schools Report (2005), as a historical antecedent to later leadership policies, is relevant because it foregrounds the notion of leadership distribution, and leadership in general, as a catalyst for change. It appears to represent a movement towards a leadership continuum or sustainable system in which change is brought about by leadership on a number of levels.

The policy reforms that have impinged upon teacher education and therefore distributed leadership, as previously mentioned, appear to be supported by comprehensive reform of the public sector as a whole. The Scottish Government: Standard for Headship (2005) reiterates the pivotal role played by head teachers and senior leaders. This report features a series of actions for head teachers that accord with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence (CFE). For example, strategies for building the school’s capacity include, developing leadership in others, empowering and supporting teams and individuals and creating an atmosphere of collegiality. Such priorities appear to attune with neo-liberalism in that, as opposed to external intervention, school improvement and organisational capacity are predicated upon the actions of the teaching staff. Emphasis within this report is placed upon utilising the expertise and talents of teachers, delegation of responsibility and the development of a participatory ethos. Aligning with the assumptions underpinning distributed leadership ideology, The Scottish Government: Standard for Headship (2012) promotes the inclusion of young people in decision-making. As a means of conceptualising leadership the Standard is useful because it implies that leadership is intended to extend beyond the scope of the teacher. The above actions for head teachers appear to represent the beginning of a new leadership ethos within schools in which educational aims are realised through collegiality, collaboration and the participation of many actors. Such policy priorities appear to align with what Lipman (2011) describes as a neo-liberalist ideology which aims to reconstruct social relations, values and social identities.

Further policy developments resonate with the above and with distributed leadership ideology. The Scottish Government: Leadership for Learning Report (2007) focuses on the development of teachers through building leadership capacity at all levels. Emphasis within this policy is on the removal of barriers to improvement and reform. “Perhaps the most challenging job of any leader is to change the prevailing culture” and “one strategy to promote a change of culture may include the distribution of leadership more widely” (p. 43). Policy priorities in order to achieve the above aims include a forum through which the head

teacher can involve senior and middle management in decision-making and the involvement of the teaching staff in leadership projects. Gronn (2008) recognises that policy reforms have prompted the changing responsibilities of head teachers and the inclusion of teachers in leadership.

These policy aims seem to align with the intended outcomes of distributed leadership and appear to represent a point of divergence from the more traditional hierarchical leadership modes. The imperative for increased levels of responsibility amongst teachers is clearly evident and a greater degree of collegiate working is implied. Such measures appear to aim for improvements in schools, school leadership and, ultimately, improvements in terms of what pupils' experience. Torrance (2013) recognises that head teachers and senior leaders have a facilitating role in involving others in leadership. Additionally, Torrance notes that distributed leadership does not necessarily negate the role of the head teacher, but adds to its complexity. Building upon these priorities, The Scottish Government: CFE Programme (2009) promotes the notion of a relationship between leadership and learning. Key aspects of this policy highlight the expectation for teachers to learn within a range of contexts, participate in inter-agency learning, decision-making and reflection upon learning. There is reference to 'inter-agency' working in the sense that learning amongst teachers is expected to emanate from collaboration between teachers within each school and beyond the school to involve other schools/organisations. The emergence of a mutually reciprocal relationship between leadership and career development appears to emerge as a theme. The CFE is significant because it explores the notion of sustainable leadership through reciprocation. Pounder & Crow (2005) describe this permeation of leadership as a 'leadership pipeline'. In alignment with neo-liberalist influences, the above policy priorities seem to imply that teachers' leadership development is incumbent upon the school and that each teacher is responsible for their own professional development. Such perspectives are endorsed by Magill & Rodriguez (2017) who recognise that neo-liberalist ideologies and discourses have promoted deep reductions in labour costs.

Harris (2008) endorses the notion that sustainable leadership is synonymous with leadership that is co-produced when people learn with others. The (TSFR) Scottish Government: Teaching Scotland's Future Report (2011) cites the co-creation of leadership as a key policy aim and casts teachers as agents of 'change'. In addition, a key recommendation within the TSFR focuses on 'leadership at all levels'. This report notes that the CFE, as discussed above,

is predicated upon teachers' willingness to respond to the necessity for quality leadership at all levels. Such notions are reiterated throughout the TSFR in that improvements in teaching and learning are considered to rely upon the "leadership of Scottish education at all levels" (p. 19). However, Mowat & McMahon (2018) argue that the concept of 'leadership at all levels' is largely under-theorised and is based upon a model of teacher development that is hierarchical. In addition, such models are as likely to limit teachers' capacity as to enhance it. Such concerns notwithstanding, within the context of the TSFR, leadership co-creation is construed as the establishment of a sustainable leadership continuum. It is incumbent upon head teachers, as previously stated, to involve senior leaders in decision-making and leadership. The TSFR emphasises a similar role for those in formal leadership positions and for teachers themselves. Hartley (2007) suggests that the development of leadership skills for all teachers should be undertaken within a culture that supports distributed leadership. For all practical purposes the assumptions underpinning the TSFR seem indicative of leadership within schools that is shared or distributed in favour of traditional hierarchical leadership which has become less relevant in terms of school improvement and teachers' leadership development. As Taylor (2004) recognises, neo-liberalism impacts upon the ways in which people construe their world through "the common understandings, myths, and stories that make possible generalised practices and widely shared legitimacy of a particular shared order" (p. 23).

2.5 Establishing Pathways for Leadership Education

The (GTCS) General Teaching Council for Scotland: Standards for Registration (2012), in response to perceived short-falls, set out a series of professional standards. The Standards serve to provide guidance for teacher development, practice and professional relationships. Aligning with previous policy requirements, the standards highlight the role of the head teacher in relation to utilising teachers' leadership and expertise. Emphasis is given to the head teacher's role in working with teachers in a consultative way in order to formulate contextualised solutions to a given problem. With a focus on the themes of collaboration, sustainability and leadership, the standards provide a progressive developmental framework. The GTCS: Standards for Registration (2012) set out particular expectations for teachers in Scotland in relation to "professional development, learning, working collegiately and leadership as core aspects of professionalism and collaborative practice" (a, p. 2). The aforementioned imperatives appear to represent the beginnings of a system for leadership and

sustainable systems of school improvement.

Concepts of support for teachers' leadership, collegiality and sustainable leadership, as noted above, resonate with neo-liberalist influences and the values that underpin the model for distributed leadership. Leadership that is distributed or transient beyond the teacher/school is highlighted within The GTCS: Standards for Leadership and Management (2012) (SLM) which promotes the concept of teachers leading upon learning activities for learners, colleagues and partners external to the school. The inclusion of others in leadership and pupils in particular appears to resonate with the notion of a sustainable leadership continuum or pipeline (Pounder & Crow, 2005). Within a system intended to perpetuate leadership, the SLM appears to seek to embed the notion of inclusion. Leadership and learning activities that engage the entire school appear as key priorities.

Within The GTCS: Standards for Career-long Professional Development (2012) (SCPD) the notion of sustainable leadership is reiterated. This resonates with policy imperatives that pre-date the GTCS: Standards in terms of advocating leadership at all levels within schools and teachers' leadership that transcends the school to involve parents and external stakeholders. What the above implies is that there is value in working collaboratively in order to make a difference. The GTCS: SCPD appears to suggest that more can be achieved through teachers' collective, as opposed to individual, efforts. Such conceptions align with distributed leadership ideology in terms of teachers' leadership that extends beyond their classroom role and engages others. The above priorities also seem indicative of neoliberalist ideology which, in the view of Lipman (2011), seeks to impose new social identities and relationships.

Many of the actions featured within the GTCS: Standards for Registration (2012) align with distributed leadership ideology in terms of: support for colleagues in their leadership development; shared learning; dissemination of experience and expertise; learning within interdisciplinary contexts; working collaboratively and seeking opportunities to lead. The GTCS: (RTH) Standards for Registration: Routes to Headship Programme (2012) reiterates many of these practices. Its key aim is that of bringing coherence to leadership within schools. Although the Scottish Qualification in Headship and the Flexible Route to Headship have subsequently been replaced, it would seem that the RTH aims to provide teachers with a range of routes that can be followed towards a qualification in headship. In line with the principles that underpin distributed leadership ideology (The Flexible Route to Headship)

emphasises collaborative practice and individualised approaches to learning coupled with a focus on whole-school leadership. Subsequently, the aforementioned has been replaced by the Specialist Qualification In Headship which offers a route to headship which has three components comprising of a 'Middle Leadership' route, an 'Into Headship' route and an 'In Headship' route.

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012) propose that its remit has been accreditation of the routes to headship. Policy developments appear to have focused on providing a context within which school leadership can be transformed. Since the introduction of the Professional Standards the GTCS, in 2017, instigated the 'National Conversation' in order to engage partners, teachers, parents, young people and children in discussing what has worked in relation to the standards and what changes may be required. This review of the standards aims to ensure their currency and relevance. Key messages from data gathered aims to inform working groups whose purpose is to provide stakeholders with suggestions for consultation by the autumn of 2018. The GTCS Standards and other Scottish Government policies discussed above appear to legitimise distributed leadership in that sustainability, leadership at all levels and shared professional values appear as common themes. This might suggest what Taylor (2004) describes as the power of neo-liberalism which lies in its infiltration into consciousness and social practices, making it difficult to form alternative perspectives. Although the above policy priorities seem to afford teachers greater autonomy and agency, they could be construed as prescriptions which influence and constrain the ways in which teachers operate within their practice.

A key recommendation of The Scottish Government: TSFR (2011), as discussed earlier in this section, alludes to the formation of a virtual College of School Leadership in order to support leadership education. Such measures were intended to offer part of an infra-structure in order to realise policy aims and support leadership development in Scotland. However, as opposed to a virtual college, The Scottish College of School Leadership (SCEL) was founded in Scotland in 2014. Whilst the Standards developed by the GTCS appear to have been instrumental in drawing together coherent systems for leadership education in Scotland, further developments have become the remit of SCEL. SCEL (2014) identify the development and improvement of leadership education in Scotland as one of its principal aims. As such, SCEL developed a Framework for Educational Leadership (FEL). Aligning

with the direction of current policy, the framework emphasises individualised approaches to addressing the needs of teachers irrespective of their prior experience or their role within education. Through the FEL educators can identify their strengths, shape their professional development and direct their learning journey.

2.6 Models of Leadership

Teacher-leadership

The above work carried out by SCEL is useful in exploring different conceptualisations of leadership within policy. The FEL takes account of teachers' aspirations for leadership, middle management leadership and headship. It also provides a framework by which head teachers who are in post can develop through the Extended Induction/In Headship component of the Specialist Qualification for Headship and the Excellence in Headship and Fellowship programmes. Echoing the assumptions that underpin distributed leadership, the FEL positions teachers as, 'teacher-leaders' who collaborate with colleagues, create a positive impact on the school community and are able to innovate and to improve outcomes for pupils by sustaining high-quality relationships with young people, parents, colleagues and external partners. In line with neo-liberalist rhetoric this conceptualization of leadership emphasizes teachers' ingenuity and self-evaluation which implies a greater degree of autonomy for teachers. However, aligning with neo-liberalist tendencies, this could be construed as indicative of a further distancing of government from their responsibilities in relation to schools, school leadership and progress. More explicit reference to teacher-leadership is made within the GTCS Revised Standard. The GTCS: Standard for Full Registration (2012) appears to make it incumbent upon all teachers in Scotland to 'exercise professional leadership'. This stipulation appears to apply to teachers irrespective of their status as a promoted or un-promoted member of staff. It would seem that teachers' leadership is increasingly perceived as pivotal in relation to the forward movement of education. Frost (2010) for example, recognizes that a relationship exists between teacher-leadership, innovation and future change within education. Frost (2014) identifies that non-promoted teachers can instigate change, lead strategically and through their engagement with others, influence the direction of particular initiatives.

Middle leadership

Leadership from the middle, as defined within the FEL, can be understood in a variety of ways that can apply to teachers at different stages of their careers. Middle leadership, in broad terms, is construed as representative of those who have a specified leadership remit beyond the classroom. Such roles can include, but not exclusively, classroom teachers, depute head teachers, principal teachers and faculty head teachers. The GTCS: Standard for Middle Leadership and Management (2012) aims to address teachers' leadership development. In addition, in collaboration with Scottish universities, SCEL has sought to provide development in (middle leadership) at post-graduate level. The 'Middle Leadership' qualification, as previously discussed in section 2.3, forms the initial stage of the Specialist Qualification in Headship.

The FEL appears to offer a structure in relation to the distribution of leadership in terms of defining (teacher) and (middle) leaders. The role school leaders play in achieving school improvement by supporting and challenging middle leaders is recognized within this framework. Priorities appear to reflect distributed leadership ideology in terms of leadership that is not the preserve of senior leaders and an emphasis upon engaging teachers in order to inform current and future actions to bring about school improvement. This reflects the priorities alluded to earlier in relation to teachers' autonomy and self-reliance. The FEL, in differentiating between Teacher, Middle, and School leadership, has assisted in constructing a base-line understanding of the leadership layers that can exist within schools. These definitions, in turn, appear to be useful in creating a clearer understanding of the ways in which leadership is thought to be distributed. However, it is recognized that in order to achieve the priorities encompassed within each level of leadership, systems of working will be required.

Systems leadership

Dimmock (2016) attributes the emergence of 'systems leadership' to a shortage of high performing head teachers. Furthermore, he notes that in order to address this deficit and to drive school improvement, the distribution of high performing leaders across schools will be required. It seems evident that the collective actions of head teachers, (systems leaders), are intended to ensure that all schools within a specific regional authority benefit from quality leadership. The FEL (2014) identifies that it is incumbent upon systems leaders to share their work and expertise with other leaders from other parts of the system in order to bring about change and improvement. The role of 'systems leaders' resonates with distributed leadership

ideology in that leadership, as opposed to being concentrated in one person or school, is intended to permeate and influence the performance of others. Echoing a frequent policy theme and the values that underpin distributed the FEL, as part of the school's performance and review processes, notes that systems leaders have a key role in empowering other colleagues in their leadership. Such assumptions appear to imply that school improvement is considered to emanate from leadership that is distributed at each level within schools. Chapman (2014) concurs with the above notions suggesting that school improvement can emanate from reinforcing collaboration and leadership inside of, across and beyond the school.

The above priorities and those within Scottish Government policy in general appear to center on outcomes for young people that derive from high quality schooling. As such, school leadership is acknowledged as fundamental. The policy focus on leadership continues within The Scottish Government: National Improvement Framework (2016), (NIF). As one of the most influential policy developments over the last decade, the NIF sets out the Scottish Government's priorities for achieving 'excellence' within school education and 'equity' in relation to what pupils experience irrespective of their social background. Key drivers for improvement set out within the NIF include:

- school leadership;
- teacher professionalism;
- parental engagement;
- assessment of children's progress and
- school improvement.

The above drivers for improvement provide a focus for collecting evidence which can be evaluated in order to determine whether future improvements are required. The emphasis within this policy framework is on empowered head teachers and teachers who empower others to take ownership of their own learning and development. Such priorities appear to align with a neo-liberalist agenda in that responsibility, as opposed to residing with the state, is being cascaded downwards throughout organisations. The framework, in relation to leadership, provides a means of evaluating the impact and quality of school leadership at all levels. Information that emerges is intended to be used by schools and local authorities in order to evaluate the success of school leadership upon which outcomes for pupils are thought to depend. Evidence that is gathered in relation to the quality of school leadership

aims to identify and share leadership practice that is deemed to be excellent. This notion resonates with the assumptions that underpin distributed leadership and 'systems leadership' in that excellence in leadership practice may transmit to others through collective influence. The NIF, with the aim of ensuring effective school leadership, takes account of the proportion of head teachers who meet the GTCS: Standards for Headship (2012) and the proportion who continue to meet the GTCS: Standard for Leadership and Management (2012). This framework, in addition to its auditing role, seeks to provide a support mechanism if leadership requires to be improved. The aforementioned priorities appear to have been addressed further within the Scottish Government's review of school governance.

The Scottish Government: Governance Review (2017), (SGGR) sets out a vision for education. Key aims within this review appear to include the desire to drive improvement, the pursuit of 'equity' and the achievement of 'excellence'. An over-arching message is that a system is required in which teachers are the leaders of learning and have a responsibility for delivering excellence and equity. This report, whilst clearly stating that young people are central to the education system, cites the quality of learning, teaching and leadership as fundamental to the success of schools. Although there is a pledge of much increased support for teachers, it is clear that the success or failure of the system is intended to lie with teachers, as 'leaders'. The content of the SGGR would seem to suggest that the Scottish Government seeks to distance itself from responsibility for the education system. Head teachers and teachers at other levels seem to be positioned as those responsible and accountable for the success or failure of schools. Such priorities would appear to coincide with the neo-liberalist agenda in terms of ever-decreasing government accountability for the success of schools. Magill & Rodreguez (2017) endorse such perspectives in that neo-liberalism champions forms of governance which promote the withdrawal of government provisions for social services.

The Report of Initial Findings of the International Council of Education Advisors (2017), (RICEA), appointed by the Scottish Government to advise on education policy, advocates strengthening middle leadership within Scottish education. The SGGR reflects this in terms of the establishment of regional collaboratives. The RICEA suggests that a culture of collaboration should exist throughout Scottish education at school, classroom, regional and national level. The above aims suggest the imposition of neo-liberalist tendencies or what Lipman (2011) construes as the power of neo-liberalism to saturate social practices. One of

the central policy strands of the (SGGR) has been the empowerment of head teachers through the Head Teachers Charter, a policy proposal which also increases head teachers' accountability.

2.7 Synthesis & Discussion

Within the policy developments discussed in this section it seems that conceptualisations of school leadership and, in particular, distributed leadership continue to evolve. The Scottish Executive Education Department: Improving our schools (2000) appears to set the agenda for school improvement. Across a number of Scottish Government policies common themes include the role of the head teacher in creating conditions which foster leadership distribution and the uptake of leadership at all levels within schools. The GTCS: Standards for Headship (2012) emphasises the utilisation of teachers' expertise whilst The Scottish Government: Leadership for Learning Report (2007) cites teacher-leadership as a key policy imperative. Further policy imperatives appear to focus on the re-organisation of schools in order to create a very different ethos in which leadership is central to the achievement of policy aims. The Scottish Government: Review of Scotland's Public Services Report (2011) appears crucial in setting the agenda for the devolvement of power and accountability for management of schools from the Scottish Government and local authorities to schools. Such moves appear to be in response to reduced funding for public services arising from the financial crisis of 2007. It could be argued that an encounter between austerity and the desire for school improvement has created a greater impetus for distributed leadership in schools. The Scottish Government: Teaching Scotland's Future Report (2011) paves the way for sustainable leadership systems. The emphasis upon leadership distributed across all levels within schools offers a different way of conceptualising the teaching profession. Subsequently, the GTCS: Professional Standards (2012) seem to be instrumental in setting out pathways teachers can follow in order to further their leadership development. The SCEL - National Framework for Educational Leadership (2014), in relation to distributed leadership, appears to impose structure in terms of what is led at each level within school and by whom. It is suggested that distributed leadership is construed in two directions of travel. Many policies relate to top-down distribution of leadership with a focus on engaging teachers at all levels in school leadership. The head teacher's leadership appears predominant in terms of its importance in creating the conditions necessary for successful distribution of leadership throughout the school. As such, head teachers and others appear to be tasked with lateral distribution of leadership. Although

the notion of systems leadership is under-developed, it is predicated on the notion that the influence and expertise of certain head teachers can be utilized in order to improve schools that are outside of their domain. Such notions seem to assume that collegial, collaborative practices will lead to the diffusion of excellence in school leadership.

The notion that leadership continues to evolve is evident from the above review of Scottish Government policy. This is exemplified within The Scottish Government: National Improvement Framework (2016) NIF which is, essentially, a mechanism for the evaluation and review of school leadership. It appears to offer a means of ensuring that schools continue to meet Scottish Government policy aims. For nearly two decades policy developments appear to have instigated radical changes in teachers' responsibilities. Teachers appear to be positioned as 'leaders' who work collegially for the greater good of their place of employment and of other schools. The Scottish Government: Governance Review (2017) appears to focus on creating systems in which teachers are responsible, through their leadership, for delivering excellence and equity. Parents and communities will be engaged in what seems to be a continual movement that shifts the onus for school success away from Government. Some might argue that increased levels of autonomy for teachers, more power in the hands of head teachers, involvement of parents and communities in school governance and the pursuit of 'equity' in relation to pupils' experiences of the school system, are commendable policy aims. However, critics might regard the above policy priorities as hegemonic in terms of their influence on teachers' responsibilities and in relation to reduced levels of reliance upon government. It is recognised that neo-liberalist influences are able to permeate practice and have a sustained impact upon it because of their embeddedness in governance at a local level (Peck & Tinkell, 2002).

In an attempt to contextualise distributed leadership the above discussion has traced its development across Scottish Government policy. The discussion has sought to demonstrate neo-liberalist influences which have emerged within Scottish Government policy, how these relate to distributed leadership and, as such, to the practices of teachers. The following chapter, The Literature Chapter, traces the origins of distributed leadership, explores its various permutations, examines the ways in which it is conceptualised within contemporary literature and provides a rationale for the focus of this study based upon perceived gaps within the literature.

Chapter (2) - Literature Chapter

Part 1

This chapter is presented in two parts. Part one discusses the criteria used for selection of relevant literature. Part two explores distributed leadership in a historical context, discusses the concepts included within the distributed leadership paradigm and offers a rationale in support of this study based on gaps identified from this review of the literature.

2.1 The Literature Review — Conducting the Review

The purpose of conducting the literature review is to enable a deeper understanding of the study area, its central issues and omissions that might indicate areas yet to be researched and to help derive the research questions. Wallace & Wray (2006) define reflexivity as self-development that occurs when practitioners adopt a reflective and self-critical stance. By frequently revisiting the literature, decisions can be made about which themes to develop and build upon. The literature reviewed consists of articles, books, theses and e-books. The following sets out the ways in which the literature was sourced, the process used in order to carry out a literature search and the selection criteria.

2.2 Sourcing the Literature

Relevant literature was sourced through the University of Strathclyde library and other sources. Some of the literature gathered was in hard copy and many in electronic format. Hard copies were accessed through libraries including the University of Strathclyde and through retail suppliers. 'Supremo', The University of Strathclyde library's search engine, was used in order to establish the availability of texts on the subject of 'Distributed Leadership'. Through this search engine it was possible to establish whether, or not, such texts could be accessed in hard copy or electronic form. Through the use of Supremo, journal articles, data bases, books and theses could be searched. Subsequently, other search engines were used in order to direct the researcher to downloadable material. Such search engines included for example, Google Scholar, Emerald journals, Sage publications and Wiley. Some of the literature accessed in the early stages of the review prompted further searches. For example, some articles highlighted 'micro-politics' in relation to distributed leadership. This fuelled a search for material in connection with the relationship between micro-politics and distributed leadership.

From an array of books, journal articles and conference papers, terms in relation to distributed leadership emerged that merited further investigation for example, shared leadership, hybrid leadership, teacher-leadership and a distributive perspective. As such, the review became more expansive as some of the material gathered was used in order to search for, and locate, other information. Similarly, the researcher made use of the reference sections in various books/articles/papers in order to gain a sense of the key authors in the field whose work had been sourced by others. This process assisted the researcher in identifying some of the most prolific writers in the field.

The selection of the literature was guided by the following criteria:

- the relevance of the topic in terms of the parameters and aims of the study;
- the authority of the material including the standing of the author in the research community;
- the reputation of the publisher;
- the location of articles in peer-reviewed journals;
- the currency of the work (ideally emerging within the last 10 years) and
- consideration of older publications — seminal works that were highly significant to the study.

The above criteria, as noted earlier, acted only to guide the selection of texts. Such criteria served as a starting point into the literature and for the researcher, as a novice within the field, as a way of orientating herself into it. The researcher acknowledges that the above criteria represent broad categories and that there are sources, such as seminal texts, which are drawn upon throughout the thesis and are considered to be appropriate. Examples of such texts include: Gibbs, 1954; Lave & Wenger, 1982; Schutz, 1962 and Lukes, 1974.

The concept of distributed leadership in education largely came to the fore in the early nineteen nineties. However, Deflaminis (2017) recognises that it has gained considerable attention over the last fifteen years. In a cultural sense, in terms of how distributed leadership has evolved, this study takes account of developments over the last decade.

In relation to the literature review, Hart (2008) asserts that the process illuminates the nature and the extant of the literature, the ways in which research into the area has been conducted, and the key themes. After initial scrutiny of the study area the review became more focused as key themes were identified. Wallace & Wray (2006) advocate the use of a concept map in order to make sense of the themes that emerge from a literature review. A concept map was formed at the commencement of this review in order to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of this study and in order to establish its direction. Over time, the concept map helped to reveal the key themes and sub-themes to be addressed and those less relevant to the study. The process of deriving the concepts involved the researcher in scrutinising the literature and noting prominent themes that occur frequently within it. Through building up a list of commonly occurring themes, the researcher was able to gain a broad perspective of the field of study. As the review commenced and throughout the review process each concept (theme) was written on an individual card. The researcher, through a process of assembling and re-assembling the cards, was able to organise the concepts in a logical sequence. Novak & Canas (2006) recognise that individual concepts and areas where ideas intersect can be identified by placing concepts in a hierarchical structure. Birbili (2006) reinforces the notion that a visual display helps to organise information in a way that makes sense to others. The use of such techniques enabled the researcher to establish the key areas of focus, decide upon a logical order in which to present them and, therefore, enhance the coherence of this study. An exemplification of the concept map is included in (Appendix, A/1) and (Appendix, A/2).

Part 2

2.1 Historical Context

In order to contextualise distributed leadership the following explores the development of the concept and some of the reasons for its rise to prominence. Whilst the notion of distributed leadership has become increasingly common within Scottish Government policy and within empirical literature it is characterised by critics as, lacking in "conceptual clarity" (Hartley, 2007) and a "term that is heavily contested" (MacBeath et al., 2009). "Indeed, few authors and researchers define distributed leadership in, and for, their work" (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). In order to clarify the concept of distributed leadership, for the purpose of this study, the following traces its origins and antecedents as defined by key theorists.

The concept of distributed leadership, as discussed within the previous chapter, has been

widely and uncritically accepted by policy-makers. However, despite its appearance within Scottish Government policy and within empirical literature over the last two decades, it is evident that distributed leadership is not a new concept. Some of the key notions that were formed in relation to distributed leadership over half a century ago still appear to be significant today. Many such notions, for example, "leadership is probably best conceived as a group quality, as a set of functions which must be carried out by the group" (Gibb, 1954, p. 54) reflect some of the key assumptions contemporary theorists associate with distributed leadership. His work has created a focus on group dynamics that impacts on the work of groups. A further concept emerging through Gibb's work concerns the belief that leadership should not be construed as the preserve of the individual, but as a function distributed amongst individuals. The foundations established by Gibb seem to represent an important starting point of a new field. They also form an important precursor to the work of Spillane which is discussed later in the chapter. However, over the subsequent two decades further expansion of the area has paused. "Before 2009, few published studies existed and those published tend to be small-scale" (Torrance & Humes, 2015, p. 792). The apparent hiatus was "most probably owing to the appetite for new leadership founded on 'transformational' and/or 'charismatic' leadership by senior executives that came to dominate scholarly and practitioner literature" (Bolden, 2011, p. 253).

Transformational leadership, as distinct from Gibb's notion of leadership distribution, would appear as an individualistic approach whereby power is vested in a single leader. Currie & Locket (2007) assert that organisational improvement and innovation is perceived to emanate from novel approaches and frequent challenges set for followers by the leader. The concept of transformational leadership is discussed here because it illustrates the imperative for an alternative. As an antecedent to distributed leadership it represents a point of departure from notions of leadership that focus solely on head teachers or school principals supported by a limited senior management team. Theorists offer some insights into the reasons for this shift including, the implausibility of the notion that one individual can possess the abilities necessary to lead in every situation (Hartley, 2007), an increasing disillusionment with individualism amongst practitioners (Thorpe et al., 2011) and a recognition that the demands of 21st century school leadership are unrelenting and consequently, the demands made upon head teachers are unrealistic (MacBeath, 2006). Hartley (2007) identifies that organisational efficacy cannot be attributed to a solitary leader, but to the school staff as a collective. There is recognition that hierarchical leadership that concentrates power and influence in the hands

of the few is unsustainable. Therefore, new and more distributed forms of leadership are advocated and "as a result we see a new discourse of 'post-charismatic' or 'post-transformational' emerging" (Parry & Bryman, 2006, p. 4).

Gronn (2000), dismissive of centralised approaches, advocates distributed forms of leadership. However, in later work he argues that transformational and distributed leadership can co-exist and suggests that practice is never as discrete as individual leadership ideologies might imply. Gronn (2009) suggests that "hybridity is a more accurate representation of diverse patterns of practice which fuse and coalesce" (p. 214). Gronn (2016) recognises that tension exists in terms of schools which claim to have distributed leadership whilst retaining the notion that the head teacher's role is more important than the roles of others. He asserts that, over time, entrenched discourses have reinforced the notion that 'leadership' resides within a single 'leader' whilst others are categorised as 'followers'. In addition, the extent to which organisational outcomes can be attributed to the most senior leader is brought into question. Gronn (2016) implies that in many organisations un-promoted staff act at various levels with considerable autonomy and discretion. Therefore, as opposed to the notion that leadership requires to be distributed, he argues that it is already shared. As such, distributed leadership can neither be conceived as formal roles which are shared or rotated or as a model in which 'leadership' is the preserve of one individual. Rather, the nature of leadership practice which takes place in organisations is most likely to encompass "degrees of individualism and collectivism". Aligning with notions of 'hybridity', leadership practice, in Gronn's view, accounts for 'leadership "comprising of a configuration" which could include "an individual, individuals and collective sets of leading agents" (p. 169).

It seems, as previously discussed, that distributed leadership's rise has emanated from perceived constraints associated with transformational leadership. However, the above argues that different leadership forms may emerge in practice as necessity dictates. Such arguments notwithstanding, a perceived dissatisfaction with transformational leadership does appear, to some degree, to have fuelled interest in distributed leadership. Hartley (2007) asserts that distributed leadership has gained momentum as the popularity of transformational leadership has ebbed. However, questions have been raised in relation to the nature of leadership which actually operates within schools.

Since the year two thousand, "distributed leadership has seen a rapid growth in interest"

(Bolden, 2011, p. 251). Chapter one discussed some of the factors contributing to the resurgence of interest in distributed leadership. However, they are effectively encapsulated by Torrance (2013) in that - "distributed leadership was heralded as an elixir for the challenges besetting Scottish education such as devolved governance, the perceived leadership crisis, the inherent difficulties in school management structures, workload pressures and issues of succession planning" (p. 50). Although these issues and others which have acted as an impetus for distributed leadership will be explored further throughout this chapter, the following seeks to offer some insights.

2.2 Aims & Catalysts Associated with Distributed Leadership

One of the principal assumptions underpinning distributed leadership ideology is the notion of leadership that is extended across an organisation and which engages all members of staff. According to Wright (2008) devolvement of managerial and financial control to schools from local authorities has fuelled the rise of distributed leadership. Anderson et al. (2009) consider that decentralisation of school leadership has seen the emergence of learning networks spread across teams. Hartley (2010) identifies that distributed leadership is synonymous with a more transient culture in which organisational boundaries are more fluid. Theorists refer to these dimensions of leadership in contrast to previous bureaucratic forms of leadership. These imperatives seem to imply new and different approaches from traditional hierarchical leadership roles. Kirwan & MacBeath (2008) assert that because of such developments leaders should foster a culture of leadership distribution, dissolve boundaries between schools and the community, and embed structures that spread responsibility.

The perception of distributed leadership as a medium for teachers' leadership development is one of distributed leadership's key premises. Spillane et al. (2009) recognise that learning is facilitated within organisations when individuals engage collectively in the leadership of a task. In other words, development of the organisation (school) can be attributed to the transfer of knowledge and information between individuals and the school as a whole. From the above discussion it would appear that the school benefits from leadership that promotes the exchange of ideas. Timperley (2010) recognises that through distributed (collective) leadership teachers can develop their expertise and learn more about themselves and issues affecting the school. According to Heck & Hallinger (2010) successful school leadership fosters collaboration, promotes shared accountability and decision-making and empowers

teachers. Mayrowetz (2008) identifies that distributed leadership erodes barriers between teachers and teacher-leaders. These insights are particularly useful in exploring leader/follower relationships that seem to emerge from distributed leadership. It would seem that there are implications for senior leaders within schools in relation to their leadership approach. What is implied in the above is that in the most developed form of distributed leadership the roles of leaders and followers become merged or perhaps obsolete. In order to further contextualise distributed leadership the following provides an overview of what some theorists regard as its theoretical foundations.

2.3 Social Constructivist Learning

Burke (2010) suggests that Vygotsky's social constructivist theory forms the cognitive basis upon which distributed leadership, (as an instructional medium), is founded. The 'zone of proximal development', as conceived by Vygotsky (1987), is defined as the difference between what a person is able to understand/achieve unaided and their potential to solve a given problem under the direction of an expert or a more capable peer. Drawing upon Vygotsky's 'social constructivist' learning theory, Wells (2007) identifies elements of the social world as highly influential in bridging the gap between an individual's existing knowledge and further knowledge they might acquire. Developing this notion further, Burke (2010) points towards an inexorable link between human experience, cognition and the physical and social context in which they occur. Such assumptions appear to form the cornerstone of social constructivist learning theory and seem to constitute the premises which underpin distributed leadership ideology.

Camburn (2009) asserts that distributed leadership affords opportunities for teachers to develop when they interact with others whose input acts as a scaffold for learning. Wood et al. (1976) describe the concept of 'scaffolding' as a form of learning that is supported by a more able peer until a point is reached where such support is no longer required and the task is within the learner's capacity. Hartley (2009) considers that leadership emerges through learning that takes place when individuals interact with one another and with aspects of their environment — 'situated cognition'. These ideas appear to associate leadership and learning with opportunities for people to be exposed to the ideas of others within social contexts. Such notions are supported by Spillane & Shearer (2004) in that "leadership practice takes shape in the interaction of people – both leaders and followers – and their situation, including the tools" (p. 2). Kydd et al. (2003) recognise that learning is more than assembling the

knowledge that others provide. In addition, learners who engage in reflection (cognition) are the possessors of knowledge which, in turn, can be used to modify the knowledge possessed by others. The aforementioned assumptions which underpin social constructivist learning theory appear to align with concepts upon which distributed leadership is based. In particular, in terms of the significance of elements of the learning environment in providing a stimulus for interaction and social learning opportunities that enable an individual to reflect and build upon their own knowledge. Reinforcing this notion, Lave & Wenger (1991) assert that people feel compelled to learn and to contribute to the learning of others when exposed to social experiences in which common interests can be explored.

2.4 Socio-Cultural Theory

According to Lave & Wenger (1991) the acquisition of knowledge is believed to derive from the coming together of individuals who share a common interest. Learning is believed to occur through sharing of experiences and information amongst group members. Situations in which people are mutually engaged in a shared practice are construed as "communities of practice" (Wenger, 1998, p. 45). Wenger (2007) construes communities of practice as distinct from groups in that members who belong to a practice domain form a community that enables them to learn from one another and develop a shared repertoire for dealing with recurrent issues. This implies that the process of social participation in a learning community fosters relationships between new and established members through which new members can develop knowledge of the practice. The notion that individual group members have something of value to contribute represents a significant departure from more traditional views of leadership. Lesser & Storck (2001) recognise that communities of practice foster the development of people and organisations in ways that are unconstrained by traditional hierarchies.

Individuals, from a socio-cultural perspective, identify with the area of practice, form new relationships with it on a continual basis and, as a consequence, learn more about what is meaningful within that practice. Socio-cultural practice construes learning as a result of collective, participatory and social processes (Kydd et al., 2003), which in turn, form the basis of distributed cognition (Greeno et al., 1998). Hartley (2009) considers that the ideas included within socio-cultural theory include, for example, collaborative learning, formation of ideas, shared cognition, scaffolding and modelling. Wenger (1998) asserts that learning

occurs when people regularly engage with each other in the pursuit of a specific intervention. The notions presented here seem significant because of their similarity to the assumptions that underpin distributed leadership ideology. Socio-cultural theory, as a theoretical underpinning of distributed leadership, offers a lens through which contemporary leadership development and practice can be understood.

Tracing the origins of distributed leadership through the lens of learning theory has proved useful in helping to explore the concept and to locate it within the wider field of study. In order to understand it more fully the following examines the ways in which distributed leadership is conceptualised within contemporary literature.

2.5 Distributed Leadership & Related Concepts

The exact nature of distributed leadership is the subject of much debate. Hartley (2007) argues that ambiguity, in relation to what it means, is cited by some theorists as problematic in attempting to form an empirical research base. Torrance & Humes (2015) suggest that vague and multiple definitions of distributed leadership hamper attempts to re-professionalise' teachers. Deflaminis (2017) asserts that loose usage has caused some theorists to question whether distributed leadership is little more than a recognition that the work of leadership and management extends beyond the head teacher. A lack of conceptual clarity seems to be the source of tensions within the literature with terms being used interchangeably. According to Torrance (2013) the terms distributive, distributed and shared leadership are used interchangeably within Scottish education policy. In order to inform this study the following section explores the ways in which distributed leadership and associated concepts are conceptualised within contemporary literature.

Distributed leadership, as previously discussed, has emerged because it has been recognised that the demands of school leadership cannot be met by a single leader, a notion corroborated by Harris (2014) who asserts that "the pace of change, the demands and the pressure of the external climate make it clear that the job of school leader is now too big for one" (p. 12). Distributed leadership is described as collaborated, co-ordinated and collective. According to Spillane & Diamond (2007) the notion that leadership is distributed between informal and formal leaders is one of the principal characteristics of distributed leadership. This view implies that the distribution of leadership occurs from person-to-person through a conscious

decision to distribute leadership across leaders. Bierly et al. (2016), from a pragmatic standpoint, identify that distributed leadership is construed as a means of enhancing organisational effectiveness and engaging teachers in the process of leadership. Taking account of the complexities of school leadership as exceeding the capacity of a single leader it would seem that distributed leadership is construed as a potential solution.

Yukl (1999) conceives of distributed leadership in relation to the use organisations make of it in order to focus upon greater effectiveness in decision-making. Baloglu (2011) cites development of organisational capacity as the principal use of distributed leadership. Frost & Harris (2003) construe that distributed leadership affords opportunities for teachers to become leaders in different formats, scales and times. Brought together, the arguments presented here suggest that teachers at all levels might assume leadership as, and when, the need arises. MacBeath et al. (2009), in relation to the various forms leadership distribution can take, suggest that it can be: conferred or delegated through formal distribution; pragmatic distribution of leadership roles – in the sense of being negotiated and divided; strategic distribution – individuals appointed in order to make a positive contribution towards the development of leadership; incremental distribution – whereby a teacher's leadership responsibility increases in tandem with their experience; opportunistic distribution – whereby an individual shows willingness to take on responsibility beyond their job role and cultural distribution – whereby leadership is assumed and shared by individuals. This work is particularly useful in helping to further explore the concept of distributed leadership. At one end of the spectrum leadership appears to be consciously distributed downwards to other individuals. This perspective would appear to align most closely with theorists' accounts of 'distributed' leadership. At the other, there is an expectation that leadership, given the correct conditions, will flourish spontaneously as individuals readily assume a leadership role.

From a study conducted within Scottish Primary schools Torrance (2013) concludes that, to a large extent, distributed leadership was found to be in "the gift of the head teacher" (p. 2). Torrance does not appear to be advocating this view. Rather, she suggests that to construe distributed leadership in this way is to view it from a narrow perspective. However, there are sources which suggest that the extent of leadership distribution relies on the head teacher's beliefs about what leadership should entail. These perspectives align with those of the OECD (2016) in that distributed leadership is construed as a set of practices related to the head teacher's ability to engage various stakeholders in the school's decision-making process. In

relation to the forms of distribution described above by MacBeath, it would appear that this type of 'distributed' leadership might be categorised as (formal distribution – conferred or delegated). MacBeath (2011) identifies two routes towards harnessing the commitment of staff beyond the senior management team. The first route is described as "distributed" involving clearly structured accountabilities, tasks and responsibilities. This perspective positions distributed leadership, in a pragmatic sense, as active distribution of leadership within an organisation. The second route is described as "more fluid, more shared, leaving room for spontaneity and initiative and navigational ability which knows how to go with the flow and at times swim up-stream" (MacBeath, 2011, p. 112). The nature of this route would appear to align more closely with 'distributive', as opposed to, 'distributed' leadership.

2.6 Distributed Versus Distributive

Harris & Spillane (2008) suggest that in order to gain a clearer view of distributed leadership it helps to distinguish between 'distributive' leadership, as a conceptual framework, as opposed to 'distributed' leadership as a practical framework. A distributive perspective is defined as taking a view of leadership that "casts a wider conceptual net" – a perspective that construes leadership activity as "inherently distributed" - spread over all members of an organisation (Deflaminis et al., 2017, p. 17). Distributed leadership is positioned as a practice that involves formal leaders in choosing someone to lead on their behalf and is construed as an integral part of a 'distributive' perspective. However, a distributive perspective is not used solely to account for the work of everyone within a school in order to provide a comprehensive account of leadership. Rather, a distributive perspective is framed as an outcome or product of the collective interactions of formal school leaders, teachers, and aspects of their situation. This implies that distributed leadership is both a process and a product.

In a distributive perspective there are three essential elements which include,

- leadership ***practice*** as the central and anchoring concern,
- leadership practice as generated in the ***interactions*** of leaders, followers, and their situation and
- the situation itself which both defines leadership practice and is defined through leadership practice.

Within this framework the (situation) is the defining element of leadership practice and not merely the context in which leadership unfolds. Aspects of the situation do not merely enable school leaders to practice more effectively. Spillane (2006) suggests that the tools and routines are also the products of leadership practice (p. 3). This dimension of leadership implies that leadership practice emanates from exchanges between leaders and followers as they enact leadership utilising resources/tools specific to the situation.

The notion that leadership practice (leader/follower interaction) acts to create the situation of leadership, its routines and tools, and that, in turn, leadership is created by the situation appears to be central to a 'distributive perspective'. The account of 'distributed' leadership in section (2.1) involves multiple leaders – formal leaders in giving - and others in receiving leadership in order to maintain the functions of the organisation. In contrast, a 'distributive perspective' offers an analytical frame for understanding leadership practice that is framed as the product of leader/follower interaction with aspects of their situation. Spillane & Healy (2010) identify that within this framing all school staff can move in and out of management and leadership roles as the activity or situation dictates. The emphasis within a 'distributive perspective' is recognised by Firestone & Martinez (2007) as a holistic process. As discussed in (2.7) above, a 'distributive perspective' is considered to be 'holistic' in the sense that it views leadership as being dispersed across all of those who occupy promoted posts as well as those who do not. The above implies that leadership relies less on formal authority and, to a greater extent, on the influence of any member of staff who becomes involved in leadership.

As such, 'a distributive perspective' is inclusive in that any teacher can assume the lead depending on the situation and that within the situation, leadership is transient. In other words, leadership can change hands multiple times within a given situation. Sloan (2013) suggests that such leadership forms facilitate an inquiry orientation, as opposed to a compliance orientation in relation to accomplishing tasks. This perspective is endorsed by Deflaminis et al. (2017) in that a distributive perspective aims to facilitate reflection, aid leadership development, and shape leadership practice in a way that is advantageous to leaders, teachers, schools and pupils. Taking forward a distributive perspective appears to require head teachers to "build trust, communicate a vision for the school, and encourage staff to engage in leaderly behaviours". However, "with what effect is relatively uncharted territory" (Harris & Spillane, 2008, p. 32). As a notion that has been described as a form of

distributed leadership the following explores 'shared leadership'. Exploration of this concept aims to inform the study by providing further insights into conceptualisations of distributed leadership.

2.7 Distributed Versus Shared Leadership

Conger & Pearce (2003) define shared leadership as a form of distributed leadership – leadership that is shared at every level. It is construed as the shared process of decision-making in teams when two or more individuals engage in leading a team. Bergman et al. (2012) suggest that shared leadership aims to direct and influence colleagues towards achieving optimal effectiveness. Such notions are, to a large extent, reinforced by other theorists. For example, Raelin (2016) perceives shared leadership as an interactive dynamic influence process among people in groups in order to lead one another with the aim of achieving a group or organisational goal. He suggests that it involves a particular social group coming together to share a particular experience in order to make use of shared judgements about how to respond to a concern that faces the group. Bergman et al. (2012) reinforce the notion that shared leadership aims to direct and influence colleagues towards achieving optimal effectiveness. Leadership that is shared between a group, shared influence, shared decision-making and a group approach to problem solving all appear to be characteristic of 'shared leadership'. There is no suggestion that groups require to be of a specific size. Conger & Pearce (2003) construe shared leadership as a form of distributed leadership – leadership that is shared at every level.

From the accounts above, it would seem that one of the main distinctions between 'shared' leadership and 'distributed' leadership or a 'distributive perspective' is that its operation does not rely on the presence of a formal leader. Shared leadership implies that, as opposed to motivations of self-interest, individuals assume the role of leadership because of the contribution they might make to the organisation. Bakir (2013) notes that the central concept of shared leadership is the idea that leadership is not premised on the position or role of an individual, but their knowledge and skills. He suggests that shared leadership reflects a culture in which all stakeholders work in unity. According to Bolden et al. (2009) participants in the process of successful school leadership include, for example, teachers, school administrators, parents and pupils. It would appear that the inclusion of multiple stakeholders in shared leadership aims to utilise the individual and collective influence of participants for the benefit of the school. The involvement of multiple stakeholders seems also to be a feature

of the ‘distributed’ or ‘distributive’ model for leadership. MacBeath (2011) suggests that ‘a distributive perspective’ can be subsumed within the term ‘distributed leadership’. A number of theorists concur with the notion that ‘distributed leadership’ encompasses elements of both. As discussed in (2.6), MacBeath (2011) recognises a range of leadership forms which include distributed, pragmatic and shared. This would seem to imply, as previously noted, that in practice leadership hybrids or elements of one or more forms may prevail.

Pearce et al. (2009) assert that nearly all concepts of shared leadership entail the practice of sharing influence and power amongst a group of individuals as opposed to concentrating it in one senior leader (p. 243). Some of the concepts central to shared leadership appear to be at odds with distributed leadership. Distributed leadership, as defined by the theorists discussed in (2.6), is predicated upon the channelling of leadership from formal leaders to followers without necessarily increasing their influence or power. Shared influence over a leadership decision or situation appears central to both shared leadership and a distributive perspective. It could be argued that shared leadership constitutes a more democratic form of leadership because it construes all stakeholders as equals and the possessors of influence. However, this ideology appears to ignore systems embedded within schools which are inherently hierarchical. Implicit within such systems are the dynamics of power. As such, notions of equality, democracy and shared influence may not reflect the practice realities within schools. Raelin (2016) warns that the concept of shared leadership has yet to be sufficiently explored.

However, there is evidence to suggest that shared leadership bears similarities with the notion of ‘communities of practice’, as discussed in section (2.2), and, as such, may yield similar benefits. Harris et al. (2008) assert that the impact of shared leadership is evident in terms of progressive organisational change. Katz & Khan (2008) concur, recognising that it increases organisational effectiveness. MacBeath et al. (2009) assert that it fosters motivation and commitment influencing teacher capacity. The concept of shared leadership within learning communities is summarised effectively as, “the efforts of individuals working co-operatively in order that the individual effect of each produces an output for the team” (Goksoy, 2015). Gronn (2000) reinforces such concepts and suggests that leadership has to be considered together with all individuals involved because the organisation is greater than the sum of its parts. A distributive perspective, in contrast, offers a leadership framework for analysing and scaling up leadership activity across the school and over a period of time. For teachers at different levels, ‘a distributive perspective’ provides a means of reflecting upon their practice with the aim, over time, of building leadership capacity. Shared leadership may, as previously

noted, borrow elements of the above. This discussion has examined the features that characterise shared leadership. It is acknowledged that a number of leadership forms share similar characteristics.

Bolden (2011) argues that efforts to distinguish between different conceptualisations of distributed leadership are futile because, as noted at the beginning of this section, theorists use the terms interchangeably. Thus far, the literature indicates that the majority of empirical work focusing on distributed leadership arose from the turn of the millennium. This would seem to imply that ambiguity remains despite many useful critiques of the concept by, for example, Spillane, 2006 – 'distributive perspective' and MacBeath et al., 2009 – a 'leadership continuum'. Torrance & Humes (2015) recognise that challenges emanate from a lack of conceptual clarity in relation to favoured forms of leadership such as distributed leadership and, as such, "despite the rhetoric of coherent policy formation, teaching staff, individually and collectively, are left to make sense of contemporary policy in school practice" (p. 793). The above would seem to reinforce the notions discussed in chapter one in relation to some of the major policy developments which have not been premised upon a lengthy research tradition.

Many theorists recognise that overlapping definitions and different interpretations have given rise to confusion in terms of attempts to operationalise distributed leadership. However, a number of studies conducted within primary schools appear to have contributed to the literature. The above discussion of leadership forms included within the distributed leadership paradigm suggests the dispersal of leadership – 'distributed', a 'distributive perspective' – leaders, followers and their situation acting to mutually construct leadership, and 'shared leadership' – of a nature that appears more fluid and spontaneous. However, Mowat (2014) describes Scottish schools as hierarchical in nature with a top-down approach to policy implementation. As such, the role of head teachers in distributing leadership features prominently within the literature. Head teachers, as those closest to policy, have the lead role in the implementation of distributed leadership. This may be one of the principal reasons why the head teacher's role appears so frequently within the literature. However, in terms of a useful analysis of distributed leadership, Torrance & Humes (2015) recognise that it might be more advantageous to focus on how teachers assume leadership positions in relation to those who distribute leadership.

The following focuses on the values associated with distributed leadership and, in the process, seeks to provide further insights into its aims. The discussion will highlight tensions and contradictions that arise within the literature. In addition, the concept of 'teacher-leadership' will be introduced.

2.8 Distributed Leadership - Related Values

Autonomy, Agency & Leadership Development

Burke & Cooper (2006) note that within the literature distributed leadership is positioned as a mechanism for building teachers' capacity and expertise. In turn, the school benefits from enhanced contributions from the teaching staff. Harris (2008) recognises that teachers' leadership development is perceived to occur as a consequence of leading collaboratively and through interaction with colleagues. However, Schleicher (2012) identifies that in order to meet such aims it is incumbent upon senior leaders to encourage leadership structures that enable leadership to develop between informal groups. It could be argued that the power over what to distribute, and to whom, appears to lie with the head teacher and senior staff. This would seem to be at odds with notions of teachers' agency and autonomy. Olssen et al. (2004) assert that the agency of the individual is significantly reduced when decision-making by those in authority impacts upon practice. However, as discussed near the beginning of this chapter, the formation of learning communities could facilitate distributive leadership and may provide opportunities for teachers to exercise agency.

It is suggested within some of the literature that mechanisms require to be in place to enable teachers to exercise agency and to be innovative. Schleicher (2012) implies that a culture is required in which teachers can exercise leadership from the bottom-up. Letizia (2017) perceives that this could be achieved by putting some agency in the hands of individuals who might allow others to have some influence in an effort to serve the organisation. The discourse used to promote distributed leadership infers that, as a result of leadership distribution, teachers will have a greater degree of freedom within their roles. Pride in ownership and the coalescence of teachers around organisational necessities appear to be implied. Wrong (1979) observes that rhetoric positions teachers as volunteers whose engagement in leadership is perceived as consensual. However, in relation to the literature, the extent to which teachers in schools willingly assume leadership is unclear. For example, Flessa (2009) recognises that the rights of individuals are constrained because they are obligated to comply with the head teacher's agenda and with policy mandates. The above

raises the question of whether, or not, it can be assumed that all teachers embrace the notion of distributed leadership and what it appears to offer in terms of agency or are they simply hostages to conformity. It would seem that irrespective of how it is construed, leadership distribution emanates from, and is facilitated by, the head teacher and the senior management team (SMT). Such factors, it might be argued, might act to constrain teacher-agency and leadership distribution. Some of the above concepts appear to characterise what is now referred to as 'teacher-leadership' and this is explored further within the following.

Teacher-leaders have been described as those who: exercise leadership within and beyond the classroom; contribute to and identify with a community of teacher learners and leaders; accept responsibility for achieving the outcomes of their leadership and influence others towards improved educational practice (Jacobs et al., 2014); have a key role in leading teaching and learning; support and develop the learning of colleagues; are catalysts of change and development either in the school or the wider educational community (GTCS: Standard for Career-long Professional Learning, 2012); take an enquiring approach to meeting learners' needs; share with colleagues inside and outside of the school; implement change (SCEL: Teacher-Leadership Programme, 2018); act strategically alongside colleagues to embed change; take the initiative in order to improve practice; collect and utilise evidence collaboratively; make a contribution to the creation and dissemination of professional knowledge (Frost, 2010); "lead within and outside of the classroom; contribute to a community of teacher learners and are influential in the continued improvement of educational practice" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 6).

Common themes within teacher-leadership appear to include the notion that teachers have a role in shaping the direction of the school and the learning of both pupils and colleagues. Lowery-Moore et al. (2016) suggest that teachers should cast off their role as technical and managed workers and assume the mantle of inventors, scholars, meaning makers and researchers. Furthermore, teachers should construe their work as "socially responsible leadership" (p. 2). However, critics point to ambiguity in relation to the term 'teacher-leadership' as a hindrance to empirical enquiry. Neumerski (2012) suggests that teacher-leadership has become an "umbrella term referring to a myriad of work" (p. 320). Wenner & Campbell (2017) assert that understandings of what exactly is meant by 'teacher-leadership' still vary widely. It could be argued that 'teacher-leadership', in a similar vein to distributed leadership, might be construed as a policy prescription aimed at levering teachers' productivity.

Mowat & McMahon (2018) recognise that although the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher-leadership is not clearly defined both have teachers' agency and empowerment at their core, a notion reinforced by Notman et al. (2016) who identify that teacher-leadership "opens up possibilities of more bottom-up creativity and influence" (p. 42). However, Smylie & Denny (1990) warn that the criteria for teacher-leadership and how it is defined may be implied and influenced by the school's organisational structure. This suggests that 'teacher-leadership' could take a number of forms relative to the conditions prevalent within individual schools. Day & Gu (2010) refer to the role of the head teacher and formal leaders as pivotal in the creation of a culture that fosters teachers' collective agency and development. Such notions seem to reflect the above in terms of the promotion of suitable conditions in which teacher-leadership might flourish and implies that the actions of senior leaders may be sufficient to enable teacher-leadership to germinate and gather momentum. However, Starratt (2007) suggests that the behaviour of teachers and how they feel about the school is influenced by the "psychological make-up of a particular school" which is particular to the school and distinguishes it from others (p. 333). Wenner & Campbell (2017) concur in that teacher-leaders can face negative conditions such as a lack of time, stress and an adversarial school climate. On a similar note, Frost (2010) suggests that teacher-leadership that is seen only as a means of relieving promoted staff of their responsibilities could be counterproductive.

Teacher-leadership ideology, as promoted within the literature, assumes positive staff relationships that enable teachers to learn with colleagues, a willingness amongst teachers to support the learning of colleagues, that teachers construe themselves as change catalysts and that teachers are innately inclined toward such ends. What this implies is that teacher-leadership has an upwards trajectory and can occur spontaneously. However, Bush (2018) contends that teacher-leadership is unlikely to flourish if unsupported by the head teacher and the SMT. On a similar note, Eldor & Sholshani (2017) recognise that the nature of staff relationships can influence teachers' willingness to engage. Reinforcing this perspective, Jacobs et al. (2014) note that the conditions within a school influence how teachers might respond to a given situation. For example, within a climate that promotes feelings of fear and isolation, teachers may not seek help with pupils' issues, try new ideas or take time to build community or relationships. The above implies disparities between the ideology, as promoted within policy, and the practicalities of teacher-leadership.

Sergiovanni & Starratt (2007) conclude that 'collegiality' assumes a degree of openness, trust, goodwill and a norm system that enables teachers to cohere as a unit. However, it has been noted within this section that teachers within an organisation may not necessarily share the same values and, as such, collegiate working may not be straightforward. Jacobs et al. (2014) suggest that in relation to teacher-leadership the first barrier to overcome might include facilitating the engagement of teachers in collegial conversations. What the above implies is that despite the ways in which teacher-leadership has been promoted within policy and empirical literature, much requires to be explored in terms of how teachers construe the concept in relation to their roles, how the conditions prevalent within schools impact upon teachers' perceptions of themselves and their practice and whether, or not, teachers feel safe to make changes. There may even be a danger that, in the absence of adequate compensation for their efforts, teachers may feel exploited.

Notman et al. (2016) contend that beyond examining the facets of the concept itself, there is much that remains to be explored in relation to the "practice realities" of teacher-leadership (p. 44). Whist some individuals consistently avoid taking on additional responsibility, others may become burdened by over-responsibility (Martin, 2003). According to Martin (2002) the costs of such imbalances can be seen in terms of the wellbeing of those who take on the responsibilities of others. In addition, those who assume too much responsibility, in the belief that their actions are assisting or rescuing others/the organisation, may actually cause 'responsibility abdication' in others whose responsibilities are being undertaken. Although coaching/scaffolding can assist a novice towards accomplishing a task, the intervention of a leader can cause a novice to become resentful and relinquish the task. It is clear from the above that task delegation/distribution should take account of the existing abilities/skills of individuals. Martin (2002) suggests that an individual's fear of failure and of being exposed may cause them to avoid collaborating with others.

As previously noted, teachers who are 'teacher-leaders', have a key role in leading learning (Jacobs et al., 2014) and lead inside and outside of the classroom (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 6). These concepts within the literature demonstrate a clear expectation for teacher-leaders to lead within the classroom. As such, teacher-leadership could be aligned with some of the elements that characterise instructional and pedagogical leadership. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine these leadership modes in detail. However, the following

serves to provide an overview of the central pillars of each model and some of their associated discourses.

Neumerski (2012) recognises that the body of literature on instructional leadership centres upon the actions head teachers should take in order to lead instruction. Hallinger & Murphy (1985) align instructional leadership with the role of the head teacher as 'instructional leader' in developing instruction that advances academic achievement and setting goals to such ends. Such notions would seem to be at odds with 'teacher-leaders' as autonomous agents, change catalysts, inventors, scholars, decision-makers, meaning makers and researchers. However, Biancarosa et al. (2010) identify that teacher-leaders at different levels, other than the head teacher, have the potential to improve teaching and learning as 'instructional leaders'. Other theorists endorse this perspective acknowledging the importance of head teachers and un-promoted teachers jointly developing instruction in order to promote the performance of pupils. Printy et al. (2009) refer to head teachers as the 'leaders of instructional leaders' and identify the collaboration of head teachers and un-promoted teachers as 'shared instructional leadership'. This would seem, to an extent, to suggest teachers' empowerment which is also characteristic of 'teacher-leadership'. However, it is evident that the instructional model for leadership is predominantly hierarchical and results driven.

Critics of instructional leadership suggest that leadership models premised upon the promotion of pupils' performance should focus less on 'instruction' and more upon how best pupils learn. Although improvements in outcomes for pupils appear as central to both teacher-leadership and instructional leadership, it is clear that the role of un-promoted teachers in achieving such ends varies within each model. In contrast to the trajectory of 'instructional leadership' which seems to be largely top-down, a 'teacher-leadership perspective' construes outcomes for pupils as emanating from the contribution of teachers cast as both 'leaders' and 'learners'. Educational improvements are accomplished through teachers leading within/beyond the classroom and being an active part of their learning community in terms of contributing towards the development of colleagues.

Instructional leadership has come under criticism because of a perceived imbalance between the bureaucratic demands associated with its implementation within schools and learning that is tailored to the individual needs of each learner. Illustrating this perspective, Osgood (2008) recognises that education establishments are preoccupied with performance and to the point where the personal side of pedagogy has been neglected. However, as opposed to data driven

test results, the notion of 'pupil's learning' appears as the central focus of pedagogical leadership. Evans (1999), in relation to pedagogic leadership, reinforces the notion that learners are essential participants in their learning and that, as opposed to prescriptive modes of leadership/learning, pedagogical leadership is based on dialogue with learners.

According to Cavanagh et al. (2005) the pedagogic leader is driven by the social and moral notions of developing each pupil as a whole, whilst taking account of the socio-political contexts of learning. Male & Palaiologou (2012) recognise that teaching and learning does not occur in isolation in educational establishments and, in relation to pedagogical leadership, relies upon synergistic relationships between learners, families, teams of teachers and the community. The aforementioned is predicated upon the culture and locality in which learning occurs as being fundamental to pupils' learning. What the above implies is that pedagogical leadership acknowledges pupils as individuals with particular learning needs and that leadership, in order to meet such needs, is closely associated with a facilitative learning community. In this respect, pedagogical leadership could be aligned with teacher-leadership in the sense that teachers operate within a learning community with a focus on taking responsibility for educational outcomes. Similarly, pedagogical leadership implies the distribution of leadership and, as such, appears less hierarchical in nature than 'instructional' leadership. The following explores issues of power in relation to distributed leadership. In particular, the section explores the power differential between distributed leadership, as leadership that is abdicated, and 'a distributive perspective' in which leadership is seen as being extended across an organisation.

Power & Empowerment

Distributed leadership, as discussed in section (2.1), is considered as a mechanism for devolving tasks. Spillane (2007) asserts that it accounts for the work of all individuals who potentially could lead in certain situations. This vision of leadership presumes that all participants in leadership are equal in terms of their power and authority. However, Wrong (1996) asserts that an individual's power and authority are determined by their position. This view would seem to imply that leadership, power and authority are intertwined. Those in formal leadership roles are seen as having authority over subordinates. Un-promoted teachers may also have a degree of authority that may rely upon their area of expertise. However, as

noted in previous discussions, those in positions of power within a hierarchy may be perceived as the ultimate authority.

Hearn (2012) emphasises that "authority is not just any power, but more specifically the power to make commands and have them obeyed" (p. 23). Wrong (2002) recognises that authority is not self-constituting and that its existence relies upon the acceptance of those who receive orders or follow commands. Such assertions imply a relationship between authority and legitimacy whereby each defines the other. Wrong (2002) describes legitimacy as a basis for authority where there exists a recognised right to command and an obligation to obey. A person's recognised expertise or specialised knowledge, as noted above, may legitimise their authority and, as such, their power to influence others within particular situations. Similarly, the power and authority of those in formal leadership positions can be seen as being legitimised through their position or designated role. In other words, the power and authority of those in formal positions can be seen to exist because of a mutual understanding between such leaders and those being led. Therefore, the legitimate authority of a leader, to a significant extent, might be seen to exist because it is sanctioned through a wide acceptance of their formal leadership position. The above notions resonate with theorists' definitions of 'distributed leadership' whereby power resides in the hands of promoted staff and hierarchy still remains. Weber (1978) appears to align with the above perspectives in that authority has its basis in established practices as embedded within organisations and a belief in the person of the leader.

As discussed in section 2.6, 'a distributive perspective' frames leadership as a product of the interactions of teachers, formal leaders and aspects of their situation (Deflamminis, 2017). Although this leadership mode assumes the presence of one or more formal leaders, what it implies is that, particular situations are led by promoted and un-promoted teachers who share an equal and active part in exercising leadership. It is also implicit within 'a distributive perspective' that teachers, promoted or un-promoted, according to their knowledge and expertise, may lead at any juncture within a given situation. As discussed within section 2.6, 'leadership' is considered to emerge from such situations in which promoted and un-promoted teachers interact as they enact leadership (Spillane, 2015). Therefore, it could be argued that, as opposed to 'distributed leadership' in which promoted teachers hold the power to delegate leadership to others, power occurs as a consequence of a 'a distributive perspective' and is shared or dispersed amongst teachers at all levels.

Although, from ‘a distributive perspective’ teachers appear to be more empowered and have greater autonomy, their thoughts and actions could still be seen as being constrained. Lukes (1974), in relation to ‘power’, considers how issues can be suppressed through societal forces, institutional practices or the decisions of individuals. On a similar vein, Bradshaw (1976) recognises the improbability of a situation in which an individual is liberated from all structural conditions and, as such, “is able to identify what his real interests would be in the best of all possible worlds (p. 122). These perspectives suggest that what teachers perceive in relation to leadership is influenced by those in positional power and repressive societal structures. Such concerns seem to attune with Notman et al. (2016) who recognise that leadership may be distributed but not necessarily power and that power from above is not distributed, but ‘given’ to willing followers. Therefore, it could be argued that power imbued through the distribution of leadership might only be to those teachers who support the head teacher’s agenda. As such, distributed leadership could constitute a potentially nepotistic tool. Echoing the above perspectives, Foucault (1980) recognises that the means for distributing information and the power to disseminate it lies in the hands of those in power. Therefore, in conceptualising ‘power’, it is more appropriate to focus upon power relations and mechanisms which give rise to patterns of force. Arguably, teachers themselves have little input in policy-making and it is for head teachers to decide how distributed leadership policy is disseminated within schools. Nevertheless, the above strategies are influential in relation to manipulating teachers’ behaviours and practices within schools.

Although, as previously discussed, ‘a distributive perspective’ offers the potential for the empowerment of teachers at all levels their agency could still be seen as being constrained. Hearn (2012) asserts that social practices which seek to cultivate skills or abilities give rise to a particular type of agency which “involves the willing submission to a path of discipline” (p. 206). Arguably, the development of teachers’ leadership skills as a consequence of ‘distributed leadership’ or ‘a distributive perspective’ could be construed in the same way. Within policy and empirical literature distributed leadership is underpinned by the assumptions that teachers at all levels understand what constitutes leadership, teachers are able to undertake work collegially, all are the possessors of legitimate authority and all teachers are willing volunteers. However, Flessa (2009) cautions that some teachers may not consider themselves as leaders, some may not be willing to lead and others may construe leadership as stressful. The above seems indicative of the extent to which teachers voices are

heard within policy and suggests a gulf between policy rhetoric and the ways in which teachers operate within schools.

Equality, Collegiality & Inclusion

The values of equality, collegiality and inclusion seem to pervade much of the literature concerning distributed leadership. Leadership development is believed to derive from collegial working that engenders positive exchanges between colleagues and shared expertise. Sergiovanni & Green (2014) identify that a culture of collegiality promotes collective problem solving. Schleicher (2014) recognises that novice teachers benefit from being paired with experienced school leaders. Woods et al. (2004) concur in that within sharing networks teachers display a strong commitment to the organisation, share the same values, and privilege organisational objectives above personal goals. However, the characteristics noted above appear to make many assumptions about the behaviour of teachers within groups. A barrier to leadership could exist because of "a culture in which teachers do not share professional values or concerns", and where "good social relationships are not extended into open and trusting collegial relationships" (Notman et al., 2016, p. 50).

In relation to the values associated with distributed leadership collegiality is not only construed as being contained within the school. Hulpa & Devos (2010) assert that collegiality and the participation of teachers in decision-making processes inside and outside of the school helps to forge alliances between organisations. The aforementioned is similar to the key concepts that underpin systems leadership. Currie et al. (2009) recognise that such arrangements act as channels for 'distributed agency'. Distributed leadership, through its ideology, is positioned as an equalising force. Such assumptions seem to imply that individuals within groups share equal status and, as such, group interactions ensue from a neutral standpoint. However, these assumptions could be construed as naïve as collegial working might rely upon staff relationships and individuals within schools are not equal in terms of their position or job role. Althusser (2011) cautions that the idea of schools as neutral spaces, devoid of ideology, is the very reason for the ease with which ideologies are able to permeate the school regime. Torrance & Humes (2015) recognise that collegiality ranges from a form of social pleasantries to a form that teachers at all levels could find uncomfortable and challenging because it forces them to engage with difficult questions. The popularity of distributed leadership notwithstanding, there seems to be a dearth of consistent comparable empirical evidence to demonstrate causal links between this model for leadership

and teachers' leadership and professional development. Leadership research appears to ignore the values of teachers as individuals.

Hartley (2007) identifies a lack of empirical evidence to support distributed leadership policy developments and their subsequent permeation into practice. It could be argued that such research should ideally have been the precursor to policy development. The lack of such a foundation is what appears to give rise to tensions within extant literature. For example, distributed leadership is positioned as an equalising, democratising force. However, Gronn (2009) argues that whilst the societies in which schools exist may be democratic, the schools (as institutions) may not be. What this suggests is that whilst inclusion, democracy, sharing of leadership and leadership development may be desirable aims, the power dynamic between promoted and un-promoted staff is influential and ever-present.

2.9 Rationale for The study

Evidence from this review of the literature shows that distributed leadership has gained momentum within education over the last fifteen - twenty years. Having been promoted through education policy, it has become a focus of research. However, some theorists identify a deficit in terms of an evidence base to support distributed leadership policy developments and their subsequent permeation into education practice. For example, Hartley (2009) notes that "distributed leadership signifies a loosening of discrete roles and structures however when formulated, policies lacked an evidence base which justified them (p.139). It would appear that the concept of distributed leadership has been ideologically driven and the platform from which the ideology has been promoted has little basis in sound empirical research. The literature suggests that distributed leadership has been interpreted in a number of different ways. Gronn (2008) suggests that empirical investigation has attempted to estimate the utility of distributed leadership and to measure its impact in the absence of any conceptual analysis. "There is still much to do both conceptually and empirically with distributed leadership" (Gronn, 2008, p.155).

Through its rhetoric distributed leadership is positioned as an equalising and democratic force. However, the literature does not offer a strong indication that these claims are legitimate. It seems that distributed leadership, as a concept, has been legitimised through its discourse. The earlier literature alludes to the notion that distributed leadership has emerged within education in the absence of a supporting rationale. "The concept itself admits no

agreed definition, and its operationalisation within empirical research is accordingly difficult" (Hartley, 2007, p.210). Although, having been promoted within education through education policy, questions still remain: what is it and what does it stand for? Theorists identify that "everyone seems to (think) they know what it means, but there is no evidence of an underlying ideal type for distributed leadership" (Currie & Locket, 2011, p.287), "the leadership and management bazaar is huge, with a dazzling array of products and services and "practitioners are right to be sceptical about ideas and routines that aren't grounded in solid empirical work" (Spillane, 2009, p.3). From this review of the literature it appears that distributed leadership is a vague concept and that policy rhetoric has overtaken a sound evidence base. This notion is reinforced in more recent literature. For example, Deflaminis (2017), as discussed in section 2.6, asserts that the malleability of the concept has prompted some theorists to question whether distributed leadership is simply a term applied to leadership that extends beyond the head teacher.

It seems clear from this review of the literature that the ways in which distributed leadership is conceptualised has, over time, changed and evolved. Despite its popularity, interpretations of the concept appear to be multiple leading to inconsistencies in its operation. However, as previously discussed, critiques by a number of theorists (MacBeath, 2006, Spillane & Mertz, 2015 and Harris & Deflaminis, 2016) have assisted in providing frameworks for understanding the forms of leadership that fall within the distributed leadership paradigm. Such advances notwithstanding, Torrance (2009) suggests that distributed leadership's "unsteady foundations can lead to tensions in the field". Some of these tensions have been explored within (section 2.3) of this review of the literature. Despite attempts to provide clearer conceptualisations of distributed leadership, it seems that some confusion persists within schools especially amongst those to whom leadership is distributed (middle leaders and classroom teachers). Teachers "distinguished between their own experiences and 'delegated leadership' - which some might consider a form of distributed leadership" (Notman et al., 2016, p.49).

Throughout the literature distributed leadership is presented as a term that conveys the notion of a coherent system that is understood by those enacting it. A common assumption that appears within the literature is that distributed leadership represents work that is accomplished through relationships and across teams. There is an expectation that at some point distributed leadership will germinate, replicate, and become the possession of teachers at all levels. However, as opposed to engaging in leadership spontaneously teachers act

within the parameters set for them by the head teacher and at a point, when they are given leave to do so (Torrance, 2013). Given that middle leaders and classroom teachers are the recipients of leadership that is distributed the evidence suggests that their perspectives may be under-represented. Mowat (2014) recognises that influence and authority remain the preserve of designated school leaders and policy-makers. As such, the voices of middle leaders and classroom teachers are heard to a lesser extent.

Schleicher (2014) recognises that there is a necessity to establish teachers' rights to influence policy at all levels and to be heard in matters of leadership and professional practice. Such assertions seem to reinforce the notion that insights into distributed leadership based on the perspectives of teachers at different levels merit further exploration. As previously discussed, the literature assumes that teachers at all levels within schools recognise and enact the values associated with distributed leadership for example, inclusion, democracy, autonomy, empowerment and collegiality. Although these terms appear to be used within policy discourse in order to promote distributed leadership there is little evidence within the literature to indicate how they are construed, experienced and enacted by teachers. The alignment of distributed leadership with the values above presents a compelling portrayal of the ways in which teachers operate within schools. It could be argued that notions of democracy and collegiality are persuasive because they align with accepted societal norms.

However, the tensions discussed in section (2.3) suggest that further research into the perspectives and experiences of teachers might reveal further insights. Flessa (2009) acknowledges that the work within schools is accomplished largely as a result of groups or individuals in the pursuit of their own interests and as they strive to gain control of resources. The literature assumes that the above values are inherent in distributed leadership and that these values are recognised, experienced and enacted by teachers at all levels. Within such assumptions issues of status, inequality, nepotism, organisational boundaries and unfairness would seem to be ignored. Notman et al. (2016) recognise that teachers may not necessarily share the same concerns or values. It could be argued that teachers' perspectives in relation to the values associated with distributed leadership require further scrutiny.

Exploration from the perspectives of teachers at different levels might provide significant insights in relation to how distributed leadership, its values and consequences are understood. It appears that many of the existing studies that seek to provide insights into distributed leadership and its operationalisation within schools have focused predominantly on primary

school education and on the roles of head teachers in relation to the distribution of leadership. Fewer studies appear to relate to middle leaders and classroom teachers operating at different levels within secondary schools. This study seeks to explore distributed leadership from the perspectives of teachers within secondary education including, classroom teachers, those in middle leadership roles and senior leaders operating as depute head teachers. As such, in the sense that it seeks to explore teachers' perspectives, this study aims to adopt a bottom-up approach to investigating the concept of distributed leadership, its values and aims. The value of this study should be construed in terms of the potential contribution it can make to practice. The meanings teachers at different levels attach to distributed leadership and their thinking and experiences in relation to its values and aims could provide insights in order to inform distributed leadership practice.

Within the following chapter the aims and purposes of this study are summarised followed by a discussion and evaluation of the main research paradigms and their suitability as theoretical underpinnings for this study. The chapter sets out the ontological and epistemological basis selected for the study and the research approaches.

Chapter (3) - Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In order to establish a philosophical framework for the study this chapter discusses the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin some of the main research paradigms. These are important considerations in terms of the quality of the research and as guidance for others who may wish to replicate the study. The chapter considers the suitability of different paradigmatic stances and research approaches for the purpose of the study. It commences with a summary of the study's aims and purpose.

3.2 The Aims and Purpose of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to investigate the concept of distributed leadership from the perspectives of teachers within secondary education. As discussed in the previous chapter, the majority of research into distributed leadership focuses on primary school education and, in particular, on the leadership of the head teacher. The perspectives and values of teachers, as individuals, appear to be ignored in much of the literature. A review of the literature in chapter two reveals consensus amongst theorists that the views of teachers in relation to distributed leadership – with a few exceptions, are under-represented (Currie & Locket, 2011 and 2007, Harris & Spillane, 2008, Spillane, 2006 and Torrance, 2009, 2013 and 2015). In particular, there seems to be fewer studies that are representative of the views of teachers in secondary education.

3.3 Theoretical Stance

Ontological considerations

With the aim of establishing a suitable foundation for the conceptual framework for this study the ontological assumptions underpinning some of the key research paradigms were explored. Guba & Lincoln (1994) recognise that the ontological questions are those relating to what can be known about a specific entity or phenomenon in terms of how it works and the features that characterise it. Blaikie (2007) refers to ontological concerns as those associated with the nature of social entities that exist, the relationships between them and the conditions of their existence. Mack (2010) defines ontological assumptions as those that are made about social

reality in terms of what exists, how it appears, its constituent parts and the ways in which the parts interact. In other words, if an entity is assumed to be real, it can be considered to assume a certain form or display certain features that might be the subject of enquiry.

One of the main ontological debates concerns the notion of whether a phenomenon can be considered to exist independently of human interaction or whether it exists only because of understandings imposed upon it through human interaction with it. Cohen et al. (2011) assert that ontological assumptions concern whether the subject of enquiry can be regarded as having an existence that is external to the individuals who form part of it or whether it can be regarded as something that arises from individual thought and cognition. In order to establish a suitable ontological basis for this enquiry the following explores ontological standpoints and their underpinning assumptions.

Objectivism

Miller (2006) identifies that an objectivist ontology assumes that social phenomena have an existence that is external to, and not dependent on, social actors. In other words, the subject of enquiry and what there is to know about it, is not considered to be reliant on the individuals who may form part of it. Crotty (1998) asserts that phenomena, from an objectivist perspective, can be viewed as objects and that objects have meaning that is independent of any consciousness of them. What seems implicit within this view of knowledge is that human action and thought seem to have no bearing on such phenomena or what can be known about them. Objectivism assumes that entities in the social world that form the focus of enquiry have a real existence that is unaffected by human input, values or agency. Guba & Lincoln (1994) recognise that an objectivist ontology positions the researcher as a detached, value-free observer. Hearn (2012) concurs in that objectivism is premised upon the existence of a reality which is substantially separate from the observer, which is nonetheless "cognitively accessible" (p. 223).

In relation to this study consideration of the assumptions underpinning this standpoint raised some concerns. It could be argued that not every entity that forms the focus of enquiry can be regarded as an 'object', because viewing it as such would imply that it is neutral or unreactive. An objectivist ontology would seem to argue that an entity has an almost tangible reality of its own and that it exists independent of human interaction. However, it could be argued that human intervention is required in determining what can be known about an entity. As such, an objectivist ontology is limiting for the purpose of this study which focuses on

teachers' perspectives of distributed leadership. It seems reasonable to assume that what might be known in relation to distributed leadership would inevitably be influenced by the values held be each teacher and their relationship with this phenomenon.

In relation to what might be known about an entity such assumptions seem to ignore the influence of the meanings individuals may attach to it and any contribution their interaction with the entity may have had in shaping the ways in which it is understood. Guba & Lincoln (1994) suggest that objectivist assumptions about phenomena, as objective and inert entities, are flawed. They argue that to view a phenomenon in this way is to assume that it is typical of all such phenomena. For the purpose of this study it seems unreasonable to assume that distributed leadership would be construed by all teachers in the same way.

It could be argued that construing phenomena such as distributed leadership as an unreactive object would seem to diminish what might be known about it. Such views would also seem to imply that from an objectivist ontology a phenomenon might be construed as bearing no relationship to anything else. In relation to this study such assumptions seem not only to ignore the individual and unique ways in which each person might relate to distributed leadership, but also the influence of different contexts in which leadership might take place. Cohen et al. (2011) assert that subjectivity does not feature within an objectivist ontology. Such assumptions seem to ignore the potential influence of any relationship that the participant or the researcher may have with the area of enquiry. It might be argued, that irrespective of attempts to remain objective, what can be known about an entity may, to some extent, encompass the participant's and the researcher's interpretations of it. As such, it seems that a suitable ontological basis for this enquiry might be one which focuses less upon the visible external features of a phenomenon.

Constructivism

In contrast to the assumptions underpinning objectivism, Bryman (2012) defines constructivism as an ontological position that views social objects and their categories as being socially constructed. Burr (2003) suggests that knowledge, as viewed from a constructivist ontology, is considered to emanate from the dynamics of social relationships between individuals. This is one of the principal assumptions underpinning constructivism. As such, it would seem to challenge the objectivist notion of pre-existing or 'real' entities that are considered to be external to the individual. Carr (2006) acknowledges that human perceptions and observations rely on interpretations of what is observed and perceived. This

implies that, even if it is accepted that an entity is real and external to the individual, interpretations of it could be multiple. As such, a constructivist standpoint assumes that individual biases and prejudices would be intrinsic to any understandings reached through the perceptions and observations of the individual.

The assumptions underpinning constructivism would seem to challenge objectivist notions of reality as static or pre-given. Strauss & Corbin (1994) recognise that constructivists accept that entities such as organisations or cultures can pre-exist. However, in the construction of such entities, emphasis is placed upon the role of the individual. Bryman (2012) asserts that social order and the categories within it are the products of interactions and negotiations between the social actors who are part of the order. This would seem to contrast with the objectivist view that individuals have no role in creating reality. Blaikie & Priest (2017) suggest that social structures such as, hierarchies, cultures or organisations are continually being produced and reproduced as social actors purposefully interact with them. It would seem that constructivism rejects objectivist assumptions about social entities as being external to human thought, unreactive and divorced from human action.

Conversely, constructivism appears to view what can be known of an entity as constituted through successive interactions with numerous human agents. This implies that knowledge of a given entity is built-up over time and is the result of multiple interactions by multiple agents. Bryman (2012) acknowledges that meaning is ephemeral and therefore it changes according to place and time. What seems implicit within this view is that a given entity has no meaning in its own right and is determined over time, built-up and changed. Hesse (1980) suggests that constructions cannot be considered as fact in any absolute sense and their content is reliant upon the individuals or groups who are the possessors of the constructions. Constructivism is premised on the notion that reality is a construct of the human mind and, as such, perceptions of reality are bound to vary from person to person. Similarly, in relation to distributed leadership, the perceptions of teachers as individuals could be considered as multiple and varied. As a possible alternative stance the following explores critical realism.

Critical Realism

According to Scott (2005) critical realism acknowledges the existence of social realities that are external to the individual whilst assuming that individuals gain knowledge of external entities indirectly through their constructs. Zachariadis & Scott (2013) identify that a critical realist ontology supports the notion of a reality that exists irrespective of whether, or not,

individuals can know about it or perceive of it. To an extent, such assumptions seem to be shared within an objectivist ontology in that, objects are assumed to be real irrespective of any consciousness of them. Synchronous with the assumptions underpinning constructivism, a critical realist ontology accepts that, what a given individual construes as reality is subjective and known only through the constructs of that individual.

Fleetwood (2004) acknowledges that from a critical realist ontology structures within society are considered to pre-exist. However, such structures can be considered to change or transform as human agents interact with them. This perspective appears to contrast with objectivist notions of entities as static, observable objects. The assumptions underpinning critical realism and constructivism align, to an extent, in that knowledge of social entities and what such entities come to represent, is constituted as successive individuals or groups engage with them, over time. Banfield (2004) asserts that processes of construction occur because of the dynamic between structure and agency. This would seem to refer to the continual formation and reformation of understandings about a given phenomenon that results as individuals interact with it and with one another. Lopez & Potter (2001) concur in that knowledge results as a consequence of the interface between human agents and social phenomena.

Although critical realists acknowledge that social entities exist in their own right, it is recognised that knowledge of them relies upon human interpretation and is, therefore, bound to be flawed. Scott (2005) acknowledges that attempts to explain the social world are bound to be fallible because society, its categories, and the relationships between them, are in a constant state of change. Losch (2009) asserts that critical realism assumes the existence of entities within the social world. However, critical realism rejects the idea of an absolute knowledge of a given entity or reality. It seems implicit within such views that knowledge of a given entity can only be regarded as an approximate and imperfect representation of it. It appears that, from a critical realist perspective, what can be known about a phenomenon cannot, at any stage, be considered as complete or final.

Bryman (2012) suggests that understandings of phenomena can only be reached through the processes, events and discourses that shape what is known of them. Bhaskar (2011) describes such processes as ‘generative’ in that they give rise to social structures and, as such, what can be known about them. Guba & Lincoln (1994) assert that such processes may not be

amenable to observation. Therefore, a critical realist ontology focuses on the observable effects of generative processes rather than the processes that have given rise to the effects.

Distributed leadership might be construed as a social structure around which successive groups of teachers might interact. As such, the features that characterise this ontology seem to suggest that it could, potentially, offer a suitable foundation for this study. Teachers, through such interaction, might contribute towards understandings of distributed leadership. However, as opposed to focusing on distributed leadership as a social structure, this study seeks to privilege the perspectives of teachers themselves. Bhaskar (2008) suggests that a critical realist ontology has a transformative agenda. In other words, the understandings reached through observation of the effects of generative processes could, potentially, act as a catalyst for change. Such assumptions do not seem to accord with the nature of this study because it does not seek to engender change.

The previous exploration of different ontological perspectives aims to inform the ways in which the subjects of this enquiry might be viewed and, therefore, what might be known in relation to them. It is important to examine the different ontological positions in order to arrive at a basis for the conceptual framework for this enquiry. Ontological considerations regarding the nature of the knowledge to be generated by the study are important because these are intended to inform the epistemological assumptions that underpin and guide the enquiry.

3.4 Methodology

Epistemological considerations

With the aim of developing the conceptual framework for this study the following explores some of the epistemological assumptions that underpin some of the main research paradigms.

Positivism

Cohen et al. (2011) assert that through the paradigm of positivism the researcher is positioned as an observer of social phenomena and that the extrapolation of universal laws is the object of such observations. Bryman (2012) acknowledges that positivism assumes objectivity, seeks to establish irrefutable generalisations about a given entity and aims to establish invariant aspects of behaviour. In addition, positivism assumes that what can be known about phenomena can be objective, unambiguous and determined by observation through the senses. Denscombe (2014) suggests that positivist assumptions concern the testing of

hypotheses or ‘falsification’. In other words, disproving all alternative theories that might explain a phenomenon to the point where only one plausible explanation of the phenomenon remains. It would seem that from a positivist paradigm knowledge can be considered to arise from the verification of hypotheses after which generalisations then follow and laws or probabilities can be established. Scott & Usher (1996) suggest that positivism aims to explain, predict and control phenomena whether human or physical.

Through the paradigm of positivism this detached positioning of the researcher would seem to preclude any relationship with the object of enquiry. Such assumptions seem to exclude the values of the individual. It could be argued that it may not be possible for researchers to enquire into an entity without influencing it or what might be known about it. Presumably, any evaluation or assessment of the research outcomes would, to an extent, involve the researcher’s interpretation. However, Creswell (2013) asserts that positivists assume the social world, and the entities within it, to be value-free.

It might be reasonable to assume that if an object is construed as inanimate or inert observation of it might lead to new insights about its nature. However, it could be argued that enquiry into an entity through objective observation has its limitations. Challenging such assumptions, Ahmad et al. (2014) identify that positivism creates a disposition towards viewing human beings as items or objects. Such views, for the purpose of this enquiry involving human actors, (teachers), may raise a dilemma. It could be argued that humans, as researched entities, cannot be considered to be inert or unreactive. In addition, the environment in which human actors operate cannot be considered to be neutral, objective or unbiased. It seems that enquiry through the lens of positivism precludes the potential influence of human interaction with the social world.

Positivist approaches appear to dwell upon observation, controlled conditions and uniformity of outcomes. Given the multiple and complex contexts in which each participant would operate, and the unfathomable number of variables that could influence the perspectives of each, positivistic notions did not seem to align with the interests of this study. In addition, enquiry through the lens of positivism precludes the values and beliefs of the individual. According to Bryman (2012) people define social reality through their own agency and, as such, modify their own thoughts and actions accordingly. However, through the paradigm of positivism, participants appear to be construed as objects. Such views seem to negate any

relationship each individual might have with the phenomenon of distributed leadership and, therefore, seem to ignore the meanings and purposes each might attach to it.

From the above evaluation of positivism it seems limiting for the purpose of this enquiry which focuses upon teachers' experiences and perspectives. The notion of an individual's direct experience as unobservable was one of the prime reasons for rejection of positivism as a possible orientation for this study. As an alternative to positivistic views of human behaviour as deterministic and controlled by external factors post-positivism appeared to allow for human agency. Phillips & Burbules (2000) suggest that post-positivism rejects the assumptions that are central to positivism.

Post-positivism

According to Cohen et al. (2011) post-positivists argue that positivist claims of verifiable observations and accurate, consistent research are not distinct from common sense reasoning. Positivism positions the researcher and the object of research as independent entities. Ernest (1994), however, acknowledges that the researcher's knowledge, values and beliefs can influence what is observed. Zammito (2004) suggests that whilst post-positivism aims for objectivity it recognises the potential influence of personal biases upon the research area. Critical theory is considered as a paradigm that falls within the category of post-positivism and is now explored as a possible alternative orientation for this study.

Critical theory

Felluga (2015) identifies that reality, from the paradigm of critical theory, is construed as malleable and that, over time, it becomes shaped by cultural, social and political influences. Cohen et al. (2011) recognise that worthwhile knowledge, or what might be construed as such, is determined by the advocates of such knowledge who tend to be individuals of positional and social power. Critical theory acknowledges that social reality is a human construct and, therefore, seems to be supported by a constructivist ontology. According to Burr (2003) constructivism holds that meaning is derived from an individual's constructs which, in turn, rely upon the relationships the individual shares with others and with the social world. This implies that the paradigm of critical theory allows for human agency. However, the constructs of individuals would appear to be heavily influenced by repressive societal factors. In other words, the constructs of individuals may be reflective of the constructs of those in power.

Wellington (2015) asserts that the paradigm of critical theory construes knowledge as constructed by society and the institutions within it. The education system might be considered to constitute such an institution. In relation to this study critical theory might be utilised in order to expose the ways in which distributed leadership ideology has been promulgated throughout education. Critical theory may provide a lens through which to enquire into the potential influence of institutional constructs upon the constructs of teachers. Enquiry through this paradigm might also seek to reveal whether, or not, such measures are in the best interests of teachers. Bryman (2012) suggests that enquiry through the paradigm of critical theory aims to change structures within society, expose inequality and change lives. However, this study aims to refine understandings of distributed leadership through the perspectives of teachers as it is understood and experienced by them. The notion of intervention in order to instigate change in peoples' lives is one of the principal assumptions underpinning the critical paradigm. However, critics of this approach point towards such assumptions as 'elitist'. Creswell (2012) suggests that the researcher's assumptions in relation to emancipation and the need for change might not coincide with the thoughts or expectations of participants. Critics argue that it is not for the researcher to make judgements in relation to the need for change. As such, the above assumptions do not seem to align with the nature of this study because there are no prior assumptions about whether, or not, teachers' perspectives are a consequence of repressive or illegitimate forces.

There is doubt in relation to claims of societal change or the reduction of inequality as a result of research utilising the paradigm of critical theory. Stevens (2009) suggests that enquiry through this paradigm may raise awareness of certain issues amongst individuals associated with the research. However, it is unlikely to achieve transformation on a societal level. The paradigm of critical theory does not seem to align with the aims of this enquiry because the enquiry is not concerned with exposing and challenging societal inequalities. Whilst it seems that the paradigm of positivism seeks to explain phenomena through observation and controlled research, the critical paradigm seeks emancipation and change. Neither of these lenses appears to privilege the perspectives of teachers. As a possible alternative orientation for this study the following discusses the paradigm of interpretivism.

Interpretivism

Bryman (2012) asserts that meaning is constructed by the individual and this is one of the key assumptions underpinning the paradigm of interpretivism. In contrast to positivistic views of

society as controlled by law-like beliefs, Ritchie & Lewis (2003) suggest that through an interpretative lens meaning is mediated through human agency. In other words, meaning is arrived at by individuals as they interact with the social world and with one another. Cohen et al. (2011) assert that interpretivism is underpinned by a constructivist ontology. In contrast to an objectivist stance associated with positivism, Guba & Lincoln (1994) contend that from a constructivist ontology, what can be construed as reality does not exist outside of the minds of those who create and apprehend it.

The paradigm of interpretivism acknowledges the role of human creativity in directing thoughts and, as such, meaning. An interpretivist paradigm, in contrast to the paradigm of critical theory, appears to hold no preconceptions in relation to social inequality or the need to heighten critical awareness of societal issues. MacKenzie & Knipe (2006) recognise that interpretivism aims to understand the world from the viewpoint of human experience. Cresswell (2013), as previously noted, suggests that enquiry through the lens of interpretivism is underpinned by a constructivist ontology and, as such, relies upon the views of participants in order to form meaning or patterns of meaning. It seems that in contrast to positivistic notions of meaning derived through objective observation interpretivism relates to meaning that is derived from the constructs of individuals which, in turn, are derived from their direct experiences.

Utilisation of an interpretative paradigm for the purpose of this study would seek to explore how teachers at different levels within a secondary school experience and understand distributed leadership. Teachers' experiences and understandings would be considered to derive from their interpretation of distributed leadership which, in turn, would be deemed to rely on their thinking and reflection upon it. Hartas (2010) suggests that during the process of reflection individuals filter out aspects of experiences which are not considered to be worth retaining. This implies that individuals do not assimilate every aspect of what passes in front of their consciousness. Prean (2002) suggests that, over time, the excluded elements attune an individual's perception and, as such, what is assimilated from an experience will differ from one person to the next. This implies that enquiry into teachers' perspectives of distributed leadership through an interpretative lens would yield multiple and varied accounts.

Marsh & Stoker (2010) reiterate the notion that an individual's perception of an entity is likely to alter with each subsequent experience of it. Additionally, as perceptions of an entity change, so too, do the ways in which individuals interact with it and, therefore, the entity

itself will change. The paradigm of interpretivism assumes that social entities and what might be understood in relation to them is subject to change as individuals and groups interact with them. Ahmad et al. (2014) suggest that, to a large extent, individuals and social groups contribute to knowledge of social entities through their cognition and intellect. This would seem to imply that knowledge formation is a mutually reciprocal process.

Whilst the paradigm of interpretivism acknowledges that human agency acts to shape social entities, this aspect is ignored within the paradigm of positivism. One of the principal assumptions underpinning interpretivism seems to be that enquiry is from an inside point of view or is viewed through the eyes of those who form the subjects of enquiry. The researcher's role, from an interpretative standpoint, is to understand and explain phenomena as construed by others. Schutz (1962) conceives of three levels of interpretation the first being the participant's interpretation and the researcher's interpretation of the interpretations of others as the second. The third level consists of the researcher's interpretation of the theories and concepts of the discipline or area of study. The third point would seem to refer to interpretation of the outcomes of enquiry as part of the body of knowledge within the field.

Some of the key assumptions underpinning an interpretative paradigm seem to include a view of reality that is constructed, subjective and based on the interpretation of the individual. It appears that meaning is interpreted by, and is unique to, the individual. As such, enquiry through the lens of interpretivism seeks to explore the various ways in which reality is experienced by different actors.

3.5 Implications for the Conceptual Framework for This Study

Ontological Considerations

In deciding upon a suitable ontological approach it is important to consider the essence of what is being investigated. In other words, selection of an approach that aligns with the nature of the enquiry or the reality to be explored. This study seeks to access the direct experiences and understandings of teachers in relation to distributed leadership. From an ontological perspective the experiences of teachers are considered to be unique to each individual. Those experiences/understandings and what they might entail are considered to be central to this study. Opie (2010) recognises the necessity to establish whether the phenomenon being studied can be perceived as subjective and, as such, a construct of the human mind or whether it can be construed as an observable, objective entity. This study

seeks to investigate distributed leadership from the unique and subjective perspectives of those who have experienced it. As such, for the interests of this study, the main ontological considerations relate to the question of whether the area of enquiry is construed as a product of individual consciousness or whether it can be considered as external to the individual and, as such, influencing them from the outside. The key ontological assumptions underpinning objectivism seemed to view social reality as existing independently of any human consciousness of it. Having explored the key features of some of the main ontological stances the following concludes as to their suitability as a basis for the conceptual framework for this study.

It could be argued that distributed leadership and its accompanying rhetoric could be construed as objective, external realities imposed upon the consciousness of teachers. However, in relation to what can be known about distributed leadership, this view would seem to imply that the thoughts and perceptions of teachers would have no part to play. This study seeks to give a voice to teachers in relation to their direct experiences/understandings of distributed leadership and the aforementioned assumptions do not seem to coincide with such aims. Similarly, an objectivist view of leadership as an entity that exists around human agents but remains unaffected by human intervention does not seem to align with the interests of this study. In contrast to enquiry into leadership as a social structure this study seeks to focus on distributed leadership as construed by teachers. Additionally, an objectivist ontology assumes that a given phenomenon, as the focus of enquiry, would exhibit similar characteristics to other similar phenomena. It seems, for the purposes of this study, unreasonable to assume that one teacher's experience and understanding of distributed leadership derived from their own individual thoughts and observations would be typical of the next.

Critical realism, in one respect, appears to coincide with the nature of this enquiry in that it acknowledges the contribution of human agency in relation to what can be known about a given entity. However, a further aspect of this stance appears to focus on the processes thought to give rise to understandings of social phenomena. This study, by contrast, seeks to privilege the views of teachers. Critical realism appears to be transformative in relation to advancing understandings of the mechanisms underlying social structures with the aim of offering the potential to intervene and, as such, change what is known of them. This enquiry does not seek to instigate structural change and, as such, critical realism is not deemed to be an appropriate ontological foundation. As previously discussed, this study seeks to enquire into distributed leadership through the eyes of teachers. As such, the researcher considered

that little is to be gained by enquiring into physical entities such as, the pragmatic aspects of leadership, leadership in action or the physical systems and structures that support leadership. Conversely, this enquiry views each teacher as being the owner of their particular constructs or versions of reality as they perceive it. Flaherty (2005) recognises that there is no reality other than what we each perceive. Constructivism assumes that what can be known about an entity such as distributed leadership is built-up or constructed by individuals as they interact with the entity and with one another.

Constructivism, to this extent, seems to offer a potential basis for the framework of this study. From this ontology teachers' experiences and understandings of distributed leadership emanate from the perceptions and observations of each. The constructs teachers in relation to distributed leadership can be attributed to the ways in which it is experienced and understood by each. The experiences and understandings of teachers, in turn, can be assumed rely upon how distributed leadership is interpreted by each. Constructivism, as such, attunes with the nature of this study because it assumes subjectivity in terms of the meanings individuals may attribute to phenomena. In addition, it recognises that an individual's beliefs and perceptions in relation to a given entity can vary and change, over time, depending on their context. As a suitable ontological basis for this enquiry constructivism assumes that teachers' interpretations of distributed leadership can be construed as multiple, unique to the individual and influenced by the context in which unique experiences unfold.

Epistemological Considerations

The enquiry focuses on the perspectives of teachers and, as such, it is important to direct the research in ways that enable close access to the authenticity of teachers' experiences.

The paradigm of positivism construes the subjects of enquiry as observable objects. Such assumptions do not seem to take account of teachers' beliefs, perceptions, values or their ability to rationalise. Positivistic views of phenomena as observable entities about which probable laws might be formed do not seem to accord with the focus of this study. Rather, teachers' perspectives in relation to distributed leadership might be considered as multiple and varied. The paradigm of positivism does not seem to recognise the distinction between enquiry into a phenomenon construed as an object and a view of humans as free-thinking agents. Approaches towards this study from the perspective of positivism might have included the observation of leadership, categorisation of leadership behaviours and attempts to establish norms in relation to leadership behaviour. Such approaches seem of limited

value for the purpose of illuminating perspectives based on the direct experiences and understandings of teachers.

The paradigm of critical theory appears to acknowledge the ability of the individual to interpret and construct meaning. However, focuses upon the foundations of such constructions with a view to revealing dominant ideologies or social structures that perpetuate social inequalities. In addition, the critical paradigm seeks to reveal the constructions of individuals in order to instigate wide-scale social change. Conversely, at the outset of this study, there are no preconceptions regarding the potential of repressive societal structures to affect the lives of individuals nor does the study aim to expose the phenomenon of distributed leadership as a repressive ideology.

The principal aim of the study is to illuminate the phenomenon of distributed leadership as it is experienced and understood by teachers who operated at different levels within secondary education. An interpretative paradigm acknowledges each teacher's ability to form their own construct and interpret their own meaning and, as such, offers the prospect of meeting this study's aims and research questions. The paradigm of interpretivism recognises that knowledge emanates from the individual's personal experiences. Whereas, critical enquiry claims to erode ignorance and enlighten society, this study is a localised enquiry that focuses on teachers within a particular secondary school. The critical paradigm seeks to transform phenomena within society whereas this study, through its outcomes, seeks to build upon extant knowledge of distributed leadership. Such outcomes derive from the personal experiences of individual teachers within particular contexts and situations. This study's outcomes are not considered to be for the purpose of generalisation to a wider population as would be the case if viewed through a critical lens. Nor could simplistic interpretations be considered as representative of the multiple and varied facets of teachers' perspectives on distributed leadership as might be the case through the lens of positivism.

A constructivist ontology recognises that teachers' perspectives or the reality each teacher construes is relative to their situation. Therefore, within this enquiry it is the researcher's purpose to understand the constructions held by each teacher within a secondary school. From a constructivist ontology the perceptions and beliefs of teachers are considered as representative of the knowledge or insights to be gleaned from this study and, as such, it is chosen in order to support an interpretative epistemology. The investigation of teachers' perceptions and beliefs is central to this study. The paradigm of interpretivism recognises that

multiple realities can co-exist and assumes that one teacher's construct can vary significantly from the next. Through this paradigm, as discussed within the previous section, the meanings of entities in the social world are continually being created, re-created and reconfigured as different actors interact with such entities and with one another. It holds that distributed leadership, as a social phenomenon has, in itself, no meaning other than the meanings attributed to it by teachers. As such, through an interpretative lens, the outcomes and understandings derived from this study relate to the constructs and interpretations of teachers who participated. The following explores some of the research approaches that support the above theoretical underpinnings of this study.

3.6 The Research Design

Action research, as a potential approach, appears to involve the collaboration of the researcher and the participants with the aim of improving a situation by instigating change.

Action Research Approach

Bryman (2012) describes action research as an approach in which the researcher and the participants ascertain a problem prior to developing a solution. Such approaches, in relation to this study, offer the prospect of empowering teachers. Teachers, through the use of an action research approach, could be involved in terms of identifying the need for change and in taking action to bring it about. Baumfield et al. (2012) suggest that the process of change involves participants in a cyclical pattern of planning, action, reflection and evaluation. At the onset of this enquiry, however, there are no prior assumptions about the requirement for change. The outcomes of action research in terms of initiating change and the empowerment of teachers do not directly align with the aims and purposes of this study as reflected in the research questions.

Niff (2013) recognises that action research offers people an element of control over their work and practice. Pine (2008) suggests that through engagement in action research people develop an increasing capacity to control the direction of their work. Although an action research approach has merit in that it empowers participants enabling them to influence what is improved and how, it seems driven by the achievement of targeted outcomes and, as such, it does not align with the aims of this enquiry. The approach implies researcher/participant collaboration in order to identify practice elements that require improvement. At the

commencement of this study, however, there are no preconceptions about deficits in leadership practice, or indeed about any aspect of what the enquiry might reveal.

The use of an action research approach aligns with a constructivist ontology chosen to underpin this study in terms of the involvement of teachers in defining issues and solutions as opposed to having solutions imposed upon them. However, leadership could be considered to be an emotive subject and vested interests could influence the research outcomes. Action research approaches appear to reject the notion of bracketing. It favours the idea of synergism between the researcher and the participants. Such approaches, in relation to this study, were deemed to limit the research process. This study was conducted within a busy secondary school and over-familiarity on the part of the researcher might have been counterproductive in terms of staff co-operation. Given that leadership is the focus of this study suspicions may have been raised regarding the purpose of the study. As a possible alternative that is encompassed within interpretative enquiry the following explores the use of ethnography.

Ethnographic Approach

Murchison (2010) recognises that ethnography serves to portray situations in participants' terms and takes account of multiple perspectives. Cohen et al. (2011) characterise ethnographic approaches as context specific and responsive in the sense that outcomes can emerge over time. This enquiry centres upon teachers' perspectives in relation to distributed leadership and thus far, ethnographic approaches appear to retain the authenticity of participants' views. Firmin (2006) identifies that ethnographic approaches attempt to understand, describe and explain context specific situations or phenomena. This study is set within the context of a secondary school so, to this extent, ethnographic approaches appear to align with the interests of the study.

According to Bryman & Bell (2015) ethnographic approaches are characterised by the emersion of the researcher in the world of those who form the subjects of research. It is argued that close involvement of the researcher as part of the enquiry provides a unique way in which to observe the phenomenon being studied. Carspeken (1996) suggests that clearer insights can be gained into the experiences of participants when researchers inhabit, and become part of, their world. Ethnographic approaches, as defined above, appear to offer a means through which the researcher can view distributed leadership through the eyes of teachers. However, as previously mentioned, the enquiry is conducted within a secondary school and the co-operation of teachers who operate at different levels within the school is

essential. As such, the ways in which teachers might construe the enquiry is an important consideration in relation to the selection of a suitable approach. Utilisation of ethnographic approaches might have raised issues of trust and participants' concerns over the researcher's agenda. The researcher's involvement as a participant, considering the nature of this enquiry, is deemed to be limiting in terms of the scope of the study and in relation to participants' willingness to provide authentic accounts of their experiences. The researcher's observation of teachers is implicit within this approach. Such measures, for the interests of this study, might be construed as an unwelcome intrusion into the working environment of teachers. The above seems indicative of a less interventionist approach and to this end a case study approach is now explored.

Case Study Approach

Merriam (2009) defines a case as an area to be studied for a particular reason with the aim of advancing understanding of the area. Elements of a case approach include the focus of enquiry, the process and the outcomes. Denscombe (2014) identifies that a case study approach seeks to illuminate a phenomenon in general by focusing on the particular. Stake (2006) endorses the above and asserts that a case study approach dwells on the complexity and 'particularity' of a specific case and aims to glean an understanding of its nature within important circumstances. Yin (2009) describes a case study as an investigation into a situation or a phenomenon within a real-life context and when the boundaries between the context and the phenomenon are not clearly evident. In relation to this enquiry it could be argued that it might not be possible to divorce the phenomenon of distributed leadership, (as experienced and understood by teachers), from the political and social environments in which it is manifest. As such, the focus of this enquiry aligns with Yin's description above.

Consensus amongst theorists suggests that a case study approach could be utilised because the researcher seeks to understand a phenomenon in its real-life context. In relation to understandings of distributed leadership, as experienced by teachers, a case study approach emphasises the importance of contextual conditions in order to form a backdrop to the case. Hamilton (2011) asserts that a case study approach seeks to build up a picture of a phenomenon using a variety of methods and gathering the perceptions, views, ideas and experiences of diverse individuals relating to the case. As such, case study approaches provide in-depth insights into participants' experiences within a particular context. Thus far, a case study appears to support enquiry into teachers' perspective in relation to distributed

leadership and appears to align with a constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology chosen as the study's theoretical underpinnings. However, there is debate within the literature about the exact nature of a case study approach and whether, or not, it should be considered as a method or as a methodological approach. Yin (2003) asserts that a case study approach may use multiple processes and sources of evidence in order to gain a rich portrayal of a given event or situation. However, it should not, in itself, be considered as a research method.

> A case study is the detailed examination of a single example of a class of phenomena. It is defined by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of enquiry used, so a case is not a method, it is form of research in which many kinds of research methods may be used (Stake, 2003, p. 199).

Yin (1994) argues that a case study approach can be used to describe, explain or explore. Stake (1995) also defines descriptive case studies as intrinsic. Such case studies can be used to describe a phenomenon and to gain a comprehensive understanding of a particular individual case. Explanatory case studies seek to explain issues or arguments highlighted through a descriptive case study. Whereas, exploratory case studies attempt to arrive at propositions that can form the basis of further research. Cohen et al. (2011) suggest that exploratory case studies are interpretive and aim to develop conceptual categories in order to test or examine initial assumptions or propositions and descriptive case studies aim to provide narrative accounts of a particular phenomenon. Throughout the discussions on the different categories of case study there is no suggestion that approaches are mutually exclusive. There could be an argument for use of a combination of approaches.

A case study, as a possible methodological approach, could be used to describe and explain teachers' perspectives in relation to distributed leadership and, as such, illuminate the phenomenon of distributed leadership itself. Therefore, 'exploratory' and 'descriptive' case study approaches seem to align most closely with the nature and aims of the enquiry. Within this study the prominence of teachers' views is of paramount importance. Whilst action research and ethnographic approaches appear to engage participants and allow for multiple perspectives, the anomalies discussed above seem to negate the merits of each as suitable approaches for this study. Emersion of the researcher in the environment of the participants did not appear to be implicit within a case study approach. A case study approach poses fewer concerns in relation to the researcher and in terms of teachers' perceptions of the enquiry. The approach is considered to align with this enquiry into a contemporary

phenomenon in this case, (teachers' views in relation to distributed leadership), and with research in its real-life context - in this case, (a secondary school). The limitations of a case study approach, as they apply within this enquiry, are discussed fully within the Methods Chapter. Throughout the remainder of this chapter and within the Methods Chapter which follows criteria to be met in order to justify a case study approach, (as defined by Bassey, 1999), are discussed in relation to this enquiry.

3.7 Use of a Case Study Approach – Rationale

This section explains the study's design and offers a rationale in relation to the inclusion of processes considered as relevant to the study. It uses Bassey's criteria in an attempt to illustrate how this study meets the requirements for a case study approach. Criterion f), which relates to the limitations of a case study approach, is fully discussed within the following chapter, the Methods Chapter. In addition, the discussion includes processes deemed to be limiting for the interests of this study.

Bassey (1999) asserts that a case study entails "an empirical enquiry which is:

- ♦ conducted within a localised boundary of space and time (i.e., a singularity);
- ♦ an enquiry into interesting aspects of an educational programme, or institution, or system;
- ♦ mainly in its natural context and within an ethic of respect for the persons;
- ♦ in order to inform the judgements and decisions of practitioners, or policy-makers;
- ♦ or theoreticians who are working to those ends;
- ♦ in such a way that sufficient data are collected for the researcher to be able to explore significant features of the case, create plausible interpretations of what is found, test for trustworthiness of those interpretations, construct a worthwhile argument or story, relate the argument or story to the relevant research in the literature, convey convincingly to an audience this argument or story, provide an audit trail by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings, or construct alternative arguments" (Bassey, 1999, p. 58).

The following section demonstrates how the elements of this case study align with each of the above criteria. This chapter discusses criteria a) to d) and criteria e) to g) are discussed within the Methods Chapter.

Bassey (1999), in relation to criterion a), "an empirical enquiry conducted within a localised boundary of space and time (i.e., a singularity)" defines a 'singularity' as research which focuses on a particular set of events or on a specific phenomenon. He describes a case study as an in-depth study of a particular phenomenon conducted within its natural setting. This enquiry aligns with the notion of a 'singularity' in that it explores the phenomenon of distributed leadership from the perspectives of teachers and does so within the setting of a secondary school in which distributed leadership takes place. Stake (1995) recognises the importance of respecting the boundaries of the case. Consideration of the boundaries is of particular significance for the researcher in relation to understanding how participants view the environment in which they operate. Gomm et al. (2000) describe a bounded case as a unique configuration and, in order to make sense of it, it must be understood as a whole. Yazan (2015) describes a case study as a complex integrated system bounded by its parts. The researcher considered this case to be an integrated system or a 'singularity' bounded by its various elements. Taking account of the parts that constitute this case assisted the researcher in defining the case and viewing it in its entirety. In addition, clarity in relation to the limits or boundaries of the case aims to enable others to comprehend it and possibly to repeat it.

Yin (2003) acknowledges that the boundaries and the context of a case are sometimes unclear and the researcher has scant control over either. It could be argued that the transient nature of social environments pose a challenge for the researcher in attempting to establish the limits of a case. Stake (2006) recognises the difficulties in delineating between the environment and the case itself. However, he suggests that contexts, environments and experience are useful concepts in specifying the case. In relation to this study, the researcher defines some of the boundaries around this case in terms of the context in which the study takes place – a secondary school and the period in which the study is conducted – at a point in time when distributed leadership has been embedded within the school. Hitchcock &Hughes (1995) define the boundaries around a case in terms of the individuals involved and their roles within the case. This study, as opposed to focussing on distributed leadership from the perspectives of policy-makers and head teachers, seeks to privilege the views of teachers who operate at other levels within a secondary school environment. As such, this case study is bounded by

the roles of the participants in the sense that it includes only depute head teachers, faculty head teachers, principal teachers and classroom teachers. The ability of the researcher to draw upon the experiences of teachers, (other than the head teacher), is a significant factor. The researcher considers that the time afforded by the head teacher and the participants for the operation of this case study constitutes a further boundary around the case.

Bassey (1999), in relation to criterion b), defines a case study as "an enquiry into interesting aspects of an educational programme, or institution, or system". References within educational policy and within contemporary literature suggest that distributed leadership rhetoric has permeated throughout educational institutions despite having little basis in empirical research. Despite the claims made for this model of leadership, its emergence within education policy and within educational institutions appears to have little supporting rationale. Hartey (2007) regards the emergence of this model for leadership as policy before evidence. Definitions of distributed leadership within extant literature appear to be multiple and varied. Even within the most recent literature theorists still seem to be attempting to illuminate the concept. The extant literature, as previously discussed, appears to focus on the head teacher's role in relation to disseminating distributed leadership throughout the school. Fewer studies have aimed to refine understandings of distributed leadership from the perspectives of teachers, (with the exception of the head teacher), who operate at different levels. Furthermore, as opposed to secondary schools, the literature appears to focus on distributed leadership within primary schools. Notwithstanding the climate in which distributed leadership has taken hold it can be considered as part of an educational institution or system and, as such, fulfils the above criterion b) in support of a case study approach. This study's focus on the phenomenon of distributed leadership, as construed by teachers who operate at different levels within a secondary school, is considered to be a particular point of interest. Exploration of these issues is guided by the research questions specified in Chapter 1. The following section discusses ethical considerations. Bassey (1999), in relation to criterion c), describes a case study as an empirical study that is "mainly in its natural context and within an ethic of respect for the persons".

3.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues in terms of confidentiality and anonymity are important considerations given that this study focuses on teachers' perspectives in relation to leadership. Guiding principles

specified by SERA set down the ethical considerations to be embodied within educational research in respect of:

- justice and equity;
- the person;
- democratic values;
- knowledge;
- the quality of educational research and
- academic freedom (SERA, 2005, p.4).

This guidance serves to ensure that researchers meet their responsibilities towards participants in the research and to maintain the integrity of the research itself. The following outlines the implications of such guidance in respect of this particular study. Hart et al. (2005) acknowledge that research has consequences for which researchers have a responsibility. Hart & Bond (1995) recognise that social life is unpredictable and, as such, research can be difficult to control. The following measures adopted within this study aim to negate any adverse impact in relation to the participants.

Participants — Respect to the Person

Collaboration and Approval

The co-operation and participation of teachers who operate at different levels within the secondary school is a primary concern. Initially, permission to carry out the study was sought from the head teacher through a letter of introduction. An exemplification of the letter can be found in (Appendix, B). Subsequently, the researcher met with the head teacher and depute head teacher in order to discuss the study. Information was provided during the meeting that outlined the nature of the study and its implications for participants. An approach to the most senior member of staff, from an ethical standpoint, was an essential requirement. This was of particular importance, as previously noted, because ‘leadership’ is the central focus of this study. Initial meetings allowed for discussion and presentation of data collection methods, agreeing the arrangements for approaching and engaging teachers in the study, informing the head teacher and depute head teacher in relation to the ways in which the researcher intended

to engage with teachers at each stage of the study and discussing the nature of the information teachers would receive.

Voluntary Informed Consent

Consents were sought from all teachers who were invited to participate in the study. Information was provided in relation to their participation and what that entailed. Punch (2016) identifies honesty and respect for people as the over-arching principles of academic research. As such, the researcher took into consideration issues of power, reliance and the impact such factors may have on teachers' decisions to participate. An exemplification of the information sheet provided for participants is included in (Appendix, C). The aim of providing information for teachers at all levels about the nature, intentions and operation of the research was to enable them to consider whether, or not, to participate. Cohen et al. (2011) acknowledge the complexities of situations within research and the sensitivities that may influence people within certain contexts. In order to overcome such challenges the potential participants were informed that their participation was optional rather than obligatory. Denscombe (2014) reiterates that voluntary participation is an ethical necessity. As such, the teachers who participated in this study were afforded the opportunity to refuse to participate. This measure aims to heightening the possibility of honest and frank responses from participants by engaging only those willing to speak freely and, as such, enhance the credibility of data. An exemplification of a 'consent from' used within this study can be found in (Appendix, D).

Negating Potentially Detrimental Effects on Participants

It was anticipated that any potential risks to participants would be countered by measures taken to ensure that they were fully informed of the study's aims, processes, their engagement and potential consequences should they decide to participate. Punch (2016) warns of possible conflict of interests that may arise especially within a political arena. Mindful of the context in which the study was to be conducted assurances of anonymity, confidentiality and privacy were provided. Such measures aim to assure participants that their data could be contributed towards the study without the threat of losing credibility in the eyes of their colleagues. The researcher provided written and verbal assurances of confidentiality in terms of the information participants may provide and sought only data in relation to the study's aims and the research questions. Additionally, the researcher sought to reduce intrusion in terms of participants' time and workload.

Permissions were sought from participants regarding the use of their views/perceptions which form part of the research transcripts, data analysis and the results. In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998), assurances were provided that it would not be possible to discern the identities of individuals or organisations within the completed thesis. In addition, participants were informed of how the information provided by them would be used and stored.

Responsibility of the Researcher to the Field of Educational Research and to the Research Community

Scott & Usher (1996) recognise that researchers have a responsibility to uphold standards that best serve the research community. For example, in relation to one's own research any "contributions from other researchers and their authorship must be recognised" (BERA, 2011, p. 10). Additionally, professional standards must be adhered to in terms of the study's rigour, integrity and relevance to a wide range of audiences. Wallace & Wray (2016) suggest that scrutiny of the study by a third party may affirm the author's intentions and the nature of the arguments used in order to convince the target audience. The following relates to criterion d) in support of a case study approach. Bassey (2000) asserts that the outcomes of a case study should serve to "to inform the judgements and decisions of practitioners, or policy-makers or theoreticians who are working to those ends".

It was not the intention of this study to have a significant impact on broader Scottish Government leadership policy. The study did have implications for teaching professionals working within other secondary schools. The study's conclusions could serve to inform decision-makers and practitioners operating within similar institutions and within similar contexts. However, the study did not aim to provide an inclusive portrayal of distributed leadership in all secondary schools in general. The chapter which follows, the Methods Chapter, considers the applicability of the outcomes of this study to other investigations, criterion e), which focuses on the suitability of data collection methods within a case study approach and criterion f), which focuses on trustworthiness.

3.9 Qualitative Versus Quantitative Approaches

The following explores and compares the features of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and their relevance within a case study approach and as part of the conceptual framework chosen for this study. The value of qualitative and quantitative methodologies has

been a long-standing focus of debate amongst theorists. Criticisms of a quantitative methodology seem to concern the influence of the researcher's issues. Creswell (2013) suggests that quantitative approaches focus on concerns that researchers bring into the enquiry. A focus on the perspectives of teachers in relation to distributed leadership, as opposed to those of the researchers, is of particular importance within this study. Matthews & Ross (2010) suggest that decisions about the testing of hypotheses and other concepts researchers bring into the forefront of the enquiry are implicit within quantitative approaches. At the commencement of this study there were no preconceived hypotheses and the study did not aim to test concepts or theories. Conversely, the study design sought to emphasise teachers' experiences, understandings, perspectives and factors which they, as individuals, deem to be important or significant.

As such, in alignment with a constructivist ontology chosen as the study's conceptual underpinning, the selected approach aims to reveal participants' views based upon their constructions. Denscombe (2014) suggests that insights and concepts can emerge out of qualitative data collection approaches. This perspective aligns with the paradigm of interpretivism chosen as the epistemological orientation for this study. Boblin et al. (2013) suggest that a case study approach takes account of contextual factors which shape an individual's experience of a phenomenon. This study aims to obtain data sufficiently detailed in order to enable the researcher to capture a comprehensive picture of distributed leadership from the perspectives of the teachers who participated within the study. Geertz (2000) supports that notion that knowledge of the social world relies on human capacities to make sense of it. Hart & Bond (1995) identify that research directed towards specific outcomes expressed in numerical form resonates with the paradigm of positivism. For the purpose of this enquiry it seems that the exclusive use of quantitative methodologies may not adequately consider the relationships and the inter-connectedness of people, contexts and events that form a comprehensive picture.

Denzin & Lincoln (2011) argue that the quest for generating incontrovertible linear knowledge is incongruous with enquiry into aspects of human life. This suggests that a purely quantitative methodology may not have adequately captured the multiple and varied perspectives of the different individuals who participated in this enquiry. The subjectivity of social life would seem to indicate that no tangible measure exists that would enable researchers to gauge how others make sense of their environment. However, Miles et al. (2014) assert that quantitative methodologies aim to measure and quantify aspects of social

life. This suggests that a quantitative methodology has some value in gauging elements of a phenomenon within an interpretive context.

From the above discussion a qualitative approach seems to be consistent with an interpretative paradigm and a constructivist ontology chosen as the conceptual framework for this study. Twinning et al. (2016) recognise that qualitative and quantitative methodologies are paradigmatically distinct because, "they are based on paradigmatically different theoretical stances (ontological and epistemological views)." This suggests that it is not possible to combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies in framing research.

> However, the question is not whether you are using a mixture of numerical and non-numerical data, but how that data is being viewed. Within a qualitative methodology both numerical and non-numerical data are viewed in the same way; all data is a symbolic representation which needs to be interpreted and thus its meaning is subjective and context dependent (Twinning et al., 2016, p. 2).

The methodological approach used within this study is predominantly qualitative, but includes a quantitative element. The approach to data collection described within the following chapter, the Methods Chapter, is considered as a mixed-methods approach because the methods described incorporate both numerical and non-numerical data. The researcher acknowledges the challenge posed by mixed-methods research in that quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed within a single study. It is acknowledged that quantitative and qualitative approaches are paradigmatically distinct in a theoretical sense. However, as previously discussed, this study employs a case study approach that allows for flexibility in terms of the methods adopted. Cameron et al. (2015) suggest that mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods occurs only at the methods stage of the enquiry.

3.10 Conclusion

In order to orientate this study and to address the research questions this chapter has explored the assumptions underpinning some of the main research paradigms. It emerges that a constructivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology align with the aims and purpose of this study. Having explored different research approaches, a case study approach appears to be appropriate in terms of the above philosophical framework and in relation to the nature of the study. The discussion of qualitative versus quantitative methodologies has assisted in determining the suitability of these paradigms in order to support this study. The following

chapter focuses on the approach adopted within this case study, the framework used for data collection, the conduct of the study, the methods selected for the collection and analysis of data and the measures employed in order to ensure rigour.

Chapter (4) – Methods Chapter

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discusses the methodological underpinnings for this study and the use of a case study in preference to alternative research approaches. This chapter discusses: a mixed-methods approach adopted within this case study; the framework used to guide the process of data collection; the preparation necessary in order to proceed with the study; the methods employed for data collection and data analysis; the concepts taken into account in relation to rigour within a case study and the measures employed throughout this study in order to ensure the quality of data. The criteria Bassey (1999) proposes in support of a case study approach, (a – d), were discussed in the previous chapter. Elements of this case study have been aligned with such criteria in order to demonstrate how the study meets the requirements of a case study approach. Criteria, (e – g), relate to the methods employed within a case study approach and, as such, are discussed within this chapter.

4.2 Overview of the Research Approach

A mixed-methods approach is used for the purpose of this study. Many theorists describe the use of different data collection methods as a means of achieving a more comprehensive picture of a complex phenomenon. Bassey (1999) suggests that methods should be used "in such a way that sufficient data are collected for the researcher to be able to explore significant features of the case" (Criterion e, p. 58). Greene et al. (1989) define mixed-methods research as a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Cresswell (2013) recognises that the use of a combination of methods can result in a clearer understanding of the research area than could otherwise be achieved. In other words, the use of purely quantitative or qualitative methods may not provide a comprehensive portrayal of the research area. Bryman (2012) argues that the separate strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches make them suitable for use together. For the purpose of this study the researcher's use of this design seeks to draw on the strengths of the different methods in order to address the study's aims and the research questions. This study uses a framework for data collection based on concepts suggested by Plano-Clark & Creswell (2008) and drawn from the application of mixed-method approaches in practice. The framework includes, an 'exploratory phase' – (a pilot study using a Likert-scale questionnaire), an 'enhancement phase' – (semi-structured interviews) and a 'confirmatory phase' – (a focus group discussion).

Exploratory Phase

A relative weighting is attributed to each of the methods according to their purpose within this study. The study, as previously noted in Chapter 3, is predominantly qualitative in nature. However, it uses a Likert-scale questionnaire, (quantitative method), for the initial exploratory phase of data collection. Used as the initial data collection phase, the questionnaire takes the form of a pilot study and should be seen in this context. Jupp (2006) recognises that a pilot study is construed as one stage of the developmental process of conducting research and assists in gauging the feasibility of the questions being posed. Details of the development and refinement of the methods used in this study can be found in (Appendix, J). The use and results of an exploratory pilot study employing a questionnaire are outlined in (Appendix, K). Cohen et al. (2011) identify that a pilot study can assist in gauging how individuals respond and in tailoring the questions/statements accordingly.

In addition, the use of a questionnaire within this study served to engage teachers in the research process and set the scene paving the way for further phases of data collection. Bassey (1999) recognises that a Likert-scale questionnaire provides a discrete method for obtaining a significant amount of data. This study was conducted in a busy secondary school and from the first encounter with the school the researcher became aware of the demands teachers face in their day-to-day duties. As such, a pilot study using a Likert-scale questionnaire is chosen for the exploratory phase of data collection because it is not time consuming for the participants. In addition, this method is deemed to be suitable for this phase of data collection because participants can provide their responses in privacy uninfluenced by the researcher.

Enhancement Phase

A Likert-scale questionnaire serves to provide some insights into teachers' beliefs, opinions and attitudes in relation to distributed leadership. However, in order to enhance data and to provide further context in relation to teachers' perspectives, semi-structured interviews are used for the 'enhancement phase'. Cresswell & Plano-Clark (2011) suggest that the collection of supplemental data enhances the overall study. The use of interviews within this case study affords an opportunity for the researcher to interact with each individual participant. During interviews participants' views could be discussed in greater detail and the researcher could glean more in-depth insights. As such, the use of qualitative interviews for the 'enhancement

phase' aims to expand upon the quantitative outcomes achieved from use of a questionnaire within the 'exploratory phase'.

Confirmatory Phase

Plano Clark et al. (2008) suggest that the purpose of combining methods is to use one data set to confirm another. Theorists appear to agree that this is one of the principal advantages of a mixed-methods research design. Within this study a focus group discussion is chosen for the final 'confirmatory phase' of data collection. Data obtained through the use of this method were used to confirm data obtained from the use of the previous methods. The construction of the methods facilitated the process of comparing data sets. For example, questions posed within each of the methods covered the same ground and, as previously discussed, the questions are set out in three distinct sections each reflecting one of the three main research questions. The interview schedule contains 'open' questions in order not to constrain the ways in which participants might respond. What follows is a discussion of the ways in which the data collection methods are considered to align with the theoretical framework selected to underpin this study.

Alignment of the Methods with the Theoretical Stance

A constructivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology, as discussed in Chapter 3, form the theoretical framework chosen to support this study. The researcher considered the above methods to be consistent with a case study approach and with the philosophical underpinnings of this study. Merriam (2009) defines case study research as a pliable approach that offers flexibility and creativity. This case study, as previously noted, is predominantly qualitative in nature. As such, the methods employed within it aim to access teachers' direct experiences and understandings of distributed leadership. In alignment with a constructivist ontology data are deemed to emanate from the constructs of participants. Individual constructs, in turn, are considered to be based on what each participant's experience entails. Each data collection method aims to draw upon teachers' perceptions gleaned from their and interpretations in relation to distributed leadership. As such, the methods chosen for this study are deemed to be consistent with the paradigm of interpretivism. The epistemological tensions that arise from the use of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods have been discussed in section 3.7 of the Methodology Chapter.

4.3 The Sample

For the purpose of this study, and in relation to Criterion c, section 3.6 of Chapter 3, a secondary school situated in central Scotland constitutes the natural setting in which data collection takes place. Cohen et al. (2011) suggest that the population from which a sample is to be drawn, the status of the individuals who form the sample and the suitability of the sample for the purpose of the research are important consideration in the selection of a sample. The school population totals one hundred and two members of staff. This study requires the participation of teachers at different levels within a secondary school, (with the exception of the head teacher), including classroom teachers, principal teachers, faculty heads and depute head teachers. Thompson (2012) defines a stratified sample as the population partitioned into regions or strata. A sample is selected by some design within each stratum such as, geographical region, sex or social factors. In line with the original study design and in order to achieve the purposes of this study, it is necessary that a sample includes teachers at different levels within the school.

Respondents from the entire school population were invited to complete the initial exploratory phase of the research involving a questionnaire which took the form of a pilot study. However, the responses to the pilot study were insufficient to make it necessary to adopt a stratified sampling method for the interviews and a focus group discussion. Thirteen respondents from the school population chose to complete the questionnaire including (seven classroom teachers, two principal teachers, two faculty heads and two depute head teachers). Of the respondents who completed a questionnaire, eight indicated their desire to participate in a semi-structured interview including (two classroom teachers, two principal teachers, two faculty heads, and two depute head teachers). Of those eight respondents, six chose to attend a focus group discussion. In respect of the number of teachers who responded to the questionnaire the response rate is 12.8 percent.

It is acknowledged that a 12.8 percent response rate is a limitation of the study. Rowantree (2003) suggests that data derived from a limited sample of a given population cannot be assumed to be typical of the entire population. This issue and others pertaining to the subject of generalisability are discussed further in section 4.6 towards the end of this chapter. The following provides an overview of the researcher's value position in relation to this research and examines the potential influence of such factors in terms of the research results.

4.4 The Researcher's Value Position

Silverman (2015) identifies that researchers need to explicitly reveal their own position and how this relates to the research in order to ensure that the research outcomes are free from bias. The following provides a brief account of the researcher's relationship with the study. Such transparency aims to enable readers to establish the extent to which data are representative of participants' views as opposed to those of the researcher. The researcher's perspective in relation to the focus of this study, (distributed leadership), is influenced by her own experience of being led. A form of leadership that might be described by some as distributed has, in recent years, been employed within the researcher's place of work. The demands upon those in formal leadership positions seem to have necessitated delegation of duties to other members of staff. Many to whom duties have been delegated are not willing recipients. This situation has led to some members of staff becoming resentful. Some members of staff have been appointed to formal leadership positions and benefit from the remuneration that goes with such an appointment. Others are simply expected to fulfil additional duties that are beyond the boundaries of their job roles.

The culture that prevails is one of compliance and senior management tolerate neither challenge nor scrutiny. Within such an environment the voices of un-promoted staff are unlikely to be heard.

> A researcher's perspective is a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others… and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may influence what one is trying to understand (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 123).

The researcher has set out the above position in relation to their own experience of being led for the purpose of heightening their awareness of personal biases and in order to inform the reader. By taking account of such biases the researcher seeks to minimise their impact upon the outcomes of this study. Additionally, readers of this study may judge the trustworthiness of the study's results.

The Researcher's Position in Relation to the Research

Mercer (2007) identifies that 'trust' is critical to building and sustaining successful relationships between researchers and participants. He emphasises the importance of researchers taking account of their status in relation to the research, the implications the

researcher's position may have for relationships with participants and the ways in which it may affect the outcomes of the research. Dwyer & Buckle (2009) refer to researchers who are already an integral part of the research context as 'insider' researchers. As such, the use of the researcher's 'insider' status could be advantageous in terms of engaging with participants and gaining rich insights. Conversely, Chawla-Duggan (2007) considers that 'outsider' researchers, those who are not a part of the research context or setting, are more able to remain impartial.

The researcher had not operated within a secondary school context prior to this study. This is considered to be advantageous in terms of maintaining a neutral stance. Kanuha (2000) identifies that 'insider' researchers sometimes have difficulty in separating their own personal experiences from those of the participants. Kauffman (1994) suggests that issues of confidentiality can arise when 'insider' researchers interview members of their own community. As someone who has no prior experience of operating within secondary school education, and who does not participate in teachers' core activities, the researcher construes their position as being peripheral to the experiences and commonalities shared by the teachers who participated in this study. As such, concerns were fewer in relation to over familiarity with the participants or researcher bias. Dwyer & Buckle (2009) describes the 'outsider' researcher as someone who is an outsider to the commonality shared by the participants. The researcher's background relates to further education and, therefore, she does not share the characteristics, roles or experiences of the secondary school teachers who participated in this study.

4.7 Conducting the Research

Preliminaries

During three preliminary visits to the school the researcher met with the head teacher and senior members of staff. The purpose of the initial visit was to discuss the nature of the study with the head teacher and senior staff. Shenton (2004) recognises that preparatory work paves the way for research by establishing trust. This study, as previously noted, focuses on leadership within a secondary school. In preparation for data collection it was necessary for the researcher to set out the nature and intention of the research. This necessitated the establishment of a working relationship between the researcher and the school staff. On subsequent visits, over a period of three months, the processes for data collection and the engagement of teachers from across the school were discussed in greater detail.

Arrangements were made for the school staff to receive information in relation to the nature of the study through e-mail and via the head teacher. The school staff were informed through e-mail that copies of a questionnaire, (should they wish to complete it), could be obtained from the school's main reception area. The questionnaires employed as a pilot study were offered to classroom teachers, principal teachers, faculty heads and depute head teachers from across the school. Questionnaires used within this study instructed each participant to include their e-mail address only if they wished to participate in an interview. Silverman (2015) suggests that such measures serve to ensure that participants do not feel vulnerable and, as such, increases the likelihood of achieving authentic data. An exemplification of the questionnaire used in this study is included in (Appendix, E). On conclusion of each interview the researcher asked each participant if they would be willing to attend a focus group discussion. In relation to the teachers who participated in this study the above measures aim to ensure anonymity. The following discusses the phases of data collection, (exploratory, enhancement, and confirmatory), in further detail.

Avoiding Bias Versus Informing Participants

Consensus amongst theorists indicates that researchers should be open and honest in relation to their investigation in terms of its purpose and methods. This study did not involve covert research or any form of ethnography. In the interests of transparency, as outlined in section 4.4, consents were obtained, participants were informed about the nature of the study, the possible consequences of their involvement and the intended use of their data. These were important considerations in the conduct of the study in order to gain teachers' trust and co-operation. Nothing was hidden from the participants in terms of the nature of the research, its aims, their involvement and the researcher's role.

Whilst it was necessary to enable participants to make an informed choice about their participation in this study it was equally important, in relation to the research outcomes, to consider the nature and content of the information provided. For example, during the interviews and a focus group discussion, the researcher did not offer examples in relation to the questions being asked and refrained from offering a personal view. Denscombe (2014) identifies that when participants are given too much information about what is being investigated they can be swayed, (consciously or not), to provide answers they believe the researcher expects of them. Such considerations were important in order to avoid leading participants and possibly compromising data through inappropriate input.

As discussed in section 4.6, criterion f., the concept of external validity has little relevance within this case study because it is not concerned with causation. However, the above measures aim to ensure rigour in terms of the 'credibility' of data derived from this study. The concept of 'credibility', as previously discussed, relates to the degree to which data can be considered to be an accurate reflection of the views of participants. A more in-depth discussion of 'credibility' and other concepts of relevance to rigour within this case study can be found in section 4.6.

At each stage of the data collection process, as described in 4.2 above, participants chose whether, or not, to participate in further stages of the research. Such measures aim to ensure that participants contribute their data freely and that their responses are not prejudiced because of coercion. In order to avoid jeopardising the quality of participants' data the privacy and safety of information were important considerations. Further measures employed in order to avoid bias are discussed throughout the remainder of this chapter. The following discusses the conduct of the study and the methods employed.

Research Phases and Methods

Likert-scale Questionnaire used as a Pilot Study – (Exploratory phase)

Boss et al. (2009) recognise that a Likert-scale questionnaire can be used to reveal the constructs of each individual and their frame of reference. This quantitative method is chosen because it aims to access the attitudes, beliefs, experiences and understandings of teachers in relation to distributed leadership. Weller (1998) suggests that the meaning a participant attaches to a particular phenomenon is relative to their interpretive context. The use of a Likert-scale questionnaire for the exploratory phase of data collection enabled teachers to engage with a series of statements in relation distributed leadership. Bowling (2002) suggests that statements within a Likert-scale questionnaire seek to provoke spontaneous responses and, as such, heighten the authenticity of data. The use of this method, as previously discussed, provides an opportunity for teachers to provide their responses in privacy. The nature of this method and conditions of its use sought to access the individual and unique views of each teacher who participated in the study.

The Statements

In the construction of statements contained within the Likert-scale questionnaire the use of language is an important consideration. Scott & Morrison (2006) advocate the use of short

and simple statements in order to reduce ambiguity and bias within the language. The participants within this study, as noted above, completed a Likert-scale questionnaire in isolation. Thirteen teachers chose to complete the exploratory phase of data collection using a Likert-scale questionnaire (two depute head teachers, two faculty heads, two principal teachers and seven classroom teachers). The questionnaire contains a request that teachers return their completed version in a sealed envelope to the school's main reception area. It was evident from the completed questionnaires that eight teachers had chosen to participate in an interview. Of this number, two depute head teachers, two faculty heads, two principal teachers and two classroom teachers opted to be interviewed.

Semi-structured Interviews – (Enhancement Phase)

Interviews were conducted over the duration of two month and involved the researcher in visiting the school several times during this period. Each interview lasting between forty-five minutes and one hour was conducted in a private space chosen by the participants. Galletta (2013) suggests that schedules used within semi-structured interviews consist of an outline of topics and issues for discussion. Prior to each of the interviews the researcher explained that a schedule would be used to guide the interview. Drever (2003) suggests that semi-structured interviews offer flexibility in responding to the direction in which participants wish to take the conversation. During the conduct of the interviews within this study questions were not always posed in the same order across all interviews. However, for consistency, the researcher ensured that all questions were asked of each participant. Gillham (2010) recognises that whilst each interview is personal and unique it essentially covers the same ground. An exemplification of the interview schedule used within this study can be found in (Appendix, F).

Weller (1998) recognises that such methods are sufficiently flexible to enable researchers to explore themes that emerge in the course of the interview. As such, the use of this method enabled participants to voice their views in privacy unrestrained by the parameters of a questionnaire or by the presence of other individuals. Data obtained through the use of a Likert-scale questionnaire, (exploratory phase), could be built upon using data derived from the interviews, (enhancement phase). Through the use of interviews it was possible to probe, in more depth, the beliefs and opinions participants had shared within their responses to the questionnaire. During this phase of data collection the reasons behind participants' views

could be explored. Previously, this had not been possible because the questionnaire was self-administered.

A Focus Group Discussion – (Confirmatory Phase)

A focus group discussion was chosen for the final stage of data collection. The use of this method aims to further explore and confirm issues that emerged within the previous data sets. Data yielded through this method used for the 'confirmatory phase' enabled the researcher to identify areas of convergence and confirm perspectives gleaned from the use of a questionnaire and interviews. Participants had been informed that a focus group discussion would take place immediately after the last interview. Of the eight participants who chose to participate in an interview, six attended the focus group discussion. Miles & Huberman (2014) suggest that interviews and focus group discussion typically involve between six and eight participants. The process involves participants in discussing issues of particular interest under the direction of a facilitator. Within this study the use of a focus group discussion affords an opportunity for teachers to interact with the researcher and with one another.

The confirmatory phase of data collection using a focus group discussion coincided with preparation for a 'skills week'. As such, in order to participate, it was necessary for teachers to take time away from their preparations. At the commencement of the focus group discussion the researcher acknowledged the situation and assured participants that the discussion would not be prolonged. Morgan (1997) identifies that focus group discussions are less controlled than interviews and the participants, as opposed to the researcher, define the nature of the interaction. It is acknowledged that focus groups can be demanding in relation to the skills of the researcher. Researchers must be aware of the possible influence upon some group members of more powerful/persuasive peers. Some participants may be swayed in their views and when "confronted with opinions contrary to theirs, many subjects shift their judgments in the direction of the opposing views" (Asche, 1955, p. 35). The above reflects the power of the group and "the majority effect" which "is a function of the size of group opposition" (Asche, 1952, p. 235). Taking account of the above, it is necessary for the researcher to remain vigilant, ensure that everyone is able to contribute and, if necessary, probe the meaning of what is said by each individual during the discussion. As such, the teachers who participated in the focus group discussion were encouraged to respond freely to prompts provided by the researcher. In addition, responses were triangulated against data obtained from interviews in which individuals were not influenced by others.

An exemplification of the focus group prompts used within this study can be found in (Appendix, G). Jupp (2006) recognises that issues can be teased out and discussion around an area of mutual interest can provoke the exchange of perspectives. Cohen et al. (2011) suggest that a focus group discussion can be used as an adjunct to other forms of interview. In relation to rigour the use of a focus group discussion for the 'confirmatory phase' of data collection enabled the researcher to build upon and confirm data derived from the methods previously used. Section 4.1 considers the value of the data collection framework used in relation to rigour within this study. The ways in which the research tools were piloted and refined prior to their use within this study are fully described within (Appendix, J).

4.8 Data Analysis

Analysis of Quantitative Data - Likert-scale Questionniare

Analysis of data derived from the use of a Likert-scale questionnaire involved scrutinising and sorting participants' responses to each of the statements. Miles & Huberman (2014) suggest that a tabulated matrix based upon categories can be a useful technique. For the purpose of this analysis the use of a matrix assisted the researcher in establishing the numbers of teachers who, in relation to the content of each statement, (strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or remained neutral). Representing data in this way indicated the level of agreement/disagreement across the different groups of teachers. The matrix also reveals differences in the ways in which teachers at different levels, (classroom teachers, middle leaders and depute head teachers), responded to particular statements. Teachers who fulfil the roles of principal teachers and faculty head teachers are categorised as 'middle leaders'. It should be noted that the terms used within the matrix include the abbreviation (ML) to denote 'middle leaders'. An exemplification of a tabulated matrix used to represent data obtained from a pilot study using a Likert-scale questionnaire can be found in (Appendix, H).

The second stage of analysis of data derived from use of a Likert-scale questionnaire involved reviewing data in response to each statement in order to identify areas of consensus or statements that provoked divergent views. Rowantree (2003) recognises that the representation of data, as described above, provides a clear indication of similarities and differences in participants' responses. The use of a matrix for this stage of the analysis provided a visual representation of data and assisted the researcher in identifying the status of the participants who provided it. For the purpose of this study participants responded to the

questionnaire by assigning a value expressed in terms of strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree or strongly disagree. As such, it is acknowledged that the method and analysis are quantitative in nature. However, Rowantree (2003) suggests that such analysis employs what he refers to as 'descriptive statistics' that can be used to draw inferences and to summarise from responses provided by a sample. Analysis of data derived from the process described above provided insights based upon teachers' beliefs, attitudes, experiences and understandings in relation to distributed leadership. It enabled the researcher to gauge consensus across teacher groups in relation to an issue and revealed disparities in relation to the beliefs and opinions of teachers who operate at different levels within the school.

Analysis of Qualitative Data - Semi-structured Interviews & A Focus Group Discussion

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is chosen in order to process data derived from interviews and a focus group discussion. This form of analysis is chosen because the researcher considered it suitable for the analysis of data derived from the above methods. Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis offers a flexible method of analysis that allows the researcher a wide degree of scope in terms of what might be said about data. Such characteristics appear to have an affinity with the analysis of qualitative data and with a case study approach. As such, thematic analysis seems an appropriate choice for analysis of data that is reflective of a wide range of teachers' experiences and understandings in relation to distributed leadership. Guest (2012) identifies that thematic analysis is suitable for interpreting themes supported by data and elaborating upon participants' unique and collective experiences. As such, thematic analysis aligns with a constructivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology chosen as this study's conceptual underpinnings. Braun & Clarke (2006) identify that analysis should be guided by the theoretical assumptions underpinning the study.

Saldana (2009) asserts that thematic analysis allows for categories to emerge from data. Foster & Parker (1995) describe analysis as "a deliberate and self-conscious creation by the researcher, and must be constructed to persuade the reader of the plausibility of an argument" (p. 204). Thematic analysis, as previously noted, appears to align with a case study approach chosen for this research in that it captures the majority of data and provides 'rich description'. The method of thematic analysis used within this study is described by Braun & Clarke (2006) as 'inductive analysis' in the sense that data is coded without attempting to fit it into a

pre-existing coding frame, or trying to align it with the researcher's preconceptions that are driven by their interest in the research area. In other words, as opposed to a theoretically driven deductive analysis, the themes are strongly matched to data themselves.

Horrocks & King (2010) suggest that themes must be clearly defined and the thematic structure should be clear and comprehensible. Guest et al. (2012) define thematic analysis as qualitative analysis used to identify themes within data and to develop relationships between themes. The process entails the researcher's ability to demonstrate how themes are developed. Guest et al. (2012) conclude that thematic analysis provides a useful method for capturing the intricacies of meaning in the data set. The centrality of teachers' perspectives in relation to distributed leadership is pivotal in terms of the aims of this study. As such, thematic analysis is selected on the basis that it provides an in-depth picture of participants' understandings and experiences. Horrocks & King (2010) identify that the main purpose of developing a thematic structure for analysis is to illustrate the researcher's thinking in relation to data. The following sets out the procedures employed as part of an inductive thematic analysis of data derived from interviews and focus group discussion.

Thematic Analysis Process

The following provides an account of how the thematic analysis was conducted in terms of the stages of the analysis and the significance of each stage.

Stage (1) - Transcribing Data

Transcripts obtained from audio recordings were compiled by the researcher and each recorded interview was transcribed in its entirety. The transcripts were compiled by the researcher soon after each interview and focus group discussion. Braun & Clarke (2006) perceive the process of transcription as a key stage of data analysis. The process, in relation to this study, afforded an opportunity for the researcher to re-engage with data and to glean a thorough understanding of it. Each transcript was assigned a number (1-8) signifying each of the eight participants who provided data. The status of each individual was also indicated on each transcript for example, (DH1) was used to denote the first depute head teacher and (DH2) to denote the second and so on… Transcription followed the same sequence as the three main research questions used to guide this study. As such, each participant's data was

transcribed in the same order. On completion of the transcripts the researcher ascertained the accuracy of each by checking its contents against the audio recordings.

Braun & Clarke (2006) assert that the researcher's immersion in data is crucial if they are to become completely familiar with its breadth of the content. Having conducted the interviews and a focus group discussion the researcher has, to an extent, some prior knowledge of data. However, in order to become completely familiar with its contents the researcher read each transcript a number of times. This process served to remind the researcher of the context and meaning of the dialogue. Horrocks & King (2010) identify that this stage is important because analysis of any particular section of a transcript needs to be done in the context of the entire interview. Frequent scrutiny of transcripts enabled the researcher to recognise possible patterns in data that might be useful in coding which forms the next stage of the process. During this stage the researcher noted ideas of interest from which codes and themes might be developed later in the analysis.

Stage (2) - Identifying Relevant Aspects of Participants' Accounts

Having scrutinised the transcripts the researcher proceeded to highlight areas of interest in each participant's response. Braun & Clarke (2006) recognise that this stage in the analysis involves identifying a feature of data that is of interest to the analyst. On a chart consisting of two columns the researcher included a section of transcript. Having scrutinised each transcript, extracts of interest to the researcher were selected. The selected areas of interest from the transcripts were inserted into column one of the chart. These excerpts retained some of the surrounding text so that the meanings held within data did not become lost or decontextualised. From the selected areas of transcript the researcher identified elements of the excerpts of relevance to the research questions. The aforementioned elements of participants' accounts deemed to be of interest in terms of the analysis were included in column two. In order to complete stage two of the thematic analysis the researcher continued the process described above until all aspects of interest within the transcripts had been identified. Braun & Clarke (2006) identify that this process involves extracting the most basic element of data that is of interest to the analyst and can be evaluated in a meaningful way. This part of the process involves the production of initial codes from raw data.

Stage (3) - Forming Descriptive Comments

Having worked systematically through each transcript, having formed initial codes by identifying areas of interest within data and having listed the codes, as above, the researcher began the process of forming 'descriptive comments'. This process involves the researcher in reading each data extract, (aspect of interest), and creating an initial comment that aims to capture the essence of the participant's meaning. Horricks & King (2010) suggest that during this process researchers should avoid the temptation to speculate about what might lie behind a participant's account and stay close to the data. When considering each 'aspect of interest' and how each would be expressed as a 'descriptive comment' the researcher took account of the surrounding text. This measure aimed to ensure that the descriptive comments remained true to participants' accounts within the general context of the interviews from which data had been derived. Bryman (2001) suggests that the loss of context is a frequent criticism of coding and such losses occur because relevant data have been excluded.

Stage (4) - Descriptive Codes

This stage of the analysis involves the formation of descriptive codes derived from the descriptive comments created previously. Horricks & King (2010) recognise that descriptive codes do not have to include every part of the text and can be labelled using shortened words, phrases or abbreviations. As such, the descriptive comments were further refined in order to create descriptive codes which encapsulate the key message within data. The descriptive codes created by the researcher take the form of short statements that aim to capture the essence of the participant's account. This stage of the thematic analysis continued until all data were coded. Braun & Clarke (2006) recognise that at the end of this process a list of codes will have been produced that have been derived from across the entire data set.

Stage (5) – Naming Codes or Creating Analytical Codes

Braun & Clarke (2006) describe this process as 'naming' selections of text. For the purpose of this analysis, the researcher revisited the transcripts frequently in order to verify participants' meanings and to ensuring that significant data had not been omitted. Codes were frequently revised and some were deleted because they were deemed to be irrelevant in terms of the study's aims and the research questions. Miles & Huberman (1994) describe the process of coding as an integral part of data analysis. At this stage of the analysis the researcher allocated a short phrase to each descriptive code that aims to encapsulate its meaning. Braun & Clarke (2006) refer to such phrases or labels as 'names' and Horricks &

King (2010) identify them as ‘analytical codes’. This process resulted in an extensive list of descriptive codes aligned with their appropriate ‘name’ or ‘analytical code’.

Stage (6) – Collating Codes

At this stage of the analysis the researcher looked across the descriptive codes in order to identify those that seemed to share a common meaning. Subsequently, the descriptive codes were grouped together and given a ‘name’ or ‘analytical code’. According to Horricks & King (2010) analytical codes capture the meaning of a group of descriptive codes. Braun & Clarke (2006) assert that this part of the process requires the researcher to group the descriptive codes under a single heading that demonstrates that code. Essentially, the analytical code aims to capture the essence of the group of descriptive codes. The formation of descriptive and analytical codes, for the purpose of this analysis, was an iterative process that involved the researcher in redefining and collapsing codes as the analysis continued. Saldana (2009) recognises that the coding process is rarely completed on the first occasion and that researchers should refine codes by adding, subtracting or combining potential codes. At the end of this process the descriptive codes had been collated into various lists. Each lists had been allocated a heading, (name or analytical code), that captures the meaning of codes contained within it.

Stage (7) - Gathering Data Extracts

By this stage of the analysis lists of descriptive codes had been produced within their relevant ‘named’ headings or ‘analytical codes’. The following stage of the analysis included gathering data extracts and aligning them with the descriptive codes. Braun & Clarke (2006) recognise that this phase involves collating all data extracts within the identified themes. During this process the researcher considered whether data extracts appeared to form a coherent pattern or whether, or not, extracts belonged within another theme. Braun & Clarke (2006) advocate the use of theme piles whereby extracts can be organised into ‘themes’ or piles (p. 19). For the purpose of this analysis the researcher organised extracts in a similar way using a word processor. In the final stages of the analysis the researcher created a thematic map in order to illustrate the over-arching themes and sub-themes that had been identified through the analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that there must be sufficient data in order to support a theme. An exemplification of the above analysis, (stages 1 – 7), and

an exemplification of a thematic map developed for the purpose of this analysis can be found in (Appendix, I).

4.9 Reliability and Validity - Discussion

The following discussion examines the relationship between the concepts of reliability and validity and their relevance within case study research. The focus of the discussion then turns to alternative criteria employed within a case study in order to enable readers to evaluate its quality. The methods chosen for data collection and analysis, as discussed above, aim to support a case study approach selected for this enquiry. The quality of the research is an important consideration in relation to the data collection methods chosen and their use within this case study design. A case study approach has been criticised in terms of rigour in relation to issues of reliability, validity and generalisation. Some theorists argue that such concepts are largely irrelevant within a case study approach and within research that includes qualitative methods.

Reliability

Cohen et al. (2011) assert that the concept of reliability relates to the degree to which the results of research are replicable. Denzin & Lincoln (2011) recognise that if a study can be repeated by different researchers using the same methodology, and each study yields the same results, then the results can be considered to be reliable. Kirk & Miller (1986) recognise that the reliability of the research outcomes can be gauged according to the degree to which they are consistent over a given period of time. As such, the ability of the researcher to demonstrate reliability would seem to rely on any subsequent research being conducted under the same conditions as the original study. Only then would it be possible to achieve consistent results from repeated research. It is not the aim of the research methods chosen within this case study to generate replicable research outcomes. It could be argued that because of the contextually bound nature of a case study, as discussed in Chapter 3, criterion a), replication of the research results would be challenging.

Gagnon (2010) acknowledges that because of the uniqueness of a case study the exact replication of either the research setting or the outcomes would be unlikely. Le Compte et al. (1992) suggest that replicable research in social settings is implausible. This is because social contexts and the actors within them are not frozen in time but constantly changing. What this suggests is that similar, but not identical, results might be obtained if this study were to be

repeated in another secondary school and with different teachers. Treiman (2014) recognises that research that aims to produce replicable outcomes and, as such, demonstrates reliability aligns with the paradigm of positivism and with the production of quantitative data. The impetus for ensuring rigour in terms of reliability appears to emanate from a desire by positivists to claim that links exist between propositions made prior to the research and the actual outcomes. Golafshani (2003) recognises that quantitative data employed in order to support a positivist paradigm assumes objectivity and measurable relationships. The aim of this study, however, is to refine understandings of distributed leadership through the perspectives of teachers. In alignment with the philosophical framework selected for this study teachers' perspectives are considered to be subjective. As such, the perspectives of teachers who participated in the study cannot be viewed as replicable because they rely upon the constructs of each individual. Teachers' constructs are not considered to be amenable to measurement. The concept of reliability, in view of the above, did not appear congruent with the aims of this study or with an interpretivist paradigm chosen as the study's theoretical underpinning.

Validity

The concepts of reliability and validity, as noted above, are presented as criterion against which the rigour and quality of research is evaluated. Hammersely (2009) considers validity as an important criterion in the sense that an empirical account must be credible and plausible. Yin (2013) asserts that validity encompasses three strands - construct validity, internal validity and external validity. Construct validity is thought to relate to the aim of promoting convergence. This is achieved through the design of data collection methods and the use of multiple sources of data. Within this study one quantitative method and two qualitative methods were employed in order to encourage convergent lines of enquiry. However, Rowley (2002) identifies that the concept of construct validity is rooted within a positivist paradigm and that it aligns only with quantitative data collection methods. Creswell (2012) concurs, suggesting that construct validity relates to the process of establishing an adequate measure of a domain, trait or construct. Lissitz (2009) identifies that constructs or theoretical conceptions to be studied dictate the nature of data to be collected in order to validate test results or scores.

The notion of construct validity appears to imply the use of purely quantitative data, measures that aim to reduce subjectivity and standardised research processes and outcomes.

As such, the concept did not seem align with a constructivist ontology chosen as the conceptual basis for this study. Silverman (2014) asserts that constructivism raises questions over the value of data derived from standardised research approaches. The methods employed within this case study did not aim to measure constructs or to validate the researcher's predetermined theories. As such, the interests of this study appeared at odds with the notions of construct validity more associated with a positivist paradigm. At the commencement of this study there were no predetermined hypotheses or preconceptions in relation to teachers' perspectives of distributed leadership. A pilot study involving the use of a questionnaire introduced a quantitative element to this study's data collection process. However, as discussed earlier, the study is mainly qualitative in nature. Data collection methods are discussed in section 4.1, criterion e), above.

External Validity or Generalisation

Yin (2013) defines the concept of external validity as the extent to which findings can be generalised beyond the present study. Guba & Lincoln (1994) identify that generalisation concerns the issue of whether the findings will hold in a context that differs from that of the original study. However, some theorists question the relevance of the concept of external validity, (generalisation), for the purpose of interpretive enquiry that uses a case study approach. Gomm et al. (2000) suggest that generalisations are context free and, in relation to the outcomes of research, their value lies in their use in order to control and predict. Such notions seem to support a positivist paradigm and appear to be at odds with this case study enquiry that is bounded by its particular context.

The central notion in relation to external validity appears to be around attempts to limit variables and to control the contextual features of the research. It would be unlikely, as previously discussed, that the context in which this case study took place could be replicated exactly. A case study using identical methods to the original could be repeated in a different secondary school and with different teachers. However, it would be likely to yield similar but not identical findings. The contextual features of a case, as discussed in the previous chapter, serve to define the case. Stake (2006) recognises that a case study approach is not for the purpose of generalisation, but particularisation. In other words, as discussed within criterion a), the case is a 'singularity'. As such, the methods employed within this case study aim to derive insights into teachers' experiences and understandings in relation to distributed

leadership. The study's value, therefore, is in relation to the insights it offers rather than the ability to generalise beyond the study.

Merriam (1991) suggests that if 'understanding' is the principal rationale for an enquiry then the criteria for judging its quality will differ from those applied if testing a theory is the aim. Yin (2013) concurs, suggesting that the concept of external validity does not apply to descriptive or exploratory case studies because neither is concerned with causal situations. This case study enquiry is exploratory in the sense that it seeks to understand distributed leadership from teachers' perspectives. It is also descriptive in the sense that it seeks to provide a narrative in relation to those experiences. In alignment with the conceptual underpinnings of this study, as discussed in Chapter 3, the findings of this enquiry are concerned with the interpretation of meaning. In relation to rigour within a case study the above suggests that the concepts of 'external validity' or 'generalisation' are irrelevant.

Theorists have criticised the use of qualitative methods within case study enquiry in terms of their use of limited and unrepresentative samples. Bryman (2012) concludes that interpretative enquiry that uses qualitative methods and limited samples are problematic in terms of external validity. Khan (1999) supports the notion that outcomes from research that involves limited sample sizes cannot be generalised beyond the population represented within the sample. In addition, external validity, (generalisation), is decreased through the use of samples drawn from a restricted range because such samples are not representative of a homogenous population. The respondent rate achieved within this case study enquiry is 12.8 percent and such a low response rate is acknowledged as a limitation of this study. The researcher recognises that the study's results cannot be generalised beyond the population range represented within the group of respondents. Cohen et al. (2011) suggest that a case study is representative of itself and that its value is in the contribution it makes to the expansion of knowledge. As such, this case study and the methods it employs are concerned with illuminating the phenomenon of distributed leadership from teachers' perspectives. The insights gleaned could contribute to the wider body of knowledge in relation to how teachers' experience and understand distributed leadership and might inform practice.

The above discussion aims to illuminate tensions in relation to the applicability of the concepts of 'reliability' and 'validity' within interpretative enquiry. Gagnon (2010) acknowledges that validity and reliability are concepts that support a positivist paradigm and that neither can be addressed within interpretative or naturalistic research. Rowley (2002)

recognises that principal aim of both concepts within positivist enquiry is to structure quantitative methods of data collection and analysis in order to confirm or refute research propositions. It seems that decisions in relation to the relevance of 'reliability' and 'validity' within research could be based on the paradigm, the type of data sought through the data collection methods and the nature of the knowledge sought through the enquiry.

Le Compte et al. (1992) suggest that the quality of a case should be judged using a different set of criteria to those used in positivistic and experimental research. This study, as previously noted, includes mainly qualitative data collection methods and is underpinned by a constructivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology. Bowan (2009) suggests that studies framed within an interpretative paradigm should focus on quality criteria associated with 'trustworthiness'. Guba & Lincoln (1985) propose four constructs as a framework for ensuring trustworthiness - credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The following discussion considers the application of each of these criteria for the purposes of this case study.

4.10 Trustworthiness

Credibility

Guba & Lincoln (1985) identify that credibility is one of the most important criteria in relation to establishing the trustworthiness of the data and, as such, of the results. The concept of credibility appears to relate to the plausibility of the results. Merriam (2009) asserts that credibility concerns the extent to which the research results are congruent with reality. All meaningful realities and, therefore, the results gleaned from this study, rely upon the constructs developed by teachers within the context of a secondary school. Consensus amongst theorists suggests that the credibility of the research results relies upon the researcher's ability to accurately interpret and reflect participants' views. As such, in the conduct of this study the researcher seeks to ensure the credibility of the results in terms of their representativeness of teachers' perspectives. The section that follows discusses different aspects in relation to the criterion of 'credibility'. It also sets out the measures adopted within this study that aim to assist the reader in establishing the extent to which the study's results can be deemed to be credible.

Triangulation

According to Quinn Patton (2015) triangulation of data derived from different methods can increase the accuracy and 'credibility' of the results. Furthermore, triangulation can determine the strength of the evidence in support of a particular result. As such, the credibility of the results is heightened through convergence of data derived from different data collection methods. Within this study, as discussed in section 4.1, the data collection methods include a Likert-scale questionnaire, interviews and a focus group discussion. The process of cross-referencing data obtained through the use of each method enabled the researcher to identify convergent views, opinions and beliefs. Bowen (2009) suggests that measures that aim to ensure the credibility of the results should not only be considered 'post hoc'. Provisions to address credibility should be evident during the process of construction of the data collection methods. As such, the data collection methods employed within this study, (a Likert-scale questionnaire, an interview schedule and focus group prompts), were each constructed in three distinct sections. Each of the sections relates to one of the three main research questions used to guide this study. This structure seeks to generate comparable data with the aim of facilitating triangulation. Identification of areas of convergence across data sets assisted the researcher in heightening the accuracy and credibility of the results.

Denscombe (2014) suggests that the process of data triangulation affords an opportunity for the researcher to compare participants' individual viewpoints against those of their colleagues. The process of verifying a particular view against others constitutes a further means of triangulation. Struebert & Carpenter (2011) suggest that a rich picture of experiences, beliefs and attitudes can be constructed through the contributions of a range of people. Stake (2006) recognises that a case is considered as a 'singularity'. However, its sections, domains, groups and sub-sections have their own contexts that make a significant contribution to making relationships within the case understandable. This enquiry draws upon the perspectives of teachers who operate at different levels within a secondary school including classroom teachers, principal teachers, faculty heads and depute head teachers. As such, comparisons could be made between data obtained from teachers at different levels. Data derived from teachers at one level could be used to shed light on the beliefs, experiences and understandings of teachers operating at another. The researcher, through this process of comparing views across a range of participants, was able to assess the plausibility and 'credibility' of the results.

Prolonged Engagement

In order that the research area can be understood, as the participants understand it, Yakow & Schwartz-Shea (2014) advocate prolonged engagement between the researcher, the participants and the organisation. Section 4.4 above details the researcher's preliminary visits to the school and the preparation that took place for data collection. Further engagement with the participants during the different phases of data collection facilitated relationships and helped to establish trust. Anney (2014) suggests that the researcher's engagement with the research setting enhances credibility because dialogue becomes more spontaneous as relationships develop. Accurate interpretation of participants' views and the researcher's ability to reflect those views within the results are central to the concept of 'credibility'. Yanow & Schwartz-Shea (2014) recognise that the period of engagement in order to satisfy the criterion for 'credibility' is not definitive and it relies upon the researcher's judgement. This research study was conducted in a busy secondary school. As such, the availability of participants' time, the goodwill of teachers at all levels and the competing demands of the school were important considerations. Shenton (2004) warns that excessive demands on the part of the researcher could act to limit staff co-operation and the researcher's access to the organisation. Silverman (2014) recognises that extensive familiarisation with an organisation could limit the researcher's ability to remain impartial. Such factors, in turn, could influence the accuracy of the results. It was apparent that the secondary school in which the study took place functioned at a pace. This seemed to indicate that unrealistic demands might jeopardise the research from the outset. As such, the researcher decided that the level of contact with the school and its staff was sufficient for the interests of this study.

Member Checks

Koelsch (2013) describes member checks as a process whereby provisional data is subjected to the scrutiny of the participants who provided it. The application of this process within the study enabled participants to determine if the researcher had provided an accurate account of their views and experiences. Member checks were employed during and after each interview and on conclusion of a focus group discussion. Participants were invited to read sections of transcript in order to verify that their views had been accurately recorded. The use of member check aims to ensure that data are credible and provide an accurate reflection of participants' views. Guba & Lincoln (1985) recognise that member checks are one of the most important considerations in order to enhance the accuracy and credibility of data.

Transferability

The generalisability or external validity of the outcomes, as discussed above, appears as a key criterion for judging the quality of research that is viewed from a positivist stance. Bryman (2012) suggests that 'validity', as a criterion applied in order to judge the quality of research, applies only to data obtained through quantitative methods. The degree of similarity between the observed outcomes of research and the researcher's propositions appear as a measure of the 'validity' of the results. This case study, as discussed in section 4.1, uses a mixed-methods approach in which the weighting is attributed mainly to the qualitative methods of data collection. As such, the concept of 'validity' seems inappropriate for the purpose of judging the trustworthiness of mainly qualitative data. Guba & Lincoln (1985) assert that the concept of 'transferability' provides a suitable substitute.

Firestone (1993) recognises that 'transferability', as opposed to making broad generalizable claims, invites the reader to make connections between elements of the study and their own experience. The ability to generalise, as previously discussed, is not the aim of this study or of the chosen methods of data collection. Holloway (1997) suggests that 'transferability' relates to the degree to which readers are able to transfer the conclusions of a study to other similar situations. This, in turn, relies on adequate description of the research phenomenon. Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis provide a detailed account of this study with the aim of enabling the reader to compare its outcomes with their own experience. Theorists concur that the concept of 'transferability' relies on the researcher's ability to describe the research phenomenon, context and processes in sufficient detail for readers to determine whether the results could apply within a second context. As such, the aforementioned chapters provide a detailed account of this study's context, methods and processes. Lincoln & Guba (2013) emphasise that ultimately, decisions in relation to 'transfer' of the research and its results can only be made by readers of the study. The following considers the measures employed in order to ensure the 'dependability' of data derived from use of the chosen methods. Bassey (2000) alludes to the concept of 'dependability' in terms of the researcher's ability to "relate the argument or story to the relevant research in the literature, convey convincingly to an audience this argument or story, provide an audit trail by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings, or construct alternative arguments" (Criterion g, p. 58).

Dependibility

The concept of 'dependability' relates to the dependability of data, and therefore, of the study's results. Theorists identify that 'dependability' has two main strands. In relation to the

first, Guba & Lincoln (1985) assert that dependability is achieved through triangulation of overlapping methods. In this respect the concept of 'dependability' is reflective of 'credibility' in that both concepts relate to ascertaining the accuracy of the results. The measures employed within this study in order to triangulate data derived from the use of each of the chosen methods are discussed above. In addition, the above section discusses the framework used, (exploratory, enhancement and confirmatory phases), in order to facilitate triangulation of data.

In relation to the second strand of 'dependability', Padgett (2016) suggests that providing an audit trail that details the process of transcription to the production of data enables the results to be seen as dependable. As such, the processes employed within this study for the purposes of collecting, transcribing and analysing data are discussed in detail within this chapter. Hoepfl (1997) recognises that an audit trail can be useful in order to examine the research process and the plausibility of the results. Golafshani (2003) identifies that the criterion of 'dependability' closely relates to the concept of 'reliability' in positivist enquiry. Shenton (2004) asserts that it relates to the extent to which other researchers are able to repeat the research, if not necessarily to gain the same results. However, as discussed at the beginning of this section, it is not the purpose of this case study or the methods it employs to produce replicable research outcomes.

Guba & Lincoln (1985) suggest further measures that enable the reader to establish the 'dependability' of data and, therefore, of the results. Some of the researcher's decisions in relation to this study were based upon feedback from supervisors during the development of data collection methods used within the study. At the commencement of this chapter the researcher's value position in relation to the research is acknowledged. Guba & Lincoln (1985) suggest that such measures assist in enabling readers to evaluate the extent to which the study's results can be construed as 'dependable'. In respect of the above, this chapter has focused on decisions made by the researcher in terms of the construction and use of data collection methods for the purpose of operationalising the study. The following discusses the concept of 'confirmability' in relation to the results.

Confirmability

Riazi (2016) asserts that the criterion of 'confirmability', in relation to qualitative data, equates to 'objectivity' in positivist research involving quantitative data. Atkinson et al. (2003) recognise that 'confirmability', in relation to judgements about the adequacy of the

research, substitutes interpretative judgements in preference to objectivist accounts often based on decontextualised criteria. Daymon & Holloway (2010) suggest that in order to meet the criterion of 'confirmability' there must be evidence to demonstrate that data are clearly linked to their sources. As such, the goal of confirmability does not seem to be concerned with replicability of the results. According to Rodwell (1998) its aim is to enable the reader to assess the 'reasonableness' of the insights and the logic of the results that evolve from data.

'Confirmability', as it relates to this study, concerns the measures adopted in order to demonstrate that the research results can be attributed directly to data obtained from the participants. Within this study the process of triangulating data sources, as previously discussed, aims to affirm participants' data and reduce the potential influence of researcher bias within the results. During the conduct of this study participants were invited to review their data in order to ensure that their voices, as opposed to the researcher's, were reflected in the results. The above process has been described earlier within this section by Koelsch (2013) as 'member checks'. The use of principles proposed by Plano Clark et al. (2008), as discussed in section 4.1, aims to utilise one data set to confirm another. For example, this study used a 'confirmatory' focus group discussion in order to ascertain data derived previously from the use of a Likert-scale questionnaire and interviews.

Silverman (2014) suggests that 'confirmability' can be demonstrated when the research is shown to be free from bias in respect of data collection procedures, data analysis and in the interpretation of the results. This chapter has sought to make the aforementioned processes transparent to the reader. Section 4.1, criterion e), acknowledges the limitations of this study in terms of the methods adopted within a case study approach. Creswell (2015) recognises that researcher bias can influence the research results only if such biases are not made explicit. As such, in section 4.3 above, the researcher's value position in relation to the focus of this research is acknowledged. This process aims to ensure that readers of the results of this study can relate them to the participants. Kiraly (2014) suggests a 'confirmability audit trail' can coincide with a 'dependability' audit. As such, the processes adopted within this study in support of the criterion for 'dependability' have been discussed in the above. Section 4.5 seeks to make the process of data analysis explicit so as to enable the reader to trace the results back to participants' data.

This chapter has discussed the elements considered in conducting this enquiry and the methods used for data collection and analysis. It has sought to provide a detailed account of

the research processes adopted in terms of the preparation for the research, the collection of data, the analysis of data and the quality measured employed. Section 4.6 above has discussed some of the issues cited by Bassey (1999) in relation to the 'trustworthiness' of data and, as such, of the research results. In addition, he recognises the need "to create plausible interpretations of what is found, test for trustworthiness of those interpretations and construct a worthwhile argument or story" (criterion f, p. 58). The following chapter present the results derived from the use of the study's main data collection methods.

Chapter (5) - Results Chapter

5.1 Introduction

Although a questionnaire is used for the exploratory phase of this research, as discussed within the Methods Chapter, it has a lesser role than the qualitative methods. A questionnaire, as previously noted, takes the form of a pilot study and should be seen in this context. Largely, this chapter sets out the results of this study in relation to interviews and a focus group discussion. However, section 6.2 of the Analysis Chapter discusses the similarities and differences in data sourced from use of each of the methods including the questionnaire. Further details relating to the results of the pilot study can be found in (Appendix, K). Throughout the chapter, with the exception of data derived from the pilot study, quotes serve to illustrate the results. Within the following abbreviations denote teachers at different levels. For example, middle leader (ML), classroom teacher (CT) and depute head teacher (DH). Numbers have been allocated in order to represent different individuals who operate at the same level.

5.2 Results Derived from Interviews

5.2.1 Results Derived from Interviews which are Supported by those Derived from a Focus Group Discussion

Teachers at all levels talked about a role, the Project Leader (PL) role, that had been introduced into the school by senior management in order to enable teachers to experience formal leadership of a whole-school project for the duration of one year. Other ways in which teachers experience leadership within the school include: assisting a PL in their role; participation in a working group; joining a focused group activity or short-term working group; in-service days; comic relief or fair trade events. The results suggest that when teachers exercise leadership, even of more minor activities such as those noted above, they can feel motivated to seek out other opportunities. This result suggests that, to some extent, the opportunities to exercise leadership can derive from teachers themselves. However, there is a strong sense throughout the remaining results that teachers' opportunities to exercise leadership emanate from the head teacher and SMT and "if you want to take the opportunities they will create them for you" (ML3). Teachers at all levels indicate that such opportunities

are made available to everyone in the school including senior leaders, middle leaders and classroom teachers.

The results reveal a number of consequences in terms of teachers' involvement in leadership which include: innovation that emanates from projects teachers lead upon; learning that occurs through teachers taking responsibility for leadership; recognition gained by certain teachers for their specialised knowledge or skills; personal and professional development; increased confidence in abilities; the acquisition of new skills and extension of existing ones by "being able to lead something that is beyond the curriculum" (CT1). Through their involvement in leadership teachers at different levels appear to have gained a more sophisticated understanding of "what the school is like" (ML2), its "systems and procedures" (CT2) and the roles of senior leaders in terms of "what it's like to have to make decisions" (ML4).

The results reveal some positive changes that have occurred within the school as a consequence of teachers becoming involved in exercising leadership. Some of the advantages teachers talked about include making a difference through contributing something new, the results of successful projects being rolled out school-wide, school improvement through teachers' leadership that builds capacity and instigates improvement for pupils and projects taken forward by staff that have implications for use within the classroom. "You can visibly see differences because things are happening within the school" (ML1).

Throughout the results teachers at all levels reiterate that improvements for pupils of the school are the principal impetus behind actions in relation to teachers' leadership, learning and development. "There is a big thing in the school about trying to make things better and to improve" (ML3) and "improvements are for young people" (DH1). Although data suggests that there is flexibility in terms of what teachers choose to lead upon, there is a strong sense that what pupils experience within the school is the primary focus. Projects led by teachers appear to be channelled towards specific improvements. It is clear from the results that teachers can offer suggestions for projects they might wish to lead upon. However, the likelihood of such suggestions being accepted by senior leaders appears to hinge upon the probable benefits for pupils that might be derived. If the head teacher believes that "the task is of benefit to the young people of our school she will run with it and evaluate it at the end" (CT1).

The results show that teachers at all levels perceive the school's Continued Professional Development and Performance Development Review (CPD/PDR) systems as a vehicle for teachers' leadership and development which, in turn, are construed as mechanisms for driving school improvement. Teachers appear to perceive the CPD/PDR systems, their leadership, and school improvement as a cyclical process. The results suggest that there is a perceived correlation between the number of teacher-led projects and the breadth of opportunities and experiences afforded to pupils. Teachers appear to believe that their development, as a consequence of exercising leadership, is an objective of the head teacher and SMT. It seems that through the CPD/PDR systems teachers feel challenged to do more. Teachers appear to construe that these systems are used as a means of harnessing their efforts. CTs perceive such systems as mechanisms for "the distribution of additional responsibility at direction of head teacher and SMT" and "distribution of additional responsibility… as actions or focuses for Professional Update" (CT2). From these results it seems that the CPD/PDR systems are being used in order to encourage teachers to maximise their contribution to the school whilst simultaneously enhancing their personal/professional development, their skills and, as such, their confidence in their abilities.

There is a belief amongst teachers that senior leaders aim for them to exercise leadership for the purposes of: accomplishing more; enabling teachers to extend their skills and creating an "impact upon the pupils of the school" (ML1); fostering teachers' participation in leadership; encouraging teachers to take on more responsibility; having teachers within the school who are able to lead; having teachers who can "lead in a way that engages others" (DH2) and having teachers who can contribute toward the vision and direction of the school.

Some teachers talked about the school's values of "honesty" (DH2) and "positive relationships" (DH1). Others associated leadership with collegiality and inclusion. A few teachers mention inclusion and take the view that staff and pupils should feel included. "There is an understanding that we all have a role to play and are part of the bigger school moving forward" (ML3). It had been noted that, as opposed to working in isolation, the approach in the school is collegial and teachers work as a team. Teachers at all levels were keen to emphasise that individuals who do not exercise leadership beyond their classrooms or who do not assume additional responsibility are "seen as leaders" (ML1) because they are "responsible for how they lead their classes" (ML4) and the "majority have some sort of role in their department" (ML3).

5.2.2 Results Derived from Interviews which are not Comparable with those Derived from a Questionnaire and from a Focus Group Discussion

In relation to the above results it had been observed that the nature of collegiality "is less strong…it just depends on the members of staff you are working with" (ML1). This result echoes those derived from a questionnaire. Although 'collegiality' had been mentioned within a focus group discussion, the detail above only emerged within interviews. The following results, as noted above, emanate only from the interviews.

These results from interviews indicate that teachers associate leadership with changes in the roles and responsibilities of the SMT. Teachers at all levels seem to be aware that the roles of senior leaders within the school have changed over recent years. The responsibilities of the head teacher and senior leaders appear to have broadened. There has been "a widening of the responsibilities of senior staff" (DH2) and "significant changes to SMT" (CT2). Some of the changes teachers perceive include faculty leaders who are not necessarily subject specialists, teachers construed as 'agents of change', teachers being required to exercise leadership of a range of activities and changes within the school that are "based on the outcomes of the different activities" (DH2).

It seems clear from these results that leadership by a wider range of staff, and over an increased number of activities, is construed as a means of meeting the demands of the school. Progress within the school is predicated upon the outcomes of projects led by numerous members of staff and "changes have been driven by people leading on different things" (CT1). Although the results seem to suggest that the impetus for the distribution of leadership has emanated from changes in the school's management structure, it seems that "these arrangements were not brought in specifically as part of distributed leadership" but rather, "it's a consequence of funding that practitioners have been left to lead" (DH1). There is an acknowledgement amongst senior staff that their efforts alone cannot meet the aims of the school and "if it was relying on people in established management posts… things would be slower…we can't do everything ourselves" (DH2).

Through a formal interview process teachers can be selected for a (PL) role. Such roles appear to enable teachers to exercise leadership beyond their role as a classroom teacher, principal teacher or faculty head teacher. A number of projects are led by different individuals and, as one middle leader put it, "being the project leader I was in charge of 'nurture' for the whole school" (ML3). PL roles appear to have evolved from inter-

disciplinary projects that had previously been part of the work of the school. Such roles appear, at one time, to have attracted funding. However, "as the finance has dwindled…people have still been volunteering" (ML2). It would seem from the results that the PL role instigated by senior leaders has become integral to the work of the school. It appears to have acted, to some extent, as an impetus for leadership that emanates from un-promoted teachers because "when people hear about someone's experience… it can be bottom-up…people start looking for their own opportunities" (ML2).

The results show that some teachers perceive that innovation derives as a consequence of initiatives that are led by someone who would not normally exercise leadership. It appears that different staff members bring a new dimension or fresh perspective to certain areas of work within the school. "Different people are introducing new findings" and "because classroom teachers haven't had opportunities to deliver something it looks different" (ML1). Some teachers appear to construe leadership as an aid to their advancement in that "it separates you from your competitors" (ML3). Others perceive that their involvement in leadership has enabled them to exert influence over the direction of projects and "shape the outcomes" (ML4), "experience whole-school leadership" (ML3) and "work with and share ideas with colleagues I would not see otherwise" (CT2).

Teachers talked about the support and encouragement provided by leaders at all levels for those who wish to exercise leadership. "Line managers at every level…look to find a pool of opportunities for those staff to be able to progress their development plan" (DH1). It is clear that those who show willingness to take on additional responsibility for exercising leadership are encouraged and supported. Teachers talked about a perception that "there is possibly more pressure put on CTs in here" (ML3) and that teachers, in general, are under more pressure from senior leaders to take responsibility for initiatives beyond the scope of their classrooms. It seems clear from the results that the head teacher and SMT aim for teachers to work beyond the scope of their classroom teaching, work outside the boundaries of their curriculum and subject-based training and, through the PL role, exercise formal leadership that encompasses the entire school. The results indicate that some teachers value the opportunity to "do something that is over and above your normal classroom teaching" (CT1). Challenges to teachers' leadership appear to come in the shape of resource limitations which create "barriers 'top-down' in terms of offering opportunities" (ML1).

Despite the positive ways in which leadership is depicted, it is evident within these results that not all teachers share the same views. "You can't say that everyone takes part in leadership" (ML3). It is noted that some teachers may not feel at ease with the prospect of engaging in leadership and others have no desire to work outside the boundaries of their classrooms or their respective departments. Amongst the concerns raised in relation exercising leadership teachers cited: a lack of desire to engage in leadership; health issues; family issues; personality traits incongruent with leadership; a desire to focus on their classroom teaching; their lack of ambition to become a senior leader; a lack of desire to advance within the school and a lack of desire to take on a challenge. One middle leader emphasises that teachers who lack willingness to engage in leadership do not do so because of incompetence, they simply had "no desire" (ML4).

Some of the results reveal further insights into the reasons why some teachers may be averse to involving themselves in leading a project. Teachers' reservations appear to centre upon the challenges of leadership in terms of having to engage others and having to prioritise the work involved in exercising leadership with the demands of their job roles. In relation to engaging others in a project one ML observes that "not everyone buys into it…so you've got that experience of trying to sell it" (ML3). Some of those who have experienced leadership of a project conclude that it involves a considerable extension of their skills in terms of enjoining unfamiliar members of staff and gaining their support for the project. Another ML notes that "having to step up and talk to people… that puts some people off" (ML2). Others cite competing demands as their principal concern.

It is clear within these results that some teachers have undertaken the leadership of a project. However, their experiences appear to have offered insights that seem influential in terms of any future endeavours. Some of the results show that teachers' experiences of leadership have included negotiating between the competing demands of exercising leadership whilst simultaneously coping with the delivery of their classes, finding a way of transitioning between their leadership duties, which some find intense, to then reverting back to the role of class teacher and finding ways to cope simultaneously with class delivery, project leadership and innovations that are incumbent upon the whole school such as, the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. The above factors have led some to question why teachers would "put themselves through that" (ML3). One ML observes that "we're all on the edge with work here" (ML4).

The results appear to indicate the challenges some teachers construe in relation to exercising leadership. It has been observed that when the work load of the entire school staff is increased, for example, as a consequence of implementing a government policy initiative or when teachers are asked to assist with extra-curricular activities, teachers refrain from involving themselves in leadership and "nobody offers and so, when you apply that mentality to leadership you can understand why some people hold back" (ML4). Other results indicate that some teachers believe that their efforts in relation to leadership have gone unacknowledged, more equitable and proportionate allocation of leadership responsibilities is required, teachers require a greater allocation of time and, or, remuneration in order to exercise leadership alongside their other duties. One classroom teacher suggests that "leadership responsibility must be distributed equally or the more dedicated and hardworking teachers will continue to carry an unequal share of the burden" (CT2). In relation to the opportunities afforded to teachers in order to exercise leadership, one ML observes that "they don't have to…in-fact I would go as far as to say nobody would complain if they didn't" (ML2).

Teachers' views in relation to leadership, as the results imply, seem to be wide-ranging. Whilst the actions of the head teacher and senior staff seem to have facilitated teachers' engagement in leadership other factors may also have provided an impetus. The termination of the Chartered Teacher Scheme (CTS) appears to have caused some teachers to reconsider their future within the school and their development. Prior to the closure of the CTS, as these results indicate, some teachers had considered their future to be solely within the classroom. It appears that the removal of the CTS has been an unsettling experience for a number of teachers and many of the staff "thought…I want to stay in the classroom…if I don't do something I will plateau for the next 30 years" (ML2). It seems clear that some teachers perceive the role of classroom teacher as their current and future career path. The results also indicate that it is the preference of some teachers to remain within their classrooms and within their respective departments. The removal of the CTS is seen by some teachers to have closed off such options. Although it is clear that not all teachers have a positive view of leadership, a few noted that the opportunities provided for them in order to exercise leadership "avoids people from being stagnant" (ML1) and that failure to engage may "be detrimental for their future" (ML2).

As discussed near the beginning of this section, the above results are exclusive to the interviews. Interviews were selected as a suitable method within this case study on the basis

that they provide a private setting and an opportunity to obtain rich data. It is clear that such a setting has yielded results that differ from those obtained through the use of a questionnaire or focus group discussion. The following results derive from a focus group discussion and, with the exception of those above, largely reflect the results obtained through interviews.

5.3 Results Derived from a Focus Group Discussion

The results show that some teachers associate leadership in the school with their own learning, the learning of the staff as a whole, advantages for pupils of the school and, in turn, improvements within the school for example, "people can learn from their experience of different projects" (CT1) and "the improvements help the staff, the school and the young people" (ML4). Teachers often refer to projects led by themselves and others, how their personal development has been enhanced in the process and how the outcomes of such projects have been utilised within the school. "I've learned about … my own strengths…and people in other parts of the school" (CT3).

Teachers talked about the different ways in which staff can lead in the school and pointed out that participation in leadership is voluntary. The results indicate that "different activities throughout the year encourage people to take on responsibility" (ML4) and a range of opportunities exist. Teachers lead can lead upon: a role within their respective departments; in-service days; short-term working groups; development of teaching practice; curricular development or a PL role (formal leadership of a whole-school project).

Teachers talked about a few of the processes that have been influential in their engagement in exercising leadership. "People can volunteer to take responsibility for a project" (CT1) or "have one assigned to them" (CT3). "Some of the opportunities are offered to staff" (DH1). The results reveal a perceived link between teachers' opportunities to exercise leadership and the school's CPD and PRD systems. Teachers, as part of their CPD/PDR process, are encouraged to put forward ideas for projects upon which they would like to exercise leadership. As such, the CPD/PRD processes act as catalysts for teachers' leadership within the school and teachers "can be doing project as part of their CPD" (ML1).

It is clear from the results that teachers' leadership is encouraged and supported by the head teacher and the SMT. Although teachers seem to construe their involvement in leadership as voluntary, it is evident from these results that "the head teacher sets out the priorities and that translates into different activities that bring about improvements" (ML4) and, as such, the

school's priorities are the chief determinant of what is led. Teachers identify a collegial approach and inclusivity as being characteristic of the school's ethos. However, these results suggest that teachers associate such values with a general movement within the school towards increased distribution of leadership. In relation to distributed leadership DH1 recognises that "I think that's been helped along by being inclusive… opportunities for everyone".

Throughout the focus group discussion the views teachers expressed appeared to be supported by others within the group. It is clear that many of the results obtained from the focus group discussion confirm those yielded through the interviews. However, it is of note that interviews yielded significantly greater and more detailed results than the focus group discussion. It is perhaps unsurprising that teachers feel less inclined to elaborate upon certain views in an open forum such as a focus group discussion. The following chapter discusses the themes that arose from this study and the relationship between the themes.

Chapter (6) - Analysis Chapter

6.1 Introduction

Within the previous chapter the results of the data sources were set out and the principal similarities and differences in relation to data derived from them were discussed. This chapter builds upon chapter five by demonstrating how, utilising the results of the data sets, the researcher arrived at the over-arching themes. This chapter also builds upon the Methods Chapter which provides a detailed account of data analysis. Within this chapter the themes and their sub-themes are set out in terms of how each theme appears, how the theme is demonstrated in relation to each data source, the number of contributors to a particular view that derive from interviews and a focus group discussion and the extent to which themes can be supported by the available data extracts. A proportion of data resulting from a pilot study using a questionnaire aligns with data derived from interviews and a focus group discussion. The paragraph that follows discusses these issues more fully. Similarly, theme five was identified purely through thematic analysis of interview data. It is unlikely, given the nature of this theme, (Teachers' reservations in relation to exercising leadership), that the theme itself or its supporting data would have been revealed through the use of a questionnaire or in the open forum of a focus group discussion. However, theme five and its sub-themes are considered to be important outcomes of this study.

6.2 Analysis – Taking Account of Disparities in Data

Although there are many examples across data sets where the ideas, views and thoughts of teachers intersect, there are also a few instances in which data obtained through one source does not directly accord with that derived through the others. In particular, data derived from a pilot study using a questionnaire contained some elements that did not directly correspond with those obtained through the interviews or a focus group discussion. The purpose of this section is to explore such data and the ways in which it is accommodated within the analysis. In addition, this discussion examines the reasons why data derived from other sources differs from those derived from the use of the questionnaire.

Firstly, it should be noted that the statements contained within the questionnaire, to which teachers were asked to respond, are based upon themes that commonly appear within the literature on distributed leadership. As discussed in section 6.3, there are a number of

instances whereby data obtained from the use of the questionnaire correspond with those obtained through interviews and a focus group discussion. For example, in support of the sub-theme 'leadership as responsibility', data derived from a questionnaire shows that all classroom teachers and middle leaders construe distributed leadership as a way of spreading responsibility for tasks more widely across the school. As such, these data are used within the analysis to support data of a similar nature that emanates from the other two sources (interviews and a focus group discussion).

Therefore, data derived from the use of a questionnaire, to an extent, is deemed to affirm those derived from other methods in support of particular sub-themes or themes. Within this analysis other questionnaire data is accommodated in a similar way to the above. There are also data derived from the use of a questionnaire that can be compared directly to similar data obtained from the use of other methods. For example, the sub-theme, 'the school's change ethos' is supported by multiple data extracts derived from interviews. This sub-theme is also supported by questionnaire data that shows consensus across staff at all levels in relation to the notion that teachers are autonomous and have the power to make changes.

Clearly, there are some data derived from interviews and a focus group discussion that bear no correlation to data derived from the pilot study using a questionnaire. As discussed within the Methods Chapter, questionnaires are useful in order to elicit 'what' respondents might think in relation to particular areas of interest within the study. However, their scope is limited in terms of illuminating the reasons 'why' people hold particular beliefs or the circumstances that may have led such views. Additionally, they offer no face-to-face interaction and no opportunity to explore issues in-depth. For example, the sub-theme 'progress and development review' (PDR) is an issue that arose during interviews in response to interview prompts that are designed to garner further detail and enhance data obtained from the use of a questionnaire. The ability to achieve data in relation to the school's use of the PDR system in order to galvanise leadership throughout the school is beyond the scope of a questionnaire. As discussed within the Methods Chapter, interviews are utilised within this study as an 'enhancement phase'. In other words, in order to enrich data derived from a pilot study using an 'exploratory' questionnaire.

6.3 Themes and Sub-themes

Responses to interviews and a focus group discussion were analysed using an inductive thematic analysis process described by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Firstly, data were scrutinised

in order to identify meaningful elements of transcript relevant to the research area. Secondly, the elements of transcript were coded - (descriptive codes). Thirdly, descriptive codes, (coded elements of transcript dealing with the similar issues), were grouped together and 'named' (Braun & Clarke, 2006) or grouped into 'analytical codes' (Horricks & King, 2010) and were assigned provisional definitions. Braun & Clarke (2006) define inductive thematic analysis as a process of coding data without attempting to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame. As such, the form of thematic analysis employed within this study is data driven. The 'names' allocated or 'analytical codes' were used to inform the sub-themes. This process culminated in a lengthy list of codes. Analysis at the level of coding was accomplished by sorting the codes into their various different groupings under their 'names' or 'analytical codes'.

The analysis progressed by aligning the codes with the relevant data extracts. Data were systematically reviewed in order to ensure that a name, definition, and exhaustive set of data extracts to support each theme were identified. According to Braun & Clarke (2006) one of the principal criteria used in order to establish the existence of a theme is whether, or not, there are sufficient data extracts to support the theme. At this stage it was possible to establish whether, or not, a theme could be supported through the analysis. The above process is set out within the Methods Chapter and is exemplified in (Appendix, I). Through inductive thematic analysis five key themes were identified:

1) facilitated leadership;

2) drivers of distributed leadership;

3) what distributed leadership affords;

4) how teachers exercise leadership and

5) reservations in relation to exercising leadership.

Each of the five themes and their sub-themes were identified using the process detailed above. The following discussion of each theme is preceded by a chart intended to exemplify that theme and its sub-themes. Abbreviations and numbers used within the previous chapter to denote teachers at different levels have also been used throughout the following. The abbreviation (Int) has been used to identify quotes derived from interviews and the abbreviation (Fg) denotes those derived from a focus group discussion.

Theme 1 - Facilitated leadership

Sub-themes

↓ Leadership as responsibility	↓ Leadership opportunities	↓ Support for leadership

Data shows that teachers perceive that their leadership is facilitated because they are encouraged by the senior management team (SMT) to take on additional responsibility. Teachers' leadership is facilitated by the opportunities for them to exercise leadership which are provided by the SMT and the ways in which the SMT supports their leadership. The following explains each of these factors which also constitute sub-themes.

Sub-theme - Leadership as Responsibility

Data derived from a questionnaire used as a pilot study shows that all classroom teachers and middle leaders construe distributed leadership as a way of spreading responsibility for tasks more widely across the school. Such data is reinforced by numerous data extracts derived across interviews, (forty one), and from a range of teachers at different levels, (CT1, CT2, ML1, ML2, ML3, ML4, DH1 and DH2). The above data is corroborated by six data extracts from (CT1, CT3, ML1 and ML2) derived from a focus group discussion. For example, "teachers assuming more responsibility is seen as empowering them to deliver the school's vision" (ML1 - Int) and "the teacher is responsible for delivery of the project they have chosen to lead" (CT3 - Fg). As such, analysis of interview and focus group data shows that teachers at all levels construe leadership as 'responsibility' that is given to teachers by the SMT or that is assumed by teachers. It is evident that the sub-theme 'leadership as responsibility' is supported by data from all sources.

Sub-theme - Leadership Opportunities

The notion that SMT are instrumental in creating opportunities for teachers at all levels to exercise leadership is a common strand within data. Data shows that teachers' leadership within the school has been facilitated by the intervention of the head teacher and the SMT in terms of creating opportunities for them to exercise leadership. Data derived from a questionnaire supports the sub-theme 'leadership opportunities' in that, with the exception of three middle leaders, all teachers believe that the opportunities afforded to them in order to exercise leadership makes them think of themselves as 'leaders'. This sub-theme is reinforced through interview data in that teachers at the levels of (CT1, CT2, ML1, ML2, ML3 and

DH1) raised the issue of 'opportunities to exercise leadership' thirty seven times and those at the levels of (ML3 and DH1) raised it again on eight occasions during a focus group discussion. For example, "Opportunities to exercise leadership are made available by SMT for any member of staff" (Int) and "some of the opportunities to exercise leadership are offered to teachers by SMT" (Fg).

Sub-theme - Support for Leadership

Whilst the previous sub-theme focuses on the ways in which the SMT have created opportunities for teachers to exercise leadership, this sub-theme relates to the ways in which teachers' leadership has been encouraged and supported by the head teacher and the SMT. Although no direct comparisons can be made between data arising from a questionnaire, all teachers, as stated above, with the exception of three middle leaders, responded favourably to the statement "opportunities to exercise leadership make me think of myself as a leader". As such, data derived from a questionnaire supports the above sub-theme. The sub-theme 'support for leadership' is corroborated by data that occurs frequently across interviews and a focus group discussion and from teachers at all levels. For example, there are twenty five data extracts that support this sub-theme across interviews and that emanate from teachers at different levels (CT1, CT2, ML1, ML2, ML3, ML4, DH1 and DH2). Similarly, data derived from a focus group discussion that reflects this sub-theme occurs on twelve occasions and emanates from (CT1, ML4 and DH1). It is clear from the above that the sub-theme 'support for leadership' is identified within, and supported by, all data sources.

Theme 2 - Drivers of Distributed Leadership

Sub-themes

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

The school's 'change' ethos	Progress & development review	The project leader role	Narrowing of options	A self-sustaining system

The above sub-themes and all others were not immediately apparent from the analysis. Frequent and repetitive revision of codes and their matching data extracts eventually led to identification of the sub-themes above and others discussed within this chapter. As the analysis developed it became clear that particular views had been expressed by a range of different teachers multiple times and across different data sets. At a certain point in the

analysis the groupings of data extracts relevant to the above sub-themes appeared amongst a number of other such groupings in relation to various other topics. Through a process of reviewing the groupings of data extracts it was possible for the researcher to identify that certain groupings shared a common meaning and, as such, cohered into a theme. From the analysis it became apparent that a number of factors act as catalysts for leadership distribution within the school. Such factors as the school's 'change' ethos, progress and development review (PDR), the project leader role (PL), narrowing of options and a self-sustaining system were identified through the process of organising data extracts of a similar nature into groups.

Sub-theme - Progress & Development Review

Data shows that initiatives teachers bring to the PDR become a focus for projects that some teachers go on to lead upon. As such, the PDR has fuelled the distribution of leadership. As a driver of distributed leadership, the PDR is mentioned seventeen times in interviews and by teachers at different levels including (CT1, CT2, ML1, ML4, DH1 and DH2) and on six occasions by two teachers within a focus group discussion including (CT1 and ML1). Data extracts derived from interviews show that "actions from professional up-date are used for the distribution of additional responsibility" (CT2 - Int). "Projects led by teachers as continued professional development (CPD) are normally derived from their PRD" (ML1 - Fg).

Sub-theme – The school's 'Change' Ethos

Although no data extracts were revealed through a focus group discussion in relation to the school's 'change' ethos, as a sub-theme, it is considered to be significant because of it arises thirty four times within interview data derived from teachers at different levels including (CT1, CT2, ML1, ML2, DH1 and DH2). For example, "change is driven by numerous staff exercising leadership" (DH1- Int) and "change is promoted as a consequence of teachers exercising leadership for a range of projects" (CT1 - Int). This sub-theme is supported by data derived from a questionnaire that shows consensus across staff at all levels in relation to the notion that teachers are, to some extent, autonomous and have the power to make changes. It is clear from data obtained from all sources that teachers' associate distributed leadership with 'change' and with the forward movement of the school.

Sub-theme - A self-sustaining System

It is clear that when some teachers hear of, or witness, what their colleagues have achieved through exercising leadership they feel inspired to seek opportunities of their own. In turn, the outcomes of projects led by teachers can have a sustained impact upon the work of the school. In other words, teachers who undertake a leadership project can, whether it is their intention or not, have an influence on others. Data extracts indicative of the sub-theme, 'a self-sustaining system', arise fourteen times across interviews (CT1, ML1, ML2 and DH1). This sub-theme is also supported in terms of data extracts totalling five that derive from a focus group discussion (CT1, CT3 and ML4). For example, "when teachers see others exercising leadership they feel inspired to do the same" (ML1 - Int). "What is derived from different projects can be put to use within the classroom" (CT3 - Fg). What these data show is that, to some extent, leadership can be self-perpetuating. It should be noted that the subject matter of this sub-theme may pertain to this school only. No comparable data in relation to this sub-theme arises from the use of a questionnaire.

Sub-theme – The Project Leader Role

Data shows that, as a driver of distributed leadership, the PL role has been significant. This role has been designed and implemented by the head teacher and the SMT within the school with a view to spreading responsibility for leadership. Through analysis of interview and focus group data it is identified that data extracts in relation to the PL role occur multiple times across data sets. The PL role is identified as a sub-theme because nineteen data extracts of similar meaning in relation to it are evident across interviews (CT2, ML1, ML2, ML3, DH1 and DH2). For example, "the project leader role is an example of an opportunity SMT have created in order to enable teachers to exercise leadership" (DH1 -Int). Five data extracts which pertain to the PL role were derived from a focus group discussion and these reflect the views of teachers at the level of 'middle leader' (ML1, ML2 and ML4). For example, "exercising leadership of a project leader role affords an opportunity for teachers to experience formal leadership, school-wide" (ML4). As noted in relation to the previous sub-theme, the PL role may be particular to this school. No comparable data arises from a pilot study using a questionnaire. The questionnaire, as previously noted, is limited in terms of its scope in relation to obtaining detailed data. This circumstance also applies to the following sub-theme.

Sub-theme - Narrowing of Options

Although no data extracts were identified in relation to 'narrowing of options' through a focus group discussion, data in support of this sub-theme arises on seven occasions across interviews and is derived from teachers at the levels of (CT1, ML1 and ML2). The 'narrowing of options' is considered as a sub-theme because, from the perspectives of teachers, it is significant in relation to their engagement in leadership. For example, "I thought of my future as being in the classroom – then the Chartered Teacher Scheme (CTS) was removed" (ML4). What these data show is that teachers' involvement in leadership has, to a significant extent, been galvanised by the removal of the CTS as an option for their future development and job role which has led "teachers to consider that failure to volunteer for projects …could adversely affect their future" (ML2). The following discusses 'drivers of distributed leadership' as an over-arching theme.

Drivers of Distributed Leadership

Foster & Parker (1995) assert that thematic analysis is a deliberate and self-consciously artful creation by the researcher. Because each of the above sub-themes identified through this analysis relate to factors that provide an impetus for leadership, together, they point to the over-arching theme of 'drivers of distributed leadership'. Data shows that the school's 'change' ethos, the progress and development review and the PL role are measures taken by the head teacher and the SMT in order to promote teachers' leadership within the school. The sub-theme, 'a self-sustaining system', relates to the implications of the above measures in terms of driving leadership distribution. Similarly, the sub-theme, 'narrowing of options', relates to the closure of the CTS which, as data shows, has acted as a catalyst, albeit external to the school, which has encouraged some teachers to consider engaging in leadership. Within this sub-theme, as noted above, teachers believe that their futures could be adversely impacted upon if they do not volunteer to lead projects and this could imply a degree of coercion. Analysis has identified theme two above in terms of how leadership has been encouraged through the school's culture, systems and changes within education policy. Theme three and its sub-themes which follow relate to the above in terms of what has occurred as a consequence of further leadership distribution within the school.

Theme 3 - What Distributed Leadership Affords

Sub-themes

↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Leadership & learning	School improvement	Acquisition of skills	Collegiality	Inclusion

Sub-theme - Leadership & Learning

The notion that leadership relates to teachers' learning emanates from all data sources. There are favourable responses from teachers at all levels to a statement within a questionnaire in relation to the notion that distributed leadership is an approach that helps teachers to develop their expertise. Such data shows that teachers perceive a relationship between exercising leadership and their development. Additionally, the concept of learning that is a consequence of teachers exercising leadership features on nineteen occasions across interviews that involve staff at different levels (CT1, CT2, ML2, ML3, ML4, DH1 and DH2). For example, it was observed that "teachers learn because of the challenge presented by exercising leadership" (DH2 - Int). Similarly, this sub-theme arises seven times within a focus group discussion (CT1 and CT3). Taking account of all of the above factors, this analysis clearly identifies data to support the notion of learning that is a consequence of leadership and, as such, the sub-theme – 'leadership and learning'.

Sub-theme - School Improvement

This sub-theme is supported by data from all sources. Each shows that teachers at all levels believe that school improvement occurs as a result of teachers' leadership. Data derived from a questionnaire confirms that teachers at all levels strongly believe that the school benefits when staff expertise is distributed across the school. This notion is corroborated through interviews in which data extracts in relation to it feature on thirty occasions and from teachers including (CT1, CT2, ML1, ML2, ML3, ML4, DH1 and DH2). For example, "leadership is a catalyst for improvement" (CT2 - Int). As part of a focus group discussion this issue arises four times from teachers at the level of (CT3 and ML4) and (ML4 notes that "projects are evaluated and successful elements can be used in the classroom" (Fg).

Sub-theme – Acquisition of Skills

It is clear that teachers construe their involvement in exercising leadership as a means through which skills can be developed. As such, the sub-theme 'acquisition of skills' as a consequence of leadership is supported by data derived from all sources. Data derived from a

questionnaire shows that teachers at all levels have a strong belief that their engagement in leadership assists in developing their expertise. This notion is corroborated on nine occasions by data extracts obtained across interviews (CT1, ML1 and ML4) and on two occasions within a focus group discussion (ML1 and ML4). Teachers have more to offer pupils "because of their own skills development" (ML1-int) and can "enhance their skills through the opportunities the school provides for them to exercise leadership" (ML4 - Fg). Clearly, the 'acquisition of skills' is supported as a sub-theme because it is identified within data from all sources and from teachers at each level.

Sub-theme – Collegiality

Although there were no supporting data derived from a focus group in relation to this sub-theme it is supported, to an extent, through data derived from a questionnaire. For example, all classroom teachers and middle leaders believe that their contribution to decision-making has a direct impact upon the school. Although this notion is not supported by depute head teachers, such data is deemed to be indicative of a 'collegial' approach. As a sub-theme, 'collegiality' arises sixteen times across interviews (CT1, ML1, ML2 and DH2). A collegial approach enabled teachers to "see how different personalities influence decision-making" (ML2 - Int). However, "staff relationships influence collegiality" (ML1 – Int). As discussed in the previous chapter, it became obvious from the analysis that teachers perceive that collegiality is symptomatic of leadership. However, data extracts derived from a questionnaire and from interviews show that 'collegiality' is also reliant upon the nature of staff relations.

Sub-theme – Inclusion

'Inclusion' is considered to be a sub-theme as it arises in data derived from interviews on seven occasions (ML1, ML3 and DH2) and is supported by data obtained from a focus group discussion (DH1). For example, there is "inclusiveness of staff… and pupils" (ML1 - Int) and "an inclusive approach has facilitated teachers in exercising leadership that spreads across disciplines" (DH1 - Fg). Data derived from a questionnaire supports this sub-theme in that, with the exception of most middle leaders, all teachers believe that the opportunities afforded to them in order to exercise leadership makes them think of themselves as leaders. What follows is a discussion of an over-arching theme which is supported by all of the above sub-themes.

What Distributed Leadership Affords

This over-arching theme is supported by groupings of data extracts which give rise to its sub-themes. Further analysis of the groupings revealed commonalities in terms of what the different sub-themes could mean. For example, the sub-themes leadership and learning, school improvement, the acquisition of skills, collegiality and inclusion all arise as a consequence of distributed leadership. As such, taken together, they coalesce around the over-arching theme – 'what distributed leadership affords'. The similarities between the groupings of data extracts or the themes that might be indicated by them, as noted at the commencement of this chapter, were not immediately apparent. Through the process of frequently sorting and reorganising codes and data extracts shared meanings and similarities were identified. A number of sub-themes that support the over-arching theme, 'what distributed leadership affords', are themselves supported by multiple data extracts derived from each data source and from teachers at different levels within the school.

Theme 4 - How Teachers Exercise Leadership

Sub-themes

↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Leadership of the classroom	Leadership within the department	Leadership of initiatives	Leadership through participation	Leadership beyond the classroom	Leadership of the whole school

Whilst the previous theme focuses on what distributed leadership affords, theme four derives from groupings of data that are concerned with the different ways in which teachers exercise leadership. Data derived from both interviews and a focus group discussion support the sub-themes that underpin the above theme. The following relates to the extent of such data and discusses each of the above sub-themes, in turn**.** The sub-theme, 'leadership of the department' is supported by seven data extracts derived from interviews which are corroborated by two data extracts derived from a focus group discussion. 'Leadership of initiatives', as a sub-theme, is identified through sixteen data extracts obtained from interviews and supported by four data extracts of similar meaning which derive from a focus group discussion. For example, "Teachers can suggest initiative upon which they wish to lead" (DH1 - Fg). On eight occasions data indicative of the sub-theme 'leadership through

participation' occurs as a result of interviews and is corroborated by three data extracts obtained through a focus group discussion. 'Leadership of the whole school', as a sub-theme, is supported by eight data extracts, four of which occur across interviews and four which derive from a focus group discussion. The sub-themes in relation to teachers' leadership of, and beyond, their classrooms are supported by data that derives exclusively from interviews. Data in relation to each of the above occurs multiple times across in interviews. For example, "teachers have a responsibility for exercising leadership of their classes" (ML4 - Int). Although the relationship between the above categories was not immediately apparent, as the analysis progressed, it became clear that a number of data groupings relate to the different ways in which teachers exercise leadership. The above sub-themes, when taken together, relate to, and coalesce around, the over-arching theme - 'how teachers exercise leadership'.

Theme 5 - Teachers' Reservations in Relation to Exercising Leadership

Sub-themes

↓	↓	↓	↓
Lack of desire/aptitude	Teachers' concerns	Workload	Incentives

The over-arching theme 'teachers' reservations in relation to exercising leadership' is considered by the researcher to be of significance because data in relation to it derives, at many junctures, from across the interviews. Analysis of interview data identifies groupings of data extracts that reflect the sub-themes lack of desire/aptitude, teacher's concerns, workload and incentives. Data in relation to this over-arching theme and its sub-themes differs in nature to the remaining data which presents a more positive view of how teachers experience and understand distributed leadership. As discussed within the Results Chapter, perhaps the privacy afforded to teachers through an interview setting has enabled them to be more candid. What this over-arching theme and its sub-themes demonstrate is that not all teachers are willing participants in leadership. In addition, some teachers have concerns in relation to their involvement in exercising leadership. The following offers some detail in relation to the extent of data available to support the above theme and sub-themes.

Data in support of the sub-theme 'lack of desire/aptitude' occurs seventeen times across interviews, 'teachers' concerns' – on ten occasions, 'workload' – on nine occasions and

'incentives' – on four occasions. For example, "some teachers might not want to exercise leadership" (ML4). One middle leader observes that teachers may not wish to exercise leadership "because of the extent of the workload teachers are at their limit" (ML2). The groupings of data in support of the over-arching theme 'teachers' reservations in relation to exercising leadership' all reveal that, for a variety of reasons, the experience of exercising leadership is not something that sits comfortably with all teachers. Teachers may not have wished to express the above views within an open forum afforded by a focus group discussion. However, data extracts identified through interviews in relation to the above are significant in terms of their quantity and in terms of the outcomes of this study. The over-arching theme above and its sub-themes demonstrate an alternative view held by some teachers and implies that distributed leadership is not seen by all as a positive entity. The following discussion focuses on the over-arching themes and the relationship between them.

6.4 Discussion of the Over-arching Themes

In addition to section 6.3 above, a detailed account of the thematic analysis process used within this study is provided in the Methods Chapter and is supplemented by an exemplification which can be found in (Appendix, I). Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that at the end of the analytical process the researcher should have a clear notion of themes, the ways in which they relate to one another and the overall picture they portray about data. As noted above, the themes identified through thematic analysis include facilitated leadership, drivers of distributed leadership, what distributed leadership affords, how teachers exercise leadership and reservations in relation to exercising leadership. This section discusses the essence of each of these themes in terms of the story it tells, how it fits into the broader over-all story that is being told about data and how themes relate to one another. It is important to consider how each theme fits into the broader narrative that is being constructed about data in order to ensure that there is not too much overlap between themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 22).

Over-arching Theme (1) – Facilitated Leadership

All sub-themes within this theme relate to teachers' perceptions of leadership as being enabled through the actions of the head teacher and the SMT. Whilst teachers' beliefs about how distributed leadership is instigated and what it accomplishes are illustrated through themes (2) and (3) respectively, theme (1) 'facilitated leadership' provides insight into the

factors which have influenced the ways in which teachers within this school have come to think about leadership. Largely, teachers' views of leadership align with notions of the head teacher's and SMT's support for teacher-leadership, their creation of opportunities for teachers to exercise leadership and their actions in relation to spreading responsibility for leadership. What seems clear is that distributed leadership does not, to any significant extent, occur spontaneously. The following theme 'drivers of distributed leadership' links to the above by elaborating upon the ways in which, from the perspectives of teachers, the head teacher, SMT and other factors have been instrumental in enabling the spread of leadership. In turn, such events have clearly influenced the ways in which leadership is internalised by teachers.

Over-arching Theme (2) - Drivers of Distributed Leadership

The essence of this theme relates to the systems and processes utilised within a secondary school in order to promote the distribution of leadership. The sub-themes contained within this theme capture the contours of a large amount of data in relation to the ways in which the range of leadership distribution has been maximised. Factors which have acted as catalysts for the distribution of leadership have included the creation of a focused leadership role by the head teacher and the SMT - the Project Leader Role, the ways in which the head teachers and the SMT have utilised the school's PRD/CPD systems in order to encourage teachers to assume responsibility for leadership and the closure of the chartered teacher scheme which has, in the view of some teachers, closed off other viable development options. Braun & Clarke (2006) identify that sub-themes within a theme can be useful in providing structure to a particularly complex or large theme. Although the above sub-themes have no hierarchical relationship, each relates to the promotion of leadership distribution within the secondary school in which this study took place. The above sub-themes are integral to the meaning teachers attach to the concept of 'distributed leadership' in that each represents a mechanism which enables it. Of all of the themes identified through this analysis, 'drivers of distributed leadership' is selected as the second as it builds upon the narrative of the previous over-arching theme 'facilitated leadership'. Additionally, it illustrates, from the perspectives of teachers, the roots from which distributed leadership within this school emanates. As such, this theme and its sub-themes offer insights into the ways in which distributed leadership is understood and experienced. Following on from perceptions of how distributed leadership is

promoted and instigated within the school, teachers at all levels talked about their beliefs in relation to what the distribution of leadership has accomplished.

Over-arching theme (3) - What Distributed Leadership Affords

Having established the sources of distributed leadership through over-arching themes one and two, the current over-arching theme, 'what distributed leadership affords', is considered to provide a logical progression in terms of how this narrative unfolds. From the sub-themes that support this theme, it is clear that teachers perceive that there are consequences of their involvement in distributed leadership for example, the acquisition of skills, school improvement, collegiality and inclusion. As such, teachers' beliefs in relation to their involvement in distributed leadership align with notions of outcomes that can be, or have been, achieved. Whereas, theme (1) alludes to how distributed leadership has been facilitated within the school, theme (2) progresses the narrative in terms of the catalysts which have acted to drive it forwards, theme (3) builds upon the story of the previous themes in terms of what has arisen within the school as a consequence of distributed leadership. From the perspectives of teachers, distributed leadership is seen mainly as a means of school improvement, but also as a vehicle for their personal development. Through this analysis the themes, thus far, have illustrated how distributed leadership is promoted and to what effect. The following theme 'how teachers exercise leadership' links to, and expands upon, the above themes in that it provides further insight into how teachers within this school understand and experience leadership and its permutations.

Over-arching Theme (4) - How Leadership is Exercised

Previous themes have emphasised how distributed leadership has been facilitated, driven and what it has achieved. Theme (4) – 'how leadership is exercised' underpins the above in the sense that it focuses on how, from the perspectives of teachers, leadership operates in practice. To an extent, the sub-themes within this theme reflect some of the notions associated with over-arching themes (1) and (2) in that teachers construe leadership as whole-school leadership that can be exercised through a PL role, leadership that is exercised by taking responsibility for a project that is outside of the classroom and exercising leadership of an initiative. The remaining sub-themes - leadership of the classroom and leadership within the department relate to teachers' mandatory roles. All teachers lead their classes and most lead upon a role within their respective departments. This theme provides a sense of scope

and diversity in relation to the ways in which teachers perceive that leadership can be exercised within the school.

Over-arching Theme 5 – Teachers' Reservations in Relation to Exercising Leadership

Previous themes tell a story about distributed leadership in this school in terms of its outcomes and how it is promoted, supported and enacted. These themes link to theme (5) by foregrounding it and providing a contextual background that facilitates the reader's understanding of the final theme. In a sense, it is different in nature to the other four themes in that it portrays a less compelling picture of distributed leadership. The prevalence of the over-arching theme 'teachers' reservations in relation to exercising leadership' is demonstrated through the sub-themes which support it including a lack of desire/aptitude, teachers' concerns, workload and incentives. This theme represents a number of concerns teachers identify in relation to the ways in which they experience leadership and how they perceive their involvement in exercising it. These views appear to challenge the perceived wisdom in relation to distributed leadership in terms of how it is promoted within policy and how it is made to appear within empirical literature. For example, the assumption expressed within theme (4) that all teachers are construed as 'leaders', even if they do not take on additional responsibility outside of their classrooms, does not seem to be universally shared. The assumptions that underpin themes (2) – (4) imply that no challenges stand in the way of teachers' involvement in leadership and that the idea of exercising leadership is something teachers readily embrace. However, theme (5) and its sub-themes suggest that not all teachers buy in to the notion of distributed leadership and some may feel ill at ease about the prospect. There may even be a danger that, in the absence of adequate compensation for their efforts, teachers may feel exploited. This chapter has discussed how the over-arching themes were identified, the ways in which themes relate to one another, how each is supported by its sub-themes and how each over-arching theme contributes to a broader narrative. The following chapter discusses each of the above in relation to the research questions used to guide this study and in relation to the literature.

Chapter (7) - Discussion Chapter

7.1 Introduction

Whilst the previous chapter has discussed the ways in which analysis has led to five over-arching themes and their sub-themes, this chapter discusses the aforementioned in relation to the study's three main research questions and in relation to the literature. Throughout the chapter research questions one (RQ1), two (RQ2) and three (RQ3) are used as headings. The following sections draw upon themes and sub-themes which address each research question, in turn, whilst relating the over-arching themes/sub-themes to the literature.

7.2 RQ1 - How is distributed leadership understood and experienced by teachers at different levels of the school (other than the head teacher)?

The Influence of Senior Leadership

It is clear that teachers conceptualise leadership in this secondary school in terms of the structures put in place by the senior management team (SMT) in order to encourage teachers at all levels to exercise leadership. Teachers' thinking in relation to leadership is clearly influenced by the actions of the SMT in terms of their arrangements which have, to an extent, promoted teachers' leadership. Such arrangements are reflected in theme one, 'facilitated leadership' and its sub-themes, 'leadership responsibility', 'leadership opportunities' and 'support for leadership'.

It is clear that teachers' experiences of leadership are largely those made available to them by the head teacher and the SMT, a result corroborated by Notman et al. (2016) who note that "teacher-leadership does not happen in isolation, but is constrained and facilitated by many factors, and supported and enabled by those in formal leadership positions" (p. 44). As theme one and, in particular, the sub-theme 'support for leadership' demonstrates, teachers recognise that the approaches of the head teacher and the SMT play a significant role in the likely success of leadership distribution within the school, a result endorsed by Day & Gu (2010) who recognise the pivotal role of senior leaders in teacher-leadership and by Bush (2018) who contends that in the absence of such support teacher-leadership is unlikely to flourish. It is evident that teachers share an understanding that those who show willingness to lead will be supported by staff at all levels. Lesser & Storck (2001) endorse this result by advocating that individuals should be developed in ways that are unconstrained by traditional

hierarchies. The notion that teachers' experiences of leadership are supported at every level aligns with the idea of working with others who can offer insight in terms of novel approaches (Perkins, 2009), harnessing the latent talent of an individual or 'human capital' (Hargreaves & Fullen, 2012) and, to an extent, with 'a distributive perspective' in which leadership is framed as a product of the interactions of un-promoted teachers, formal leaders and aspects of their situation (Deflaminis, 2017).

As reflected in theme one, sub-theme, 'leadership as responsibility', teachers are aware of a desire by senior leaders for them to take on responsibility that is in addition to their classroom role. Although it seems that teachers construe their mandatory duties as pertaining to their classroom and departmental responsibilities, it is clear that they see, as an aim of the SMT, a progressive increase in their responsibilities. Such results attune with the neo-liberalist agenda which construes individuals as autonomous agents who are responsible for their own interests and who are less reliant upon the state. These results are echoed by Jacobs et al. (2014) who recognise that teacher-leadership is characterised by teachers accepting responsibility for achieving the outcomes of their leadership and exercising leadership beyond the classroom and by Lowery-Moore et al. (2016) who suggest that teacher-leaders should construe their work as "socially responsible leadership" (p. 2). Teachers understand that any additional responsibility for leadership they might assume will be at the discretion of the head teacher and the SMT. As such, there is little distinction between teachers' reported experiences of leadership and what Notman et al. (2016) define as 'distributed leadership' in the sense that leadership is delegated and what MacBeath et al. (2009) describe as leadership that is conferred or delegated through formal distribution. It is clear that the desire for teachers to assume ever-increasing levels of responsibility for leadership of activities that extend beyond their classrooms and departmental roles is integral to their everyday experience within the school. Such findings are reflected in The GTCS: Standard for Career-long Professional Development (2012) which advocates leadership at all levels and The GTCS: Standard for Headship (2012) in that leadership should extend beyond the scope of the teacher.

As discussed above, the opportunities teachers have in order to experience leadership, as reflected in theme one, sub-theme, 'leadership opportunities', emanate from the head teacher and the SMT. What seems implicit within these results is that teachers' experiences of leadership, to a lesser extent, derive from teachers themselves. This suggests that leadership within the school can, to a lesser extent, be aligned with what MacBeath (2011) describes as

more spontaneous, fluid and shared. What teachers understand and experience of leadership also challenges notions of shared influence (Bergman et al., 2012), shared power amongst a group (Peirce et al., 2009), and leadership that is not based upon position (Bakir, 2013), all of which characterise 'shared leadership'. Some of the opportunities teachers have experienced in order to exercise leadership include their classrooms and departments duties, observation of learning and teaching, comic relief and use of whiteboard. It could be argued that, as opposed to representing forms of distributed leadership, such activities may be representative of the everyday work that takes place within the school.

Leadership as Voluntary

The sub-theme of over-arching theme one, 'leadership opportunities', demonstrates an understanding amongst teachers that they are encouraged to volunteer in order to lead a project or initiative, a notion proffered by Torrance (2013) who recognises the pivotal role played by senior leaders in involving others in leadership. The school's arrangements would seem to challenge Scheicher (2012) who envisions that the school culture should promote 'bottom-up' leadership. Although teachers construe that they are able to put forward their ideas, the influence and control of the head teacher and the SMT over what is led, and by whom, seems clear. Such arrangements would seem to negate, to an extent, what McBeath et al. (2005) describe as, cultural distribution whereby leadership is assumed and shared by individuals. However, little is known about why teachers may choose, or may choose not, to volunteer to exercise leadership or whether, or not, their participation is purely consensual.

This theme reveals a gap in terms of the ways in which teachers understand and experience distributed leadership in relation to contemporary policy. It is clear that teachers within this secondary school construe their participation in leadership as voluntary. Perhaps this view has been influenced by the ways in which distributed leadership has been promoted within the literature. For example, Wrong (2002) suggests that distributed leadership rhetoric could position teacher-leaders as volunteers who may, or may not, consent to engage in leadership and Spillane (2015) perceives that leadership emerges from exchanges between colleagues within particular situations. These ways of conceptualising leadership imply that it is organic in nature and relies upon nothing more than individuals mutually opting to come together. However, such notions appear to be at odds with the ways in which teachers in this secondary school experience and understand distributed leadership and also with some contemporary policy mandates. For example, The Scottish Government: Teaching Scotland's Future Report

(2011) refers to leadership distributed at every level, The GTCS: Standard for Full Registration (2012) appears to mandate teachers in Scotland to exercise 'professional leadership' and The GTCS: Standard for Leadership and Management (2012) refers to teachers leading upon activities for colleagues. As such, teachers' engagement in exercising leadership is clearly not optional.

Perhaps further research could explore the ways in which distributed leadership plays out in practice and whether, or not, practice has been influenced by inconsistencies in teachers' understandings of the aims of leadership practices within the school, distributed leadership ideology and policy mandates. In relation to RQ1, over-arching theme one and its sub-themes have demonstrated some of the factors that have influenced how leadership is experienced and understood by teachers within this school. However, less is known about whether, or not, such influences are viewed positively by teachers. In addition, the extent to which widespread distribution of leadership has resulted from the actions of the head teacher and the SMT has not been identified.

Understandings Formed Through Experience

In relation to RQ1, a further aspect pertaining to the ways in which teachers understand and experience leadership relates to the various ways in which it is exercised by themselves and others. This is demonstrated through theme four, 'how teachers exercise leadership' and its sub-themes, 'leadership of the classroom', 'leadership of the department', 'leadership through participation', 'leadership beyond the classroom' and 'whole-school leadership'. It is evident that teachers perceive themselves as the leaders of their classrooms, a result that aligns with The GTCS: Standard for Leadership and Management (2012) which advocates that teachers should lead upon learning activities for learners. Critics might question whether 'leadership of the classroom' constitutes a form of 'distributed leadership' or whether it can be regarded as the role in which teachers have always been, and will continue to be, engaged.

It is evident through theme four's, sub-themes, leadership within the department, beyond the classroom, through participation and of the whole school that some teachers experience and, as such, gain an understanding of leadership that goes beyond the classroom. Such results attune with The GTCS: Standard for Full Registration (2012) in which it is mandatory for teachers at all levels to exercise 'professional leadership' and with notions in relation to 'active learning' derived from the 'conditions of life' (Dewey, 2016). In relation to RQ1, this would seem to imply that teachers' experiences of leadership should transcend the classroom.

It has been outside of the scope of this study to examine, in-depth, each of the above forms of leadership, as experienced by teachers. However, further research could explore what it means to teachers to experience leadership that goes beyond their usual job role in terms of their influence, authority, power, position and issues of equality of status. For example the sub-theme of theme four, 'leadership within the department', demonstrates that teachers perceive, as leaders, those who hold a particular area of expertise, a result corroborated by Bakir (2013) who recognises that leadership based upon the possession of knowledge and skills, as opposed to position, is characteristic of 'shared leadership'. In other words, the possession of certain skills or knowledge may imbue some teachers with a degree of authority that may enable them to lead others in a particular field. Hearn (2012) would appear to contest such views asserting that "authority is not just any power, but more specifically the power to make commands and have them obeyed" (p. 23). As such, a view of teachers' experiences of leadership beyond the classroom, as demonstrated within the sub-themes of theme four, may be overly simplistic. It is evident that the experience of leadership does not hold universal appeal.

Theme five, 'teachers' reservations in relation to exercising leadership', sub-theme, 'teachers' concerns', demonstrates that not all teachers experience leadership beyond their classrooms. In relation to RQ1, this sub-theme highlights that some teachers are apprehensive about the prospect of exercising leadership because, amongst other reasons, it involves having to engage with, and secure the support of, colleagues. This result is supported by Wrong (2002) who recognises that authority is not self-constituting and that it relies upon the acceptance of those who receive orders. What this sub-theme of theme five implies is that teachers' experiences of leadership outside of the confines of their classrooms require a significant leap of faith. These results seem at odds with the perspectives of Frost (2014) who identifies that non-promoted teachers can instigate change, lead strategically and, through their engagement with others, influence the direction of particular initiatives. Unlike teachers who occupy promoted positions within the school, un-promoted teachers are not seen to have authority that is legitimised because of their designated role. As such, un-promoted teachers are not embarking upon an experience of leadership secure in the knowledge that their authority and, as such, their power as 'a leader' is sanctioned through a wider acceptance of their position in the school.

It is evident that teachers can experience leadership in a range of ways, as indicated through over-arching theme four above. However, it is clear that not all teachers are willing or perhaps able to experience leadership. Factors that influence how leadership is viewed, for a proportion of teachers, include a lack of desire to involve themselves in leadership, a lack of ambition to become a leader, a desire to focus only on their classroom duties or to remain within their respective departments, personal issues or health issues. Such results are corroborated by Flessa (2009) who echoes the concerns embodied within over-arching theme five in that some teachers may not perceive themselves as leaders and some may actually view leadership as a stressful experience.

7.3 RQ2 - What is the perception of teachers in relation to the values that underpin distributed leadership?

In order to address RQ2 this discussion draws upon elements of over-arching theme three, 'what leadership affords' and, in particular, the sub-themes, 'collegiality' and 'inclusion'. It is evident that the values of distributed leadership are not prevalent within the collective consciousness of teachers within this school because only two of the values were identified through analysis. 'Inclusion', as a sub-theme of over-arching theme three, demonstrates a shared feeling amongst teachers that they are integral to the progression of the school. Teachers align their feelings of being included with the availability within the school of opportunities for them to exercise leadership. The principal factors which have influenced teachers' beliefs in relation to 'inclusion' stem primarily from the school's inclusive ethos and a culture in which opportunities to exercise leadership are made available to all staff, a result that attunes with The Scottish Government: Ambitious Excellent Schools Report (2005) which sets out the responsibilities of head teachers in terms of developing leadership in others, empowering people and teams and engendering collegiality.

As previously noted, RQ2 is addressed through a further sub-theme of theme three, 'collegiality'. Teachers talked about the ways in which a 'collegial approach' had enabled them to liaise with unfamiliar staff, learn about their roles and witness the influence different people have on decision-making, a result endorsed by Sergiovanni & Green (2014) in that collegiality facilitates problem solving and Hulpa & Devos (2010) who recognise that alliances can be forged through teachers' involvement in decision-making. However, it is evident that the extent to which a collegial approach exists amongst teachers relies upon the nature and personalities of those who are interacting at any given time and the nature of the

relationships teachers share with their colleagues. Such results map into the perspectives of Notman et al. (2016) in that good social relationships are not indicative of trusting collegial ones and Dawson (2014) who emphasises that the nature of staff relationships can influence a teacher's decision to exercise leadership. The above concerns seem to be at odds with notions advocated within The GTCS: Standards for Registration (2012) which sets out particular expectations for teachers in Scotland in relation to learning, working collegiately and leadership as core aspects of professionalism and collaborative practice (a, p. 2). It would appear that there may be some disparities between the policy aims in relation to the values which underpin distributed leadership and the realities of how such values are enacted within the school context. The notion of 'collegiality', as a policy prescription, seems to be fundamentally flawed. Sergiovanni & Stirrat (2007) recognise that 'collegiality' relies upon goodwill, trust, openness and groups of teachers who are able to form coherent teams, none of which are inevitable.

Interestingly, no themes were identified in relation to the values of equality, autonomy, agency and democracy. Although the value of 'empowerment' was not identified as a theme, it could be argued that teachers have been empowered because of the strategies senior leaders have implemented in order to enable them to exercise and experience leadership, as discussed above in response to RQ1. The values teachers may have associated with distributed leadership assume that group interactions commence from a neutral standpoint and that teachers have equality of status, influence and power. It is perhaps for such reasons that the values of distributed leadership are not prevalent within the themes identified. Perhaps a lack of detail in relation to the values associated with distributed leadership is indicative of a sense that teachers do not construe their significance or it might be argued that notions of empowerment, collegiality and inclusion are little more than policy rhetoric.

7.4 RQ3 - To what extent, if any, do teachers believe that distributed leadership has achieved its aims?

In relation to RQ3, teachers' beliefs in terms of the aims of distributed leadership and the extent to which such aims have been achieved are demonstrated through over-arching theme two, 'drivers of distributed leadership' and its sub-themes, 'the school ethos', 'the professional development review' (PDR) and 'continued professional development' (CPD) systems, 'the project leader (PL) role' and 'a self-sustaining system' and theme three, 'what distributed leadership affords' and its sub-themes, 'leadership and learning', 'school

improvement' and 'the acquisition of skills'. In order to address RQ3, the following discussion will draw upon themes and sub-themes previously discussed in relation to the first two research questions. In identifying the drivers of distributed leadership within this school, over-arching themes one and two demonstrate the intentions or aims that give rise to this form of leadership within this secondary school and, as such, teachers' beliefs in relation to the aims.

Developing the School's Culture

Perhaps as a consequence of the culture that has been cultivated within the school by the head teacher and the SMT teachers align their leadership and, as such, an aim of distributed leadership with teachers taking on additional responsibility, a result corroborated by Kirwan & MacBeath (2008) who advocate that leadership should aim to foster a culture of leadership distribution and embed structures that spread responsibility. Such aims are demonstrated through theme two, sub-theme, 'the school's change ethos'. Teachers talked about being encouraged to put forward their ideas for initiatives upon which to lead, a result endorsed by Hallinger & Heck (2010) in that successful school leadership aims to foster collaboration and shared decision-making.

As over-arching theme two 'drivers of distributed leadership', and its sub-theme 'the school's change ethos' demonstrate, the culture and ethos within this secondary school have clearly provided, to some extent, an impetus for distributed leadership. Teachers talked about a culture within the school that encourages their leadership of focused activities, a result that aligns with Hartley (2007) in that the development of leadership skills for all teachers should be undertaken within a culture that supports distributed leadership, the GTCS: Standard for Career-long Professional Learning (2012) which casts teacher-leaders as 'catalysts for change' and the SCEL: Teacher-Leadership Programme (2018) which emphasises teachers' leadership inside and outside of the school in order to implement change. A supportive school ethos and culture is seen by teachers to play an important role in motivating them to participate in exercising leadership and, as such, in the distribution of leadership within the school, a result which aligns with the notion that 'effective schools' are predicated upon support for teachers by the creation of conditions which enable them to be effective on a day-to-day basis (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The motivation for such aims appears, in part, to be attributed to constraints on school funding which have imposed limitations on what can be achieved by senior leaders, a result that maps into the perspectives of Torrance (2013) in

relation to the challenges faced by Scottish education in terms of difficulties in school management, devolved governance, workload pressures and a perception of distributed leadership as a potential remedy. As such, deficits are thought to be addressed by engaging the maximum number of staff in exercising leadership of projects. However, such assumptions can seem overly simplistic and are at odds with some critics who warn that teacher-leadership which is construed only as a means of reducing the workload of senior leaders could be counterproductive (Frost, 2010).

Within this secondary school projects led by staff are evaluated and some have led to improvement and innovation within the school. Such aims are reflected in The Scottish Government: National Improvement Framework (2006) in terms of school improvements achieved through evaluation and review and The Scottish Government: Ambitious Excellent Schools Report (2005) which foregrounds the notion of distributed leadership as a catalyst for change. Assumptions that underpin the above appear to be predicated upon a view of the teaching staff as a latent workforce in a state of readiness to exercise leadership and that the availability of an opportunity will be sufficient in order to galvanise their efforts. It has not been possible within the scope of this study to establish the extent to which teachers, school-wide, become involved in leadership.

The Significance of Mechanisms Aimed at Enabling Leadership

Sub-themes of over-arching theme two, the 'PRD/CPD systems' and 'the PL role', are identified by teachers as mechanisms utilised by senior leaders with the aim of maximising the distribution of leadership. The PRD/CPD systems are seen as an opportunity for teachers, in consultation with senior leaders, to discuss the nature of focused projects that aim to fulfil teachers' mandatory requirements in relation to PRD/CPD whilst simultaneously bringing about improvements/innovations within the school, a result that aligns with what MacBeath et al. (2009) describe as 'pragmatic distribution' in the sense that, through such systems, the distribution of leadership roles is negotiated and divided.

The aim of engaging teachers in whole-school leadership is demonstrated through over-arching theme two, sub-theme, 'the project leader role', a post created by senior leaders that offers teachers the possibility of engaging in whole-school leadership for one year. It is also demonstrated through over-arching theme four, 'how leadership is exercised', sub-theme, 'whole-school leadership'. This result is endorsed within The GTCS: Standard for Headship (2012) which advocates a focus on whole-school leadership and collaborative practice and

the SCEL: Framework for Educational Leadership (2014) in which teachers at all levels, including classroom teachers, are positioned as 'middle leaders' whose remit extends beyond the classroom. Targets which are integral to the PL role aim to improve a specific aspect of the work of the school. As such, its serves the purpose of distributing leadership whilst simultaneously achieving particular aims for the school. This sub-theme aligns with what MacBeath et al. (2009) describe as 'strategic distribution' of leadership in the sense that individuals are appointed in order to make a positive contribution towards the development of leadership. To a degree, this sub-theme also reflects 'opportunistic distribution' said by MacBeath et al. (2009) to arise when an individual shows willingness to take responsibility for leadership beyond their job role. This definition mirrors the PL role because teachers apply for the role and are selected through an interview process. As such, the above also aligns with the perspectives of Deflaminis (2017) in relation to 'distributed leadership' in the sense that teachers can be chosen by formal leaders to lead on their behalf. The strategies used by senior leaders that aim to maximise leadership distribution might suggest efficient school leadership. However, it could be argued that such strategies might be viewed as hegemonic in the sense their influence could be seen as channelling or constraining the thoughts and behaviours of teachers (Wellington, 2015). In other words, the use of these systems by senior leaders highlights certain pressures on teachers to conform. Teachers take the view that failure to engage in leadership could be detrimental to their future careers. This would seem to imply a degree of coercion.

It is clear that the strategies employed by the SMT have, to an extent, provoked some teachers to consider taking responsibility for a leadership role. However, the extent to which teachers engage in leadership spontaneously is unknown. A further sub-theme of over-arching theme two, 'a self-sustaining system' demonstrates that some teachers, having been influenced by the experiences of others, have sought opportunities to exercise leadership in similar roles, a result that maps into the aims featured in the GTCS: Standards for Registration (2012) in relation to teachers developing the leadership of colleagues, working collaboratively and seeking opportunities to lead.

In relation to this secondary school, for example, theme two, sub-theme, 'the PL role' demonstrates that there have been leadership experiences from which leaders have emerged. Teachers talked about the significance of the PL role in terms of achieving the aim of leadership development both in relation to the person selected for the role and in terms of those who assisted in fulfilling the obligations entailed within the role, a result that attunes

with the perspectives of Frost (2010) who describes teacher-leadership as un-promoted teachers acting strategically alongside colleagues to embed change and taking the initiative in order to improve practice. In relation to future practice, the above may be viewed by some as a welcome consequence of distributed leadership within this secondary school. It is evident that other projects led by teachers, outside of the PL role, have achieved similar effects, a result corroborated by Notman et al. (2016) who define teacher-leadership as a term that "opens up possibilities of more bottom-up creativity and influence" (p. 42). However, it is unclear as to whether, or not, this snowballing effect is a predicted aim of leadership distribution. In addition, it has not been possible within the scope of this study to determine whether, or not, this apparent influence upon teachers is limited or wide-spread. What does seem certain is that, to some extent, the aims of senior leaders in promoting distributed leadership and the strategies they have employed have the potential to effect the proliferation of leadership, a result that echoes the perspectives of Schleicher (2012) who recognises that senior leaders should encourage leadership structures that enable leadership between informal groups. Participants within this study talked about the ways in which a range of projects, as discussed above, have been led by teachers who operate at different levels within the school.

The PL role, for example, has focused upon 'nurture' and has drawn on the skills of teachers, administrators and support staff in order to develop strategies that aim to support pupils with particular learning issues/needs. Such projects align with notions of pedagogic leadership in terms of an emphasis on dialogue with pupils (Evans, 1999), a focus on the development of each pupil as a whole and learning which is premised upon collaboration (Cavanagh et al., 2005). Some teachers have developed initiatives within their respective departments. One classroom teacher and his pupils have focused on 'citizenship' as part of a Modern Studies project. The outcomes of the project were shared with other pupils who are studying this subject and with other interested parties across the school. The above, as such, also encompasses characteristics of pedagogical leadership in that the project undertaken required the active participation of pupils in their own learning and collaboration between staff at different levels within the school (Male & Palaiologou, 2012).

Glatthorn et al. (2012) assert that it is the role of the curriculum leader to establish how best to involve all teachers in curricular work and to determine teachers' needs in order to gain their commitment. Within the school in which this study took place the outcomes of initiatives, for example, innovative use of 'whiteboard' have been disseminated through presentations/demonstrations in order to enhance the knowledge/expertise of teachers from

across the school. Similarly, a number of presentations based on the outcomes of teacher-led projects have been provided with the aim of sharing knowledge/expertise. Aligning with the aims of curriculum leadership, such projects/initiatives have acted to engage teachers in curricular work whilst simultaneously addressing the needs of their colleagues. On a similar vein, senior leaders have utilised the PRD/CPD systems within the school in order to determine the needs of teachers and to engage them in project leadership. Attuning with notions of curriculum/pedagogic leadership, teachers are able to reflect upon the outcomes of such projects, determine actions and bring about school improvement by putting theory into practice (Glatthorn, 1987).

Conditions under which Teachers Experience Leadership

Although the above may hold some promise for those who aim to promote the distribution of leadership, theme five, 'teachers' reservations in relation to exercising leadership' and its sub-themes may serve as caveats. Whilst it seems clear that the positive experiences of some teachers in relation to exercising leadership may have inspired others, the sub-themes of theme five, 'workload' and 'incentives' are indicative of teachers' experiences of leadership that have proved to be less inspiring. It is clear that some teachers who have assumed the mantle of leadership have negative impressions of the experience. Factors highlighted through the sub-theme, 'workload' have included, for example, that some teachers find coping with the demands of leadership, in addition to their class remit, extremely challenging. The introduction of new initiatives within the school negates any thoughts teachers may have in relation to exercising leadership because the demands are seen as unmanageable. These results are corroborated by Wenner & Campbell (2017) in that teacher-leaders can face negative conditions such as a lack of time, stress and an adversarial school climate. It is evident that, to a significant extent, teachers perceive that a leadership role is incompatible with their classroom/departmental duties. Little is known about how teachers feel in relation to their increasing responsibilities and how, if at all, the additional responsibilities for leadership intersect with the demands of their existing roles. The above, to an extent, maps into the notion that teachers can become burdened by over-responsibility (Martin, 2003) and that some teachers' fear of failure might cause them to resist engaging in leadership or collaborating with others (Martin, 2002). Schleicher (2014) reinforces these perspectives identifying a need to establish teachers' rights to influence policy at all levels and for teachers to be heard in matters of leadership and professional practice.

A further sub-theme of theme five, 'incentives' highlights the conditions teachers believe are necessary in order to fulfil the aim of 'leadership distribution'. Teachers talked about the necessity of time being allowed for them to produce work that is of quality. There is a sense amongst those who have ventured to lead a project/initiative that more incentives are required for teachers, when the demands of their usual job remit is already taking them to the limits of their capacity, a result that is reflected by Neumerski (2012) who suggests that the term 'teacher-leadership' has become an umbrella term for a "myriad of work" (p. 320). What seems implicit in the above is that, when teachers reflect upon their experiences in relation to exercising leadership, some may not readily assume further leadership roles. From the previous discussion in relation to theme two, sub-theme, 'a self-sustaining system', it is evident that leadership distribution can be influenced through teachers' positive experiences of leadership which, in turn, act to inspire others. However, theme five above suggests that although some teachers have assumed leadership roles, the conditions under which those roles have been exercised have not been ideal, a result that is corroborated by Starratt (2007) who recognises the "psychological make-up" particular to each school as influential in terms of teachers' behaviour and how they feel about the school. It could be argued that poor appraisals of experiences in relation to exercising leadership, by those who have accepted the challenge, might actually influence others to refrain from seeking similar roles. As such, the trend towards the proliferation of leadership embodied within the sub-theme, 'a self-sustaining system' could, potentially, be reversed. The GTCS: Standard for Headship (2012) (revised) has been useful in stipulating leadership modes and guidance in relation to the prior experience of teachers, as individuals. However, the above sub-themes seem indicative of a requirement for further guidance in respect of the conditions under which teachers are expected to engage in leadership and what their leadership will entail. Such guidance may, to an extent, enable teachers to understand the parameters of their engagement in leadership and may go some way to negating the impressions some teachers have of being imposed upon.

Teachers' Perspectives in Relation to the Consequences of Distributed Leadership

In relation to RQ3, a further theme, theme three - 'what distributed leadership affords' and its sub-themes, 'leadership and learning', 'school improvement' and 'the acquisition of skills' demonstrate the aims teachers associate with distributed leadership and the extent to which such aims have been achieved.

Leadership Development

The sub-theme, 'leadership and learning' shows that teachers recognise that their learning is facilitated directly through their own experiences of exercising leadership or indirectly through their participation in, or observation of, initiatives led by others, a result which attunes with the notion that leading with others enables teachers to learn about themselves, others and the school (Timperley, 2010) and that "participatory structures" enable individuals to "learn their practice form others in a team" (Perkins, 2009, p. 170). Teachers perceive that leadership offers opportunities to learn which, in turn, fosters the creation of 'leaders'. The above aims that centre upon the notion that leadership and learning are mutually reciprocal are reflected in The Scottish Government: Curriculum for Excellence (2009) and in the perspectives of Harris (2008) who suggests that leadership is co-produced when people learn with others and Drotter (2011) who, in relation to broadening leadership capability, refers to a 'leadership pipeline'. The correlation identified by teachers in relation to leadership development that is a consequence of experiencing leadership or seeing others exercising it is rooted in Scottish Government policy. For example, the GTCS: Standards for Registration (2012) prioritises leadership development and shared learning.

However, little is known about the time and energy teachers expend preparing for and engaging in leadership and learning, how willing teachers are to engage in leadership, how teachers construe the outcomes of their leadership and the extent to which teachers engage in exercising leadership and to what effect. Although the sub-theme of 'leadership and learning' demonstrates some positive aspects in terms of what has derived from teachers' direct experiences of leadership or from witnessing the leadership of others, less is known in relation to the conditions in which such experiences are rooted. Perhaps further research is necessary in order to chart these processes in further detail.

Organisational Efficiency

The sub-theme of theme three, 'school improvement' addresses RQ3 and demonstrates, from the perspectives of teachers, the extent to which the aims of distributed leadership have been achieved. It is evident from the above discussion that the aim of 'leadership development' has, to an extent, been achieved. Through the current sub-theme it is evident that teachers construe 'school improvement' as the principal aim of their involvement in leadership within the school, a result which aligns with The Scottish Government: Leadership for Learning Report (2007) which focuses on the development of teachers through building leadership capacity at all levels. Teachers talked about changes and improvements to work within the

classroom as a consequence of projects led by themselves or their colleagues, a result that echoes The Scottish Government: Teaching Scotland's Future Report (2011) (TSF) which cites the co-creation of leadership as a key policy aim and casts teachers as 'agents of change'. It is clear that the progression of the school has been enhanced through improvements and innovations as a consequence of the delivery of the PL role and other initiatives led by teachers, a result corroborated by Katz & Khan (2008) who identify 'shared leadership' as a catalyst for organisational effectiveness and Goksoy (2015) who recognises that the collective efforts of individuals yield benefits for teams and organisations. Prioritisation of the school improvement agenda is underpinned within the SCEL: Framework for Educational Leadership (2014) which recognises the roles of senior leaders in engaging teachers in actions that will bring about school improvement.

Although the above is indicative of some success in terms of the output of teachers' leadership, it is not clear to what extent such commitment is prevalent across the body of staff. Notions of leadership aims and positive outcomes for the school that emanate from teachers' leadership appear to be predicated upon the assumptions that teachers from across the organisation: share a willingness to prioritise the school's goals; share a common interest in achieving the same; are willing to coalesce around such ends; are able, (given the demands of their remits), to commit their efforts and are able to work together constructively. Within the boundaries of this theme it has not been possible to explore, in-depth, the similarities between the aims of distributed leadership, as promoted within policy discourse, and the realities of practice. Additionally, it is evident that teachers' personal/career aspirations and developmental needs are, to a large extent, overshadowed by the prioritisation of the school improvement agenda. Further research may be required in order to establish how teachers construe the prioritisation of the school's goals, what implications there are for them within their roles and how such implications intersect with their sense of personal and professional identity.

From the perspectives of teachers within this secondary school it is clear that the aim of skills development has, to an extent, been achieved. The sub-theme 'acquisition of skills' shows that teachers associate exercising leadership or participation in exercising leadership with the enhancement of existing skills and the development of new ones, a result recognised by Hartley (2007) as reflective of the neo-liberalist agenda which seeks to relinquish government responsibility for social change. Teachers within this school are construed as the instruments through which 'change' is achieved and changes are perceived to emanate from the outcomes

of teacher-led projects, a result which aligns with Fullan & Hargreaves (1992) in that teachers are seen as both "subjects and agents of change" (p. 36). It is evident that teachers have used their experiences in exercising leadership in order to develop their leadership skills which, in turn, have been utilised to enhance the experience of pupils within the school, a result which attunes with The GTCS: Standard for Registration (2012) in relation to improvements derived from working collaboratively and with Hallinger & Murphy (1985) who identify that teacher-leaders have the potential, as 'instructional leaders', to improve learning and teaching. The above resonates with the notion of leadership that emerges from the collective actions of formal and informal leaders as they interact over the leadership of a task and aligns with 'a distributive perspective' (Defaminis et al., 2017) and (Spillane & Sherer, 2004).

The notion embodied within the sub-theme above is predicated upon the assumptions that all teachers feel equipped in order to exercise leadership, they understand what leadership demands and have sufficient confidence in their abilities to put themselves forward for a leadership role. What also seems implicit within the above is that teachers, as a body of staff, constitute a dormant force whose capacity can unleashed simply by the availability of an opportunity to exercise leadership, a result echoed by Mayrowetz (2008) in that school improvement is predicated upon harnessing the collective capacity of the school staff and teachers have an increased role in the achievement of the school's goals. Such views appear to align with neo-liberalist ideology in that teachers, as opposed to government intervention/resources, appear to be pivotal in terms of school improvement. However, it could be argued that the role of leadership requires certain prerequisite skills. Leaders must be able to find a level upon which to communicate effectively with others and enjoin others in assisting with a task. These may represent novel aspects of work never before encountered by some teachers.

In addition, it is not possible within the limitations of this study to fully explore the extent to which teachers' leadership skills are impacted upon through their involvement in exercising leadership, the particular skills teachers believe to be derived and the conditions under which those skills have been advanced.

7.5 A synthesis

Many of these results coincide with the findings within the wider literature. This discussion has focused on the themes and sub-themes relative to the research questions used to guide this study. It is evident that largely, teachers experience leadership that is 'delegated' through

the school's structures and at the discretion of senior leaders. As such, what they experience could be described as mainly 'distributed leadership' in the sense that it is delegated or conferred. As these results have shown, teachers' experiences have, to an extent, encompassed elements of leadership forms that fall within the distributed leadership paradigm such as a distributive perspective, teacher-leadership and shared leadership. The themes discussed within this chapter in relation to RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3 have explored the ways in which teachers understand and experience leadership practice in relation to the aims of senior leaders and in relation to policy mandates. Teachers' leadership and, as such, distributed leadership within the school, has been promoted by a supportive culture initiated and embedded through the actions of the head teacher and senior leaders. Through the ways in which teachers have experienced leadership, they have a sense of the aims of distributed leadership and the extent to which such aims have been realised through their interventions. This discussion has also highlighted some anomalies in respect of the conditions under which teachers experience leadership. The following chapter discusses the conclusions of this study and makes recommendations for the further research and future practice.

Chapter (8) – Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This study's purpose is to enquire into the phenomenon of distributed leadership, its values and aims, from the perspectives of teachers at different levels within a secondary school. Distributed leadership, as the Literature Chapter and the Introductory Chapter have demonstrated, is a contested concept that, despite its prominence within educational policy, assumes many forms. As discussed within the above mentioned chapters, the rhetoric used to promote the concept has been premised upon the notions that distributed leadership harnesses the expertise of many individuals, it is seen as a group activity and it has emerged in response to an acknowledgement that the functions of an organisation cannot be fulfilled solely through the actions of senior leaders.

Many empirical studies, such as those discussed within the first two chapters of this thesis, have enquired into distributed leadership from the perspectives of teachers at different levels within primary schools. Some appear to have focused on the roles and perspectives of head teachers and senior leaders. This study has investigated distributed leadership within a secondary school context and from the perspectives of teachers at different levels (with the exception of the head teacher). In particular, the study has sought to enquire, from the perspectives of classroom teachers, middle leaders and depute head teachers, into the ways in which teachers experience and understand distributed leadership, its values and aims.

Many permutations exist in relation to leadership forms that fall within the distributed leadership paradigm and these include for example: 'a distributive perspective'; delegated leadership; shared leadership; democratic leadership; teacher-leadership; middle leadership; systems leadership; pragmatic distribution; strategic distribution and opportunistic distribution, to mention but a few. For clarity in relation to this study, as discussed in the Introductory Chapter, the term 'distributed leadership' has been used throughout this thesis because it is the term that is most commonly used by theorists within empirical literature and by policy-makers. Although the above mentioned forms of distributed leadership are defined by their various characteristics, there is consensus amongst theorists that 'distributed leadership' is defined as leadership that is conferred or delegated through formal distribution (MacBeath et al., 2009).

This enquiry uses a mixed-methods approach within a case study in order to explore the phenomenon of distributed leadership, as experienced and understood by teachers at different levels, within the real life context of a secondary school. It is acknowledged that the outcomes of a single case study enquiry may not be generalizable to all secondary schools. In addition, the response rate, in respect of the number of teachers who took part in this study, is 12.8 percent of the school population. As such, this study's outcomes cannot be assumed to be typical of the entire school population. However, the value of this case study is in relation to the insights it offers in terms of the study's focus rather than the ability to generalise beyond the study. The following conclusions based upon the study's outcomes have value in terms of informing future leadership practice and in relation to the orientation of future enquiry.

8.2 Leadership from Teachers' Perspectives

This study has demonstrated that largely, what teachers experience and understand as leadership bears the greatest similarities to 'distributed leadership', as described above. Leadership, in relation to this particular secondary school, is delegated or conferred by senior leaders through the school's structures and systems. Teachers' experiences and understandings in relation to leadership encompass, to a lesser extent, elements of other leadership forms that fall within the 'distributed leadership' paradigm. In relation to 'shared leadership' for example, teachers experience and understand aspects of it which are premised upon the notion that an individual who holds a particular area of expertise can be seen as 'a leader'. However, such experiences and understandings do not entail other aspects of shared leadership such as, spontaneity, shared influence, shared power, shared accountability and leadership that occurs in an unsolicited way and is assumed by groups of teachers as the need arises. It is clear that teachers experience leadership that involves collaboration between promoted and un-promoted staff and is supported by staff at every level and, as such, is characteristic of two of the elements of a 'distributive perspective'. However, it is evident that leadership within this secondary school, unlike 'a distributive perspective', is not spread over all members of the organisation.

8.3 Policy & Perceptions of Leadership

This study has demonstrated that teachers construe leadership as that which is exercised within the classroom, within the department and within the whole-school. In addition, it is exercised through participation and includes leadership of projects/initiatives. Leadership of

the ‘classroom’ is, as discussed within the previous chapter, included within educational policy. However, whilst some of the above may represent forms of distributed leadership, to an extent, many aspects for example, leadership within the classroom, the department and of projects/initiatives may represent work that might be expected as part of the everyday activities within a school. As such, further research might explore leadership categories recognised by teachers and investigate the extent to which, if at all, such categories are representative of distributed leadership.

Although the requirement for teachers to exercising leadership is mandated through policy, it is clear from this study that it is perceived as voluntary by teachers in the respondent group. As discussed within the previous chapter, this might be attributed to the ways in which distributed leadership is promoted within the literature. This would imply that further research could explore the ways in which distributed leadership plays out in practice and whether, or not, practice has been influenced by inconsistencies in teachers’ understandings of the aims of leadership practices within the school, distributed leadership ideology and policy mandates. This study was conducted within one secondary school and, as such, it is not possible to establish whether, or not, teachers’ perceptions of leadership as ‘voluntary’ are wide-spread or limited to this school. However, little is known about why teachers may choose, or may choose not, to volunteer in order to exercise leadership or whether, or not, their participation is purely consensual. Future enquiry into such aspects could assist in illuminating the factors which lever teachers’ engagement in exercising leadership and the reasons why teachers refrain from becoming involved. .

8.4 Perceptions of Practice

This study has demonstrated that teachers see the school’s culture and ethos, the Professional Development Review (PDR) and Continued Professional Development (CPD) systems and the Project Leader (PL) role as the vehicles through which leadership within the school has been distributed. Such arrangements within this secondary school are identified as the foundations for leadership distribution. However, it has been argued within this study that such arrangements may not act in teachers’ best interests. The promotion of distributed leadership through the school’s structures could be construed as hegemonic. Such arrangements which compel teachers to participate in exercising leadership could be seen as an inappropriate use of power.

Largely, as discussed above, teachers' experiences of leadership have been galvanised through the SMT's creation of posts that encourage teachers to sample school-wide leadership (the PL role) and leadership of small-scale projects negotiated through the use of the school's PRD/CPD systems. As such, the SMT play a significant role in the success of leadership distribution within the school and teachers themselves, to a lesser extent. However, teachers perceive that the strategies employed by SMT have, in the first instance, acted as catalysts for increasing the range of leadership distribution. The consequences of such measures have, in turn, promoted further distribution of leadership. Some teachers, upon learning of what colleagues have experienced and achieved as a result of assuming responsibility for leadership, have been inspired to seek opportunities of their own. It is clear from this study that teachers are aware of a desire by the head teacher and the SMT for them to take on responsibility for leadership beyond their classroom and departmental roles.

Although the above is indicative of spontaneity in terms of some teachers being moved to acquire a leadership experience, this study concludes that the nature of leadership experienced by teachers cannot be described as fluid, organic or spontaneous. In other words, it is not evident that, in response to a perceived need, teachers spontaneously collaborate over leadership. However, this study has demonstrated how distributed leadership has developed within this particular secondary school from its inception through the actions of the SMT, to its impact in terms of initiatives/projects led by teachers and finally, to its impact in terms of how teachers' leadership has, as a consequence, motivated others to assume responsibility for leadership. As this study has demonstrated, leadership, as teachers perceive it, is top-down in terms of senior leaders' decisions about what is led and by whom.

Although the outcomes of this study have provided insights into the factors that have influenced teachers' experiences and understandings of leadership, it also demonstrates that not all teachers construe their experiences of leadership in a positive way. It is clear from this study that some of the teachers who have willingly assumed a leadership role have, on reflection, considered it to be incompatible with their classroom duties and, as such, unmanageable. As discussed in section 8.3 above, the notion that teachers are encouraged to take on further responsibility beyond their classroom role is widely acknowledged. However, this study demonstrates that little is known about how teachers feel in relation to their increasing responsibilities and how, if at all, the additional responsibilities for leadership intersect with the demands of their existing roles. It would seem that more is required in

order to provide a contour for teachers' engagement in leadership and to enable teachers to understand the boundaries of their involvement.

Section 8.4 above alludes to the proliferation of leadership premised on the notion that the positive experiences of some teachers in relation to leadership can influence others. However, it is clear that the delivery of major projects such as the PL role have posed significant challenges in terms of the achievement of project targets in addition to a full teaching commitment. Whilst designated leaders benefit from class remission in order to fulfil their leadership roles and receive compensation for their efforts in the form of remuneration, no such concessions are available for un-promoted teachers. This raises ethical issues particularly in terms of the work undertaken through the PL role which is, effectively, work under contract. As such, further research could be of value in exploring the conditions under which teachers assume leadership, the parameters of their engagement and the incentives available to them. This study demonstrates that failure to take account of these considerations could be counterproductive in relation to leadership distribution. Poor appraisals of leadership experiences by teachers who have assumed responsibility for leadership, only to find that their aims could not be realised because of excessive demands in relation to their leadership combined with their classroom duties, insufficient time or lack of other resources, may act to dissuade others.

8.5 Teachers' Reluctance to Experience Leadership

This study has shown that not all teachers wish to experience leadership because of factors such as the desire to remain the classroom/department, personal issues, health issues, beliefs about personal qualities and abilities and apprehensiveness in relation to engaging others in leadership. If such issues are to be overcome, what these results imply is that, leadership must intersect with teachers' beliefs in relation to their sense of self, personalities, traits, inclinations, capabilities and aspirations. As such, in order to move beyond the above concerns, a starting point for further enquiry could focus on identifying the differences between leadership with, and leadership without, formal authority and what leadership means to un-promoted teachers in terms of their influence, authority, power, position and issues of equality of status.

It is also acknowledged that leadership occurs in numerous contexts and locations. Within the scope of this study it has not been possible to examine, in detail, how teachers appraise the various different ways in which they have experienced leadership. However, the above

suggests an onus upon senior leaders within schools to take account of what it means to teachers to experience leadership that goes beyond their usual job role.

8.6 Rhetoric or Values?

It is evident that the values of distributed leadership are not prevalent within the collective consciousness of teachers within this school. This study has shown that largely, teachers have not internalised the values associated with distributed leadership. The school promotes an ethos of 'leadership opportunities for all' and clearly, this is central to teachers' shared beliefs in relation to 'inclusion'. Although 'collegial' approaches have, to an extent, enabled teachers to work with colleagues outside of their classrooms/departments, experience shared decision-making and learn more about their own roles, it is clear that such approaches and their outcomes rely upon the nature of the individuals within any given group and the relationships that exist between them.

The values associated with distributed leadership have been used within policy to frame this mode of leadership in a positive way. Such leadership is aligned with societal norms that include, for example, equality, democracy, inclusion, collegiality, autonomy and empowerment. However, as this study demonstrates, there are disparities in relation to how such values are promoted within policy and how they are experienced, understood and enacted within a secondary school context. This outcome would seem indicative of enquiry into how, if at all, the values that underpin distributed leadership intersect with the practice of teachers within secondary education and, if so, to what effect.

8.7 What Distributed Leadership Has Accomplished

This study has shown that, from the perspectives of teachers, distributed leadership has, to an extent, achieved many of its aims in relation to: the creation of a school culture and ethos that supports teachers' leadership; some teachers taking on responsibility for leadership that extends beyond the classroom/department; some teachers leading upon focused projects aimed at school improvement; teachers who are seen as agents of 'change'; a leadership system that maximises the distribution of leadership; distribution of leadership in order to address resource/funding issues facing the school; a system that engages teachers in whole-school leadership; leadership experiences from which leaders emerge (leadership development); leadership at every level within the school; leadership as a catalyst for learning; innovation within the classroom as a consequence of the outcomes of projects led

by teachers and leadership as a catalyst for the development of new skills and the enhancement of existing ones.

Clearly, from the perspectives of teachers at different levels within this secondary school, the impact of distributed leadership, in terms of achieving its aims, has been extensive and wide-ranging. Despite this, as this study demonstrates, there remain some significant challenges in terms of teachers' perceptions of what their leadership means and what implications there are for those who assume the mantle of leadership. It is evident, as previously noted, that a supportive school ethos and culture is seen by teachers to play an important role in motivating them to participate in exercising leadership. The engagement of some teachers in leadership has, in turn, assisted in realising the above aims.

However, as this study has shown, distributed leadership is, to an extent, perceived as a response to resource constraints imposed upon the school. It is clear that teachers' leadership, as opposed to external resources, is seen as a solution. This would seem to indicate that distributed leadership is part of a broader movement aimed at fulfilling the neo-liberalist agenda in terms of responsibility for the delivery and improvement of the education system migrating away from central and local government and into the hands of teachers. Teachers' leadership, as discussed in Chapter 1, is construed as a catalyst in order to achieve positive outcomes for schools. However, such imperatives are predicated upon the assumptions that teachers from across the organisation prioritise the school's goals and that teachers share a willingness to strive towards achieving them. This study has demonstrated that this may be true of some, but not all, teachers. As such, further research may be required in order to establish how teachers construe the prioritisation of the school's goals, how such priorities impact upon their workload and what implications there are for them within their roles and in terms of their personal aspirations.

8.8 A Synthesis

This chapter has set out the study's outcomes, their implications for practice and the possible direction of future research. The outcomes have shown that largely, teachers experience 'distributed leadership' in the sense that leadership is conferred or delegated by senior leaders. The major practical contributions of this study include the insights it has revealed in relation to: the range of ways in which teachers at all levels experience leadership; how the school's ethos and the use of its systems have provided an impetus for leadership distribution within the school; how the values associated with distributed leadership are not prevalent

within discourse; how teachers perceive their involvement in leadership and teachers' perceptions in relation to the aims associated with distributed leadership.

Although some of the outcomes of this study suggest that teachers' experiences and understandings of distributed leadership are largely positive, a number of issues that might inform the direction of further research have emerged. Future recommendations include a focus on: what leadership beyond their classroom means to teachers in terms of their influence, authority, power, position and issues of equality of status; how leadership beyond the classroom is appraised by those who have experienced it; the differences between leadership with, and leadership without, formal authority; ethical issues in relation to the conditions under which teachers assume leadership; how teachers feel in relation taking on additional responsibility for leadership; how teachers' responsibilities for leadership have intersected with other duties; the implications of the school's improvement agenda and, as such, the implications of teachers' leadership on their workload.

Other aspects of this study's outcomes are indicative of future enquiry with a focus on how, if at all, the values associated with distributed leadership intersect with practice within secondary education. It is clear, as noted earlier in this chapter, that teachers' leadership is mandated through policy. However, as the outcomes of this study imply, further enquiry might focus on the ways in which policy mandates and the realities of practice differ, ethical issues in relation to teachers' leadership and why some teachers volunteer in order to exercise leadership whilst others refrain. Such aspects could assist in informing future leadership practice.

Implications of This Study

The extent of the reading and writing that has been necessary in order to fulfil the requirements of this study has assisted the researcher in developing a more sophisticated understanding of the discourses surrounding leadership and leadership policy. This, in turn, has influenced the writing and the language now used when discussing distributed leadership. The researcher's ability in relation to critical reading and writing has developed over the period of the study. In particular, when reading texts, the researcher has considered the evidence presented by authors in support of their claims, looked for hidden assumptions, possible alternative explanations, potential bias and the author's line of reasoning. Such priorities have been reflected within the writing of the thesis.

This study has enabled the researcher to explore the area of distributed leadership within a context that differs from her usual place of work. The most striking insight this has revealed is in terms of the difference leadership can make to the attitudes and dispositions of a body of staff. As such, throughout the conduct of this research within a secondary school it was necessary to 'bracket' personal assumptions in relation to respondents' views. From the outcomes of this study it would seem that the organisational climate and the conditions under which staff exercise leadership, as alluded to in section 2.8 of the Literature Chapter, are fundamental to the success of the distributed leadership model. It is possible that teaching/lecturing staff within other organisations may share the same beliefs, opinions, concerns or fears expressed by the respondents who contributed to this thesis. This thesis, as such, could be insightful for teachers/lecturers within schools/colleges or for contemporary leaders who grapple with the task of leadership distribution.

Implications of This Study for the Practice of the Study School

Key aspects of this study's outcomes which could inform practice within the secondary school in which this study took place include: the significance of leadership as a vehicle for teachers'/pupils' learning; the relevance teachers attach to the values associated with distributed leadership; the link between teacher-led projects and what pupils experience within the classroom; issues in relation to the use of the school's systems in order to distribute leadership and teachers' concerns in relation to exercising leadership.

One of the principal notions to emerge from this study is that, although prominent within policy, the values associated with distributed leadership do not appear to be hugely

meaningful or relevant in the views of teachers. The aforementioned would seem to have implications in relation to teachers' development. Other results imply that there is value in distributed leadership in terms of the outcomes of teacher-led projects and the application of such outcomes for the benefit of pupils within the classroom or 'social capital' (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). As such, continuance of leadership distribution within the school may enable further innovation in relation to pedagogy. However, there is evidence that not all teachers are entirely at ease with the prospect of exercising leadership. The ways in which the CPD/PRD systems are used in the school in order to lever teachers' leadership is a particular concern to teachers. What seems implicit in the above is that senior leaders should heighten their awareness of the ways in which un-promoted teachers perceive their involvement in exercising leadership. This study's outcomes suggest that a climate should be created in which teachers can take tentative steps towards exercising leadership which may involve permeable, transparent initiatives which enable people to join initiatives (Perkins & Reese, 2014) and participatory structures (Perkins, 2009). The actions of senior leaders, as this study's outcomes imply, can be perceived by un-promoted teachers as manipulative and exploitative. One of the dominant messages to emerge from this study, in relation to practice within the school, is that teachers' engagement in leadership should be disentangled from their mandatory CPD/PRD requirements.

Although, as discussed in Chapter 1, teachers' leadership is mandated through policy, not all teachers in the study school are willing or able to exercise leadership. Perhaps it should be recognised that not all members of staff see themselves in the role of 'a leader'. In addition, as this study's outcomes imply, in order to sustain the efforts of those who have engaged in leadership, incentives may be required. The concerns raised by teachers who participated in this study, in relation to exercising leadership, seem to imply that the terms 'leader'/'leadership' are unhelpful. Perhaps an alternative shared discourse is required in relation to teachers' development/school improvement. An alternative discourse which does not cause individuals to become fearful or to question their abilities, may foster the engagement of the teaching staff.

Implications of This Study for the Researcher's Practice as an Educator

It is implicit within one of the key outcomes of this study that 'leaders' should consider the conditions under which un-promoted teachers experience leadership. Similarly, the climate in which students'/pupils' learning takes place is of equal importance. In relation to the

researcher's own practice, as a leader, the above affirms her own beliefs. Aspects of this study have also affirmed the researcher's views, as a lecturer/leader, in terms of making learning more meaningful by forging productive relationships with learners/staff and maintaining a welcoming attitude (Perkins, 2018). The results of this study show that teacher-led projects, in addition to offering a learning experience for teachers, have impacted positively upon the school/pupils. This insight has caused the researcher to reflect upon the nature of learning which occurs within further education. To a large extent, learning within further education emanates from the 'lived experiences' of learners (Dewey, 1916) and, as such, is useful in the sense that theoretical knowledge has a useful application (Whitehead, 1929). Although, as noted previously, some teachers do not agree with the use of the schools systems in order to engage them in leadership, there is one aspect of this arrangement which could be advantageous in terms of lecturers' learning. It is clear that teachers work with senior leaders to jointly decide upon the focus of projects which teachers could lead upon. This insight might be of value in terms of providing an opportunity for the researcher to learn, as a 'leader'/'educator', what teachers/lecturers believe to be 'useful learning', what teachers/lecturers believe might 'make a difference' and what is engaging for teachers/lecturers (Perkins, 2018).

This study's results indicate that the quantity of teacher-led projects impacts on the range of learning experiences afforded to pupils. Such insights have implications for the researcher, as an educator/leader, in terms of the engagement of lecturers in exercising leadership and the evaluation of the outcomes of such interventions in relation to the learning experiences of pupils/students. It is evident that teachers' involvement in leadership has enabled them to network with staff from across the school. Such experiences afforded to lecturers and students within further education could facilitate learning, enable individuals to learn within a range of contexts and to learn from others (Perkins, 2018).

Implications of This Study for the Researcher's Future Practice as a Researcher

Methodology

This research is underpinned by an interpretative epistemology supported by a constructivist ontology. The study's purpose, as explained within the thesis, is to enquire into the ways in which distributed leadership is experienced and understood by teachers at different levels within a secondary school. The conceptual framework above has served the purpose of this study. However, as the theoretical framework for future research, the paradigm of critical

theory supported by a critical realist ontology could be employed. The use of such methodologies could enable the researcher to focus on the processes which influence teachers' agency and which give rise to teachers' constructs in relation to distributed leadership.

Methods

A Likert-scale questionnaire is used as a pilot study for the purpose of the current research. Although the above proved to be a convenient way of capturing a large amount of data, the researcher believes that a questionnaire designed to capture qualitative data might enhance future research by enabling participants to elaborate upon their views and, as such, provide contextual data. The intention to triangulate data obtained from the use of different methods was a key consideration in the construction of the data collection tools used within the current study. As such, all data collection tools are closely aligned in terms of the order and content of the questions/prompts contained within each. For the purpose of the current study, the above approach was largely effective. However, in order to streamline the process of data analysis within any future study, a greater degree of alignment in relation to the data collection tools would enhance the process. The following provides a summary of the implications of this study in terms of further research.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research could explore:

- the leadership categories recognised by teachers and what such categories represent;
- the extent to which, if to any extent, the leadership categories identified by teachers are representative of distributed leadership;
- the extent to which, if to any extent, teachers' practice within the school has been influenced by their understandings of the aims of leadership, as promoted within distributed leadership ideology/policy;
- the reasons why some teachers volunteer in order to exercise leadership and why others resist;

- teachers' attitudes towards possible increases in teachers' responsibilities;
- how, if at all, teachers' leadership responsibilities intersect with their existing roles;
- the conditions under which teachers assume responsibility for exercising leadership;
- the parameters within which teachers engage in leadership;
- the incentives, if any, afforded to teachers who engage in exercising leadership;
- the differences between exercising leadership with/without formal authority;
- what exercising leadership means to un-promoted teachers in terms of their influence, authority, power and status;
- the extent to which, if to any extent, the values associated with distributed leadership intersect with the practice of teachers in secondary education;
- the impact, if any, that the values associated with distributed leadership have upon teachers' practice;
- how teachers construe prioritisation of the school's goals;
- how, if at all, prioritisation of the school's goals impacts upon teachers' workloads;
- the implications of prioritisation of the school's goals for teachers' personal/professional aspirations;
- how leadership beyond the classroom is appraised by those who have experienced it and
- how the impact of teacher-led projects upon classroom practice is measured.

References

Ahmad, A. et al. (2014). Positivist and Non-Positivist Paradigm in Social Science Research: Conflicting Paradigms or Perfect Partners? *Journal of Management and Sustainability*, *4*(3), 79-95.

Akdemir, O. A. & Ayik, A. (2017). The Impact of Distributed Leadership Behaviors of School Principals on the Organizational Commitment of Teachers. *Journal of Educational Research 5*(12), 18-26.

Althusser, L. (2011). *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists.* London: Verso.

Amzat, I. H. & Valdez, N. P. (2017). *Teacher Empowerment Toward Professional Development and Practices*. Springer: Singapore.

Anderson, S. E. et al. (2009). Positioning the Principal in Patterns of School Leadership Distribution. In K. Leithwood, B. Mascall & T. Strauss, (Eds.), *Distributed Leadership According to the Evidence*. London: Routledge.

Anney, V. M. (2014). Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at Trustworthiness Criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies, 5*(2), 272-281.

Asche, S. E. (1952). *Social Psychology*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

Asche, S. E. (1955). Opinions and Social Pressure. *American Scientific, 193*(5), 31-35.

Atkinson, P. et al. (2003). *Key Themes in Qualitative Research: Continuities and Change.* Oxford: AltaMira Press.

Bakır, A. A. (2013). *Analysis of the relationship between teachers' perceptions in shared leadership and organizational commitment. Doctoral Thesis Inonu University Institute of Educational Sciences, Malatya*. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1067238.pdf

Baldwin, J. S. et al. (2006). Evolutionary drive: New understandings of change in socio-economic systems. *ECO, 8*(2), 2-19.

Ball, S. J. (2003). The Teacher's Soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy, 18*((2), 215-228.

Ball, S. J. (2017). *The Education Debate (3rd ed)*. Bristol: Polity Press.

Baloğlu, N. (2011). Distributed Leadership: A leadership Approach that Needs to be Taken into Consideration at Schools. *Ahi Evran University Faculty of Education Journal*, *12*(3), 127-148.

Banfield, G. (2004). What's Really Wrong with Ethnography? *International Education Journal*, *4*(4), 53-63.

Bangs, J., MacBeath, J. & Galton, M. (2011). *Reinventing Schools, Reforming Teaching: From Political Visions to Classroom reality*. Routledge: Oxon.

Bassey, M. (1999). *Case Study Research in Educational Settings.* Philidelphia: Open University Press.

Bassey, M. (2000). *Fuzzy Generalisations and Best Estimates of Trustworthiness a step towards transforming research knowledge about learning into effective teaching practice.* Retrieved from http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00003143.htm

Bates, J., Lewis, S. & Pickard, A. (2001). *Education Policy, Practice and the Professional*. Continuum: London.

Baumfield, V. et al. (2012). *Action Research in Education: Learning Through Practitioner Enquiry* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bennis, G. W. (2009). *On Becoming a Leader*. United Kingdom: Hachette.

BERA (2011). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. Retrieved from https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf

Bergman, J. Z. et al. (2012). "The Shared Leadership Process in Decision-Making Teams". *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *152*(1), 17-42.

Bernstein, R. J. (1983). *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science Hermeneutics and Praxis.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bhaskar, R. (2008). *A Realist Theory of Science*. London: Routledge.

Bhaskar, R. (2011). *Reclaiming Reality: A Critical Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy.* London: Routledge.

Biancarosa, G. et al. (2010). Assessing the Value-added Effects of Literacy Collaborative Professional Development on Student Learning. *Elementary School Journal*, *3*(1), 7-34.

Bierly et al. (2009). Team Dynamics Over Time. In E. Salas, L.V. Blackwell Landon (Eds.), *Research on Managing Groups and Teams.* Emerald Publishing Limited: Bingly.

Birbili, M. (2006). Mapping Knowledge: Concept Maps in Early Childhood Education. *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, *8*(2), 1-9. Retrieved from http://ecrpauth.crc.uiuc.edu/v8n2/birbili.html

Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge* (2nded.). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Blaikie, N. & Priest, J. (2017). *Social Research: Paradigms in Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bloor, M. (2001). *Focus Groups in Social Research*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Blustein, D. L. (2013). *The Oxford Handbook of the Psychology of Working*. Oxford: University Press.

Boas, T. & Gans-Morse, J. (2009). Neoliberalism: From New Liberal Philosophy to Anti-Liberal Slogan. *Springer, 44*(2), 137-161.

Boblin, S. L. et al. (2013). Using Stake's Qualitative Case Study Approach to Explore Implementation of Evidence-based Practice. *Qualitative Health Research, 23*(9), 1267-1275.

Bolden, R. et al. (2009). Distributed Leadership in Higher Education: What Does it Accomplish? *Leadership, 5*(3), 139-150.

Bolden, R. (2011). Distributed Leadership in Organisations: A Review of Theory and Research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *13*, 251-269.

Boss, P. G. et al. (2009). *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: A Contextual Approach*. Minnesota: Springer.

Bowen, G. (2009). Naturalistic Inquiry and the Saturation Concept: a Research Note. *Qualitative Research, 8*(1), 137-152.

Bowling, A. (2002). *Research Methods in Health: Investigating health & health services* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Bradshaw, A. (1976). A Critique of Steven Lukes Power: A Radical View. *Sociology, 10*(1), 121-127. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/42853323

Brenner, M. et al. (1985). *The Research Interview*. London: Academic Press.

Briggs, A. R. J. et al. (2012). *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Brighouse, H., Tooley, J. & Howie, K. R. (2010). *Educational Equality.* Continuum: London.

Brinkman, S. & Kvale, S. (2014). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Michigan: Wiley.

Bryman, A. (2001). Ethnography Volume 2: Sage Benchmarks in Research Methods. London: Sage.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford: University Press.

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2015). *Business Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford: University Press.

Burke, A. (2010). Postmodernism. In C. Reus-Smith & D.Snidal (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of international relations.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burke, R. J. & Cooper, C. L. (2006). *Inspiring Leaders*. Oxon: Routledge.

Burr, V. (2003). *Social Constructivism* (2nd ed.). East Sussex: Routledge.

Bush, T. (2018). Professional learning communities and school leadership: Empowering teachers. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *46*(5), 711–712.

Carcary, M. (2009*).* "The Research Audit Trial – Enhancing Trustworthiness in Qualitative Enquiry". *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 7*(1), 11-24. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/c-smith/Downloads/ejbrm-volume7-issue1-article198.pdf

Carr, W. (2006). Philosophy, Methodology and Action Research. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *40*(4), 421-435.

Carspeken, P. F. (1996). *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research*. London: Routledge.

Camburn, E. (2009). Investigating Connections between distributed leadership and instructional change. In A. Harris, A. (Ed.), *Distributed Leadership: Different Perspectives*. The Netherlands: Springer Press.

Camerson, R. et al. (2015). Mixed Methods Use in Project Management Research. *Project Management Journal, 46*(2), 90–104.

Campbell, J. L. & Pedersen, O. K., (2001). *The Rise of Neoliberalism and Institutional Analysis.* Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Cavanagh, R. F. et al. (2005). Pedagogic Leadership: Refocusing on Learning and Teaching. *International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning, 9*(2), 1-11.

Chawla-Duggan, R. (2007). Breaking out, breaking through: accessing knowledge in a non-western overseas educational setting—methodological issues for an outsider, Compare: *A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 37*(2), 185-200.

Chapman, C. (2014). From within- to between- and beyond- school: A case of rethinking roles and relationships? In A. Harris, M. Jones & J. B. Huffman (Eds.), *Teachers Leading Educational Reform: The Power of Professional Learning Communities.* Oxon: Routledge.

Chapman, C. (2014). *From within-to between- and beyond- school improvement: A case of rethinking roles and relationships? International Congress 2014: Educational Effectiveness and Improvement Research, Policy and Practice*. Retrieved from https://www.icsei.net/?id=1832

Chapman, C. (2018). *Policy briefing: Public service leadership: What works?* http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/policy-briefing-public-service-leadership-what-works/

Conger, A. J. & Pearce, C. L. (2003). *Shared Leadership: The Hows and Whys of Leadership.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Cohen, L. et al. (2011). *Research Methods in Education* (7th ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.

Creemers, B. P. M. & Kyriakides, L. (2012). *Improving quality in education: Dynamic Approaches to School Improvement.* Routlege: Oxon.

Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing From Five Approaches* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research Design: qualitative, quantitative & mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research*. London: Sage.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundation of Social Research: Meaning and Perspectives in the Research Process*. London: Sage.

Currie, G. & Locket, A. (2007). 'A Critique of Transformational Leadership: Moral Professional and Contingent Dimensions of Leadership within Public Service Organisations'. *Human Relations, 60*(2), 342-370.

Currie, G. et al. (2009). The institutionalization of distributed leadership: A 'Catch-22' in English public services. *Human Relations, 62*(11), 1735-1761.

Currie, G. & Locket, A. (2011). Distributed Leadership in Health and Social Care: Concertive, Conjoint or Collective? *International Journal of Management Reviews, 13*(3), 286-300.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2009). Steady work: How Finland is building a strong teaching and learning system. *Voices in Urban Education, 24*, 15-25.

Dawson, M. (2014). Learning to Lead Through Leading Learning: Reducing Career Stagnation in Experienced Teachers. *Leading & Managing*, *20*(2), 105-116.

Day, C. & Gu, Q. (2010). The New Lives of Teachers (1st ed.). London: Routledge.

Daymon, C. & Holloway, I. (2010). *Qualitative Research Methods in Public Relations and Marketing* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Deflaminis, J. et al. (2017). *Distributed Leadership in Schools: A Practical Guide for Learning and Improvement*. Oxon: Routledge.

Denscombe, M. (2014). *The Good Research Guide* (5th ed.). Berkshire: Open University Press.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications Limited.

De Vellis, R. F. (2003). *Scale Development Theory and Applications*. Thousand Oak: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Blackwell.

Dewey, J. (1997). *Experience & Education*. Simon & Schuster: New York.

Dimmock, C. (2016). Systems' Leadership for School Improvement: A Developing Concepts and Set of Practices. *Scottish Educational Review, 48*(2), 60-79.

Drever, E. (2003). *Using Semi-structured interviews in small-scale research: a teacher's guide*. Glasgow: Scottish Council for Research in Education.

Drotter, S. (2011). *The Performance Pipeline: Getting The Right Performance at Every Level of Leadership.* Sanfrancisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dwyer, S. C. & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The Space Between: On Being an Inside-Outsider in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 8*(1), 54-63.

Edwards, A. & Talbot, R. (2014). *The Hard-pressed researcher: a research handbook for the caring professional* (2nd ed.). Oxon: Routledge.

Eldor, L. & Shoshani, A. (2017). The relationship between school climate for services and teachers' engagement, satisfaction and the intention to leave: a moderated mediation model. *Journal of Psychology, 151*(4), 359-378.

Ernest, P. (1994). *An introduction to Research Methodology and Paradigms*. Devon: University of Exeter.

Evans, B. et al. (2004). *Health Psychology: Theory Research and Practice* (4th ed.). London: Sage.

Evans, R. (1999). *The Pedagogic Principal.* Edmonton: Quality Institute Press.

Felluga, D. F. (2015). *Critical Theory The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.

Firestone, W. A. (1993). Alternative Arguments for Generalizing From Data as Applied to Qualitative Research. *Educational Researcher, 22*(16), 16-23.

Firestone, W. A. & Martinez, M. C. (2007). Districts, Teacher Leaders, and Distributed Leadership: Changing Instructional Practice. *Leadership and Policy in Schools: Routledge, 6,* 1-33.

Firmin, M. (2006). *Ethnographic and Qualitative Research in Education* (7th ed.). Cambridge: Scholar Press.

Flaherty, J. (2005). *Coaching: Evoking Excellence in Others*. London: Elsevier Butterman Heinemann.

Flessa, J. (2009). Educational Micropolitics and Distributed Leadership. *Peabody Journal of Education,* (84), 331–349.

Fleetwood, S. (2004). *Critical realism in economics: Development and Debate*. London: Routledge.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(2), 219-245.

Fontana, A. & Prokos, A. (2007). *The Interview from Formal to Postmodern*. California: Left Coast Press.

Foster, J. & Parker, I. (1995). *Carrying out Investigations in Psychology: Methods and Statistics.* Leicester: BPS Books.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977.* C. Gordon (Ed.). New York: Pantheon.

Fowler, F. J. & Mangione, T. W. (1990). *Standardized Survey Interviewing: Minimizing Interviewer-Related Error. Applied Social Research Methods Series Volume (18).* London: Sage Publications Inc.

Frost, D. & Harris, A. (2003). Teacher leadership: Towards a research agenda. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 33*(3), 479-498.

Frost, D. (2010). Teacher Leadership and Educational Innovation. *University of Cambridge: Faculty of Education, 42*(2), 201-216.

Frost, D. (2014). *Changing Teacher Professionality Through Support for Teacher Leadership in Europe and Beyond Symposium.* Retrieved from http://www.teacherleadership.org.uk/uploads/2/5/4/7/25475274/ecer_2014_frost.pdf

Fullan, M. & Hargreaves, A. (1992). *Teacher Development and Educational Change*. Routledge Falmer: London.

Gagnon, Y. C. (2010). *The Case Study as Research Method: A Practical Handbook*. Canada: Presses de l' Universite du Quebec.

Galletta, A. (2013). *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview & Beyond*. New York: University Press.

Geertz, C. (1973) *Thick description: Towards an interpretive theory of culture*. New York: Basic Books.

Geertz, C. (2000). *Cultures, Customs & Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gibb, C. A. (1954). Leadership. In G. Lindzey (Ed.), *Handbook of Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley.

Gillham, B. (2010). *Case Study Research Methods*. London: Continuum.

Glatthorn, A. A., (1987). *Curriculum Renewal*. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED278127.pdf

Glatthorn, A. A., et al. (2012). *Curriculum Leadership Strategies for Development and Implemenation* (3rd ed). London: Sage.

Goksoy, S. (2015). Distributed Leadership in Educational Institutions. *Journal of Education and Training Studies, 3*(4), 110-115.

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Report, 8*(4), 597-607.

Gomm, R. et al. (2000). *Case Study Method: Key Issues, Key Texts*. London: Sage.

Gomm, R. (2008). *Social Research Methodology: A Critical Introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Greene, C. et al, (1989). Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed-Method Evaluation Designs. *Sage Journals, 11*(3), 255-274.

Greeno, J. G. (1998). The Middle School Mathematics Through Application Project: The situativity of knowing, learning, and research. *American Psychologist, 53(1)*, 5-26.

Gronn, P. (2000). Designer leadership: The emerging global adoption of preparation standards. *Journal of School Leadership, 12*(5), 552–578.

Gronn, P. (2008). The future of distributed leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(2), 141-158.

Gronn, P. (2009). Leadership Configurations. *Sage Journals, 5*(3), 381-394.

Gronn, P. (2016). Fit for purpose no more? *Management in Education, 30*(4), 168-172.

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. London: Sage.

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Gubrium, J. F. et al. (2012). *The Sage Handbook of Interview Research: The complexity of the craft* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Guest, G. et al. (2012). *Applied Thematic Analysis*. London: Sage.

Guest, G. et al. (2012). Collecting Qualitative Data: A Field Manual For Applied Research. London: Sage

Hallinger, P. & Murphy, J. (1985). Assessing the instructional management behaviour of principals. *Elementary School Journal, 86*(2), 217-247.

Hamilton, L. (2011). *Case Studies in Educational Research. British Educational Research Association*. Retrieved from https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/case-studies-in-educational-research

Hammersley, M. (2009). 'Closing down the conversation? A reply to Smith and Hodkinson'. *Qualitative Inquiry, 15*(1), 40-48.

Hargreaves, A. (2001). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: Teachers' Work and Culture in the Postmodern Age.* London: Continuum.

Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, D. (2012.) *The Power of Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*. Teachers College Press: New York.

Harris, A. (2008). Distributed Leadership According to the Evidence. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(2), 176-188.

Harris, A. & Deflaminis, J. (2016). Distributed leadership in practice: Evidence, misconceptions and possibilities. *Management in Education, 30*(4), 141-146.

Harris, A. & Spillane, J. (2008). Distributed leadership through the looking glass. *Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society, 22*(1), 31-34.

Harris, A. (2011). Distributed leadership: implications for the role of the principal". Journal of Management Development, 31(1), 7-17.

Harris, A. (2014). *Distributed Leadership Matters: Perspectives, Practicalities and Potential*. United Kingdom: Sage Ltd.

Harris, J. et al. (2018). *Promoting Inquity in School: Collaboration, Enquiry and Ethical Leadership.* Routledge: Oxon.

Hart, C. (2008). *Doing a Literature Review:Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination.* London: Sage.

Hart, E. P. et al. (2005). *A Companion to Research in Education*. London: Springer.

Hart, E. & Bond, M. (1995). *Action Research for Health & Social Care: A Guide to Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hartas, D. (2010). *Educational Research & Inquiry: Qualitiative & Quantitative Approaches.* London: Continuum.

Hartley, D. (2007). The Emergence of Distributed Leadership in Education: Why Now? *British Journal of Educational Studies, 55*(2), 202-214.

Hartley, D. (2007). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: University Press.

Hartley, D. (2009). Educational Policy, distributed leadership and socio-cultural theory. *Education Review, 61*(2), 139-150.

Hartley, D. (2010). Paradigms: How Far Does Research in Distributed Leadership 'Stretch'? *Education Management, Administration and Leadership, 38*(3), 271-285.

Hearn, J. (2012). *Theorising Power.* United Kingdom: Palgrave MacMillan.

Heck, R. H. & Hallinger, P. (2010). Collaborative leadership and school improvement: understanding the impact on school capacity and student learning. *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation, 3*(2), 95-110.

Hennink, M. M. (2014). *Focus Group Discussions: Understanding Qualitative Research*. Oxford: University Press.

Herring, M. C. (2016). *Handbook of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) for Educators* (2nd ed.). Oxon: Routledge.

Hersen, M. & Turner, S. (2003). *Diagnostic Interviewing* (3rd ed.). New York: Kluwer Academic Press.

Hesse, E. (1980). *Revolutions and reconstructions in the philosophy of science*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hitchcock, G. & Hughes, D. (1995). *Research and the Teacher: A qualitative introduction to school-based research* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Hoepfl, M. C. (1997). Choosing qualitative research: a primer for technology education researchers. *Journal of Technology Education, 9*(1), 47-63.

Holloway, I. (1997). *Basic Concepts for Qualitative Research*. London: Blackwell Science.

Horrocks, C. & King, N. (2010). Interviews in Qualitative Research. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Hulpa, H. & Devos, G. (2010). The Influence of Distributed Leadership on Teachers' Organizational Commitment: A Multilevel Approach. *The Journal of Educational Research, 103*(1), 40-52.

Humes, W. M. (1986). *The Leadership Class in Scottish Education*. Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd.

Hyett, N. (2014). Methodology or method? A critical review of qualitative case study. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 9, 23606*. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v9.23606

Jacobs et al. (2014). Teacher leaders as equity-centred change agents: exploring the conditions that influence navigating change to promote educational equity. *Professional Development in Education, 40*(4), 576–596.

Johnston, B. (1999). Putting critical pedagogy in its place: A personal account. *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. TESOL Quarterly, 33*(3), 557-565.

Jupp, V. (2006). *The Sage Dictionary of Social Research Methods*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Kanuha, V. K. (2000)**.** "Being" native versus "going native": Conducting social work research as an insider. *Social Work, 45*(5), 439–447.

Katz, D. & Khan, R. L. (2008). *The Social Psychology of Organisations* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Katzenmeyer, M. & Moller, G. (2009). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders.* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Khan, B. (1999). A Qualitative Reassessment of the Finance Growth Nexus: Evidence from a Multivariate. *Journal of Development Economics, 60*, 381-405.

Kauffman, K. S. (1994). The insider/outsider dilemma: field experience of a white researcher "getting in" a poor black community. *Nursing Research, 43*(3), 179-183.

Kiraly, D. (2014). *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translation Education*. Oxon: Routledge.

Kirk, J. & Miller, M. L. (1986). *Reliability & Validity in Qualitative Research: Sage Research Methods Series 1*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Kirwan, T. and MacBeath J. (2008). *Leadership in extended schools*. Nottingham: National College of School Leadership.

Kincheloe, J. L. & McLaren, P. (2002). Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research. In Y. Zou & E. T. Trueba (Eds.), *Ethnography and schools: Qualitative Approaches to the Study of Education*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Koelsch, L. E. (2013). Reconceptualising the Member Check Interview. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 12, 168-179*. Retrieved from https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/article/view/12327/15117

Krueger, R. A. & Casey, Y. A. (2014). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (5th ed.). New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing Interviews*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Kydd, L. et al. (2003). *Leading People and Teams in Education.* London: Paul Chapman.

Lakomski, G. (1999). Critical theory. *In J. P. Keeves and G. Lakomoki. Issues in Educational Research.* Oxford: Elsevier Science Ltd.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1982). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.* Cambridge University Press: New York.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Le Compte, N. et al. (1992). *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education*. London: Academic Press.

Letizia, A. J. (2017). *Using Servant Leadership: How to Reframe the Core Functions of Higher Education.* London: Rutgers University Press.

Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of practice and organizational performance. *IBM Systems Journal, 40*(4), 831-841.

Liamputtong, P. (2011). *Focus Group Methodology: Principles and Practice.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (2013). *The Constructivist Credo*. London: Routledge.

Lipman, P. (2011). *The New Political Economy of Urban Education*. New York: Routledge.

Lissitz, R.W. (2009). *The Concept of Validity: Revisions, New Directions, and Applications*. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, Inc.

Litosseliti, L. (2007). *Using Focus Groups in Research*. London: Continuum.

Lopez, J. E. & Potter, G. (2001). *After Postmodernism: An Introduction to Critical Realism.* London: Athlone Press.

Losch, A. (2009). The Origins of Critical Realism. *Theology of Science, 7*(1), 85-106.

Lowrey-Moore, H. et al. (2016). The Essence of Teacher Leadership: A Phenomenological Inquiry of Professional Growth. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership, 7*(1), 1-16.

Lukes, S. M. (1974). *Power: A Radical View*. London: MacMillan.

Mack, L. (2010). The Philosophical Underpinnings of Educational Research.

Retrieved from http://r-cube.ritsumei.ac.jp/bitstream/10367/1887/1/1-Polyglossia19_The%20Philosophical%20Underpinnings%20of%20Educational%20Research.pdf

MacKenzie, N. & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in Educational Research, 16*(2), 193-205.

MacBeath, J. et al. (2005). *Distributed Leadership: A Developmental Process*. Paper presented at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement Barcelona Leadership for Learning: symposium. Retrieved from https://www.leraar24.nl/app/uploads/macbeath_et_al05.pdf

MacBeath, J. (2006). The Talent Enigma. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 9*(3), 183–204.

MacBeath, J. & Mortimore, J. (2001). *Improving School Effectiveness*. Open University Press: England.

MacBeath, J. et al. (2009). 'Distributed Leadership: Paradigms, policy and paradox'. In K. Leithwood, B. Mascall & T. Strauss (Eds.), *Distributed Leadership According to the Evidence.* London: Routledge.

MacBeath, J. & Townsend, T. (2011). Leadership and Learning: Paradox, Paradigms and Principles. In T. Townsend & J. MacBeath (Eds.), *International Handbook of Leadership for Learning.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Magill, K. R. & Rodriguez, A. (2017). *Imagining Education: Beyond the Logic Of Global Neoliberal Capitalism*. USA: Information Age Publishing.

Makkreel, R. A. (1994). *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of The Critique of Judgement.* London: The University of Chicago.

Male, T. & Palaiologou, I. (2012). Learning-Centred Leadership or Pedagogical Leadership? An Alternative Approach to Leadership in Education Contexts. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 15*(1), 107-118.

Marks, H. M., & Printy, S. M. (2003). Principal leadership and school performance: Integration of transformational and instructional leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 39*(3), 370-397.

Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. (2010). *Theory & Methods in Political Science* (3rd ed.). Basingstoke: MacMillan Publishers Ltd.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing Qualitative Research* (6th ed.). London: Sage.

Martin, R. (2002). *The Responsibility Virus: How Control Freaks, Shrinking Violets-and the Rest of Us-Can Harness the Power of True Partnership*. Basic Books: New York.

Martin, R. (2003). *The Responsibility Virus: How Control Freaks, Shrinking Violets (and the Rest Of Us) Can Harness the Power of True Partnership***.** Retrieved from http://www.cognitionnet.com/member/resources/Summaries/Management/responsibility_virus.pdf

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social Sciences.* Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Maykut, P. & Mourhouse, R. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophical and Practical Guide.* London: The Falmer Press.

Mayrowetz, D. (2008). Making Sense of Distributed Leadership: Exploring the Multiple Usages of the Concept in the Field. *Sage Journals, 44*(3), 424-435.

Mercer, J. (2007). The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas. *Oxford Review Education, 33*(1), 1-17.

Merriam, S. B. (1991). *Case study research in education: a qualitative approach*. Michigan: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. (2001). How Research Produces Knowledge. In J. M. Peters & P. Jarvis (Eds.), *Adult Education*. Lanham: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McCafferty et al. (2010). *Neo-liberal Scotland: Class and Society in a Stateless Nation*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

McLeavy, J. (2008). Neo-liberalising Subjects: The Legacy of New Labour's Construction of Social Exclusion in Local Governance. *Geoform, 39*(5), 1657-1666.

Miles, M. B. et al. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Inc.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *An Expanded Sourcebook: Qualitative Data Analysis* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B. et al. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Miller, J. A. (2006). Ontology based representations of simulation models following the process interaction world view. In A.Tolk, (Eds.), *Ontology, Epistemology and Teleology for Modelling and Simulation: Philisophical Foundations for Intelligent M & S Applications*. USA: Springer.

Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). *Qualitative Research Methods Series 16.* London: Sage Publications.

Mowat, J. G (2014). *Research Brief 6 - The Development of Leadership Capacities Across the Career Trajectory: a Focus upon Teacher Professional Development*. Retrieved from https://pureportal.strath.ac.uk/en/publications/research-brief-6-the-development-of-leadership-capacities-across-

Mowat, J. G. & McMahon, M. (2018). *Interrogating the concept of 'leadership at all levels': a Scottish perspective. Professional Development in Education, 1-17.* Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2018.1511452

Mowat, J. G. (2019). Exploring the impact of social inequality and poverty on the mental health and wellbeing and attainment of children and young people in Scotland. Improving Schools. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1365480219835323 Retrieved 27th March 19

Murchison, J. (2010). *Ethnography Essentials: Designing, Conducting and Presenting Your Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Neuman, L. (2014). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (7th ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Neumerski, C. M. (2012). Rethinking Instructional Leadership, a Review: What Do We Know About Principal, Teacher, and Coach Instructional Leadership, and Where Should We Go From Here? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *37*(2), 119-149.

Niff, J. (2013). *Action Research: Principles and Practice*. London: Routledge.

Norman, G. R. et al. (2002). *International Handbook of Research in Medical Education*. London: Kluwer Academic Publications.

Notman, R. et al. (2016). 'Teacher leadership development: An exploration of issues arising from programmes in Scotland and New Zealand'. *Scottish Educational Review, 48*(2), 43-59.

Novak, J. D. & Canas, A. J. (2006). *Technical Report IHMC Florida Institute for Human Cognition*. Retrieved from http://search http://search.bt.com/result?p=Novak+%26+Canas+2006&Location=Location&channel=Test2

OECD (2016). *Teaching in Focus: School leadership for developing professional learning communities*. Retrieved from https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/5jlr5798b937-en.pdf?expires=1542021855&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=0451A84DB7D15D2EF9CD04C8930A3686

OECD (2017). *Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Improve Equity and Outcomes for All. International Summit on the Teaching Profession.* Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/education/empowering-and-enabling-teachers-to-improve-equity-and-outcomes-for-all-9789264273238-en.htm

OECD (2018). *More effort needed to improve equity in education*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/more-effort-needed-to-improve-equity-in-education.htm

OECD (2018). Report on academic resilience of disadvantaged students. Retrieved from https://comprehensivefuture.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Education-Journal-No.-327-30.1.18-p-22-23.pdf

Olssen, M. et al. (2004). *Education Policy: Globalisation, Citizenship and Democracy*. London: Sage.

Opie, C. (2010). *Doing Educational Research*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Oppenheim, A. N. (2000). *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement* (2nd ed.). London: Continuum.

Osgood, J. (2008). Professionalism and performativity: The feminist challenge facing early years practitioners, in Early Years. *International Journal of Research and Development, 26*(2), 187-199.

Padgett, D. (2016). *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Parry, K. W. & Bryman, A. (2006). In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. B. Lawrence & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Organisational Studies*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Patrick, B. & Rollins, A. C. (2016). Shifting the Blame in Public Education: Are There Parallels Between Opinion and Policy? *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy, 23*(2), 1- 16.

Parallels Between Opinion and Policy? *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy, 23*(2), 1- 16

Pearce, C. L. et al. (2009). Where Do We Go From Here? : Is Shared Leadership the Key to Team Success? *Organizational Dynamics, 38*(3), 234-238.

Peck, J. (2004). Geography and Public Policy: Constructions of Neoliberalism. Progress in Human Geography. *Sage Publication, 28*(3), 392-405.

Peck, J. & Tinkell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing Space. *Antipode, 34*(3), 380-404.

Perkins, D. (2009). *Making Learning Whole: How Seven Principles of Teaching can Transform Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Perkins, D. N. & Reese, J. D. (2014). When Change Has Legs. *Educational Leadership, 71*(8), 42-47.

Perkins, D. (2018). *What's worth learning? – What makes a difference?* Retrieved from http://www.youtube/watch=sysbpbEmhlg

Perkins, D. (2018). *Teachers make a difference*. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfUmE2zWv2e8

Phillips, D. C. & Burbules, M. C. (2000). *Postmodernism and Educational Research*. Oxford: Rowan Littlefield Publishers Inc.

Pine, G. J. (2008). *Teacher Action Research: Building Knowledge Democracies*. London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Plano Clark, V. L. & Creswell, J. W. (2008). *The Mixed Methods Reader*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Plano Clark V. L. et al. (2008). Mixed Methods Approaches in Family Science Research. *Journal of Family Issues, 29*(11), 1543-1566.

Pounder, D. & Crow, G. (2005). Sustaining the Pipeline of School Administrators. *Educational Leadership, 62*(8), 56-60.

Prean, M. (2002). *Individual Differences and Development in Organisations: Wiley Handbook of the Psychology of Management in Organisations.* England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Printy, S. et al. (2009). Integrated leadership: How principals and teachers share instructional influence. *Journal of School Leadership, 19*(5), 504-532.

Pritchard, A. & Woollard, J. (2010). *Psychology for the Classroom: Constructivism and Social Learning*. Oxon: Routledge.

Punch, K. F. (2016). *Developing an Effective Research Proposal* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Quinn Patton, M. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (4th ed.). London: Sage Publications Inc.

Raelin, J. A. (2016). Imagine There Are No Leaders: Reframing Leadership as Collaborative Agency. *Leadership, 12*(2), 131-158.

Reynolds, D. & Parker, A. (1992). *School Effectiveness Research: Policy and Practice*. Cassells: London.

Riazi, A. M. (2016). *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Research Methods in Applied Linguistics: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Research*. London: Routledge.

Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: Sage Publications.

Robinson, V. M. J. & Timperley, H. S. (2007). The leadership of the improvement of teaching and learning: Lessons from initiatives with positive outcomes for students. *Australian Journal of Education, 51*(3), 247-262.

Rodwell, M. K. (1998). *Social Work: Constructivist Research*. London: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Romney, A. K. & Weller, S. C. (1988). *Systematic Data Collection (Qualitative Research Methods) Series 10*. London: Sage.

Rowantree, D. (2003). *Statistics Without Tears*. London: Allyn & Bacon.

Rowe, A. & Chapman, C. (2015). *What works Scotland, Perspectives on Improvement & Effectiveness: Key definitions and concepts.* Retrieved from http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Perspectives-on-Improvement.pdf

Rowley, J. (2002). Using Case Studies in Research. *Management Research News*, *25*(1), 16-27.

Sahlberg, P. (2011). *Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* Teacher College Press: London.

Sammons, P. (1999). *School effectiveness coming of age in the 21st centrury*. Swets & Zeitlinger: Abingdon.

Sapsford, R. & Jupp, V. (2006). Data Collection and Analysis (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Saldana, J. (2009). *The Coding Manual For Qualitative Researchers*. London: Sage.

Sanderson, C. A. (2010). *Social Psychology.* USA: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Saunders, L. (1999). *Value added measurement of school effectiveness: a critical review*. Retrieved from https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/91034/91034.pdf

Scottish Educational Research Association (2005). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research.* Retrieved from http://www.sera.ac.uk/documents/Publications/SERA%20Ethical%20GuidelinesWeb.PDF

SCEL: (2014). *Leadership Development and Professional Learning: National Framework for Educational Leadership*. Retrieved from http://www.scelscotland.org.uk/

SCEL: (2018). *In Headship: Leadership Development and Professional Learning*. Retrieved from http://www.scelscotland.org.uk/

Schleicher, A. (2012). *OECD Preparing Teachers and Developing School Leaders for the 21st Century: Lessons from around the World*. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264174559-en

Schleicher, A. (2014). *OECD International Summit on the Teaching Profession Equity, Excellence and Inclusiveness in Education: Policy Lessons from Around the World*. Retrieved from https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/content/publication/9789264214033-enopi

Schutz, A. (1962). The Problem of Social Reality. The Hague: Nijhoff Martinus. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of Constructivist Research*. London: The Guild Press.

Scott, D. (2005). Critical Realism and Empirical Research Methods in Education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 39*(4), 633-646.

Scott, D. & Morrison, M. (2006). *Key Ideas in Educational Research*. London: Continuum.

Scott, D. & Usher, R. (1996). *Understanding Educational Research*. London: Routledge.

Scottish Educational Research Association (2005). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research.* Retrieved from http://www.sera.ac.uk/documents/Publications/SERA%20Ethical%20GuidelinesWeb.PDF

Sergiovanni, T. J. & Green, R. L. (2014). *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective.* University of California: Allyn & Bacon.

Sergiovanni, T. J. & Starratt, R. J. (2007). *Supervision: A redefinition (8th ed.)*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information 22*, 63–75.

Silverman, D. (2009). *Doing Qualitative Research* (4th ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Silverman, D. (2014). *Interpreting Qualitative Data – Methods for analysing talk, text and interaction* (5th ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Silverman, S. J. (2015). *Research Methods in Physical Activity*. Leeds: Human Kinetics.

Slee, R. (1995). *Changing theories and practices of discipline School*. The Falmer Press: London.

Slee, R., Weiner, G. & Tomlinson, S. (1998). *School Effectiveness for Whom? Challenges to the School Effectiveness and School Improvement Movements.* Falmer Press: London.

Sloan, T. (2013). Distributed Leadership and Organizational Change: Implementation of a Teaching Performance Measure. *New Educator, 9*(1), 29-53.

Smelser, M. J. & Baltes, P. B. (2001). *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioural Sciences.* Michigan: Elsevier.

Smylie, M. & Denny, J. (1990). Teacher Leadership: Tensions and Ambiguities in Organizational Perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 26*(3), 235-259.

Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R. & Diamond, J. B. (2004). 'Towards a theory of leadership practice: a distributed perspective'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 36*(1), 3-34.

Spillane, J. P. & Sherer, J. Z. (2004). *A Distributed Perspective on School Leadership: Leadership Practice As Stretched Over People and Place*. A presentation at the annual meeting of the American Education Association, San Diego. Retrieved from http://mysesp-test.sesp.northwestern.edu/docs/leadstretchSPISHE.pdf

Spillane, J. P. (2006). *Distributed leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Spillane, J. P. & Diamond, J. B. (2007). *Distributed Leadership in Practice (Critical Issues in Educational Leadership.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Spillane, J. P. et al. (2007). Taking a Distributed Perspective to the School Principal's Workday. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 6*(1), 103-125.

Spillane, J.P. et al., (2008). Taking a distributed perspective Epistemological and Methodological tradeoffs in operationalizing the leader-plus aspect. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(2), 189-213

Spillane, J. P. (2009). Managing to Lead: Reframing School Leadership & Management. *The Phi Delta Kappa International, 91*(3), 70-73.

Spillane, J. P., et al. (2009). Managing and leading elementary schools: Attending to the formal and informal organisation. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 37*(1), 5–28.

Spillane, J. P. and Healy, K. (2010). Conceptualising School Leadership and Management From a Distributed Perspective: An Exploration of Some Study Operations and Measures. *The Elementary School Journal, 111*(2), 253-281.

Spillane, J. P. (2015). Leadership and Learning: Conceptualising Relations between School Administrative Practice and Instructional Practice. *Societies Journal, 5*, 277-294.

Spillane, J. P. & Mertz, K. (2015). *Distributed leadership. Oxford Index – A Search for Discovery Gateway.* Retrieved from http://oxfordindex.oup.com/view/10.1093/obo/9780199756810.016.0123

Spillane, J. P & Diamond, J. B. (2016). School leadership and management from a distributed perspective: A 2016 retrospective and prospective. *Management in Education, 30*(4), 147–154.

Springer, S. et al. (2016). *The Handbook of Neoliberalism*. S. Springer, K. Birch & J. McLeavy (Eds.). London: Routledge.

Springer, S. (2010). Neoliberalism and Geography: Expansions, Variegations, Formations. *Wiley Digital Archives, 4*(8), 1025-1038.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. London: Sage Publications Inc.

Stake, R. E. (2003). Case Studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple Case Study Analysis*. New York: The Guildford Press.

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000), (asp 6). Retrieved from https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2000/6/pdfs/asp_20000006_en.pdf

Starratt, R. J. (2007). Leading a Community of Learners Learning to be Moral by Engaging the Morality of Learning. *Educational Administration & Leadership, 35*(2), 165-183.

Starratt, R. J. (2012). *Cultivating an Ethical School*. Oxon: Routledge.

Stevens, C. (2009). *Critical pedagogy on the web*. Retrieved from www.markfoster.net?struc/criticalpedagogy.html

Stewart, D. W. & Shandasani, P. N. (2014). *Focus Groups: Theory and Practice* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In M. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park: Sage.

Struebert, H. & D. R. Carpenter, (2011). *Qualitative research in nursing: advancing the humanistic imperative* (5th ed.). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer.

Suraiya, R. et al. (2013). Teachers' reflections on distributive leadership in public primary schools. *South African Journal of Education, 33*(2), 1-15.

Tatnell, A., Kereteletswe, O. C. & Visscher, A. (2010). 9th IFIP WG 3.7 Conference on Information Technology in Educational Management, ITEM 2010. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-19715-4

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012). *Standards for Career-Long Professional Learning: driving forwards professional standards for teachers.* Retrieved from http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/about-gtcs/standard-for-career-long-professional-learning-draft-august-2012.pdf

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2005). *Standard for Headship*. Retrieved from http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/the-standards/the-standard-for-headship.pdf

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012). *Standards for Headship (Revised).* Retrieved from http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/the-standards/headship.aspx

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012). *Standards for Leadership and Management: supporting leadership and management development.* Includes both the Standard for Middle Leadership and the Standard for Headship (SFH). Retrieved from http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/files/the-standards/standards-for-leadership-and-management-1212.pdf

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012). *Standards for Registration.* Retrieved from http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/standards-for-registration.aspx

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2012). *Standards for Registration: Routes to Headship programme.* Retrieved from http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/the-standards/headship.aspx

The Scottish Government (2005). *Ambitious, Excellent Schools: Leadership*. Retreived from https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2005/06/17104251/42555

The Scottish Government (2011). *Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services Report.* Retrieved from https://www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/352649/0118638.pdf

The Scottish Government (2009). *Curriculum for Excellence Building the Curriculum 4 Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work.* Retrieved from https://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/288517/0088239.pdf

The Scottish Government (2017). *Educational Governance Review*. Retrieved from https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Education/education-reform-agenda/edgovrev

The Scottish Government (2000). *Improving Our Schools: Schools Scotland Code*. Retrieved from https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2000/04/5428/File-1

The Scottish Government (2007). *Leadership for Learning: The Challenges of Leading in a Time of Change.* Retrieved from http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/8061/7/lflcltc_Redacted.pdf

The Scottish Government (2016). *National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education.* Retrieved from https://beta.gov.scot/policies/schools/national-improvement-framework/

The Scottish Government (2017). *Report of Initial Findings of The International Council of Education Advisors.* Retrieved from https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/foi-eir-release/2017/10/foi-17-02217/documents/53cd1675-7714-4812

The Scottish Government (2011). *Teaching Scotland's Future: Report of a Review of Teacher Education.* Retrieved from https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/01/13092132/0

Thompson, S. K. (2012). *Sampling* (3rd ed). New Jersey: Wiley & Sons Inc.

Thorpe, R. et al. (2011). Locating Distributed Leadership. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 13*(3), 239-250.

Timperley, H. S. (2009). "Distributed Leadership: Developing Leaders for Tomorrow". *Journal of Educational Administration, 47*(4), 521-523,

Timperley, H. S. (2010). Organizational learning facilitated by instructional leadership: tight coupling and boundary spanning practices. *Journal of Educational Change, 11*(2), 139-155.

Timperley, H. S. (2011). *Realising the power of professional learning.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Torrance, D. (2009). Distributed Leadership in Scottish Schools: Perspectives from participants recently completing the revised Scottish Qualifications for Headship Programme. *Management in Education, 23*(2), 63-70.

Torrance, D. (2013). Distributed Leadership: Still in the Gift of the Head Teacher. *Scottish Educational Review, 45*(2), 50-63.

Torrance, D. & Humes, W. (2015). The shifting discourses of educational leadership: International trends and Scotland's response. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership, 43*(5), 792-810.

Treiman, D. J. (2014). *Quantitative Data Analysis: Doing Social Research to Test Ideas*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Tuckman, B. W. & Harper, B. E. (2012). *Pilot testing the instrument and evaluating the results: Conducting educational research* (6th ed.). United Kingdom: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers.

Turner, D. W. (2010). Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators. *The Qualitative Report, 15*(3), 754-760.

Twining, P. et al. (2016). The Open University's Repository. *Some Guidance on Conducting and Reporting Qualitative Studies. Computers & Education*. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2016.12.002

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes.* USA: Harvard College.

Wallace, M. & Wray, A. (2016). *Critical Reading and Writing for Postgraduates*. London: Sage.

Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and Society: Volume 1 & 2*. G. Roth & C. Wittich (Eds.). New York: Oxford University Press

Wells, G. (2007). Semiotic Mediation, Dialogue and the Construction of Knowledge. *Human Development, 55*(5), 244-274.

Weller, S. C. (1998). Structured Interviewing and Questionnaire Construction. In Bernard, H. R. et al., *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. California: Altamira Press.

Wellington, J. (2015). *Educational Research: Contemporary Issues and Practical Approaches* (2nd ed.). London: Bloomsbury.

Wenger, L. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, L. et al. (2002). *A Guide to Managing Knowledge: Cultivating Communities of Practice.* Massachussets: Harvard Business School Press.

Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narratives and Semi-structured Methods.* London: Sage.

Wenner, A. & Campbell, T. (2017). The Theoretical and Empirical Basis of Teacher Leadership: A Review of the Literature. *Review of Educational Research, 87*(1), 134-171.

Whitehead, A. N. (1929). *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*. New York: Free Press.

Wood, D., et al. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Child Psychiatry, 17*(2), 89−100.

Wood, P. & Smith, J. (2016). *Educational Research: Taking the Plunge.* Carmarthon: Independent Thinking Press

Woods, P. A. et al. (2004). 'Variabilities and dualities in distributed leadership: Findings from a systematic literature review'. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership, 32*(4), 439-457.

Wright, P. M. (2008). Breaking Barriers for Purposes of Inclusiveness. *Human Resources Management, 47*(2), 403-406.

Wrong, D. (1996). 'Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault' (Book review). *American Journal of Sociology, 102*(3), 869-72.

Wrong, D. (2002). *Power: Its Forms, Bases and Uses* (3rd ed). London: Transaction.

Yanow, D. E. & Schwartz-Shea, P. (2014). *Interpretation & Method: Empirical Research Methods & The Interpretive Turn.* London: Routledge.

Yazan, B. (2015). Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam and Stake. *The Qualitative Report, 20*(2), 134-152.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case Study Research Design and Methods* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Yin, R. K**.** (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case Study Research Design and Methods* (5th ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Yin, R. K. (2009). Enhancing the quality of case studies in health service research. *Health Service Research, 34*(5), 1209-1224.

Yin, R. K. (2013). Validity and generalisation in future case study evaluations. *Sage Journals: Evaluation, 19*(3), 321-332.

Yukl, G. (2012). Leadership in Organisations (8th ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Zachariades, N. & Scott, S. (2013). Methodological implications of critical realism for mixed methods research. *MIS Quarterly*, *37*, 855-879.

Zammito, J. H. (2004). *A Nice Derangement of Epistemes: Post-positivism in the Study of Science From Quine to Latour*. London: The University of Chicago Press.

APPENDIX (A/1) Exemplification of Concept Map

Concepts associated with distributed leadership

multiple meanings learning empowerment co-leadership collaboration

agency responsibility change agents

school culture collective leadership shared expertise decision-making

accountability notions of hierarchy shared leadership

leadership development learning through interaction contribution of social processes

collaborative learning shared cognition democracy external climate

pace of change challenges of school leadership organisational effectiveness

collegiality head teacher's responsibilities harnessing staff expertise/commitment

collective interactions loosening of boundaries distributed perspective

leadership spread across the organisation less formal authority achieving group/organisational goals

collective influence inclusion autonomy spontaneous power relations

teacher-leadership bottom-up leadership policy mandates promotion of distributed

leadership in policy multiple definitions loose concept culture that fosters leadership

power equality collective problem solving an equalising force distributed agency

loosening of discrete roles delegation school improvement hybrid leadership

APPENDIX (A/2) - Exemplification of a Concept Map

Concepts associated with distributed leadership

Leadership Multiple meanings Multiple definitions Loose concept Teacher-leadership Shared leadership Collective leadership Distributed perspective Spread across the organisation Bottom-up leadership Hybrid leadership Delegation	Policy aims Learning Empowerment Collaboration Collaborative learning Responsibility Agency Organisational effectiveness Policy mandates School improvement Distributed agency	Values Collegiality Democracy Equality Inclusion Autonomy
Teachers Shared expertise Learning through interaction Agents of change Achieving group/organisational goals Collective influence Collective problem solving	Culture Accountability Notions of hierarchy Influence of external climate Pace of change Challenges of school leadership Head teacher's responsibilities Harnessing staff commitment Loosening of boundaries Less formal authority Power relations Fostering leadership Less discrete roles	Learning Shared cognition Contribution of social processes Leadership development

Appendix (B)

Date as post mark

Senior Lecturer
School of Education
Lord Hope Building
St. James Road
University of Strathclyde
Glasgow
G4 01T

Dear Sir/Madam,

By way of introduction, my name is Christine Smith, and I am currently studying towards a Doctorate in Education at the University of Strathclyde. As part of this study, I am researching the topic of distributed leadership within education. I would like to carry out the research within the context of a school, and am writing to request your permission to approach staff inviting them to participate within the study.

Ethical approval has been granted by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences. An outline of the study is provided on the enclosed information sheet.

I look forward to your response.

Yours Sincerely,

Enc.

Appendix (C)

University of Strathclyde

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

School of Education

Participant Information

Research Study:

Distributed Leadership in Schools: Perspectives of teachers in Secondary Education

The Researcher:

I am a student of the University of Strathclyde. Currently, I am a studying towards a Doctor of Education degree, and as part of this qualification, I am presenting a thesis. The thesis focuses on distributed leadership within secondary schools and specifically, from the teachers' perspective.

I am inviting you to take part in the research, and this information sets out the purpose of the study and what is involved for people who choose to take part.

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of the research is to explore what distributed leadership means to teachers operating within secondary schools. The majority of studies into distributed leadership seem to focus on the perceptions of Head Teachers, and senior staff. This research aims to focus on distributed leadership from teachers' points of view.

The research aims:

>To explore the ways in which distributed leadership is understood and experienced by teachers who practice within secondary schools

>To explore teachers' experiences of the values associated with distributed leadership

>To explore (from the teachers' perspective), the extent to which distributed leadership has achieved its aims

Why have you been chosen to participate?

I want to explore aspects of distributed leadership from the teachers' point of view. I would like to speak to teachers to determine their perceptions. Few of the existing research studies have explored distributed leadership from teachers' perspectives. Therefore, insights that might be gleaned from this study may contribute to existing research. The researcher chose this school as the focus for the study because of its size, the number and diversity of the faculties from which respondents might be drawn and the possibility of access to staff who operate at different levels within the school including, senior and non-promoted teachers.

I am interested in the view of teachers who work at different levels within the school and the structure within this school – (depute head teachers, principal teachers, faculty head teachers, and classroom teachers), makes it suitable for the purpose of my research. Individuals who will be asked to participate in the research, will be invited to do so on the grounds of; their occupation as a; depute head teacher, faculty head, teacher, learning support teacher, or assisted learning support teacher. Aligning with the interpretative stance used to orientate the study, non-probability sampling techniques will be used with the intention of producing data that is representative of this school, and its staff. Thirty one participants will be invited to participate within the research. This sample will include; three depute head teachers, four faculty heads, four teachers from each of four faculties, four learning support teachers, and four assisted learning support teachers. Teachers from each of the four faculties will be selected on the basis of traits that typify that faculty, for example; gender, age, and experience in teaching.

Completion of the questionnaire is a choice people can make and should you choose to complete it, you will be instructed to provide your name, and contact details, only if you wish to be selected for participation in a semi-structured interview. Whether or not you indicate that you would be willing to be selected to participate in as semi-structured interview, you may not be selected. If you are selected for participation in a semi-structured interview, the researcher will ask you whether or not you wish to be included in a focus group. If you indicate that you are willing to be included in the focus group, you will be invited to join it.

What will be involved if you take part?

A questionnaire

Firstly, participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. This consists of a series of questions/statements. Each question/statement on the questionnaire contains a series of possible answers ranging from strongly agree, agree, (neither agree nor disagree), disagree and strongly disagree. You will be asked to read each of the questions/statements and indicate which of the statements most closely reflects your attitude or belief. The questionnaire will be available in electronic form (survey monkey). A paper version of the questionnaire will be available for those who prefer it to the on-line version. An advantage associated with this type of questionnaire is that it is quick to complete as you will not be required to formulate an answer. Your responses to the questionnaire will only be accessible by you and by the researcher. If you prefer paper copies, these will be supplied.

You may choose whether or not to complete the questionnaire. If you choose to complete it, you may do so in sections. For example, you may complete a section, save your answers, and return to it later. If you choose to complete the questionnaire in this way, please save your answers by using the (save) tab at the bottom of the page. If you choose to complete the questionnaire, you need only provide your name, and contact details, should you wish to be selected for the next stage of the research, which will

consist of a semi-structured interview. Otherwise, the responses you provide to the questionnaire may remain anonymous.

Whether or not, you provide your name and contact details, you may, or may not, be selected to participate in the next stage of the research.

Semi-structured Interview

From those who provide their name, and contact details on the questionnaire, the researcher will select six people, at random, for participation in a semi-structured interview. The researcher is interested in the perspectives of teachers who operate at different levels within the school, and therefore, will aim for a representative sample.

If you are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview, it will last for approximately 45 minutes. The researcher will bring along to the interview, a set of pre-prepared questions, however, as the interview unfolds, there may be elements of the conversation which the researcher wants to explore in further detail. Therefore, further questions may be used, and the conversation may veer away from the topics that appear on the pre-prepared interview schedule, and this is why the interview is referred to as 'semi-structured'. The interview schedule can be provided in advance and we will agree a venue that is suitable and private. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed.

Focus group discussion

For the final stage, you may be invited to take part in a focus group discussion with other teachers, and issues can be explored further. A maximum of 8 participants will be invited to the focus group session. The aim of a focus group is to capture and build upon data derived during the questionnaire, and semi-structured interview. Data that may emerge may provide insights into shared perceptions and beliefs. The focus group activity will be recorded and transcribed.

Transcripts formed on conclusion of the semi-structured interviews will be provided for respondents to read in order to ensure that they agree with the content, and that it is a fair representation of their input. On conclusion of the focus group session, respondents will be invited to attend a feedback meeting. The researcher will present the main findings, and a copy of the findings will be provided for each respondent.

Before the study takes place, please read and sign the attached consent form. Whether or not you participate in the study, is your choice. If you do choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time, without explanation. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign the consent form showing that you are willing to be involved.

What are the potential risks of taking part?

In agreeing to take part, you risk giving up your time so that you will be able to; complete a questionnaire, provide your views within a semi-structured interview, and participate in a focus group session.

What happens to the information you provide?

All information supplied for the purpose of the research will be treated in the strictest confidence. Responses provided to the questionnaire will be accessible to the respondent, and to the researcher. No person or organisation will be identifiable within the thesis, or any relevant publication or

conference. Questionnaires will be completed using 'Survey Monkey', which is a closed system. The results of each person's questionnaire will be accessible only to them, and to the researcher. Recordings made during interviews and focus groups will be deleted at the end of the study. The research will be carried out in line with the University of Strathclyde code of ethical practice.

The information you provide will be retained in a locked cabinet within the office of the researcher until the thesis has been completed. Within one week of completion of the thesis, the data will be deleted. Any paper documents will be disposed of by shredding. Anonymity will be maintained, and no references to those individuals who supplied the information will be made within the finished thesis, and any other relevant publication/conference.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The results of the study will be published within a thesis presented as part of a Doctorate in Education and any other relevant publications/conferences. Parts of the work may be presented at scientific presentations and in academic literature.

Who can be contacted if you need more information?

For more information you can contact the researcher using the contact details below:

Christine Smith,
School of Education,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of Education,
Lord Hope Building,
St. James Road,
University of Strathclyde,
Glasgow.
G4 01T
E-mail - Christine.smith@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk

Academic Supervisor:

Dr. Joan Mowat,
Senior Lecturer,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of Education,
Lord Hope Building,
St. James Road,
University of Strathclyde,
Glasgow.
G4 01T
E-mail – Joan.mowat@strath.ac.uk

School of Education Ethics Convenor:

Dr. Eleni Karagiannidou,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of Education,

Lord Hope Building,
St. James Road,
University of Strathclyde,
Glasgow.
G4 01T

E-mail – Eleni.Karagiannidou@strath.ac.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Appendix (D) – Exemplification of a Consent Form

University of Strathclyde

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Education

Distributed Leadership: Teachers' Perspectives

Consent Form

This study seeks to generate insights into the perspectives of secondary school teachers in relation to their understandings of distributed leadership.

Until now, research into distributed leadership within education has focused upon the perceptions of senior leaders. Through this study, I hope to contribute to the current knowledge base in relation to the ways in which distributed leadership is experienced and understood from the perspectives of teachers.

An information sheet has been provided which explains the study in some detail. Involvement within this study will require participants to complete a questionnaire which will take approximately 20 minutes. Subsequent to completion of the questionnaire, participants may be invited to participate in a semi-structured interview which will take approximately 45 minutes, and then a focus group discussion which will take approximately 45 minutes. Recordings will be made of responses to each of the above.

Completion of the questionnaire is your choice and should you choose to complete it, you will be instructed to provide your name and contact details, only if you wish to be selected for participation in an interview. Whether, or not, you indicate that you would be willing to be selected to participate in an interview, you may not be selected. If you are selected for participation in an interview, the researcher will ask you whether, or not, you wish to be included in a focus group discussion. If you indicate that you are willing to be included in the focus group discussion, you will be invited to join it.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

Please indicate your consent to participating by ticking the boxes below:

I have chosen to participate in this study ☐

I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation ☐

I have read the information sheet provided and understand what is required of me ☐

I agree to participate (as required), in the:

Questionnaire ☐

Semi-structured interview ☐

Focus group discussion ☐

I understand that the information provided will be treated in confidence ☐

I am aware that information I provide may be used for research purposes ☐

I understand that no organisation or person will be identifiable within the completed thesis or any relevant publication/conference. ☐

Participant's name: Signature:

_____ _____

Date:

_____

Appendix (E) – Exemplification of a Questionnaire

University of Strathclyde

School of Education

Thesis title: Distributed Leadership: Teachers' Perspectives

I am a student of the University of Strathclyde. Currently, I am a studying towards a Doctor of Education degree and as part of this qualification I am presenting a thesis. The thesis focuses on distributed leadership within secondary schools and specifically from the teachers' perspective.

I am inviting you to take part in the research and this information sets out the purpose of the study and what is involved for people who choose to take part.

The purpose of the research is to explore what distributed leadership means to teachers operating within secondary schools. The majority of studies into distributed leadership seem to focus on the perceptions of Head Teachers and senior staff. This research aims to focus on distributed leadership form the teachers' point of view.

The research aims to explore:

- The ways in which secondary school teachers understand and experience distributed Leadership.
- Teachers' experience of the values associated with distributed leadership.
- To explore the extent to which distributed leadership has achieved its aims.

Completion of this questionnaire is your choice, and you may choose not to continue. On completion of the questionnaire please provide your name, and contact details, only if you wish to be selected for the next stage of the research, which will be a semi-structured interview lasting for approximately 45 minutes, and a focus group lasting for approximately, 45 minutes. Even if you have provided your name, and contact details, you may, or may not, be selected to participate in the interview stage.

Semi-structured interviews

The use of semi-structured interviews will seek to explore issues in relation to the research questions, and to elaborate upon issues arising from the data generated through the use of the questionnaire. At this stage of the research, the researcher aims to include 6 respondents in the semi-structured interviews. Six of the respondents who (self-selected), by adding their names and contact details on their questionnaires, will then be randomly selected for the next stage of the research. Selection will aim to create a sample representative of teachers at each level within the school.

All information supplied for the purpose of the research will be treated in the strictest confidence. In addition, the school involved within the study will be referred to by a number, and no person or organisation will be identifiable from reading the completed thesis.

The research will be carried out in line with the University of Strathclyde code of ethical practice.

At no point will the information supplied by participants be discussed with any other participant or individual.

The questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Should you wish to partially complete a section, and then return to it at a later time, please remember to save your entries by using the (save) bar, found at the bottom of the relevant page. This will enable you to return to the questionnaire at a later time, and complete the remainder.

To begin the questionnaire, select the

'Next' button below.

Thank you for your participation.

Christine Smith

The following statements are about ways in which distributed leadership may be perceived.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

The area below each question is available for any views or comments you wish to add.

1. **Distributed leadership is an approach that helps teachers to develop their leadership expertise.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

2. **The school benefits from staff expertise when leadership is distributed across the school.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

3. **Distributed leadership is promoted within schools as a way of engaging teachers in fulfilling the educational aims of the Scottish Government.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

4. **Distributed leadership is about staff working together to solve an issue or problem.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

5. **Distributed leadership is a way of spreading tasks more widely across the school staff.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The following statements are about values associated with distributed leadership.

6. **The practice of distributed leadership makes the school more democratic.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

7. **My involvement in distributed leadership practice makes me feel more empowered.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

8. **Distributed leadership promotes equality.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

9. **School teachers feel more engaged with the work of the school due to distributed leadership practices.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The following statements are about aims associated with distributed leadership.

10. **Distribution of leadership within the school serves my interests and goals.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

11. Distribution of leadership is a 'good thing'.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

12. Distribution of leadership provides progressive opportunities for teachers' professional development.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

13. When teachers learn together as part of a team, the results are always positive.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

14. Participation in activities outside of the school contributes significantly to my professional development.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

15. Conflict sometimes obstructs team work and collegial working.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

16. My contribution to decision making makes a direct contribution to the school.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

17. Teacher development/learning that takes place through working with colleagues in teams can result in the circulation of poor practices.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

18. The opportunities I have to lead on a task/issue make me think of myself as a leader.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

19. I am not autonomous and lack the power to make changes.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please provide the following information, only if you wish to be selected for participation in a semi-structured interview:

Name:

Location:

Contact Telephone Number:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix (F) – Exemplification of an Interview Schedule

University of Strathclyde
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Education

Research Question 1: How is distributed leadership understood and experienced by teachers?

1.1 What has been your experience of leadership within this school?

1.2 How do you think this works in practice?

1.3 Have you found it to be a worthwhile experience?

Research Question 2: What is the perception of teachers in relation to the values which underpin distributed leadership?

2.1 Are there any values or behaviours that you associate with leadership within the school?

2.2 How have things changed within the school over the last few sessions?

Research Question 3: To what extent (if any) do teachers believe that distributed leadership has achieved its aims?

3.1 How would you describe the mode of leadership that you experience within the school?

3.2. Are there any specific objectives that you associate with this type of leadership?

Section 4

4.1 Is there anything else you want to say about this topic that I haven't asked you?

4.2 Is there anything else that you want to ask me?

Thank you for taking the time to provide this information.

Appendix (G) – Exemplification of Focus Group Prompts

Focus Group Interview Prompts

Research Question (1)

How is distributed leadership understood and experienced by teachers?

- Drawing upon your experience, what is your understanding of leadership within the school?

- To what extent has this impacted upon you?

Research Question (2)

What is the perception of teachers in relation to the values which underpin distributed leadership, for example (inclusion, democracy, autonomy, empowerment, equality, collegiality, participation and engagement)?

- What, (if anything), has changed as a result of leadership within the school?

  What leads you to say this?

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approach?

Research Question (3)

To what extent (if any) do teachers perceive that distributed leadership has achieved its aims in relation to leadership development and professional development?

- 3.1 What opportunities for leadership development (if any), have been afforded through the leadership regime in this school?

  3.1.2 What aspects (if any) have been problematic?

  3.1.3 What leads you to say this?

  3.1.4. How might this be improved?

- 3.2 What opportunities for professional development (if any), have been afforded through the leadership regime within the school?

3.2.1 What aspects (if any) have been problematic?

3.2.3 What leads you to say this?

3.3.3. How might this be improved?

General

- Is there anything else you would like to say about the topic that I haven't asked?
- Is there anything else you want to ask me?
- Is there anything you would change?

Appendix (H) – Exemplification of a Matrix used to Display Quantitative Data

Matrix representing data derived from a Likert-scale questionnaire

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Distributed leadership is an approach that helps teachers to develop their leadership expertise.					
The school benefits from staff expertise when leadership is distributed across the school.					
Distributed leadership is promoted within schools as a way of engaging teachers in fulfilling the educational aims of the Scottish Government.					
Distributed leadership is about staff working together to solve an issue or problem.					
Distributed leadership is a way of spreading tasks more widely across the school staff.					
The practice of distributed leadership makes the school more democratic.					
My involvement in distributed leadership practice makes me feel more empowered.					
Distributed leadership promotes equality.					
School teachers feel more engaged with the work of the school due to distributed leadership practices.					
Distribution of leadership within the school serves my					

interests and goals.					
Distribution of leadership provides progressive opportunities for teachers' professional development.					
Participation in activities outside of the school contributes significantly to my professional development.					
Conflict sometimes obstructs team work and collegial working.					
My contribution to decision making makes a direct contribution to the school.					
Teacher development/learning that takes place through working with colleagues in teams can result in the circulation of poor practices.					
The opportunities I have to lead on a task/issue make me think of myself as a leader.					
I am not autonomous and lack the power to make changes.					

Appendix (I) – Exemplification of Thematic Analysis Process

Thematic Analysis – Process

The following provides an account of how the thematic analysis was conducted in terms of the stages of the analysis and the significance of each stage.

Transcribing Data – Stage (1)

Transcripts obtained from audio recordings were compiled by the researcher and each recorded interview was transcribed in its entirety. The transcripts were compiled by the researcher soon after each interview and focus group discussion. Braun & Clarke (2006) perceive the process of transcription as a key stage of data analysis. The process, in relation to this study, afforded an opportunity for the researcher to re-engage with data and to glean a thorough understanding of it. Each transcript was assigned a number (1-8) signifying each of the eight participants who provided data. The status of each individual was also indicated on each transcript for example, (DH1) was used to denote the first depute head teacher and (DH2) to denote the second and so on… Transcription followed the same sequence as the three main research questions used to guide this study. As such, each participant's data was transcribed in the same order. On completion of the transcripts the researcher ascertained the accuracy of each by checking its contents against the audio recordings.

Braun & Clarke (2006) assert that the researcher's immersion in data is crucial if they are to become completely familiar with its breadth of the content. Having conducted the interviews and a focus group discussion the researcher has, to an extent, some prior knowledge of data. However, in order to become completely familiar with its contents the researcher read each transcript a number of times. This process served to remind the researcher of the context and meaning of the dialogue. Horrocks & King (2010) identify that this stage is important because analysis of any particular section of a transcript needs to be done in the context of the entire interview.

Through frequent scrutiny of transcripts the researcher was able to recognise possible patterns in data that might be useful in the process of coding to follow. During this stage the researcher made notes on ideas that were thought to be of interest. The researcher used some of these ideas within codes and themes developed later in the analysis.

Identifying Relevant Aspects of Participants' Accounts – Stage (2)

Having scrutinised the transcripts the researcher proceeded to highlight areas of interest in each participant's response. Braun & Clarke (2006) recognise that this stage in the analysis involves identifying a feature of data that is of interest to the analyst. An exemplification of the process for the purpose of this analysis can be seen in (figure 4.2) below. In the first column the researcher has included a section of transcript. Having scrutinised the transcript the researcher selected extracts of interest. The second column shows aspects of the transcript which the researcher deemed to be relevant or interesting elements of the participant's account.

Transcript	Aspects of interest in the participant's account (Data extracts)
In this school there is a culture in which leadership opportunities are created for everyone. Individual staff are encouraged to lead in terms of developing curriculum courses… developing practice in terms of learning and teaching. Staff are given opportunities to take part in working groups and short term groups for specific improvements and each session, a number of staff are appointed as project leaders to enable them to take forward a whole-school initiative. So that allows them to take something forward beyond their role as a classroom teacher, principal teacher or faculty head and to lead a whole school initiative. All people would have the opportunity and others would see that they have the opportunity – they would see leadership taking place and…being part of the life of the school so, that is really how we move things forward by having lots of people delivering change and improvement.	In this school there is a culture in which leadership opportunities are created for everyone. Staff are given opportunities to take part in working groups and short term groups for specific improvements each session, a number of staff are appointed as project leaders to enable them to take forward a whole-school initiative. That allows them to take something forward beyond their role as a classroom teacher, principal teacher or faculty head and to lead a whole school initiative. All people would have the opportunity… others would see that they have the opportunity they would see leadership taking place and…being part of the life of the school that is really how we move things forward by having lots of people delivering change and improvement.

Figure 4.2: An exemplification of aspects of a participant's account

Having read and scrutinised data the researcher used charts such as in the sample above in order to list aspects of interest within it. Braun & Clarke (2006) identify that this process involves extracting the most basic element of data that is of interest to the analyst and can be evaluated in a meaningful way. This part of the process is considered as the production of initial codes from raw data.

Forming Descriptive Comments – Stage (3)

Having worked systematically through each transcript identifying interesting aspects of data the researcher began the process of forming 'descriptive comments'. This process involved the research in reading each data extract, (aspect of interest), and creating an initial comment that aimed to capture the essence of the participant's meaning. Horricks & King (2010) suggest that researchers should avoid the temptation to speculate about what might lie behind a participant's account and stay close to the data. When considering each 'aspect of interest' and how each would be expressed as a 'descriptive comment' the researcher took account of the surrounding text. This measure aimed to ensure that the descriptive comments remained true to participants' accounts within the general context of the interviews from which data was derived. Bryman (2001) suggests that the loss of context is a frequent criticism of coding and this occurs because relevant data has been excluded. An exemplification of the researcher's 'descriptive comments' in relation to aspects of data can be found in (figure 4.3) below.

Aspects of interest in the participant's account (Data extracts)	Descriptive comments
In this school there is a culture in which leadership opportunities are created for everyone (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Opportunities in this school are provided for all teachers as part of the school culture (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Staff are given opportunities to take part in working groups and short term groups for specific improvements (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	The school provides opportunities for teachers to participate in working groups that focus on particular improvements (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
each session, a number of staff are appointed as project leaders to enable them to take forward a whole-school initiative. That allows them to take something forward beyond their role as a classroom teacher, principal teacher or faculty head and to lead a whole school initiative (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Project leader appointments each year enable teachers to lead a whole-school project (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT). Project leadership enables teachers to take responsibility outside of their classroom role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
All people would have the opportunity… (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Every teacher has the opportunity to become a PL (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
others would see that they have the opportunity (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Staff within the school can see others engaging in the PL role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
they would see leadership taking place and…being part of the life of the school (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Staff within the school witness leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
that is really how we move things forward by having lots of people delivering change and improvement (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Many staff engaging in delivering change is how the school moves forwards (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

Figure 4.3 Exemplification of the identification of initial comments the researcher has made in relation to areas of interest within data.

Descriptive Codes – Stage (4)

For this stage of the analysis the researcher used the descriptive comments (as above) in order to define the descriptive codes. During the following stage of analysis the researcher created descriptive codes in the form of short statements that aimed to capture the essence of the participant's account. According to Horricks & King (2010) descriptive codes do not have to include every part of the text and can be labelled using shortened words, phrases or abbreviations. The researcher continued the process until all data had been coded.

Descriptive Comments	Descriptive Codes
Opportunities in this school are provided for all teachers as part of the school culture (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Opportunities are provided for teachers to lead (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
The school provides opportunities for teachers to participate in working groups that focus on particular improvements (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Teachers participate in focused working groups (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Project leader appointments each year enable teachers to lead a whole-school project (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Whole-school leadership through the Project Leader role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Project leadership enables teachers to take responsibility outside of their classroom role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Through the PL teachers take on responsibility beyond the classroom (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Every teacher has the opportunity to become a PL (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	The opportunity of a PL role is available to all teachers (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Staff within the school can see others engaging in the PL role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Teachers see colleagues deliver the PL role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Staff within the school witness leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Teachers see colleagues exercising leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Many staff engaging in delivering change is how the school moves forwards (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	School improvement is driven by numerous staff exercising leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

Figure 4.4 Exemplification of descriptive codes formed from descriptive comments.

Braun & Clarke (2006) recognise that at the end of this process a list of codes will have been produced that have been derived from across the entire data set.

LIST OF CODES IDENTIFIED ACROSS DATA SET
Opportunities are provided for teachers to lead (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Teachers participate in focused working groups (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
Whole-school leadership through the Project Leader role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

Through the PL teachers take on responsibility beyond the classroom (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

The opportunity of a PL role is available to all teachers (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

Teachers see colleagues deliver the PL role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

Teachers see colleagues exercising leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

School improvement is driven by numerous staff exercising leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

All teachers have the opportunity to exercise leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).

School-wide teachers can see leadership being exercised (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).

The creation of opportunities for all teachers to exercise leadership is facilitated by the school's culture (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).

Teachers can suggest a project they wish to lead upon (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).

Figure 4.5 Excerpt from a list of descriptive codes that were formed across the entire data set.

Sorting Codes – Stage (4)

According to Horricks & King (2010) analytical codes capture the meaning of a group of descriptive codes. This stage of the analysis involved the researcher in looking across the descriptive codes in order to identify those that seemed to share a common meaning. Subsequently, the descriptive codes were grouped together under a single heading or 'analytical code'. Braun & Clarke (2006) describe this process as naming selections of text. Essentially, the analytical code aims to capture the essence of the group of descriptive codes. The formation of descriptive and analytical codes was an iterative process that involved the researcher in redefining and collapsing codes as the analysis continued. The names (analytical codes) were used to inform sub-themes. Saldana (2009) recognises that the coding process is rarely completed on the first occasion and that researchers should refine codes by adding, subtracting or combining potential codes. The researcher revisited the transcripts frequently throughout this analysis in order to verify participants' meanings and to ensuring that significant data had not been omitted. Codes were frequently revised and some were deleted because they were deemed to be irrelevant in terms of the study's aims and the research questions. An exemplification of the analytical codes can be found in (figure 4.6) below.

Descriptive Codes	Analytical code
Opportunities are provided for teachers to lead	Leadership opportunities

(RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	
Teachers participate in focused working groups (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Leadership through participation
Whole-school leadership through the Project Leader role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Whole-school leadership
Through the PL teachers take on responsibility beyond the classroom (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Leadership responsibility
The opportunity of a PL role is available to all teachers (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	Leadership opportunities
Teachers see colleagues deliver the PL role (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	A self-sustaining system
Teachers see colleagues exercising leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	A self-sustaining system
School improvement is driven by numerous staff exercising leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	School improvement

Figure 4.6 Excerpt from a list of labels or analytical codes that were attached to descriptive codes.

Collating Codes - Stage 5

Having worked systematically through the above stages one to four the researcher identified 'aspects of interest' in participants' accounts, used the 'aspects of interest' to create descriptive comments and from the descriptive comments created descriptive codes. The following phase of the analysis involved the researcher in collating codes together within each of the analytical codes. Miles & Huberman (1994) describe the process of coding as an integral part of data analysis. Analysis at the level of coding was accomplished by sorting the codes into their various different groupings under their names or (analytical codes). An exemplification of the process of coded and collated data can be found in (figure 4.7) below.

Leadership opportunities Opportunities are provided for teachers to lead (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
The opportunity of a PL role is available to all teachers (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
All teachers have the opportunity to exercise leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).

Both formal leaders and classroom teachers have opportunities to exercise leadership (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).

Opportunities for teachers to take on additional responsibility are provide (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).

Through the opportunities provided teachers can try out or sample leadership (RQ1/1.1/ML2/INT4).

Opportunities to exercise leadership are created by teachers school-wide in addition to SMT (RQ1/1.1/ML2/INT4).

Promoted staff are also afforded opportunities to exercise leadership of projects (RQ1/1.1/CT1/INT7).

Leadership Responsibility

Through the PL teachers take on responsibility beyond the classroom (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT1).

The school provides opportunities for teachers to take responsibility outside of their classroom teaching (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).

Opportunities for teachers to take on additional responsibility are provide (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).

Teachers are encouraged to assume responsibility (RQ1/1.1/ML3/INT5).

In providing teachers with opportunities to take responsibility outside of their classroom role, this school is highly effective (RQ1/1.1/CT1/INT7).

SMT and the HT distributing more responsibility (RQ1/1.1/CT2/INT8).

Utilising the actions from professional up-date as a vehicle for the distribution of additional responsibility (RQ1/1.1/CT2/INT8).

Figure 4.7: Exemplification of collated codes.

Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that the researcher can identify codes by writing notes on the text being analysed or collating each code together using file cards. The above example shows the process used by the researcher in order to collate data relevant to each analytical code. Having sorted descriptive codes under each analytical code Braun & Clarke (2006) advocate gathering data extracts in relation to the codes that have been collated. The analysis progressed to aligning the codes with the relevant data extracts. Data were systematically reviewed in order to ensure that a name, definition, and exhaustive set of data extracts to support each theme were identified. According to Braun & Clarke (2006) one of the principal criteria used in order to establish the existence of a theme is whether, or not, there are sufficient data extracts to support the theme.

Codes	Relevant Data Extract
Leadership opportunities Opportunities are provided for teachers to lead (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	In this school there is a culture in which leadership opportunities are created for everyone (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).

The opportunity of a PL role is available to all teachers (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).	All people would have the opportunity… (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT).
All teachers have the opportunity to exercise leadership (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).	Everyone in the school has the opportunity to lead and others can see how they respond as they lead a project (RQ1/1.1/DH2/INT).
Both formal leaders and classroom teachers have opportunities to exercise leadership (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).	Managers and classroom teachers have the opportunity to take on a project and in the school (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).
Opportunities for teachers to take on additional responsibility are provide (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).	Opportunities for people to take on more responsibility are provided through the school (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).
Through the opportunities provided teachers can try out or sample leadership (RQ1/1.1/ML2/INT4).	that sort of mini-leadership is good it does not just come from SMT… that comes from un-promoted staff all-round the school (RQ1/1.1/ML2/INT4).
Opportunities to exercise leadership are created by teachers school-wide in addition to SMT (RQ1/1.1/ML2/INT4).	
Promoted staff are also afforded opportunities to exercise leadership of projects (RQ1/1.1/CT1/INT7).	also the managers have opps. to lead on tasks or projects (RQ1/1.1/CT1/INT).
Opportunities for teachers to exercise leadership do not occur by chance (RQ1/1.3/ML1/INT3).	Opps. don't happen by chance (RQ1/1.3/ML1/INT3).
There are numerous opportunities for classroom teachers to exercise leadership outside of the classroom (RQ1/1.3/ML1/INT3).	there are a lot of opps. for Classroom teachers to get involved beyond their teaching (RQ1/1.3/ML1/INT3).
	What's important about being given an opp. To lead something beyond your curriculum

Leadership Responsibility	
Through the PL teachers take on responsibility beyond the classroom (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT1).	each session, a number of staff are appointed as project leaders to enable them to take forward a whole-school initiative. That allows them to take something forward beyond their role as a classroom teacher, principal teacher or faculty head and to lead a whole school initiative (RQ1/1.1/DH1/INT1).
The school provides opportunities for teachers to take responsibility outside of their classroom teaching (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).	people are given opportunities to take on responsibilities outside besides their classroom duties (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).
Opportunities for teachers to take on additional responsibility are provide (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).	Opportunities for people to take on more responsibility are provided through the school (RQ1/1.1/ML1/INT3).

Teachers are encouraged to assume responsibility (RQ1/1.1/ML3/INT5). In providing teachers with opportunities to take responsibility outside of their classroom role, this school is highly effective (RQ1/1.1/CT1/INT7). SMT and the HT distributing more responsibility (RQ1/1.1/CT2/INT8). Utilising the actions from professional up-date as a vehicle for the distribution of additional responsibility (RQ1/1.1/CT2/INT8).	In this school you are encouraged to take on responsibilities (RQ1/1.1/ML3/INT5). I think this school are very good at providing opportunities for people to take on more responsibility apart from your classroom teaching (RQ1/1.1/CT1/INT7). The distribution of additional responsibility at direction of head teacher and SMT (RQ1/1.1/CT2/INT8). The distribution of additional responsibility… as actions or focuses for Professional Update RQ1/1.1/CT2/INT8).

Figure 4.8: Exemplification of collated data extracts in relation to codes.

Braun & Clarke (2006) recognise that this phase involves sorting different codes into potential themes and collating all data extracts within the identified themes. In this analysis of codes the researcher considers how different codes may combine in order to form an over-arching theme. Braun & Clarke (2006) advocate the use of theme piles whereby codes/extracts can be organised into theme-piles (p. 19).

For the purpose of this study the researcher organised codes using a word processor. In the final stages of the analysis a thematic map was produced in order to illustrate the over-arching themes and sub-themes that had been identified.

Thematic Map

Themes	Sub-themes
1) Facilitated Leadership	
>	Leadership Opportunities
>	Leadership as Responsibility
>	Support for Leadership
2) How Teachers Exercise Leadership	
>	Leadership of the Classroom
>	Leadership Beyond the Classroom
>	Leadership within the Department
>	Whole-school Leadership
>	Leadership through Participation
>	Leadership of Initiatives
3) Drivers of Leadership	

> The School's 'Change' Ethos
> The Project Leader Role
> A self-sustaining System
> Progress & Development Review & CPD
> Narrowing of Options

4) Aims Associated with Leadership
> Leadership & learning
> School improvement

5) What Leadership Affords
> Acquisition of Skills
> School Improvement
> Collegiality
> Inclusion
> Leadership & Learning
> Empowerment
> Teacher's Attitudes
> Outcomes

6) Lack of Engagement in Leadership
> Associated Issues/concerns
> Workload
> Incentives

Figure 4.9: Exemplification of a thematic map.

Having created, sorted and classified descriptive and analytical codes, having looked across data sets and having taken all factors together, it was necessary to identify the key messages or themes.

Appendix (J) – Piloting of the Research Tools

Piloting of the Research Tools

Prior to using the data collection tools for the purpose of this study it was necessary to pilot and refine them. Having formulated a clear set of research questions, it is possible to consider the nature of data required in order to address the questions. The over-all research design is explained and described fully in the Methodology Chapter and the Methods Chapter. The following sets out the ways in which the research tools were piloted prior to their use within this case study. Drever (2003) recognises that piloting the research tools serves to ascertain anomalies that could arise during the actual research.

Background

This study explored distributed leadership, its values and aims from the perspectives of teachers (with the exception of the head teacher) who operate at different levels within a secondary school. Wood & Smith (2016) assert that it is essential to identify the population who will encounter the research tools or to whom the research tools will be distributed. Therefore, in order to pilot the questionnaire and interview prompts used within this study, the selection of individuals who share similar characteristics to those above was of key importance. As such, those asked to complete a questionnaire and to respond to the questions posed in an interview schedule included six members of staff who operate within the researcher's place of work. In common with the actual respondent group, each member of staff who participated in the pilot study, although now employed in further education, has extensive prior experience of teaching within a secondary school. Sapsford & Jupp (2006) recognise that representativeness is difficult to guarantee because of small respondent group sizes typical of pilot studies. However, those who agreed to pilot the tools included colleagues who had previously held middle leader and classroom teacher positions within secondary schools. As such, the representativeness of the group was deemed to be acceptable for the purpose of piloting the research tools. Representativeness is considered to be of importance in relation to achieving credible and useful feedback. As discussed in the Methods Chapter and the Results Chapter, the questionnaire forms the initial exploratory phase of the research and plays a lesser role in the research than the qualitative methods. It forms a pilot study and the details of its use and results can be found in (Appendix, K).

The Research Tools

Drever (2003) recognises that bias within data could result as a consequence of the wording or sentence structure used in the research tools. For the purpose of this study, feedback from the six staff members noted above enabled the researcher to evaluate the tools in terms of identifying potential bias in the language or phraseology used within them. It should be noted that the prompts used for the purpose of a focus group discussion reflect the questions posed in the interview schedule. As such, any changes made to questions in the interview schedule would be reflected in the focus group prompts. In order to facilitate triangulation of the resultant data each of the research tools was designed in order to reflect the structure and content of the others. Three distinct sections are contained within each of the research tools and each section draws upon one of the three main research questions. This too, is a measure intended to heighten the 'credibility' of the results of this study.

Piloting the Questionnaire

Questionnaire - First Draft (Likert-scale questionnaire)

Respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire in the form of a Likert-scale. Each respondent was asked to read the statements contained in the questionnaire and to respond by indicating one of five responses along a continuum ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The first draft of the questionnaire contains ninety four statements drawing upon some of the main concepts derived from the literature in relation to distributed leadership, its values and aims. Feedback from respondents indicates that completion of the questionnaire was too time consuming because of the number of questions (statements) it contained. The researcher, having reviewed the literature, had sought to include a number of statements pertaining to each of the research questions. Although teachers' responses to the extensive range of statements contained in the questionnaire would have been interesting to the researcher, on reflection, the volume of information required was considered to be excessive. Gomme (2008) suggests that a reflexive approach assists in reducing the influence of the researcher's personal assumptions and biases. In relation to the questionnaire, it had been assumed, given the nature of this research tool - a series of choices against which teachers could indicate their responses by placing a tick in the appropriate box, that its completion would not be onerous. However, only half of the respondents chose to complete the questionnaire and all intimated that its completion was too time consuming. As such, the inclusion of numerous statements proved to be counterproductive.

Questionnaire – Second Draft (Semantic differential table)

A Semantic Differential Table

Having considered respondents' feedback from the first phase of the questionnaire pilot, the researcher produced a second questionnaire which contained fewer statements. During this process it was important to decide upon retaining statements which, to the greatest extent, address the research questions and study aims. Taking account of the reduced number of statements now contained within the questionnaire, the researcher decided upon the use of a semantic differential table. De Vellis (2003) recognises that such a tool provides two sets of adjectives arranged along a continuum which, in the same manner as a Likert-scale questionnaire, enables respondents to indicate their response by placing a mark along a continuum. This style of questionnaire was intended to provide two sets of data and this was considered to be advantageous and a further reason for the use of such a tool. On completion of the semantic differential table, respondents' feedback suggests that its completion was still time consuming. They did not approve of the inclusion of a second scale against each of the statements which seems to be the main reason this questionnaire was deemed to be too time consuming. It seems that any benefit gained from a reduction in the number of statements had been negated by the inclusion of a second scale.

Questionnaire – Third Draft (Likert-scale questionnaire)

Taking account of the feedback from previous piloting of this tool, a further draft was constructed reverting back to a Likert-scale questionnaire containing (forty seven statements) half of the number contained in the original draft. Respondents' feedback suggests that, although preferable to the sematic differential table, the questionnaire was still lengthy and in addition, the meaning of some of the statements was not easy to comprehend. Although, prior to this stage, the issue of interpretation of the statements had not arisen, this new insight caused the researcher to reflect upon the terminology used within the statements. Gomm (2008) suggests that because of their closeness to the study area researchers can sometimes assume that others share the same familiarity with the topic. On reflection, some of the statements contained terms such as, co-leadership, collective, democratic and co-production. Whilst respondents noted that most of the statements seemed unambiguous, the inclusion of the above terms within some of the statements made them difficult to comprehend. Clearly, a level of familiarity amongst respondents in relation to the discourses that accompany

distributed leadership had been assumed by the researcher. Drever (2003) identifies that technical terms that are incomprehensible to the respondent group require to be altered.

The nature of data required from the use of the research tools and the extent to which such data could be deemed to be 'credible' were some of the principal considerations in piloting and refining the tools for use within this study. As such, in relation to piloting the Likert-scale questionnaire, arriving at clear, unambiguous statements or prompts was crucial so as to avoid bias entering into data as a result of leading or poorly prepared statements/prompts. Additionally, it was essential to reduce the possibility of inaccurate data which could result from the use of statements/prompts which are not comprehensible to respondents or which respondents find difficult to interpret. Wood & Smith (2016) suggest that researchers should ensure that respondents are able to interpret questions in the ways in which the researcher intended and that they should reflect upon "the use of language which some respondents may not fully understand and which may cause spurious results" (p. 90). For the purpose of this study, feedback from respondents in relation to the above enabled the researcher to review each of the statements contained in the Likert-scale questionnaire and to replace terms identified by respondents as problematic.

Questionnaire – Final Draft (Likert-scale questionnaire)

The questionnaire, in its final draft, contains nineteen statements (half of those contained in the previous version) and all statements were reviewed in light of respondents' feedback and some, as stated above, were amended to enable respondents to more easily interpret and comprehend them. Feedback indicates that respondents found all statements in the final draft to be concise and immediately comprehensible. The reduced number of statements made the time required for completion of the questionnaire manageable. As noted previously, details of a pilot study using the questionnaire can be found in (Appendix, K).

Piloting of the interview schedule

The experience of piloting the questionnaire helped to inform the structure and content of the interview schedule and the focus group prompts. During the process of refining these tools, the researcher took account of the feedback obtained from piloting of the questionnaire in terms of the terminology used in each of the prompts, the quantity of prompts included and the respondents' time necessary for completion of the interviews.

Of the six members of staff who had responded to the questionnaire, four co-operated in piloting the interview schedule. In order to secure their co-operation, the researcher assured respondents that the schedule included fewer prompts/statements in comparison with the questionnaire. In order to establish whether, or not, the interview prompts required to be amended the researcher asked respondents to comment on the language used and the phraseology. Feedback confirms that the prompts seem clear and unambiguous in the views of the respondents. As previously stated, each research tool contains three sections, each focussing on prompts/statements pertaining to one of the three main research questions. During the piloting of the questionnaire, participants had no adverse comments in relation to the order in which the prompts/statements were posed. As such, the interview schedule followed the same sequence, as did the focus group prompts.

In order to gauge the ways in which respondents addressed each of the interview prompts the researcher asked each respondent to answer the questions posed. Sapsford & Jupp (2006) suggest that piloting the interview schedule in this way enables the researcher to establish whether the respondents are able to respond to each of the questions or whether certain questions could only be answered after particular prompts were provided by the researcher. What this process helped to establish was that, with the exception of questions in relation to the values teachers would associate with distributed leadership, respondents were able to formulate an answer to the questions within the interview schedule. Respondents had not seen the terminology within the questions as being problematic and they clearly understood the questions. Their hesitancy seemed to relate to their knowledge of the values associated with distributed leadership. However, one of the principal aims of this study, as reflected in research two, is to establish teachers' perceptions in relation to the values which underpin distributed leadership. The researcher, after some consideration of the questions in relation to the values of distributed leadership, decided to leave them unchanged. It was decided that the introduction of the values for example, equality, empowerment, collegiality, autonomy and democracy, (as prompts) would bias data because such information could influence how teachers might respond. Those who assisted in piloting the interview schedule noted that doing so was not onerous in terms of the time it took to complete and none of the respondents appeared to be growing impatient throughout the process.

Evaluating the tools through piloting them has been an iterative process and as noted above, its principal aim is to reduce bias within resultant data and in doing so, promote the quality

and ‘credibility’ of the results generated from this research. In terms of meeting the aims of this study and addressing the research questions, piloting has demonstrated that the tools can be usefully combined as part of this case study. The ways in which those in the respondent group (individuals with extensive experience of teaching in secondary schools) have addressed the questions/statements which form part of the questionnaire and interview schedule serves to indicate how teachers within the actual research context of a secondary school might respond. Additionally, in response to final drafts of the research tools, it seems clear that respondents are able to comprehend what is being asked of them and that phases of the research can be completed within a time scale that is acceptable to them.

APPENDIX (K)

Pilot Study – Results from an Exploratory Questionnaire

Introduction

The over-all research design is explained and described fully in the Methodology Chapter and the Methods Chapter. This discussion focuses on a questionnaire which takes the form of a pilot study. Cohen et al. (2011) recognise that a pilot study provides guidelines for further enquiry. Each of the research methods, as part of the piloting process, had been issued to a group of individuals within the researcher's place of work. The respondents each had extensive experience of teaching within secondary schools. Details of this phase of the piloting and development of the research methods can be found in (Appendix, J). Subsequently, a pilot study was carried out by issuing the questionnaire to teachers who operate within the secondary school in which the study was based. This enabled the researcher to gauge the views of the actual respondent group and the ways in which each would engage with the statements contained within the questionnaire. As discussed in the Methods Chapter and in the Results Chapter, the questionnaire plays a lesser role in the research than the qualitative methods mainly used. However, used as a pilot study, the questionnaire formed an initial exploratory phase in the developmental process of the research. Each of the statements has a deliberate focus and the ways in which respondents engaged with them assisted in tailoring the semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion.

Pilot Study - Process & Results

The questionnaire was issued to all teachers within the secondary school (with the exception of the head teacher). Teachers were asked to indicate their attitudes and beliefs in relation to distributed leadership by responding to statements contained within the questionnaire. Thirteen teachers responded to the questionnaire - seven CTs, four MLs, and two DHTs. It is acknowledged that a 12.07% response rate is low. It is, therefore, acknowledged as a limitation of this study in terms of generalisability of these results.

Results Derived from the use of a Likert-scale Questionnaire

Above each segment of the results, and in order to assist the reader, the statements to which teachers were asked to respond have been included in bold text. Charts have been used throughout this section in order that the reader is quickly able to gain a sense of the results.

Distributed leadership is an approach that helps teachers to develop their leadership expertise.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	2	5			
MLs		4			
DHs		2			

The school benefits from staff expertise when leadership is distributed across the school.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs		7			
MLs		4			
DHs		2			

Distributed leadership is a way of spreading tasks more widely across the school staff.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	5		2		
MLs	4				
DHs					2

My involvement in distributed leadership practice makes me feel more empowered

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs			7		
MLs	1	3			
DHs		2			

School teachers feel more engaged with the work of the school due to distributed leadership practices

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	7				
MLs	1		3		
DHs					2

Distribution of leadership within the school serves my interests and goals.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs		7			
MLs	1	3			
DHs			2		

Distribution of leadership is a 'good thing'.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs		7			
MLs	2	2			
DHs		2			

When teachers learn together as part of a team the results are always positive.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs		1	6		
MLs		1	3		
DHs					2

Conflict sometimes obstructs collegial working

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	7				
MLs	1		3		
DHs	2				

My contribution to decision-making makes a direct contribution to the school.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	7				
MLs	3		1		
DHs		2			

The opportunities I have had to lead on a task/initiative make me think of myself as a leader.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	7				
MLs	1	1	2		
DHs		2			

I am not autonomous and lack the power to make changes.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs				7	
MLs				4	
DHs					2

Distributed leadership is promoted within schools as a way of engaging teachers in fulfilling the educational aims of the Scottish Government.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	7				
MLs	4				
DHs			2		

Distributed leadership is about staff working together to solve an issue or problem.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs	7				
MLs	1		3		
DHs				2	

The practice of distributed leadership makes the school more democratic.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs				7	
MLs	3		1		
DHs				2	

Distributed leadership promotes equality

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs					7
MLs	1		3		
DHs					2

Participation in activities outside of the school contributes significantly to my personal development.

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs			7		
MLs	2	1		1	
DHs				2	

T**eacher development/learning that takes place through working with colleagues in teams can result in the circulation of poor practices.**

Teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CTs			7		
MLs	2		1	1	
DHs	2				

As discussed in the Methods Chapter, this pilot study was conducted as an initial stage in the developmental process of the research. It served as an introduction to the research phases to follow and a way of familiarising teachers with the research area. Each of the above statements has a deliberate focus and the ways in which respondents engaged with them assisted in tailoring the semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion. The piloting and development of the research tools is discussed further within (Appendix, J).

APPENDIX (L)

List of Abbreviations Used Throughout the Thesis

BERA	British Educational Research Association
CFE	Curriculum for Excellence
CT	Classroom teacher
CT1	Classroom teacher one
CT2	Classroom teacher two
CT3	Classroom teacher three
CTS	Charter Teacher Scheme
CPD	Continued professional development
DH	Depute head
DH1	Depute head teacher one
DH2	Depute head teacher two
FEL	Framework for Educational Leadership
Fg	Focus group discussion
GTCS	General Teaching Council for Scotland
Int	Interview
ML	Middle leader
ML1	Middle leader one
ML2	Middle leader two
ML3	Middle leader three
ML4	Middle leader four
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NIF	National Improvement Framework
PDR	Professional Development Review
PL	Project Leader
RICEA	Report of Initial Findings of the International Council of Education Advisors
RQ1	Research question one
RQ2	Research question two
RQ3	Research question three
SCEL	Scottish College for Educational Leadership
SCPD	Standards for Career-long Professional Development
SERA	Scottish Educational Research Association

SFR	Standards for Registration
SGGR	Scottish Government Governance Review
SLM	Standards for Leadership and Management
SMT	Senior Management Team
TSFR	Teaching Scotland's Future Report
UK	United Kingdom