Women in educational management: the career progress and leadership styles of female secondary headteachers in England and Wales

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

Marianne Coleman
School of Education
University of Leicester

4 September 1998
Acknowledgements

I should like to thank my supervisor Professor Tony Bush for all his support and encouragement of my research and writing which has made the completion of this thesis possible.

My thanks also go to Rob Dixon, and to Christine Wise for their technical help and expertise in relation to the analysis of the survey data. I am especially grateful to Pip Murray, Joyce Palmer, Caroyn Marriott and other members of the support staff of the EMDU past and present who gave practical help, advice on layout and moral support.

I should also like to thank my family, sons Daniel and David, who helped with the data inputting, and particularly my husband John, for continuing understanding and support.
Abstract

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Marianne Coleman

Women constitute approximately half of the teaching force of secondary schools in England and Wales but men are three times more likely than women to achieve secondary headship. A similar disproportion of women in senior management in education can be found in the USA, in other European countries and elsewhere.

Reasons for the apparent inequity, identified from the literature, include both overt and covert discrimination, which may affect selection for promotion, and opportunities for professional development within the workplace. Women are also likely to be constrained in their careers by the general acceptance that women bear the prime responsibility for domestic concerns, including the care of children and other dependants. The link with domestic life is likely to influence and encourage stereotypes that place women in a caring role in the workplace. In addition, there are stereotypes that identify leadership as male (Schein, 1994).

The research for this thesis investigates the obstacles to career progress encountered by female headteachers and considers what they, as women, bring to the management and leadership of schools. Research took the form of five in-depth interviews with female headteachers, and a postal survey of all the female headteachers in England and Wales. There was a 70 per cent response rate to the survey.

The research indicates that discrimination was experienced by approximately two thirds of the headteachers, and that this was reported more often by those who were married, who had children and were heads of co-educational schools. However, the vast majority had been encouraged in their career progress, particularly by a previous headteacher, or by a partner.

The predominant style of management of the headteachers was caring and people orientated; they tended to be collaborative and consultative. The majority felt that they had to “prove themselves” as a female leader, but that there were advantages in being a woman headteacher.
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Chapter 1 Introduction

An initial search of literature relating to women in educational management and leadership revealed a number of themes which led to the development of the research questions posed in this thesis. The most obvious of the themes is that there is an imbalance between the numbers of women employed as teachers, and the proportion of women who are senior managers in education. This inequity raises the question of the loss of many effective potential leaders in education. Other themes relate to the relationship between gender and leadership. Although gender is possibly the most important variable affecting people’s lives, it has rarely been taken into account in the consideration of leadership. Theories of leadership have been developed based on the experience of the male (Shakeshaft, 1989) and leadership and management have tended to be stereotyped as the province of men (Bem, 1974, Schein, 1994). However, new developments in leadership theory have identified qualities of effective leadership as “feminine”, and recognised the contribution that women may make to leadership (Burns, 1978, Beare et al 1993).

The relative disproportion of women in educational management

Although the career of teaching is dominated numerically by women in England and Wales (DfEE 1996, DfEE 1997) and elsewhere (Shakeshaft, 1989, Blackmore, 1989, Davies, 1990), women constitute a minority in management positions in education, with the exception of those schools which cater for very young children, which are more often managed by women (see table 1.3 below). For women teachers in junior, middle and secondary schools and in colleges and universities the likelihood is that they are less likely to achieve management positions than their male peers (see tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 below).

In the secondary sector, the proportions of women and men teachers are roughly equal, but the positions commanding the higher rates of pay and greater levels of management responsibility are more likely to be held by men than women. Men are more than three times as likely to achieve secondary headship than their female peers.
Approximately 3.6 per cent of male teachers achieve headship, and the same is true for only one per cent of female teachers. The most recently issued figures (DfEE, 1997) show a slightly increasing trend in the percentage of female heads between 1992 and 1996 (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Percentage of full-time teachers in maintained secondary schools: 1992 - 1996 by grade and sex

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<th>Heads women</th>
<th>Deputies men</th>
<th>Deputies women</th>
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<td>66.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>50.9</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996*</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The 1996 figure is provisional

(DfEE 1997)

These figures hide discrepancies between regions. The principality of Wales has fewer than the average numbers of female heads at both primary and secondary levels. Yewlett (1996) comments on the "traditional attitudes" towards women in educational management in Wales, particularly in the industrial areas of south Wales. Welsh Office statistics (1995) show that only eight per cent of the 237 secondary schools in Wales have female headteachers and that this is true for 43 per cent of the primary schools. Similarly, in Scotland, Darling and Glendinning (1996) report on gender inequities in the distribution of promoted posts in Scotland. In Scottish Office Education Department statistics for 1992 the proportion of female secondary headteachers is given as 0 per cent, with a note explaining that there are 11 women headteachers of Scottish education authority secondary schools (Darling and Glendinning, 1996, p. 61).
Edwards and Lyons (1994) identified that within England and Wales there are considerable differences in the proportions of female secondary heads that are appointed. Whilst London boroughs appear to appoint female headteachers almost as often as male heads, the shire counties as a whole have an average of 13 per cent of female heads, whilst, in 1992, at the time of their research, Northumberland and Dyfed had no female heads, and County Durham only two per cent.

In 1997, the DfEE changed the presentation of statistics and no longer give figures for the distribution of pay spine points. However, in table 1.2, consideration of the more detailed figures for 1994, issued in 1996, shows that the disproportion in management responsibility is prevalent in senior management posts below the level of deputy, but not at the more junior levels of responsibility, where women are more likely than men to have additional responsibility points.

Table 1.2 Distribution of pay spine points by gender in secondary schools in England and Wales 31 March 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All teachers</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 0-8</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 9</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 10</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 11</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 12</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 13</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay spine 14-17</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deputy heads</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>headteachers</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DfEE, 1996)
Although women are very much in the majority as primary school teachers, there is still a tendency for men in primary school teaching to be disproportionately located in senior positions (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3 Percentage of full-time teachers in maintained nursery/primary schools: 1992 - 1996 by grade and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Heads men</th>
<th>Heads women</th>
<th>Deputies men</th>
<th>Deputies women</th>
<th>Classroom and other teachers men</th>
<th>Classroom and other teachers women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>81.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DfEE, 1997)

Women are slightly in the majority as primary headteachers but the disproportion between the percentage of men teachers and men headteachers compared with women teachers and women headteachers is apparent. Over 30 per cent of male teachers are headteachers, whilst this is true for only seven per cent of female teachers. In addition, the figures in table 1.3 mask the differentials between the age ranges included in the primary sector (see Table 1.4).

Table 1.4: Proportion of female headteachers in the primary sector 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle deemed primary</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total nursery and primary</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DfEE 1996)
However, the more detailed figures published in 1993 clearly showed the tendency for men to head schools containing the older children in the primary sector. In 1991, women headed 97% of Infant schools and 73.4% of First schools but only 37% of Junior with Infant schools and 26.3% of Junior without infants schools (DFE, 1993).

Women are well represented as staff of further education colleges, but they constitute only 17 per cent of the principals (Stott and Lawson, 1997). However, this represents a change in favour of women, since in 1990 there were only 13 female principals of FE colleges, and by 1996 there were 68 (ibid.). The overall proportion of women in the old universities is relatively low. In 1994-5, 27.6 per cent of all university academic staff but only 8.2 per cent of professors were women (HESA, 1996).

The relatively small proportion of women in senior management positions in education should be seen in the wider context of the proportion of women who obtain management positions in the UK in general. In 1995 only ten per cent of women were classified as being in managerial and administrative occupations compared to nearly a fifth of men (CSO, 1996). Over 70 per cent of women between the ages of 25 and 59 were classified as economically active in 1994 (CSO, 1996), but most of them were in specific employment areas in the tertiary sector and in support and ‘caring’ roles.

Four in ten women in employment work in public administration, education and health (CSO, 1996) but numerical dominance does not appear to bring about a major share of the top management positions in the professions associated with women.

For example, in nursing, women form a disproportionately small part of the management echelon. A report for the Equal Opportunities Commission in Northern Ireland (Morgan, et al, 1995) identified that 32.3 per cent of male nurses were managers compared to 10.5 per cent of female nurses. Approximately equal numbers of men and women enter publishing, but men are twice as likely as women to become managers (Walsh and Cassell, 1995).

Women in educational management are in a minority in the UK, but they are also in a minority in most other countries, both those at comparable levels of development and those that constitute the newly emerging economies.
In the USA, senior management in schools is located in the superintendency, with an overview of the school district, and in the principalship of high schools, where there might be several in a district. 1990 figures show, that over the country as a whole, women constituted 4.6 per cent of the superintendents and 17.3 per cent of the assistant superintendents whilst 20.6 per cent of high school principals were women (American Association of School Administrators, 1992).

In New Zealand secondary schools, 51 per cent of teachers are female and 81 per cent of the principals are male (Pringle and Timperley, 1995). In Australia, the encouragement of women through affirmative action has led to “an incremental increase in female principals” (Blackmore, 1994, p. 2). However, Blackmore claims that this has been accompanied by a subtle change in the locus of power towards mainly male administrators outside the schools making “the decisions at the ‘core’” (ibid.), a situation she compares to Israel (Goldring and Chen, 1994), where women have made substantial inroads into the principalship but again, the more powerful administrators outside the schools are almost exclusively male.

In the rest of Europe, as in the UK, female headteachers or principals of secondary level schools are in a minority. The position in Ireland is complicated by the existence of three different types of schools at secondary levels: “each with its own traditions and administrative structures.” (Lynch, 1997). However, 29 per cent of all 782 school principals at secondary level are women (ibid.). The figure is slightly higher than that for the UK and is likely to be connected to the relatively large proportion of single sex schools in Eire (Ruijs, 1993). Figures on the gender of headteachers have not been collected in Spain for some time, the most recent figures available are for 1985 when 20 per cent of secondary heads were female (Santos, 1997). In France, 56 per cent of secondary teachers and 30 per cent of secondary headteachers are women (Fave-Bonnet, 1997). In Germany it appears that women are poorly represented in school management: “in the case of the Gymnasien: these are firmly in the hands of men; female heads are the absolute exception.” (Faulstich-Wieland, 1997, p. 62). Figures for the Netherlands show that in 1995-6 women constituted 33 per cent of teachers in secondary schools, 12 per cent of deputy heads and seven per cent of heads. (Vermeulen and Ruijs, 1997)
Davies and Gunarwardena (1992) conducted a survey of teachers in Sri Lanka and also in two schools in each of Botswana, the Gambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia and Malaysia/Hong Kong. The respondents were 57.9 per cent men and 42.1 per cent women. Of these, 74 per cent of women and 61 per cent of men were class teachers without any post of responsibility, whilst 23 per cent of men held positions of principal, deputy principal or head of department, compared with 13 per cent of women. These differences did not appear to be linked to age or qualifications and there was no evidence that there is some “immutable difference in career aspiration.” (p. 94).

In China, there is a 29 per cent female teaching force in secondary schools, but only 11 per cent of female principals and party secretaries are women: “women are relatively invisible too in the senior levels of the inspectorate” (Ho-Ming Ng, 1990 p. 7). In a wide ranging review of teaching staff in countries in Africa, Central America, India and China, Davies (1990) concluded:

“Whether or not therefore the profession is female dominated numerically, formal decision-making is in the hands of men. ... Educational administration is still seen as a masculine occupation in many countries” (Davies, 1990, p. 62)

The causes of the disproportion between the numbers of women teachers and the numbers of women senior managers in the UK and many other countries are likely to be complex and related to a range of social and cultural attitudes linked with the role of women in society. Drawing on Schmuck (1986) and Shakeshaft (1989), the author has elsewhere (Coleman, 1994) classified the reasons for inequity as related to:

1. Overt and covert discrimination,

2. Organizational constraints, with the implication that it is the culture that should change and not women;
3. Theories of socialization of women, carrying the implication that women could and should be re-socialized,

4. Male cultural domination.

This main themes for the research specifically relating to barriers to the career progress of women presented in this thesis are:

Organizational constraints in, and associated with the workplace, including overt and covert discrimination;

Constraints associated with the wider role of women including their domestic commitments.

**Women and styles of leadership and management**

In addition to the under-representation of women in education leadership, a further theme emerging from the literature is that there are stereotypes of leadership which identify leaders as men (Schein, 1994), particularly where leadership is linked with decision making. Such stereotypes may also contribute to the barriers to women's career progress. However, there is a feminine style of management that is not exclusive to women, but may be closely associated with the ways that most women do manage and lead; further that this style is associated with effective leadership in schools. Beare et al (1993) list, amongst the generalizations reflecting recent advances in knowledge about leadership, the importance of feminine as well as masculine attributes. The more sophisticated view of leadership as transformational, rather than linked simply to areas of decision making, includes the feminine dimensions and allows for the leadership of women:

"as leadership comes properly to be seen as a process of leaders engaging and mobilizing the human needs and aspirations of followers, women will be more readily recognized as leaders and men will change their own leadership styles". (Burns, 1978, p. 50)
The absence of large proportions of women from senior management positions in education and elsewhere appears inequitable; it also has implications for the potential loss of a range of management and leadership skills that women may be able to contribute. Writing about work in general, and a management style appropriate to the present and future needs of business and industry, Handy (1994) speculates that:

"organisations want quality people, well educated, well skilled and adaptable. They also want people who can juggle with several tasks and assignments at one time, who are more interested in making things happen than in what title or office they hold, more concerned with power and influence than status. They want people who value instinct and intuition as well as analysis and rationality, who can be tough but also tender, focused but friendly, people who can cope with these necessary contradictions. They want, therefore, as many women as they can get." (p. 179)

Although this statement includes assumptions and generalisations about the ways in which women operate, there are indications from existing research in education (Shakeshaft, 1989, Blackmore, 1995, Hall, 1993, 1996) that women do bring a range of strengths to their work, and that 'feminine' characteristics in management behaviour may now be identified as good management practice (Bolam, et al 1993).

**Research on women leaders and managers**

Despite the recognition of the suitability of women to leadership, most of the theories of leadership and studies of leaders have been based on the assumption that leaders are male, and there has been relatively little in terms of theory and research relating to women in educational management (Blackmore, 1989, Shakeshaft, 1989, Hall, 1993, 1996). In a review of 25 years of the journal Educational Management and Administration, Hall (1997, p. 310) identifies: "the marginalization of gender perspectives" in British discourse on educational management. In addition, feminist writers have identified the androcentric view of researchers and theorists and the
resulting limitations of the viewpoint on leadership and management. Gosetti and Rusch (1995) refer to the need to develop a feminist "lens":

"By using a women-centred lens, contemporary feminism is able to move beyond the consideration of women as an "add-on" issue and, instead, look at society, culture, and the world from the standpoint of being female." (Gosseti and Rusch, 1995, p. 15)

Grundy (1993) goes beyond this to develop a critique of "emancipatory praxis" recognizing that:

"the way things are perceived to be may, in fact, be the way they are being made to appear so that some existing unequal relationships and unjust practices may not be recognized for what they are." (p. 171)


"Overall the research is mainly descriptive and based on small samples," (p. 25)

Hall's (1996) qualitative research taking place over two years, on six women headteachers breaks new ground in that: "it sets out ... to be a portrayal of women studied on their own terms." (p.2). However, until the research reported in this thesis, there has been no similar large scale research work which has set out to do the same.
The purpose and significance of the thesis

Whilst qualitative studies of women leaders allow the development of a rounded and detailed understanding of the nature and practice of female leadership, the survey reported in this thesis is intended to establish some of the parameters relating to the experience of women in educational leadership, and the way that they operate. The survey findings may then act as a context for qualitative data. The research for this thesis does include data from in-depth interviews, but the main research tool is a survey of the female headteachers of England and Wales. Full details of the survey are given in chapter 3 and a copy of the instrument is included in appendix 2.

Since women are in a minority in leadership in education and elsewhere, the broad purpose of the research reported in this thesis was an investigation of the experience of women who have been successful in achieving career success. Although they may not be representative of the majority of women in teaching, they have been subject to the same range of life experiences including the identification of the female with all aspects of domestic life. The main burden of domestic responsibilities, including child care, tends to rest with the female partner, which means that women who work outside the home effectively undertake a "double shift", or if they have children, even a "triple shift" (Acker, 1994). The domestic responsibilities and stereotyping may then affect the way that women, whether or not they are married, are viewed in the workplace. Women are traditionally identified with support and caring roles, and this identification and the probability of additional responsibilities is likely to influence career choices. Career progress is then arguably more difficult for women than for men, and an evaluation of the relative effects and implications of the practical and cultural barriers faced by women was a further purpose of the thesis.

The stereotypes that form part of the cultural barriers to female career progress may continue to affect women once they have reached positions such as headship. An additional purpose of the thesis was to explore some of the parameters relating to the nature of female leadership. There are a number of paradigms relating to feminine
and masculine styles of leadership, (Bem, 1974, Gray, 1989, 1992) and the extent to which the qualities in these paradigms might relate to the ways that women actually do manage is explored in the thesis. An additional purpose of the thesis was to examine the extent to which the women headteachers were sensitised to the difficulties faced by women, and whether they actively aided the careers of other women in the school.

The subjects of leadership and management have largely been developed from a male perspective (Shakeshaft, 1989) and the research provides an opportunity for women to consider both their career and their style of school leadership from the point of view of being a woman. The intention was therefore that this thesis should add to the presently limited body of scholarship which places women as central to a discussion of leadership and management.

The particular significance of the thesis lies in the data collected from a large scale survey which provides an overview of the main parameters relating to women headteachers in England and Wales, complementing and contextualising existing and future research.

The development of research questions

A number of broad research questions were identified on the basis of the existing literature relating to the purposes outlined above.

1. To what extent have the headteachers encountered obstacles in their career progress?

   (a) Were obstacles related to overt and/or covert discrimination?

   Was progress impeded by sexism at the point of application or promotion?
(b) Were obstacles related to constraints experienced in the wider social role of women?

How do marriage, children, domestic responsibilities, care of other relatives, impinge on the lives of the women headteachers?

(c) Were obstacles related to constraints experienced in the work organisation?

Was progress influenced by sexism in the workplace, active encouragement, the provision of mentors, the provision of training?

2. Based on their experience, what do women bring to management and leadership?

(a) Is there a predominant style of management?

How do women perceive their own style of management? Does the way they operate in school appear to support their perception?

(b) What values are women promoting in the school?

What values do women perceive as important?

(c) How do women managers promote the development of their female staff?

Are women likely to help other women progress? If so how?
(d) Do they consider that, as a woman, they bring special qualities to headship?

As a headteacher, do they perceive any advantages in being a woman?

Does their experience as women help them in being an effective headteacher?

Summary

Women are well represented numerically in the field of education. However, in Britain and elsewhere, they are less well represented in senior management positions. It is likely that there is a range of interlinking reasons for this. Many women face practical difficulties in managing family responsibilities and a career, in a society where women are still generally expected to undertake most of the tasks associated with the home and family. The dual role may serve both as a disincentive to women to take on additional responsibility in the workplace, and may also affect how women are viewed by the mainly male “gatekeepers” who select senior staff. Stereotypes about women and the way that they work may cloud judgements about the ability of women to hold leadership and management roles. Whilst “feminine” qualities of collaboration and empowerment may be recognised as effective, there is still a strong identification of leadership with the male.

The themes relating to these research questions are now developed in chapter 2, where literature on both the barriers to women’s progress and the management and leadership styles of women is reviewed.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction

The most relevant source of literature for this review is that body of work that relates to the career and management style of the female British secondary headteacher. However, that body of work is quite limited. Therefore, the literature review also includes reference to studies of British secondary headteachers where gender has been a secondary focus. In addition, the review includes references to comparable literature drawn from other countries, mainly the USA, where more research relevant to female principals has been undertaken. Although the focus of the research is female secondary headteachers, the review also encompasses the limited amount of literature that is based on research on primary female heads, who are likely to experience some of the same conditions as their secondary equivalents.

A further dimension to the literature review is added by reference to literature on women in management in business and industry. The particular nature of headship, which has been likened to that of chief executive, means that it is sometimes appropriate to draw on literature relating to management in business and industry. The female secondary headteacher is likely to be faced with at least some of the same challenges and problems that are faced by female executives in the business world.

The place of the female secondary headteacher in research

(1987) have considered the characteristics of both male and female headteachers, and Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) used gender as a differential in the administration of a variety of personality questionnaires.

The studies that look at the experience of individual secondary heads have ensured a good gender balance which more than reflects the proportion of female to male managers in education. Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) included three female headteachers in the eight interviewed, Ribbins and Marland (1994) three of seven, Hustler et al (1995) interviewed four male and four female headteachers, and Ribbins (1997) included four female headteachers amongst the range of nine educational leaders. However, the gender of headteachers has not necessarily been included as a factor of importance in the study of headship or leadership, and it is only in relatively recent years that the female headteacher has been studied in her own right. Ozga (1993), includes a female secondary head amongst other accounts of female educational leaders, Ouston (1993) stresses the development of women as managers in education, Adler et al (1993) took a feminist viewpoint in researching women in senior positions in education, Evetts (1994) studied twenty secondary heads of whom ten are male and ten female, making gender an important variable in her study. Grace (1995) includes a chapter on women in educational leadership and, most notably, Hall (1996) has undertaken an in-depth study of six female headteachers of whom three are secondary and three primary. Elsewhere, Hall and Southworth (1997) point to the fact that research into headship is the weaker for largely ignoring the variable of gender:

"Using a gender perspective creates new possibilities for exploring the lives of men and women who teach, manage and lead in education. As researchers into headship we have both concluded that educational leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. Gender, in turn, is a crucial component of that identity. Future research into headship that fails to take this and the gendered nature of schools and colleges into account is likely to be incomplete.” (p. 167)

Whilst the pattern of research into the principalship in the USA has been similar in taking the male as norm, there has been considerably more research into the work of women principals, notably that of Shakeshaft (1989) and Schmuck (1980, 1986), than
there has been in the UK. Recent additions to the body of work on female leadership in education, include Dunlap and Schmuck (1995) and a range of empirical studies (Restine, 1993, Hill and Ragland, 1995, Grogan, 1996, Gupton and Appelt Slick, 1996). Attention has also been drawn to the importance of gender in educational leadership in Australia, where Blackmore (1989) and others have presented feminist critiques of the existing body of scholarship. Studies of women managers in education in Europe and elsewhere (Ruijs, 1993, Davies and Gunawardena, 1992) provide valuable comparative data.

Some characteristics of the population of female and male headteachers

Some of the earlier studies which considered both male and female headteachers do provide limited quantitative data which relates to characteristics of the population of female and male headteachers as a whole. These characteristics include relative level of qualifications and academic specialisms, age and marital status.

Qualifications - gender differences

Weindling and Earley (1987) outline the differences in the qualifications of the female and male headteachers. The females tended to be less well qualified than the males. Of the new heads 35 per cent of the male and only 21 per cent of the female heads held a higher degree, that is a masters or doctorate. Career path and experience for educational administrators in the USA is different from that of English and Welsh headteachers. However, Shakeshaft (1989) reports that among secondary school principals, 71 per cent of the men held graduate degrees in educational administration in contrast with under half of the women, and that men typically began work on a post graduate degree in their mid-twenties, women at a later stage of their lives.

In terms of subject backgrounds in the UK, Weindling and Earley (1987) report that the only statistically significant gender difference was found with regard to the subject of English. 35% of females compared to nearly 20% of males had a teaching background in English. There were no other statistically significant subject
differences. McMullan (1993) also clearly identifies English as a “feminine” subject, with 61 per cent of English teachers being female. (p. 73)

Data concerning age, marital status and career pattern of female and male headteachers

Jones (1987) in analysing the data from 400 secondary headteachers, of whom 24 per cent were female, does not differentiate the ages of the male from the female. 50.4 per cent of the total group were aged under 50 and 49.6 per cent over 50. However, Weindling and Earley, (1987) working with two groups one of new and the other of existing ‘old’ heads, considered the differences in age both between the groups and between the male and female members of each groups (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Age and experience of ‘new’ and ‘old’ heads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>new heads</th>
<th>‘old’ heads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(87%)</td>
<td>(13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 163)</td>
<td>(N = 25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(adapted from Weindling and Earley, 1987, p. 24)
They found that the women tended to be older than their male equivalents when appointed to headship, and to have had more years in teaching. In the majority of cases, female headteachers both "old" and new had spent more years in any particular role than their male equivalents. The only exceptions were head of house for both groups, and senior teacher in the case of the new head. Age differentials between the sexes had been found earlier by Gross and Trask (1976) in their seminal work on the differences between male and female principals in the USA:

"Women considered and made up their minds to become teachers at a much earlier age than men, but men gave serious consideration to becoming a principal at a much earlier stage in their careers than women." (p. 217)

Whilst men became principals younger and earlier than women, the women principals tended to have more teaching experience. More recent data from the USA indicates the same tendency for women to be appointed to positions of leadership in education at a later stage in their lives than men. (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 61) In addition Shakeshaft (1989) reports that female principals are less likely to be married than male principals, with only 59.8 per cent of females compared to 92 per cent of male principals being married. Statistics gathered for an EOC survey in 1981 indicate that in England, at that time, married women were actually a minority of female heads. (Weindling and Earley, 1987)

The trend for the later appointment of women may still be apparent. Evetts (1994) in her study of twenty headteachers, ten men and ten women, found that promotion to headship was later for the women than men and this was true for single women as well as women with families. In general the men had been appointed when they were in their thirties and the women when they were over 40 (p. 41). The women headteachers, particularly those that had married, had generally been slower to start obtaining promotions than the men. However, Evetts (1994) notes a positive aspect of the differential, more varied experience of women, in that they might be more prepared for the variety of challenges offered by comprehensive schools:
because of career breaks, part-time work, movements around the country in support of husbands' careers, generally the women heads’ teaching experience was wider than that of the men heads. ... the different patterns of women’s careers means not that they were differently equipped but that they were better equipped for the challenge of the new comprehensive schools.” (p. 39, author’s italics)

The androcentric nature of research

There is a relative paucity of research data concerning the female secondary headteacher. This is partly due to the androcentric nature of research on leadership, which has presumed that leaders are male, and that where they are not, that research findings obtained from male subjects can equally be applied to both sexes:

“Not only do most leadership theories deny the experience of women in school, theories of leadership are fraught with biases and unspoken assumptions about the role of gender in organizations. Most theory has focused only on males in organizations.” (Schmuck, 1996, p. 346)

This criticism can be applied to the way in which most large scale surveys involving headship have been carried out and reported (see above), and can also be applied to some of the theories and concepts most commonly used in educational management. For example, in one of the most influential theories, Maslow’s theory of motivation, gender variables are ignored. In his theory of motivation:

“Maslow never explored the differences between the public world of men and the private world of women.” (ibid. p. 157)

As a result he only envisaged the possibility of self-actualisation for women who were operating in a ‘male’ world of work. Shakeshaft (1989) concludes that Maslow apparently devalues the female experience since the theory implies that it is impossible to reach self actualisation through fulfilments specifically related to the family and the home. Further consideration is given to the androcentric nature of
research later in this chapter in relation to “Gender and leadership and management styles”.

More research on female leadership in education has been undertaken in the USA than elsewhere. However, within the USA, a review of textbooks on educational leadership showed that the main body of theory and literature on leadership tended to marginalize or ignore women. The review, which took place over three years, showed:

“the deafening silence of the discussion about diversity and equity throughout the education and professional development of school leaders.” (Gosetti and Rusch, 1995, p. 24).

A review of eight major educational journals over ten years revealed “devastating” (ibid., p. 28) findings. There are relatively few articles in the ten year period and only a small proportion of them challenge what is termed the “privileged view”. One example is a journal entitled “Principal” which is directed at elementary principals. During a decade this journal published only eighteen articles addressing issues relating to diversity and equity and only two of these related to access to leadership for women and minorities. A similar situation for the UK was outlined by Hall (1997) who reviewed twenty five years of the journal “Educational Management and Administration”:

“Gender only began to emerge as a discrete topic after 1980 and, since then has hovered in the wings like a wallflower at a party.” (Hall, 1997, p. 309)

Factors associated with the differential experience of female and male headteachers

The fact that the positions of power are distributed unevenly between men and women in the world of work in general and in education in particular may be attributed to several different factors. Schmuck (1986) classifies theories of inequality as:
“individual socialization processes, organizational constraints to women's mobility, and gender-based career socialization.” (p. 176)

Shakeshaft (1989) analyses theories of inequality as they relate to overt and covert discrimination, constraints found within the work organization and theories of socialization all of which rely on male cultural domination:

“the barriers [to women] ... can only exist in a world that divides people into categories based on sex; thus these barriers need to be seen not as women's fault, not as a result of organizational structure, but as the outcome of a sexual hierarchy in which males are at the top and females are at the bottom. Thus it is this ideology of patriarchy resulting in an androcentric society that explains why men, and not women, occupy the formal leadership positions in school and society.” (p. 95)

She goes on to point out the importance of the fact that:

“there is no literature on the barriers to white males in administration. Further, there is little literature for men on ways to advance.” (ibid.)

The barriers to women's progress in educational management reported in the existing literature will now be considered in the two major categories of:

1. barriers to progress and constraints associated with the wider social role of women;

2. barriers to progress associated with factors within the work place including overt and covert discrimination.

The possible barriers and constraints associated with the wider social role of women include:
the range of domestic responsibilities including responsibilities for child care and for parents;
potential role conflict;
career breaks.

The barriers to progress associated with the work place include:

- overt and covert discrimination;
- the predominance of “male culture”;
- opportunities for development;
- difficulties associated with selection and promotion;
- the stereotyping of roles.

**Barriers to progress associated with the wider social role of women**

**Domestic responsibilities and childcare**

Women tend to carry the major responsibility for domestic arrangements in general and for child care in particular. In addition, it is likely that women will bear the main responsibility for the care of aged relatives or other dependants. This domestic and caring role is identified with women and is also applied to the increasing proportion of women who do work outside the home. In addition it also helps to shape stereotypes about women and what is appropriate work for them. Shakeshaft (1989) reporting on her survey of research findings concluded:

> “Thus home and family responsibilities provide obstacles for women in administration in two ways: The woman not only must effectively juggle all of her tasks, she must also contend with the bulk of male school board presidents and superintendents who erroneously believe that not only is she unable to manage the balancing act but that it is inappropriate for her to even attempt it.” (p. 113)"
Women now comprise 40 per cent of the European workforce, but only about ten per cent of the total of European managers (Vinnecombe and Colwell, 1995). Women’s participation in the work force is expected to continue to increase, although, according to Ruijs (1993, p. 545), there is a clear and established relationship between the level of women’s employment within European countries and the availability of childcare in those countries. The difficulties associated with childcare were stressed in the work of Adler et al (1993):

“This is not to say that women view their children negatively, but that they are aware of the restrictions that this may place on them in a society that does not provide adequate and/or good childcare facilities.” (p. 52)

Throughout Europe, women managers are much more likely to be single and/or childless than male managers. In the UK as a whole, 58 per cent of women managers are married, but 93 per cent of male managers are married. Overall statistics in the UK indicate that only twelve per cent of all women aged 45 are childless (CSO, 1996), but women managers are less likely to have children than the average women and more likely to delay having children until they are in their thirties, and may then choose to have only one child (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Ouston, 1993):

“Combining work with child-rearing continues to be stressful for most women and it is clear that some organisations have compounded this problem by operating a double standard for marriage: they view the married male manager as an asset, with a stable support network at home allowing him to give his undivided attention to his work, but the married female manager as a liability, likely to neglect her career at the expense of her family at every possible opportunity. (Vinnecombe and Colwell, 1995, p. 7)

In the western world, women tend to bear the dual strain of the bulk of the responsibility for the actual domestic workload and the role stereotyping of women as “carers”. For example in Spain, Montserrat Santos (1996) writing about difficulties faced by female headteachers identifies “lack of time” (p.438) for the female headteacher who is expected to run a traditional home and look after her children:
"To the genuine lack of time of the Spanish woman, mother, wife and head can be added the excess of responsibilities and the fear of conflicts and loneliness." (p. 438)

In eastern culture too the female experience is one where women are both responsible for domestic tasks and then identified with them. In research undertaken in China:

"When considering the role of women in educational management, one of the most persistent themes in Shaanxi and elsewhere is the identification of women with domestic tasks and childcare. However, in this research the identification is such that it pervades the perception of what women can do. Most respondents identify the career difficulties faced by women who are likely to bear the whole or the major responsibility for domestic tasks and for child-care. However, recognition of this does not appear to influence attitudes for change. The respondents did not indicate any willingness to change the traditional family roles nor to share household chores among all members of the family, both female and male. (Coleman et al, 1998, p. 153)

Elsewhere the locus of domestic responsibilities may be viewed differently. Davies and Gunawardena, (1992) hypothesised that women would identify domestic responsibilities as a problem in making career progress. However, their research instrument used in Sri Lanka and also in two schools in each of Botswana, the Gambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia and Malaysia/ Hong Kong identified few gender differences in the experience of men and women relating to the conflicting claims of home and school.

"the family occupies a central place for the orientations and ambitions of both sexes. It is not a predominantly female concern." (Davies and Gunawardena, 1992, p. 71).

This difference is thought to be because of differences in social structure between the countries researched and the experience in the West and China: an example of these
differences could be the help automatically given by the extended family and/or the availability of cheap domestic help. (ibid. p. 95) Alternatively it may be that women so take for granted their domestic commitments that they do not prioritise them as a problem. However, the same survey showed that the women were stereotyped as inferior in a partnership. The authors were able to conclude that in general:

“A wife is there to provide stability and a reason for striving, not as an equal partner whose career has parallel significance.” (ibid. p. 87)

The dual career family

The proportion of men working is fairly static, therefore changes in work participation rates for women imply the development of the dual career family. However, the increase in work outside the home on the part of women does not ensure that men take a concomitant increase in domestic work or child care. Ruijs (1993 p. 546), states that over the last ten years, the daily contribution of men to domestic activities has increased by four minutes. This statistic is based on data gathered from Austria, and an OECD report (1990).

Evetts (1990) reports that for the twenty five heads she interviewed:

“husbands had played virtually no part in the everyday care of the pre-school child.” (p. 128)

Davidson and Cooper (1992. p. 142) conclude that 73 per cent of women in the UK do nearly all the housework and that men in dual-career families have an average of six hours more spare time at weekends than do their wives (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, p. 142). Burke and McKeen (1994) report that for dual-career couples, the women do on average 30 extra days per year of “second shift” (p.67) work compared to their husbands or partners. Although dual-career couples can afford to buy help in the home, there is still “much left to do, and women do the bulk of it.” (p.67)
Research in the United States (Lewis, 1994) indicates that even where men are sharing more in domestic tasks, they do not take the final responsibility for the management of the household, which still remains with the female partner.

"The household management role is a gender boundary which remains contentious and difficult to dismantle." (Lewis, 1994, p. 231)

Lewis goes on to contend that the identification of the overall responsibility for the home: "may be a way in which women exercise power and retain gender identity", (p. 232). In addition it appears that women in dual career partnerships do not define themselves as providers in the way that the male partner is perceived. They do not wish to eliminate: "the gender boundary which defines men as the major providers." (Lewis, p. 233)

On the other hand, it is generally expected that men will receive support in domestic areas. Acker (1994), discussing the minority status of women academics in British universities, makes the point that:

"To a large extent, academic success rests on research and publishing 'productivity', measured against age. Productivity is most enhanced when someone else does all the support work (laundry, dinners), avoids making competing demands, and types, edits and looks up references, as so many book prefaces remind us." (Acker, 1994, p. 126)

Discussing the dilemma felt by a senior female administrator with young children in the USA, Grogan, (1996) comments:

"The option of a 'wife' was not available to her. Neither is the option of a male partner who provides the same sort of support as readily available for a women as it is for a man. Thus, there is really little control over the way a discourse positions an individual." (p. 118)
In general the issue of support between partners is likely to be an important factor in dual career families:

"Exposure to stress at work can create tension within marriage, due to negative moods and preoccupation at home, so it can be argued that the potential for tension is greater when there are two stressful jobs." (Lewis, p. 234)

Although women generally take most responsibility for domestic arrangements including child care, increasingly both women and men may find difficulty in:

"co-ordinating, over time, the demands of two 'greedy institutions' (Coser 1974): the work setting and the family. This dilemma arises whenever the job is a career; that is, it requires continuous commitment, spilling over into otherwise leisure time." (Acker, 1994, p. 126)

The conflict can be seen as "a consequence of social definitions of work and family as separate and unrelated", (Lewis, 1994, p. 237). However, within the existing framework, the problems associated with the resolution of conflicting demands are usually felt more keenly by the female partner.

**Role conflict and guilt**

Women managers in general report that the disadvantages experienced by married women who try to combine a career with domestic responsibilities include:

- role conflict,
- difficulties of geographical mobility,
- insufficient time for both home and career,
- feelings of guilt,
- lack of support from their husband,
- having to take work home with them.

(Davidson and Cooper, 1992)
There is clear evidence of both guilt and role conflict for women holding senior management positions in education. A study of 27 top female administrators in the USA (Grogan, 1996) identifies the type of concerns that are commonly felt:

"Issues that expressed the tensions felt by the women included (1) fear of failing as a mother, (2) responsibility for the maintenance of relationships, and (3) coping with household labour. If any theme helps to weave all those concerns together, however, it is an intense preoccupation with time management." (Grogan, 1996 p. 110)

"it is almost a given that women administrators who are mothers have to do 'this terrific balancing act' to survive." (ibid., pp. 115-6)

Reflecting on the research findings relating to twenty five primary heads, Evetts (1990) comments:

"The conflicts between work responsibilities and family responsibilities were most acute for these women during the period when their own children were very young." (p. 126)

Adler et al (1993) in their study of senior managers in education state that:

"many mothers recognize anxiety and guilt in combining the role of carer with their career" (Adler et al 1993, p. 27)

Particular role conflict can occur when a child is ill. A female teacher or headteacher will feel responsibility to both her own child and the children in her care at school. The difficulties in managing such a situation were apparent from the research reviewed:

"it was remarkable how often the women claimed that their children were seldom ill. They felt that they were lucky in that theirs were not ailing or sickly children. This explanation occurred so frequently that it was possible to
hypothesize that working mothers might have a different perception of what constitutes illness compared with mothers who are at home. Nevertheless, these teacher-mothers were clear that in times of real sickness, their place should have been at home with their children.” (Evetts, 1990 p. 136)

However, the headteachers studied by Hall (1996) tended to derive support from their husband or partner:

“As they moved through their careers, emotional, moral, childcare and household support came mainly from husband or partner and, where relevant, childminders or nannies.” (p. 58)

Although, on the whole they saw their combined career as wives and mothers and headteachers to be their own responsibility:

“Generally they interpreted the problem of being a working woman who is also a wife and/or mother or caregiver as their own personal problem, not one to be shared with others.” (p. 58)

The particular pressures felt by female educational managers were identified by Biklen (1980)

“Three types of constraints create pressures on women in their jobs that are not related to the intrinsic nature of the work itself. These constraints are: family constraints, the constraint of marginality, and what might be called internal, psychological, or self-imposed constraints.” (p. 13)

Marginality is defined as being a “token woman”, but the two other problems are related to, issues of support, guilt, difficulties of mobility and conflict over seeing women who have a career as being “masculine”.
Women are faced with handling both career and domestic responsibilities, the "double shift" (Acker, 1994). As a result they may be less inclined to move into a management position, in view of the potential stress of role conflict:

"the balancing of different roles and responsibilities is a considerable organisational achievement, but is also experienced as a source of pressure. A move into management then comes to be seen as compounding this problem" (Al Khalifa, 1992, p. 96)

For women who do move into management, there are a variety of common career patterns or strategies that may help them to reconcile the potential difficulties.

Career strategies

In her study of twenty secondary headteachers, Evetts (1994) identifies three major categories of career:

"single career
the one-person career strategy
the two-person career strategy
dual career
postponement strategy
modification strategy
balancing strategy
marital breakdown; when partnership strategies are unsuccessful"

(p.53)

The sample of headteachers studied by Evetts included ten men and ten women, and it is not entirely surprising that none of the women adopted a two person single career strategy, although it was adopted by six of the ten men. In these cases, the work of the wife's was regarded as an occupation rather than a career thus minimalizing any possibilities of career conflicts.
For two of the women headteachers, the strategy adopted had been the "balancing" strategy where both partners tried to develop their careers either simultaneously or alternately. Difficulties were apparent where the female partner was more successful than the male. Where a postponement or modification strategy was adopted, it tended to be the female partner who undertook the postponement or modification. Of the twenty, five had experienced marital breakdown, three of the women and two of the men. Two of these women were now adopting a single "one-person" career strategy.

One head interviewed in Ozga (1993) had chosen a one-person career strategy from the start and reacted against the tensions that could result from dual career strategies:

"I've anxieties about able women colleagues who won't try for posts because they're sensitive that their husbands feelings might be hurt. I believe that they shouldn't put careers on back burners just to be supportive. That kind of thing makes me cross because, though it may ensure domestic harmony at the time, later it may cause professional frustration and resentment." (Maureen Sedgewick in Ozga, 1993, p. 55)

In their research on 150 highly successful female educational administrators in the USA, Gupton and Appelt Slick (1996) found that 67 per cent identified problems at the point of balancing a family and career, as a result, many of them chose to take a postponement strategy and delay their career. The third of the respondents who reported no problem at this stage identified the importance of a supportive husband.

In earlier work on primary headteachers, Evetts (1990) developed an alternative theoretical framework of how women may develop strategies in relation to their career. In this case, she coined the term the "subjective career" referring to a female teachers view of her career as successful where, for example, she has managed to combine motherhood with successful classroom teaching:

"The concept of the subjective career is concerned with how individuals have actually experienced their working lives and the meaning they attach to their work and careers." (p. 63)
In this case, the view that women have of their career is seen to be holistic, scarcely differentiating the world of work from their domestic responsibilities:

"The responsibility for the maintenance of the marital home and, particularly, the physical care and emotional well-being of young children, is seen to lie with the women. So, whereas men can and do talk about their career as something totally separate and distinct from their personal and family lives, for women career goals and personal ambitions are more intimately intertwined and interrelated." (ibid. p. 64)

Al Khalifa, (1992) also identifies the tendency for women to:

"seek to bridge the personal and professional aspects of their lives and to reduce the gap between public and private roles," (p. 102)

In analysing the career strategies of six female headteachers, Hall (1996) applies the five types of career strategy identified by Evetts (1990) initially developed in respect of primary headteachers and teachers.

1. The accommodated career - this "will have involved balancing personal and teaching responsibilities over the course of the working life." (Evetts, 1990, p. 69). Those adopting this approach may reject promotion and thus role conflict tends to be minimized.

2. The antecedent career - "the woman is highly committed to her working career right from the beginning." (ibid. p. 71). In such a career, work takes precedence and she is likely to have no children.

3. The two-stage career: promotion negotiated. This strategy and the "promotion deferred" strategy below have similarities with the concept of the "postponement" strategy of the dual career model. In this case, the woman begins by wanting career, marriage and children and will "delay one in order to achieve another, she is not
willing to give up any.” (ibid. p. 74) Usually the strategy involves the construction of her teaching career in two stages, interrupted by having children.

4. The subsequent career: promotion deferred - family goals are the main priority in the early part of the career. Some of the females who adopt this strategy may have come into teaching later in their career when they have had their children. Inevitably, they tend to achieve their headship posts when older than the average and their career takes on more significance in later life.

5. The compensatory career: promotion substituted - “the compensatory career strategy, therefore, is usually adopted following failure in some respect of another plan of action.” (ibid. p. 83) The types of failure most often experienced would be the failure of a marriage or the failure to achieve parenthood.

However they plan their career, for those women who choose to combine motherhood with a career some kind of career break becomes inevitable.

The career break

It has often been presumed that it is the career break that is most to blame for the relatively poor representation of women in senior positions in education. Evetts (1990) rehearses the commonly accepted argument for this:

“They leave teaching in order to have and to care for their own families, hence their careers are interrupted. Eventually, these women return to teaching. The break of service will have had a dramatic impact on the teaching career. Returning women teachers will be behind their male colleagues in the promotions race since the men will have advanced their careers while the women were out of teaching. Many women might decide not to seek promotion, not to add to their work responsibilities because their family commitments are still heavy. Alternatively, some women might attempt to revive or renew their career commitments, might seek promotion, but because
of their breaks in service they experience difficulty in achieving promotion and
developing their careers.” (Evetts, 1990, p. 93)

This explanation fails to account for the fact that some of the women who take career
breaks do move on to achieve headship or other senior positions. Fifteen of the
twenty five primary headteachers studied had broken their service to take time for
child care. However, for these fifteen the break taken had been short, usually under a
year, and some of them had continued to work part time. However, an NUT survey in
1980 indicated that two thirds of those who took a career break were out of teaching
for more that five years.

Findings quoted by Grant (1989) and collected in the early 1980s, seem to indicate
that:

"the disadvantage experienced by women who follow traditional career
patterns is too great for most to overcome. In part this may be because
promotion is tied to age-related norms.” (p. 44)

Whatever the length of the career break, it seems that mothers who return to work are
regarded as having made a choice, and this assigns responsibility for the management
of career and family to the mother or the dual career couple (Lewis, 1994).

The pattern of career break appears to have changed somewhat in the later 1980s and
1990s. Adler et al (1993) report that:

"The percentage of women taking career breaks to have children is lower than
generally assumed. An ILEA study of London and Birmingham school
teachers recorded that 21 per cent in Birmingham and 11 per cent in London
took breaks for this reason.” (p. 26)

Davidson and Cooper, (1992) quote CSO figures indicating that the average career
break to raise a family, for all employed women in the UK, is 3.5 years with women in
management taking a shorter break. Current statistics on career breaks would seem to indicate that:

"Women are unfairly penalized by the majority of employers for taking a career break, ... unlike the maternity breaks, breaks initiated by employers (for example, study leave or transfer to other disciplines) are accepted as being inevitable, essential or for the greater good. (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, p. 129)

There is some evidence in education that women may re-enter the profession after a career break at a lower status than they had previously held (Morgan et al, 1983), whereas, "Men rarely experienced demotion after absence from teaching even when they had worked outside the educational system". (Weindling and Earley, 1987, p. 25.) Women themselves may recognise the value of the additional skills and experience accrued through looking after their own young children, but, in general:

"the value of such a career break is perceived to be less than that taken for study, long-term industrial placement or secondment to the advisory service." (Coleman, 1997, p. 131)

**Female perceptions of the value of a maternity break**

Women who have reached positions of authority may reflect on their experience and, in the wider context, recognize the management experience that is involved in running a home and looking after children. Sue Benton interviewed in Ribbins and Marland, (1994) refers to building on these strengths in running courses for women who aspired to promotion:

"if you can juggle a career and a family successfully then you are exhibiting skills which are of great relevance to the management of schools at all levels. ... I have pushed the idea that those years are not wasted years in a woman's career. I think the climate is now changing on this but at the time this had only just begun." (p. 21-2)
Other interviewed female heads refer to the management skills that are regularly practised in the home:

“women are generally more caring and compassionate than men. I also think women are better than men at coping with a large number of things at the same time. We are used to having to cope simultaneously with problems of the family, food, the house, etc.” (Valerie Bragg in Ribbins and Marland, 1994, p. 84)

For one head there was recognition on the part of her employers that she might have benefited from a career break:

“So I went from my eight years of maternity leave, [four sons] back into teaching as a deputy head. This was an unusual progression. And I think I found the one job in the country where the people appointing me placed great value on the fact that I had spent eight years at home bringing up my family and they saw that as adding significantly to what I could offer.” (Mary Marsh, in Ribbins, 1997, p. 134)

Whilst women may perceive the benefits of their “tapestried lives” (Darking, 1991), men are possibly less likely to do so. In general, the identification of women with domestic tasks and childcare does not increase their chances of promotion, and may enhance the stereotype which places women as “carers” rather than managers and leaders:

“It is the complex, varied and rich experience of women’s lives which develops their particular management styles and capacities. Men, who are excluded from such experience or who perceive it as low-status and valueless, do not develop such skills, and therefore exclude them from conventional management practice, from the very definition of what constitutes management.” (Ozga 1993, p. 2)
Barriers to progress associated with factors within the workplace

The perception of women's role as carer, particularly as wife and mother, has an impact on the way in which women fit into a work organization. This perception of women may contribute to overt and covert discrimination. In mixed secondary schools, and within the wider environment e.g. the LEA, or working with industry, women heads and other senior managers may be faced with a prevailing male culture which at worst is inimical towards them. In addition, informal networks may mean that the full range of opportunities for development may be denied to women. The stereotypes relating to women may also be a factor in the selection for promotion, particularly for leadership roles, and this may especially be the case where the selection body is numerically dominated by men. Finally, the stereotype of women as carers appears to have led to the 'pigeon-holing' of women in certain roles, particularly pastoral ones, excluding them from others. In reviewing the literature relating to women's under-representation in educational management, Hall (1993) identifies a similar set of themes:

"Explanations of women's under-representation are mainly in terms of organizational constraints, demonstrated particularly in the barriers to promotion constituted by current arrangements for selection, re-entry and management development. A fourth barrier emerges in some of these studies as an important component of explanations of women in education management; the conceptualization of management as masculine and schools particularly secondary schools, as representing masculine cultures." (Hall, 1993, p. 30)

Writing over a decade before, Schmuck (1980) offered a similar list of factors:

"women are invisible as leaders of our public schools. Why are the leaders of a female-dominated profession predominantly male? ... Family roles, different socialization, role models, attitudes, overt and subtle discrimination in graduate schools and in the field, different career aspirations, and women's
general lack of power and influence in the society all offer potent and accurate explanations of women’s under-representation in school management. “ (p. 240)

Overt and covert discrimination

In 1939 the President of the National Association of Schoolmasters (NAS) claimed that

"only a nation heading for a madhouse would force upon men - many married with families - such a position as service under a spinster headmistress". (Partington, 1976, p.37)

Society may have changed very considerably since then. The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) does make discrimination illegal, but there is still some evidence of overt and covert discrimination. For example, evidence of direct discrimination in the 1980s is given by Vera Chadwick who reports that:

“In 1985 I became the first woman to win a sex discrimination case against a local education authority for its failure to shortlist me for a headship. The success was compounded by winning two accusations of victimization at the same hearing at an industrial tribunal.” (Chadwick, 1989, p. 97)

Her victory led to the development of policy, guidelines and the monitoring of appointments within the authority. However, the adoption of official procedures may still not ensure that prejudice is eliminated:

“The law cannot permeate all decisions relating to selection procedures and other aspects of professional development, such as appraisal, all of which may be influenced by stereotypical thinking.” (Coleman, 1997, p. 123.)

There may be a presumption that the male candidate is automatically more suited to a senior post. A female senior teacher who applied for a deputy headship reported that:
"They said I wasn't quite what they were looking for. ... I'm in my forties; with an MA in education and a diploma in educational management ... The job went to a smart young chap who had been an HoD for three years and had a BA. He was in exactly the same mould as the head!" (Adler et al, 1993 p.25) 

In management as a whole, there is still evidence of perceived discrimination. In their interviews with nearly 700 female managers and 185 male managers, Davidson and Cooper (1992) found that the female managers reported “significantly higher pressure levels relating to discrimination and career development”. For the female managers:

“sex was a disadvantage regarding job promotion/career prospects, sex discrimination and prejudice, inadequate job training experience compared to men and men being treated more favourably by management.” (p. 119)

Structural factors

An additional form of discrimination in education may occur subtly in the distribution of the types of headships and other managerial jobs that are most readily available to women. Women tend to predominate in the teaching of younger children. Proportionately more women are leaders of schools teaching children in the younger age ranges in most countries. In the UK, over 50 per cent of primary headteachers are women, and of these the majority are clustered in the headships of nursery and infant or first schools (see chapter 1). In the USA:

“The elementary principalship, as well as certain central office positions, has been considered by some to be a dead-end post. Given that more women occupy these kinds of position, this view becomes a barrier and intensifies the degree of women’s exclusions.” (Hill and Ragland, 1995, p. 19)

Women may also be more likely to take the less desirable senior positions. Working in the USA, Hill and Ragland (1995) identify a trend that women tend to take on posts
that men do not want. They classify the women that take these jobs, mainly in disadvantaged areas, as being: “Messiahs, Scapegoats, and Sacrificial Lambs” (p. 20):

“Default situations are often offered to women. ... With their backs to a wall, hiring a women is the only remaining choice. This situation is especially common in the too rare instances when minority women are given administrative positions.” (Hill and Ragland, 1995, p. 20)

Discussing the under representation of women in educational management, Restine, (1993) also identifies the relatively poor job opportunities often made available to high achieving women:

“The evidence about women’s representation would be even more compelling if we were to ... illustrate the percentages of women in urban, suburban, and rural superintendencies, by type of assistant superintendencies, and as elementary, middle, and high school principals. Women superintendents are more often found in small districts, women assistant superintendents are more often in staff specialist or supervisory positions, and women principals are more often found at the elementary school level.” (Restine, 1993, p. 19)

Structural factors may also disadvantage women in other ways. In France, women may be less willing to enter the competitive examination system for regional management positions in relation to both primary and secondary schools, since success will mean that they will probably have to move to a different area:

“It is suggested that women move with greater difficulty than their male counterparts, among others for family reasons”. (Gordon, 1996, p. 385)

In primary education for example, 79 per cent of teachers are women, but only 29 per cent of inspectors in primary education are women. Success in the competitive national examinations leads to a placement in one of the:
“available posts and women are reluctant to change schools or regions to obtain these posts.” (Fave-Bonnet, 1996, p. 393)

In the Netherlands, the tendency towards the merger of schools, to create larger units has tended to reduce the number of female heads: “In the struggle for top positions women mostly taste defeat.” (Kruger, p. 448). Ruijs (1993) reports on the same phenomenon, and also comments on the reduction in the numbers of female heads over the last twenty to thirty years as a result of the virtual disappearance of single sex schools. In the European context it noted that the relatively large numbers of single sex schools still remaining in the UK and especially in Ireland helps to maintain the proportion of female heads of secondary schools in those countries. (ibid. pp. 580-2)

A male culture in education

Despite the large numbers of women working in education, in mixed and boys only secondary schools the prevailing culture is likely to be male.

Mac an Ghaill (1994) observed the gender politics of the British staffroom:

“There was little awareness among the Old Collectivist [term refers to their union support] male teachers of the gender structuring of public arenas, such as the staffroom, that highlighted the power of masculinity as an institutional force, operating to marginalize and exclude women, while privileging the masculine perspective. Furthermore, there was little acknowledgement of the predatory heterosexual environment of staffroom, classroom and playground, that female teachers and students frequently recounted to me.” (p. 29)

The pervasive male culture may be enhanced by what Cunnison (1989) identified as “gender joking” during a three month observation of the staff of a mixed secondary school. She sees the main reason for the joking as lying in the basically competitive relationship over promotion between teachers, where gender is an important principle of social differentiation. The jokes tended to focus on issues of femininity and domesticity:
“In this school, with two men to every woman, joking took place in a male-dominated situation. More often than not it was hostile: frequently received in silence, though sometimes with facial expressions ranging from resignation through exasperation to scorn. Failure to challenge, by look or by speech, inevitably lent some degree of credence to the message.” (Cunnison, 1989, p. 164)

“Gender joking is almost entirely initiated by men. It is men defining women at work in sexual, domestic or maternal terms, terms which detract from their image as professionals. As such it is a put-down, a way of controlling and subordinating women ... and one mechanism among others which militates against their promotion.” (ibid. p. 166)

Consideration of the difficulties faced by women in educational management in Australia facing a masculine culture, are given as unpalatable choices:

“... attempting to cope with, adjust to, accommodate and accept behaviour and a working environment which excludes, marginalizes, alienates and at times demeans them, or to leaving the situation altogether.” (Ramsay, 1995, p. 176)

From a conference, including contributions from many European countries, the USA and Australia, a generalised conclusion was:

“... several [other] speakers and written contributions described the masculine culture in educational institutions as a major barrier to women seeking promotion.” (Ruijs, 1993, p. 561)

The area of gender joking impinges on what some might perceive as sexual harassment. In a study of 35 women educational leaders in the USA, (Hill and Ragland, 1995) only seven actually replied “no” to the question “have you ever been sexually harassed?” Although the responses did include some like “not really”, or “yes ... no big deal,” and “by some standards” which:
"may indicate a form of passive acceptance or denial of a very insidious phenomenon that many women leaders experience." (Hill and Ragland, 1995, p. 108)

Davidson and Cooper (1992) report that in an in-depth study of 60 female managers in the UK, 52 per cent of the sample reported sexual harassment at work. They go on to say that:

"Sexual harassment is, indeed, a more extreme form of the behaviour that goes on each day between male and female managers ... at work. Sexuality is frequently used in one guise or another by both men and women as a method of career advancement, to influence decisions at work or to 'put down' overly ambitious colleagues." (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, p. 112)

While the term "sexual harassment" may connote a serious activity which in extreme cases could lead to dismissal, the term "sexist" or "sexism" may be used in conjunction with the male culture of the staffroom, or the viewpoint of those responsible for selection and promotion. For female headteachers there are many reminders of the fact that they are female in what is generally perceived to be a male job:

"I was never more conscious of sexism in the progression and in society than when I first became a head. Never before had I been consistently addressed as 'sir' in letters, mistaken for a secretary or presumed not to be able to deal easily with misbehaving teenage boys. I actually kept a record (a little blue book) of the examples of offensive behaviour and language for the first three years." (Pat Collings in Mortimore and Mortimore, 1991, p. 39)

For a female head who is black, there are even more possibilities of criticism and stereotyping:
"So I had to work hard - doubly hard to prove that I was a good headteacher, a
good, black headteacher, a good, black female headteacher. I felt I was in a
glass cage all the time being watched." (Vasanthi Rao, in Mortimore and
Mortimore, 1991 p. 81)

Development opportunities

The numbers of women applying for headship is limited by the numbers who reach
the other senior management posts in secondary schools. The organizational factors
which limit their advancement through the career structure may include the
preferential professional development of young male teachers, an absence of
networking on the part of women and lack of confidence, aspirations and the under-
estimation of abilities. In addition, women, and sometimes men, may be hampered by
preconceptions related to their gender which places them in stereotyped roles.
Schmuck (1986) referred to the concept of men as 'gatekeepers' who may limit the
passage of women at any of the stages of advancement.

The organisational barriers identified by female educational administrators in the USA
include:

"Male dominance of key leadership positions
Lack of political savvy
Lack of career positioning
Lack of mentoring
Lack of mobility
Internal barriers and
Bias against women" (Hill and Ragland, 1995, p. 9)

In a larger and more detailed survey of 150 highly successful women administrators in
education in the USA (Gupton and Appelt Slick, 1996), respondents were asked to
describe major barriers they experienced along their career paths at a variety of points.
These points included:
(a) choosing a major area of study or career;
(b) obtaining the necessary degree or training;
(c) securing a job after college;
(d) advancing their careers;
(e) balancing family and career;
(f) encountering gender related barriers in pursuing their career goals.

Choosing an area of study and securing a job were the least likely points to have presented problems. For some respondents, money or family commitments had been a problem in obtaining training. A majority reported problems associated with advancing their career and in balancing family and career. Specific problems that were mentioned in relation to advancing their career included understanding the politics and the bureaucracy of their organisation.

However, the largest group, 70 per cent, indicated encountering gender related barriers in pursuing their career goals as a problem area. The problems were expressed as: feeling patronised; experiencing stereotypes relating to gender; a lack of support and networks for women; discrimination related to interviewing and promotion practices.

A similar approach to analysis of the under-representation of women in educational management is the management route model developed by van Eck et al (1996). This model distinguishes three chronological phases, anticipation or preparation, acquisition and performance.
Table 2.2: The Management Route Model

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<td>Phases</td>
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<td>Performance</td>
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(adapted from van Eck et al p. 406)

For each of these three phases, the authors then consider the personal, organisational and social factors that limit the progress of women in educational management, claiming that "Women encounter more obstacles than men in all three." (van Eck et al, 1996, p. 406)

Personal, organisational and social factors will have varying degrees of importance for individuals and for different phases. However, the authors propose that it is the anticipation or preparation phase where organisational factors are most important and where inequity may be:

"caused and sustained by opportunities and rewards which are distributed semi-informally, such as attending conferences and courses, running a department, representing the school in projects and non-teaching hours. Those who allocate these rewards are usually male head teachers who tend to reward those who are most like themselves, that is to say other men." (van Eck et al, 1996, p. 407)

They also refer to the importance of networking and to having a "sponsor" or mentor in this anticipation or preparation phase.
Australian analysis (Still, 1995) identifies organisational constraints in terms of not only “the glass ceiling” but also “glass walls”, limiting roles for men and women, and “sticky floors” which may be the most appropriate metaphor of all. She identifies a range of factors that inhibit the progress of women:

1. Cultural, eg religion, and the general perception that women are inferior;

2. Organisational, eg lack of close monitoring and planned job assignments, and lack of child care;

3. Individual, eg lack of self confidence, lack of ambition;

4. Governmental, eg lack of education opportunities, social policy.

Grogan (1996), whilst recognising the barriers to promotion experienced by women, uses a feminist post-structuralist framework to comment on the situation that women face:

“What bothered me most about conceiving of such factors as barriers, obstacles, or hurdles to overcome was the notion that the course to be run or negotiated was itself legitimate. In other words, it suggested that the way to become a superintendent was a good one; but in order to do it, women and others who were different would have to toil harder or do extra work to remove the obstructions that lay in their path.” (Grogan, 1996, p. 26)

The similar analysis of organizational barriers presented by Ruijs (1993) draws on the work of Shakeshaft (1989):

“She argued that using internal barriers as an explanation for women’s perceived lack of achievement is inadequate. The root cause of these barriers can be traced to male hegemony. It is not women’s psyche that is at fault and thus needs changing, but rather the social structure of society” (p. 556-7)
Within the workplace there does appear to be evidence that men are more likely to be offered opportunities that help them in their career and that they are generally more likely than women to be "groomed" for success. Schmuck (1986) comments that young male teachers are more likely to be offered development possibilities such as the chairing of a committee or group.

**Informal networks**

Ruijs (1993) refers to the informal male networks and resulting development opportunities that are more likely to benefit young male teachers in school:

"Where women have limited access to this type of informal system, they are then less likely to have informal training opportunities such as committee work, quasi-administrative duties and temporary management assignments. ... This puts female applicants at a disadvantage when competing for management positions against men who have had such opportunities." (p. 574)

Mentoring, both formal and informal, appears to be less available to women than to men. Schmuck (1986) has identified that principals tend to interact more with male teachers than with female teachers. Informal mentoring in industry and commerce has tended to be identified with men (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). In addition they note that women find it very difficult to be accepted in the 'old boy' network. Where men hold all or most of the senior positions, male culture may effectively exclude women from entering:

"in many cases the inner circle of male senior-level executives and professionals have many shared experiences such as school, sporting activities, company boards and community and professional associations. Because of this background, a certain amount of 'bonding' and trust builds up. The culture is a form that cannot easily be learned or assimilated." (Mann, 1995, p. 9)
At its most extreme women may find themselves effectively barred from potentially influential meetings and institutions, such as male dominated clubs. This may also occur within the world of education. A female American superintendent reports how she paid for one of her male principals to join the Rotary Club, so that she could always go as his guest: “in order to meet face-to-face and shake hands with the community power-brokers.” (Bell, 1995, p. 300). Delamont (1990) identifies that British women aspiring to headship may also be disadvantaged:

“If promotion in school teaching depends in part on meeting heads, councillors and LEA officials at the Freemasons, the rugby club, the Conservative party headquarters, or the golf club.” (p. 88)

Certainly for women in the business world there are still difficulties associated with entry to informal networks:

“It seems clear, however, that managerial and professional women are still less integrated with important organizational networks, and it is these internal networks that influence critical human resource decisions such as promotion and acceptance.” (Burke and McKeen, 1994, p. 75)

In addition, women may be less aware of the importance of ensuring that they take part in micro-political activity within the organisation, indeed they may be averse to this type of activity. In regard to general management, Mann (1995) points out that women tend to prefer formal means rather than organisational politics in making their way, but that:

“This political incompetence can lead to stunted career progression.” (p. 14)

Issues of confidence

It has also been suggested that women are less confident than men and may be less likely than men to estimate accurately their abilities with regard to applications for a
management position. Discussing her experience of working with women teachers and headteachers, Al Khalifa (1992) states:

"Much of what women describe and discuss in the context of career development work reveals self-doubt about their level of suitability and preparedness for management." (p. 99)

Research in the USA and the UK has shown that men may chance applying for jobs where they have only some of the necessary qualifications and experience, while women are likely to apply only for the situations where they are fully qualified. (Shakeshaft, 1993, p. 51) Rogers (1993), commenting on her research in Wales, stated that:

"if a man thought he could perform only three out of the ten duties specified in a job he would still apply for it, whereas if a woman thought she could perform seven out of the ten duties but not the other three she would not apply." (Education, 1993, p. 151)

For the eight headteachers interviewed by Hustler et al (1995):

"the pattern which emerges from the eight interviews is that the men tended to be confident from the outset of their careers - or at any rate early on in them - that headship was their goal, whereas the women had no such expectations." (Rowan, 1995, p. 177)

Typically these female heads had needed a boost to their confidence from others and from initial success, before they contemplated applying for headship. Gold (1996) reports similar conclusions that few women in educational leadership appear to have set out initially to be educational leaders, and have only applied for headship when they have been encouraged by others, when they have been managed by someone less effective, or else: "they just drift into it." (Gold, 1996, p. 423).
However, Hall (1996) did not report lack of confidence related to career progression in respect of the six heads she researched. It appeared that the fact that the heads she studied were in their late thirties or early forties when they obtained their first headship was not because of under-estimation or:

“anticipated organizational resistance but their own assessment of whether they were ready, willing and able to do the job.” (Hall, 1996 pp 61-2)

This does not exclude the possibility that the equivalent aspiring male heads might have applied for the post at an earlier stage in their lives. These headteachers were apparently realistic in their self assessment, and in planning their lives to accommodate having families. In addition, they were not constrained, like men, by the cultural expectation that they would be the main bread-winner:

“the women heads demonstrated the possibility of an inner path to headship based on self-efficacy and self-actualisation, a path that is chosen rather than a response to a demand.” (ibid. p. 62)

An international survey clearly indicates that male teachers are considerably more confident than female teachers and sure of their abilities. When asked to report on their teaching in the last year, quite typically, men might claim “100 per cent success” whilst a woman more realistically that “three-quarters of my students know how to read and write”. (Davies and Gunawardena, 1992 p. 82)

Selection and appointment

Research for the POST project in the early 1980s was critical of the assessment procedures adopted by LEAs. It was suggested that the somewhat arbitrary procedures could cause difficulties which were faced by all the candidates for headship, but which might particularly affect the selection of women since:

“In the current procedures, where non-explicit, non-job-related factors dominate, women are bound to be relatively disadvantaged, even if they
receive positive discrimination at the beginning of the appointment.” (Morgan et al 1983, p. 77)

The answer would seem to be to improve the methods used in selection. However, more sophisticated methods of assessment in selection may not eliminate gender bias. In considering the under-representation of women in general management, Alimo-Metcalfe (1994) surveyed the range of assessment procedures available in business. These included the interview, the use of psychometric tests, cognitive ability tests, personality measurement, using assessment centres and the evaluation of ongoing performance. She concludes, somewhat pessimistically, that:

"as organizations purportedly attempt to increase the 'fairness' and 'objectivity' of assessment, they may in fact be increasing the effect of gender bias. Furthermore, as the techniques of assessment become more complex, sources of bias are far less obvious and hence less likely to be challenged.” (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1994a, p., 104)

Gender certainly played an important role in the selection of heads considered in the POST project. In a situation where the majority of those appointing were male (Morgan et al, 1983, p. 68) it was felt that:

"the variability of criteria used in judging fitness for headship is likely to be complicated still further by the additional criteria which come into play when the candidate is a women. “ (ibid. p. 73)

During the same period, i.e. the 1980s, similar patterns of potentially arbitrary selection procedures used in the POST research were found to be in evidence through research projects in the USA, Australia and the Netherlands (Ruijs, 1993) Where procedures are unstructured and informal the result is likely to be that “The most influential non-rational criterion becomes: 'Does this candidate fit in our school?'” (Ruijs, 1993, p. 574) Under such circumstances it is likely that a male candidate will be favoured, since the numbers of men in senior management provide an image which may be self-perpetuating: "Many more models of men headteachers are available to
selectors, as a basis for stereotypes." (Morgan, et al, 1983, p. 77) The stereotype is underpinned by:

"the unwarranted assumption that leadership is a male characteristic demanding physical and mental toughness and the ability to approach difficulties unemotionally," (Gane and Morgan, 1992, p. 53)

The stereotypical view of males as more likely to possess leadership qualities is matched by a stereotype of females identifying their main interests with the home and family:

"Many selectors have difficulty in conceiving of domestic arrangements where the woman's career takes priority." (Morgan et al 1983, p. 69)

Summarising research undertaken in the first half of the 80s it seemed that:

"promoters are operating from constructions of gender roles defined in narrow, traditional terms which accentuate women's roles as wives and mothers and diminish their roles as teachers." (Grant, 1989, p.45)

Commenting on the interview procedure for women applying for jobs traditionally held by males, Alimo-Metcalfe states that:

"type of dress, physical attractiveness and even the wearing of lipstick significantly affect the assessor's decision." (Alimo Metcalfe, 1994b, p. 28)

The POST project 1980 - 1983 did identify that, although relatively few women applied for headship, for those that did apply, the barriers are probably no greater than those that apply at lower levels of seniority. Although women only accounted for 11% of the applications for headships of mixed comprehensive schools in 1980-83, they made up 12% of candidates reaching the final interview and 11% of those appointed, (Morgan et al 1983, p.68)
The influence of LEA officers was seen to be positive with regard to the appointment of women, raising questions about the impact of the power of governors, especially in grant-maintained schools, where they may make choices without LEA influence. In the POST research the involvement of LEA officials appears, at least at the start of the process, to have benefited female candidates:

"The nature of officer perceptions of women candidates for headship can be summarized as initially welcoming, expecting a higher quality from them than from male candidates, and fearing lay selectors' doubts at the final stages." (Morgan et al 1983, p. 67)

However, the perception of the researchers was, that whilst men were being considered for the headship of girls' schools:

"In general, the same doubts are rarely expressed in relation to men's abilities to run girls' schools, as we heard about women in mixed schools." (Ibid. p. 72)

Relatively recent research into the selection of 10 male and 10 female heads (Evetts, 1991, and 1994) noted some changes in the nature of the selection process, from that described by Morgan et al (1983). However, this research still concluded that:

"there were important elements of continuity in the headteacher selection process. Gender differences in the achievement of headteacher posts continued to be very large in spite of the claimed objectives of both LEAs and teacher unions in their equal opportunities policies." (Evetts, 1991, p.293)

More recent research undertaken by Hall (1996) indicates a possibly more egalitarian attitude on the part of selection panels. Two of the three secondary heads were surprised at getting the job:

"not because they did not consider themselves ready, but because they thought they did not fit the desired stereotype. " (p. 59)
A further factor that may affect the selection prospects for female headteachers is the area of the country where they are applying for posts. Within the different regions of the UK there are striking differences in the proportion of female headteachers. (Edwards and Lyons, 1994). Female candidates for headships in London and the home counties are much more likely to be successful than candidates in the north of England, East Anglia, Wales and Scotland, (see chapter 1).

The most likely explanation for the geographically diverse nature of opportunity for female candidates for headship relates to the prevalence of stereotypes about male and female leadership potential. The areas where male conservatism about women leaders was strongest may be typified by the response of one female head:

"A lot of governors in Yorkshire were miners or ex-miners and to them a man is always the boss and a woman’s place is in the home. Mind you, when I came to East Anglia, I found that many of the governors I met are farmers with pretty similar attitudes!" (Edwards and Lyons, 1994, p. 9)

In contrast, London appears to have governors with more ‘sophisticated’ attitudes, and who may still be affected by the residue of ILEA influence with regard to equal opportunities:

"They [the ILEA] created the expectation that women could succeed, they put gender on the map. Their equality policies made an enormous difference psychologically, and that has resulted in a steady progression on women’s part.” (female deputy director of education of a London Borough, quoted by Edwards and Lyons, 1994, p. 8)

Cultural expectations and stereotyping have a considerable influence on the career prospects and routes for promotion that may be undertaken by aspirant female headteachers.
Role stereotyping

The stereotypes that identify men with leadership roles, also brand women into other, mainly supportive, roles. The phenomenon of not only the glass ceiling, but “glass walls” has been identified as providing barriers:

“These barriers are primarily those horizontal ones which prevent both women and men from moving between functional areas or from service divisions into line management.” (Still, 1995, p. 107)

Women promoted within secondary schools have often taken, or been directed towards, a route that has involved specializing in pastoral work. Even where the role is not specifically defined as pastoral, they may find that colleagues consciously or unconsciously allot that role to them. One female deputy head found that form tutors were selective about referring pupils to her:

“problems that appear to need a woman’s touch, that is social or emotional problems, always end up outside my door.” (Singleton, 1992, p. 166)

The Management and Organisation in Secondary Schools (MOSS) project found that senior men tended to have academic posts which improved their career prospects whilst women held pastoral posts such as head of year, which are less clearly identified with management, and may involve skills and knowledge which are specific to the individual school (Weightman, 1989):

“Men tend to do the high profile, straightforward jobs that are part of the natural progression up the hierarchy. The job of head of department or faculty has a clear role that everyone understands and accepts. This enables the postholder to be seen as being a manager and doing management work.” (Weightman, 1989, p. 121)

Litawski (1992), investigating the role of female deputy heads in secondary schools, found that there was a pre-dominance of social-emotional pastoral roles and lower
status tasks, such as: “Checking the cleanliness of toilets, skirting boards, carpets, curtains.” (p. 237). She concluded that:

“My research substantiates the claim that differentiation by gender still exists, and shows no signs of changing or disappearing.” (p. 243)

However, other research on deputy heads indicates that this tendency for roles to be split on gender lines may now be reducing:

"it appears as though fewer women are being confined to stereotyped deputy roles with more senior management teams allocating deputy responsibilities according to the particular strengths of the individuals within the team rather than curriculum and administrative work being immediately associated with men and the pastoral responsibilities with women." (McBurney and Hough, 1989, p.118)

Schmuck (1986) refers to the distinction between "jobs with high opportunity and low opportunity" (p.181), and there is evidence to show that pastoral responsibilities may indicate “low opportunity”. In the study carried out by Weindling and Earley, (1987):
"the most common route to headship was 'academic' or curricular, as opposed to 'pastoral'". The implications for promotion of taking an academic rather than pastoral route are therefore considerable, and are incorporated in the advice of a secondary deputy head who had made many applications for headship:

"I feel that women deputies could (and should) insist on acquiring experience in 'male' management areas, such as timetabling - not because this is a necessary prerequisite to headship but because it is generally perceived to be so, and a competence in this area would give more confidence at interviews. Women should avoid the temptation to do only what it is thought we are good at" (Roach, 1993, pp. 64-65)

The stereotypes identifying the male role as “managerial” and the female role as “pastoral” are certainly not limited to the West. Davies and Gunawardena (1992),
researching in Africa and Asia, discovered that administrative duties were generally divided on gender basis:

"Areas which men did more often:

- Timetable
- Examination administration
- Organisation of special events

Boys' welfare
Schools visits
Chairing meetings

Areas which women did more often:

- Girls' welfare
- Students' personal problems
- Taking assembly"

The conclusion being that:

"men will therefore be more visible in organisational tasks, and women will seem to predominate in pastoral roles." (Davies and Gunawardena, 1992 p. 78)

More general gender stereotyping may affect the way both promotion and appraisal systems operate. However, for women who are black, the negative stereotyping is likely to be magnified. In her consideration of appraisal and equal opportunities, Thompson (1992) identifies the need for appraisers to be aware in relation to gender, race and age of the "danger of stereotyped expectations which result in a biased approach when conducting appraisal". (p. 256) She concludes both that "women ... are being excluded from promotion because of under-assessment by their line managers," (p. 258) and that "it is frequently assumed that black teachers will work only or largely with ethnic minority children." (p. 236) She quotes the experience of a young teacher asked if there had been any disappointments during the year? The
response indicated the stereotypical view that appeared to be held of this young Asian female teacher:

"Not really apart from the fact that I still don't have my own class. I think that people see me as some sort of superior classroom helper. I'm not. I'm a fully qualified teacher, but just because I can speak Punjabi I have to stay [in the supportive role]." (quoted in Thompson, 1992, p. 236)

McKellar, (1989) recounting her difficulties as a black woman educator, estimated that she was one of only 27 black teacher educators in higher education in England Scotland and Wales, representing 0.6% of the total. She does not state how many of the 27 were women. Based on her experience of training women in educational management, Al Khalifa concludes that: "for black women in management the experience of racism and sexism converges." (p. 101) On top of racial stereotyping, women who are black:

"encounter further harassment and excluding strategies which make the maintenance of their authority and credibility more precarious." (Al Khalifa, 1992, p. 101)

Elaine Foster, comments on the difficulties associated with career progress for black women:

"From a black women’s perspective, very little did in fact happen by chance ... I planned very carefully where I wanted to be, reflecting on my practice ... more to do with how I got the best out of myself and the people I worked with. Many black teachers have to do this because they do not necessarily have the access to networks that other colleagues have." (Hustler, et al 1995, p. 39)

Cooper and Lewis (1995) report on the continuing prevalence of gender stereotyping in the business environment, pointing out that stereotypes can become self-fulfilling:
“as when a women is not expected to be capable of a particular job, and therefore given inadequate training and support.” (Cooper and Lewis, 1995, p. 29)

They also comment on the possibility of the modification of stereotypes as the experience of women managers increases and the emergence of new stereotypes, such as the presumption that any woman using the title “Ms” is judged to be high on masculine characteristics and low on feminine ones.

Ways in which progress for women in educational management can be encouraged

The apparent difficulties that women may experience through gender and racial stereotyping may point to the need for undertaking positive action in supporting female teachers in their careers. This may be achieved through mentoring, networking and other forms of informal support. In addition the existence and promotion of role models and access to appropriate training opportunities are of real importance. Opportunities for career progress will also be affected by the perceptions of the “gatekeepers”. These perceptions will be affected both by changes in the wider society, including changes in legislation, and by the extent to which individual organisations then encourage their managers to develop awareness of gender issues.

Mentoring

Mentoring is normally associated with an older more experienced colleague giving support to a younger new entrant to a profession or to someone recruited to a new post:

“A mentor relationship has the potential to enhance career development and psychosocial development of both individuals.” (Kram, 1983, p. 613)

In education, formal mentoring is often identified as an aspect of induction, and is likely to be limited in duration. In industry, Kram studied a research sample, where
the relationship lasted from between two to eleven years. She identifies that such a relationship may include “sponsorship” with the implication that the mentor will promote the interests of the protégé, and will also ensure that the protégé is challenged in the work situation. Both of these strategies should ensure preparation for promotion. The psychosocial functions of mentoring are seen to include an element of role modelling and counselling leading to the mentee:

“developing a sense of competence, confidence, and effectiveness in the managerial role.” (Kram, 1983, p. 614)

The value of such a relationship, extending well beyond the function of induction, is obvious if some of the obstacles to the progression of women, outlined in the previous section, are to be overcome:

“Mentoring is critical to female leadership development as well as to the probability of employment promotions. Mentoring enhances leadership development for both genders, but it is especially important for women because this has not been a long-standing part of career development for women. ..... Mentors become invaluable in explaining other essentials [than hard work] to advancement, such as how to increase one’s visibility within the work setting.” (Hill and Ragland, 1995 p. 76)

For women who wish to achieve senior positions, this increase in visibility may be a particularly important aspect of mentoring or ‘sponsorship’:

“Above all else, there is a strong opinion expressed by the participants that an aspirant needs sponsors and a certain amount of visibility that comes with university connections and/or participation in professional organisations.” (Grogan, 1996 p. 71)

There is little evidence of formal developmental mentoring of this kind in education in the UK, although mentoring is now being used quite commonly in three ways for teachers in schools. These are: mentoring for students in initial teacher education;
mentoring of newly qualified teachers; and, following the initiative of the School Management Task Force, the mentoring of new headteachers. However, despite reported benefits for protégés and mentors, research on mentoring of beginner teachers in secondary schools has identified:

“fragmented and inconsistent practices across departments, where effective mentoring was dependent on the value placed on it by individual mentors.” (Bush et al, 1996, p. 124)

The benefits of mentoring may be generally recognized in schools in the UK, particularly in training for NQTs and new headteachers, but the chances of extended formal mentoring for any individual beyond the first appointment, whether male or female, are remote. However, the lack of formal mentoring programmes does not mean that mentoring cannot occur. The heads in Hall’s (1996) study all acknowledged that they had a mentor in terms of:

“significant others who have shown faith in their abilities, given opportunities to grow and practical help in advancing their careers,” (p. 55)

Evetts (1990) in her study of primary heads, reports on the importance of “gatekeepers and the sponsorship of individuals for promotion posts.” (p. 149-50). The headteachers had often been encouraged to apply for promotion by individuals in positions of authority, particularly inspectors and advisers, and their own headteachers.

Gender and mentoring

If formal mentoring of females is instituted, the question arises of whether the female protégé should be mentored by a male or a female arises. Daws (1995) concludes that success as a mentor is dependent on access to power, thus the more successful mentors are likely to be male. However, the claim is that where the mentor is male, there may be entrenched resistance in the mentor to the promotion of the protégé:
“women’s relative lack of success in breaking through the glass ceiling to senior levels of management can, in part, be explained by their lack of access to appropriate mentors.” (Daws, 1995 p. 103)

Research reported by Burke and McKeen (1994) identifies several barriers in male/female mentoring relationships in industry. The difficulties include lack of contact with mentors, the high visibility of women as protégés, negative stereotypes about women, differences in behaviour and communication style between men and women, differences in influence strategies, and biases in the organisation with regard to cross-gender relationships. In her wide-ranging study, Kram (1983) identified similar limitations in cross-gender mentoring including: young female managers lacking an adequate role model in a male mentor; male mentors maintaining stereotypical behaviour to encourage "feelings of dependency and incompetence" (Kram, 1983, p. 623)

concerns about the intimacy of the relationship and the way in which it was viewed.

Same gender mentoring avoids the problems that can be encountered in cross gender mentoring and does provide valuable role model benefits. However it has certain disadvantages, including those outlined by Hurley and Fagenson-Eland (1996). These include the relatively small number of women in top management positions who are available for mentoring, and the fact that female mentors tend to be less powerful within an institution than male mentors. In some situations, possibly those areas most strongly identified as male, the efficacy of mentoring may be related to the perceived status of the mentor. It may therefore be more helpful to women in some circumstances to be mentored by a male senior colleague. For the 27 female senior administrators studied by Grogan (1995) their mentors had inevitably been male, but they were aware of the difficulties in emulating the management style of their mentors:

"Their entry into administration was more often than not facilitated by male superiors who promoted them both directly and indirectly. Successful
administrative styles were associated with the men who performed them. Therefore, although some of the women admired a male mentor, they were conscious of not being able to imitate his approach to leadership" (Grogan, 1995, p, 183)

For the female administrators in education surveyed by Gupton and Appelt Slick (1996), mentors had been important; 73 per cent reported having had mentors, in some cases more than one. The majority of mentors were superintendents, principals, or professors, so it is not surprising that many of the mentors were male.

In the research on female administrators undertaken by Hill and Ragland (1995), the majority of the respondents were now mentoring others:

"we commonly found women principals mentoring women teachers. Interviewees often reported that they felt responsible to mentor other women because there had been no one there for them." (p. 78, authors' italics)

In countries where there is a longer history of mentoring for principals there may be some bias towards offering mentoring to men rather than women. At more senior levels this could be associated with the shortage of female role models. In relation to those training for principalship in Queensland, Australia:

"male mentors (eg male principals and male executive staff in education) tend to sponsor male protégés," (Ehrich, 1994, p. 11)

Informal support

Family and colleagues

The general level of support that women receive, both informal and formal, appears to be an important factor in encouraging career progress. Many females in education and elsewhere comment on the importance of support from colleagues and family.
Women may place particular importance on personal support systems. Hall (1996) identifies how the attitude of women to promotion is:

"strongly influenced by two sources of support: on the one hand organizational and work cultures which accept or reject women and, on the other, the character of the relationship individual women may have with their male partner or husband.” (Hall, 1996, p. 58)

None of the headteachers in Hall’s study belonged to any more formal network or group formed to support women. They were “unwilling to admit any need for help themselves.” (p. 58) They generally felt that they received support from their organisation and work culture and usually had an individual within the work situation from whom they received advice and support.

The range of support may include semi-formal work programmes, and totally informal support from family, particularly the husband or male partner, and friends. In addition many women receive support from other women, including female networking.

Support from women’s networks

The value of the more informal mentoring and networking was recognised by Cullen and Luna (1993), researching women mentoring women in higher education. Their conclusion was, that in addition to any valuable formal mentoring relationships, there should be institutionalized opportunities for networking for women. The 150 senior female administrators studied by Gupton and Appelt Slick (1996) were asked if they currently were part of a network of supportive women in the profession. Although only 40 per cent said that they were, a further 40 per cent said that they would like to be and only 17 per cent said that they did not see a need. However, more than 70 per cent ranked insufficient support systems as either the first or second cause of the continued under-representation of women in educational management.

A female former director of a UK polytechnic indicated the importance of informal female support:
"I remain convinced that networks are an essential support for women as they move into posts where responsibilities and painful isolation may undermine their confidence." (Perry, 1993, p. 94)

Grant (1989) mentions a group of six women deputy heads who had previously taught at the same school and now “provided a reference group for each other.” (p. 43)

In North Yorkshire, where there were only six female heads out of a total of 60, the women secondary headteachers formed a support group, Senior Women in Secondary Schools (SWISS) with the aim of offering:

“opportunities for support, advice and development to women holding and aspiring to senior positions.” (Peace, 1994)

The case study of two new female senior managers in a school in Victoria, Australia indicated that in the face of a basically “macho” environment:

“both saw their professional and emotional support as being derived from their social and professional networks amongst women, but usually not within the school. Neither had time for the principals’ associations which were seen to be boys’ clubs, generally conservative if not actively working against, women.” (Blackmore, 1994, p. 17)

One female head interviewed in Hustler et al (1995) actually applied for headship, when pregnant, partly because: “her women’s group gave her personal support”. (p. 180)

The existence of advocacy groups promoting the role of women in educational management in the USA is documented by Schmuck (1995), listing groups in most of the individual states.

However, not all women automatically support others. Research by Matthews (1995) identifies four types amongst women managers: 'activists' who seek to promote women within education, 'advocates' who support other women, 'isolates' who deny
that discrimination exists and 'individualists' who take the view that it is the individual that matters, not their gender; these women tend to model themselves on male colleagues and to be rather judgmental about other women in senior management. Similarly, Wild (1994) refers to women managers who "pull the ladder up behind them." (p. 92)

Matthews' 'activists' typically had been influenced by the women's movement, and the support of women colleagues was important to them. They questioned the status quo and were capable of being critically aware of the system and the place of women in it. The 'advocates' also supported other women in school administration and aimed for a balance of men and women in senior positions. They did not envisage a transformation of society and valued relationships with both men and women.

The 'isolates' may acknowledge that some women experience discrimination but deny any personal knowledge of it. They are:

"detached from issues of equity in administration. They have a certain naïveté about the problems of sex discrimination in educational administration."
(Matthews, 1995, p.256)

There is some similarity with the nineteen female principals interviewed by Schmuck and Schubert (1995) where:

"all women reported their femaleness made a difference in their jobs, yet only two principals noted behaviors which they labelled 'discriminatory', although several women reported examples of differential treatment such as, 'they have been less than accepting of me because I am a women.' How can we make sense out of the fact that they received differential treatment, yet deny the fact of personal discrimination?" (Schmuck and Schubert, 1995, p. 282)

The 'individualists' tended to have been recruited by men and they fear alienating men: "in reality they have alienated themselves from women." (Matthews, 1995, p.
In effect they see the world through male eyes and may resent other women entering their world.

Women may not always be supported by others who are working for them. Whilst 73 per cent of the senior female administrators studied by Gupton and Appelt Slick (1996) agreed that women are supportive of other women, the remainder disagreed:

"Ironically, female administrators frequently report more reluctant acceptance from the female staff members than from male members. Traditionally oriented women often harbour resentment for and even openly defy women who break with tradition and assume positions usually occupied by males." (p. 66)

The importance of role models

Although men may act as role models for women, there is evidence in management of the importance of female role models in encouraging the development of female managers:

Numerous studies have shown that female role models in higher managerial positions act as important influences in terms of career aspirations for other women." (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, p. 87)

In addition they make the point that female role models can change the attitudes of both women and men, acting positively on males who, without the evidence, tend to doubt the ability of women to successfully hold a senior position.

The importance of providing a role model is evident in the thinking of women who have reached senior positions. A black female deputy head ensures that she manages staff and pupils: “in a way that presents a strong and empowering role-model.” (Adler et al, 1992, p. 78). Similarly Elaine Foster comments on being a role model:
“Many black colleagues contact me to ask for advice on their futures. As a black women, I became tired of people implying that black people could not become heads. Being a role model in areas like Handsworth is also very important.” (Hustler, et al 1995, p. 39)

The importance of having female role models in higher education is also recognised. In the USA, affirmative action has meant that federally funded projects have made hiring of female professors in education administration a priority. Shakeshaft (1989, p. 132), claims that the “gains are small”, but Antonucci (1980, p. 191) had argued for hiring a ‘critical mass’ of women faculty.”, in order to strengthen the position of the female role model in higher education.

There is evidence of the importance of role models in the development of headteachers of British schools. Although the heads in Hall’s (1996) study had identified individuals who had acted as mentors, they were also able to identify quite separate people who had acted as role models. In most cases they had drawn various lessons from a range of those they had worked for. However, the headteachers did not draw any lessons from role models on how they might successfully combine work and family. Although many of the role models were men, there was no suggestion that the women were trying to adopt masculine behaviour:

“They were all adamant that they had at no stage of their careers sought to imitate men’s behaviour in order to progress.” (Hall, 1996, p. 55)

In some cases the role models operated as negative models, focusing attention on behaviour that the women could then avoid. In this they were similar to the senior female administrators questioned by Gupton and Appelt Slick (1996) where 85 per cent identified positive role models and 74 per cent negative role models.

Having appropriate role models is likely to be even more important for women who face the two potential career disadvantages of gender and race:
"In theory I should have had a distinct advantage over my peers throughout my education, but the early periods of schooling were dogged by low expectations, and these were exacerbated by the absence of black female models. There was nobody within school or in an equivalent status position elsewhere in society with whom to identify." (McKellar, 1989, p. 78)

Women who have achieved a position of power recognise the importance of acting as role models in their own right. The headteachers in Hall's (1996) study could be:

"prototypes of success in the current educational climate. As such, they emerge as and are expected to be role models for other women aspiring to leadership in schools and potentially for other men." (p. 196)

However, these heads were setting high standards - others commenting on them as role models may have experienced negative effects, seeing them as: "working excessively hard and setting personal standards that were sometimes hard for others to reach." (ibid. p.124). As a result they were setting an example that was almost too good:

"The almost superhuman qualities that the heads were often described as possessing and to which they aspired could potentially have been demotivating for others." (ibid. p. 127)

The senior women in education studied by Adler et al (1993) recognised the need to counter the stereotypical image of headteachers as male:

"Many of the women in our study were these successful role models. ... they were ‘high up’, well paid and therefore relatively powerful. Several women in senior positions discussed role models, stressing their own personal impact and influence on children, student and staff. Although role models present a challenge they are, alone, not enough to end a pattern of male and white dominance" (Adler et al, 1993, p. 25)
Similarly, the limitations of role models alone in initiating change are recognised by Pat Collings, speaking as a secondary head:

"It is certainly not enough simply to hope that the role model of a female head will in itself effect change in the experiences of girls and other women in the school." (Mortimore and Mortimore, 1991, p. 39)

**Training for women**

The major issues with regard to management training for women, appear to be:

whether men and women actually have equal access to such training;

the extent to which the content of the course recognizes women as managers and what they might bring to management; and

whether there is particular benefit for women in attending women only courses.

**Access to courses**

It is impossible to obtain comprehensive figures for men and women on courses that might be relevant for their development in educational management, since all courses are potentially helpful in career terms. However, the most important courses are likely to be the specialist educational management courses intended for those already holding management positions in education, and for those who would like to move into positions in educational management. Although national figures are not kept for such courses, the two largest masters degrees in educational management are those offered by the University of Leicester and the specialist educational management stream of the Open University MA in Education (TES 1997) (see Table 2.3). The Leicester MBA figures include part-time and distance learning students:
Table 2.3: Men and Women enrolled for Masters degrees in Education Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Leicester MBA (Education Management) October 1997</th>
<th>Open University MA in Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance Learning</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the pattern is not entirely clear, it would seem that women are tending to enrol for these programmes, which might assist them in obtaining promotion, in numbers that exceed those of the men, with the exception of the distance learning variant of the Leicester MBA. However, these applications come from all phases of education, and women comprise approximately 80 per cent of the teaching force as a whole. With regard to male and female access to courses for educational managers held at the Institute of Education in London, Gold (1993) claims that the programmes are attended by roughly equal numbers of men and women, despite the fact that men actually make up the majority in management. As the achievement of a Masters qualification becomes more prevalent, more cachet will be attached to obtaining a doctorate. At this level it may be that men are more likely to apply. 1997 registrations for the management strand of the Leicester Doctorate of Education were 118 in total, of whom 81 are men. However, the apparent trend for women to equal
or even outnumber men on many educational management courses has also been observed in the USA, even though men may still dominate the content and teaching of these courses. In regard to a course for principal training it was commented:

"Most of those taking the course were women. Most of those teaching the course were men." (Worrall, 1995, p. 168)

Early indications of applications for the National Professional Qualification for Headteacher (NPQH) training are that the numbers of women accepted exceed the numbers of men, but that there is an imbalance when the numbers of teachers and deputies are taken into account:

"More than two out of three primary deputy heads are women, yet the same proportion is not reflected in applications." (Whitehead 1997)

It would therefore seem that present trends indicate that women do have access to training courses for management, although their participation may not be in proportion to their numbers, may not guarantee them success in achieving promotion, and may not apply to the highest levels of educational management qualification.

Content of courses

Atchison (1993) considers the issue of women's access to management courses with regard not only to those attending, but also the content of the courses:

"Courses are male dominated in terms of the number of participants, the content and process of the course and the associated reading texts (mostly written by men). It is assumed either that the 'manager' is a man or if in rare instance, a woman, that there is no difference - it is unisex. The particular experience and contribution of women is ignored." (Atchison, 1993, p. 98)
Hite and McDonald report considerable difficulties for American women in general management development courses in relation to content, pedagogy and possible harassment:

"Not only are gender inequities found in the curriculum, but also how information is taught in classrooms points to potential bias. Women, more than men, are likely to be sexually harassed by professors via numerous methods including the use of sexist comments and jokes in the classroom, unwanted touching, or suggestions of sex in return for a good grade." (Hite and McDonald, 1995, p. 6)

They comment that women learn more successfully in an atmosphere that encourages discussion rather than in a lecture style of teaching and that: "Gender bias in textbooks continues to be a recurring theme in college classrooms." (ibid., p. 9)

It is perhaps this issue, of the content and style of courses being dominated by men and male thinking, that has led to the development of some women only courses, particularly courses for women into management.

**Women only courses**

Demand from members has led to practical courses for women being run by the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) for “Women into deputy headship” and for “Women into secondary headship” (Ruijs, 1993, p.591). However, Al Khalifa puts forward a quite distinct philosophy for the existence of women only courses:

"First, single-sex training for women, whether for career and personal development or for those specifically in management positions, has tremendous potential for empowering women and encouraging women to be confident about the validity of their experience and ideas about their own needs and their approaches to management. Second, the experience of working in women-only groups provides an opportunity for support, renewal and a stimulus for development. Indeed, it can come as a welcome relief from
the often all-male environment or isolation of their normal working situation”
(Al Khalifa, 1992, p. 104)

She goes on to develop points relating to the opportunities for black women managers to be able to work together, to the use of particular learning styles that are especially relevant to women, and to the opportunities for the development of networks for women. A similar categorisation emerges from a summary of issues that lead most European countries to have women only management courses. Ruijs (1993, pp. 583 - 585) lists the following reasons for the women only courses:

that men dominate mixed groups,

in women only groups, women’s issues and ways of learning can be central in a way that they cannot in mixed groups;

women can develop their own style of management without male influence;

women can share experiences of career issues;

women and men can have different perceptions of the same situation, which can interfere with learning and understanding in mixed groups.

Some arguments against women only groups include: the fact that there are no special men only management courses; that ‘women only’ courses may seem to imply the inferiority of women as managers and that women do have to cope with men in management in real life.

In a women into management course described by Atchison (1993), the all-female participants recognised benefits from the lack of men in the process of the course as well as the content:

“The all female WIM course also had a very different ‘feel’ to it. There was no time wasted on unnecessary issues and having to listen to men talking
about irrelevancies; no time wasted having to challenge men's attitudes and sexist behaviour which came as welcome relief. It was very focused, task oriented and extremely hard working. Even at the end of the first day there was a tremendously stimulating and empowering feel to it. Women felt encouraged to be confident about the validity of their own experience and ideas about their own needs and approaches to management.” (Atchison, 1993, p. 109)

An increase in confidence was one of the major outcomes reported by those attending this course. Similar findings were identified by Jayne (1989) who reports on the increased confidence of female students after specific training in areas such as interpersonal skills, group dynamics and managing conflict. There was a distinct contrast with the male students who had started with a higher level of confidence anyway. However, both Atchison (1993) and Jayne (1989) see training as only one of the measures needed to increase the female role in educational management: “Courses for women only are vital but not sufficient” (Atchison, 1993, p. 111). Jayne (1989) concludes that training for women can have an effective role to play, but it should be in the context of training for (male) gatekeepers, the monitoring of equal opportunities and the full recognition of the more ‘feminine’ aspects of leadership. Al Khalifa also makes the same point:

“Women's training is a form of positive action which assists women in their development but it is not an adequate solution to the problems and barriers impeding women's access to management.” (Al Khalifa, 1992, p. 104)

Experience in the USA is that the workshops and courses held to promote women's confidence and overcome barriers to the promotion of women, whilst valuable, do not: “confront the issues that women face once hired as administrators.” (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 133) In addition traditional courses have not generally been changed to include the experience of women. Commenting on management courses of all kinds, Shakeshaft claims that:
“a lack of appropriate materials on women’s issues, sex-role stereotyping, socialization, and barriers and strategies for women in administration is evident.” (ibid. p. 134)

Certainly the needs of women are not always recognised in support and training provided in business. Summing up research on support for women in management, Burke and McKeen (1994) identified several ways in which women experience pressure and may therefore need support. These were the strain of being a pioneer or token female, the strains of family demands and the resulting “second shift” and in addition, the difficulty of trying to: “walk a fine line - not too masculine and not too feminine” (p. 72) in coping with stereotypes about female behaviour. They comment that:

“Taken together these findings suggest that women and men need different kinds and levels of support in the work environment because they face different challenges inside and outside a particular assignment. Moreover, a given level of support may be perceived differentially by men and women for reasons we do not yet fully understand.”

(Burke and McKeen, 1994, p. 72, authors’ italics)

Women may be seen to add to management training sessions. Reflecting on years of management training for headteachers and deputies, Gray (1993) comments on the greater awareness of women of emotional and gender issues, although he is careful to point out that men and women should not be stereotyped. However, the strengths that many women are likely to bring to management in terms of communication skills and sensitivity may mean that:

“it is men who need to take additional management training to acquire the special skills that most women possess through their socialisation.” (Ruijs, 1993, p. 583)
Raising awareness

Changes in legislation in the last twenty five years have been important in altering the context within which women work. Equal opportunities legislation, including statutory equal pay, the outlawing of sex discrimination, and the provision of maternity leave may not be perfect in their operation but serve to change the expectations of men and women about work. In 1989 women made up 44 per cent of the labour force (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). By 1995, the overall employment rate of women in the UK was well over 50 per cent (Waddington 1997). Vinnicombe and Sturges (1995) report that in the European Community as a whole the number of women employed rose from just under 40 million in 1965 to just over 53 million in 1991. At the same time the number of men employed fell from 83 to 82 million. However, the tendency is still for women in general to earn less than men and to be concentrated in the service sector, including trade, education, retailing, health care and clerical work (Davidson and Cooper, 1993, p. 3). In addition it is estimated that in Europe women occupy only about ten per cent of management positions overall and that this may be as low as five per cent of senior management positions (Vinnicombe and Sturges 1995). Davidson and Cooper (1992) sketch in some of the major developments underlying the increase in the economic activity of women as being:

"the changing role of women in society, influenced by the 'Women's Movement, the expansion of service industries, the increase in part-time employment, the changing nature of the family, and women now marrying later, having fewer children, living longer and divorcing more frequently." (p. 2)

This background of rapid social change impacts on all sectors of society. In education, as elsewhere, there is little evidence of changes in the participation rate of women greatly affecting the proportion of women senior managers.
Addressing organizational factors

Schmuck (1986) identified the factors that tend to differentiate male and female promotion within schools:

"the grooming and recruitment of male teachers, sex-biased preparatory programs in institutions of higher education, the preference for males in sponsoring and mentoring future administrators, the lack of female role models for women teachers, differential opportunities for males and females to exhibit leadership, and male domination on selection committees which leads to discrimination on hiring." (p. 178)

Her summary is that:

"At each step of administrative preparation, job seeking and selection, there are organizational processes which clearly indicate a preference for males." (p. 178)

Senior managers in schools can take some responsibility to address these organizational processes by ensuring that the culture of the organization is imbued with the concept of equal opportunities, and by considering some of the more practical issues, such as the gender composition of selection panels and influential committees, the creation of mentoring schemes and the development of role models for both aspiring teachers and their students. In trying to achieve sex equity in educational leadership, Schmuck (1980) recommends the tactics of the SEEL project (Sex Equity in Educational Leadership Project at the University of Oregon).

1. Providing information, eg about the lack of women.
2. Visibility of Role Models, the seeking of mentors and making leaders available as mentor.
3. Attacking negative stereotypes, eg that women cannot discipline boys.
4. Getting organized - women need to interact with other women.
5. Including Male Allies
6. Getting hired, avoiding the "old-boys network".

Research commissioned by Business in the Community examined 150 international examples of successful organizational change for women (Hammond, 1994). The critical success factors identified included: the long term support of top management and a clear understanding that a change in the culture towards women made good business sense. These lessons can be applied to education, where the support of senior managers is generally needed for any initiative to succeed.

The research of Adler et al (1993) with senior female managers led them to many of the same recommendations as the earlier ones of Schmuck (1980):

- implementation of equal opportunities policies;
- monitoring of selection procedures and policies;
- training of gatekeepers;
- equal access to management training and other INSET for women and men;
- mentoring for women;
- better childcare, maternity and paternity rights;
- developmental models of appraisal where both appraiser and appraisees have received training in equal opportunities;
- networking and women's support groups;
- positive action in recruiting. A quota system is one way of achieving this;
- equal opportunities interviewing.

(Adler et al 1993, p. 134)

The analysis of the barriers to women's promotion in Australia, (Still, 1995) also led to a range of recommended strategies to overcome these barriers. Using her four fold analysis of the barriers, strategies include:
1. Cultural, e.g. global women's movement, increased acceptance of women as workers;

2. Organisational, e.g. growing number of women in organisations, leading to greater opportunities for gaining experience, more mentoring, change in workplace culture, development of women's networks, development of child care;

3. Individual, e.g. increased competence, education and experience, taking control of career;

4. Governmental, e.g. formal integration policies, legal change, child care and other social services, affirmative action policies.

It would appear that the promotion of a greater proportion of women to positions of senior management is partially dependent on organisational change and monitoring, for example equal opportunities training and awareness for appraisers and for selection panels. In addition, opportunities for women are affected by wider issues relating to social change such as childcare, the maintenance of maternity rights and the development of paternity rights. However, cultural stereotypes still impinge on the perception and acceptance of women as leaders and managers. Although the intentions of legislators may be to change structures and processes to help in the achievement of equality for women, the existence of stereotypes relating to men and women and the ways that they manage and lead continue to inform the views held on male and female managers.

**Gender and leadership and management style**

The life experiences of most women commonly include taking responsibility for home and family in a way that is not familiar to most men. Such experience is likely to have its impact on attitudes to work and to management. The experience of domesticity is generally not taken into account as preparation for a management role. However, women do recognise the impact and value of this part of their lives. When asked if
women manage headship differently from men? Helen Hyde, the headteacher of Watford Girls Grammar School, replied:

"Definitely! Women are used to doing a million things at once - at home, etc., etc. They can cope with this. I'm not saying men can't cope, although perhaps I am, with deciding many different things all at once and doing all of them effectively. For women organisation is not a big deal. We are used to doing five things at once because we do it all the time. I also think that women deal with people differently. They can be overtly caring. They don't seem to have the same need for hierarchy in the same way that men often seem to." (in Ribbins, 1997, p. 129)

The life experience that women bring to management and leadership is likely to affect the ways in which they tend to operate, just as the experience of males will influence the ways in which they lead:

"If crucial factors in the formation of 'manager' or 'leader' identities derive from life experience, then any discussion of organizational life must take account of how men and women, as individual employees, have arrived at their conceptions of appropriate work place behaviour." (Hall, 1997, p. 317)

The question of how differently the experience of women leads them to manage is potentially a contentious one. Ferrario (1994) sums up the arguments. Seeing women as different may be to imply that they are inferior, or even superior, but:

"to focus on similarities between men and women managers is to neglect a female manager's uniqueness in terms of contribution to the organization." (Ferrario, 1994, p. 121)

However, a part of the gender context is that women are still the exception in management positions in education and elsewhere, and there remains a general identification of management and leadership with the male (Schein, 1994).
The identification of management and leadership with male characteristics

The stereotypical image of the senior manager or leader is generally recognised to be that of a male. Work undertaken by Schein (1994) was designed to test the hypothesis that:

"successful middle-managers are perceived to possess those characteristics, attitudes and temperaments more commonly ascribed to men in general than to women in general." (p. 41)

This work was first undertaken in the 1970s, the initial subjects of the study being both male and female middle managers in 13 insurance companies in the USA. The subjects were presented with one of three lists, which asked them to make judgements on a one to five rating on what they thought either men or women or successful middle managers were like. The results showed a significant resemblance between the ratings of what men were like and what successful managers were like for both the men and women participating in the experiment. For men there was a near zero resemblance between the ratings of what women were like and what managers were like, whilst for the women there was some relationship between the qualities of women and managers, although it was far less strong than it was for men and managers. The research has been replicated more recently and with a wider range of samples. Brenner et al (1989) found the same results for male managers as in the earlier work, but a change in that female managers were more likely to identify the qualities of women as the qualities of managers:

"Compared to attitudes held in the 1970s there has been a major change among female managers. They no longer sex type the managerial position. Today's female managers see women as more likely to hold some traits necessary for managerial success and see men as more likely to hold others." (Schein, 1994, p. 44)

Some qualities that are identified with women, such as being supportive and involving others in decision making processes, are now recognised as potentially helpful in a
leader. However, Gold (1996) makes the point that these skills could also make women seem:

“too ‘soft’ and ineffective to manage large organisations. And the skills and attributes which were seen as important were linked to organisational efficiency and technical excellence” (Gold, 1996, p. 422)

It follows that such skills tended to be identified as male characteristics.

Later work by Schein et al (1989) has established a managerial stereotype that applies across five countries, the USA, UK, Germany, China and Japan and which shows a consistency of views across these countries. For the male respondents, women were rated lower than men (and managers) on all the main characteristics in all the samples. The characteristics listed were:

- Leadership Ability;
- Ambitious;
- Competitive;
- Desires Responsibility;
- Skilled in Business Matters;
- Competent;
- Analytical Ability.

The lists and ratings given by women were similar to those given by the male respondents, although the differences between women and men in terms of managerial characteristics were smaller than in the male sample. The inclusion of management students in the research did not change the overall pattern, showing that male students, in particular did not differ from their older counterparts in their view of the suitability of women for management.

“The pervasiveness of managerial sex typing reflects the global devaluation of women. Embedded in all cultures are traditions, practices and views that
impede women's social, political and economic equality.” (Schein, 1994, p. 51)

Ferrario (1994) reports on a range of studies over time in different countries, including Japan and India. Again, there were generally negative attitudes towards women in management positions.

The pervasiveness of the male as manager affects not only practice, but theory. Considering the range of assessment techniques available for selection procedures, Alimo-Metcalfe (1994a) comments on the gender bias implicit in management theorizing:

“There is, without doubt, substantial gender bias in the literature on models of management. What a manager does, management qualities, skills, knowledge and experience, and other associated topics are based on solidly male foundations.” (p. 94)

The stereotypes of male managers apply equally to theories of leadership:

“The behaviours, traits and characteristics displayed by men in formal positions of authority have become the ‘givens’ of leadership. Therefore, leadership in organizations has been historically associated with particular characteristics which are more frequently depicted as ‘masculine’ than ‘feminine’ - aggressiveness, forcefulness, competitiveness and independence.” (Blackmore, 1989, p. 100.)

Theories relating to leaders in organisations may be grouped into two: those which emphasise the qualities of an individual, or of an ideal leader, and those which are concerned with the interaction of the leader with situational variables. The first type includes the ‘great man’ theory, and the theory that there are particular personality traits appropriate for a leader. Blackmore (1989) holds that the:
"Masculinist' characterisation of leadership is common across the main approaches to leadership in organizational theory, whether they be trait model, the charismatic/behavioural model or the situational/contingency models of leadership central to educational administration." (p. 100)

Whilst the trait model of leadership has been largely dismissed (Stogdill, 1969), it remains true that female leaders may be subject to its application:

"If a woman displays the culturally defined traits of 'femininity' (being emotional, passive, dependent, nurturing, intuitive or submissive), she is perceived to be a 'poor' leader. If she acts according to the male role definition of a leader (being aggressive, achievement-oriented, self-confident, forceful or competitive) she is condemned as being 'unfeminine'." (Blackmore, 1989, p. 100)

It is also the case that the situational/contingency models of leadership theory, for example, Fiedler (1967) and Hersey and Blanchard (1977), may be criticised on the basis of ignoring gender as an issue. Fiedler's theory of leadership effectiveness is concerned with the interplay between a number of situational variables and the relationship between the leader and the led, but in the theory, no account is taken of the variable of gender (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 154) The empirical work that underlay Fielder's theory was largely undertaken in all male environments.

Even writers on theories of transformational leadership may be criticised on the grounds of excluding women, despite the fact that this style of leadership includes many of the characteristics that are normally associated with the "feminine" style of leadership. Gosetti and Rusch (1995) comment that:

"The literature on transformational leadership is still written primarily by men, for men. As leadership characteristics are described through the concepts and terms of this still predominantly male discourse, they become genderless and are merged into a universal and privileged perspective that, once again, renders women and marginalized people invisible." (pp. 22-3)
Whichever theory of leadership is considered:

"What is not disputable is that organizational and leadership theory neglects the significance of gender. Rather, it discusses authority, power and the division of labour in organisations as being both essential and neutral."

(Blackmore, 1989, p. 104)

Expectations of leadership in organizations tend to be based on assumed values that are derived from the group that is most likely to hold leadership positions, that is the white middle class male. Gosetti and Rusch (1995) apply this concept to education:

"As educators, our understanding of how to learn, teach, and practice leadership is determined by the assumptions and values embedded within the dominant leadership culture." (Gosetti and Rusch, 1995, p. 14)

Women in leadership positions in education may therefore find that they are both insiders as professionals in education, and outsiders or "strangers" as women in their context as leaders:

"In essence, these women have a foot in two worlds: the center and the margins. " (ibid., p. 15)

"Feminine" and "masculine" styles of management

Women and men cannot be regarded as two coherent groups that lead and manage in different ways:

"As our understanding of gender issues has developed, we have moved from considering men and women as two great, opposed sexual blocks to realising that differences within each sex are much greater than those between the sexes and that a simple view that all men or all women fall into one category of behaviour is quite false." (Gray, 1993, p. 107)
Gold (1996) points out that "profiles" of management style linked to men and women are unhelpful, since they make no allowance:

"for any notion that some men manage sensitively and some women manage in a dominating and authoritarian fashion." (p. 422)

However, a spectrum of management behaviour that includes 'masculine' and 'feminine' can be recognised, and within this range, it is likely that 'feminine' behaviour is more associated with women than with men. Research undertaken by Bem (1974) made use of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory which included both a masculinity and femininity scale, and in addition a social desirability scale that was neutral in respect to sex. The items included in the list were selected on the basis of adjectives identified as masculine, feminine or neutral, and items were graded as desirable for a man or woman. As a result the following lists were selected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acts as leader</td>
<td>affectionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggressive</td>
<td>cheerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambitious</td>
<td>childlike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analytical</td>
<td>compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assertive</td>
<td>does not use harsh language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>athletic</td>
<td>eager to soothe hurt feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competitive</td>
<td>feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defends own beliefs</td>
<td>flattering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominant</td>
<td>gentle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forceful</td>
<td>gullible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has leadership abilities</td>
<td>loves children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>loyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individualistic</td>
<td>sensitive to the needs of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makes decisions easily</td>
<td>shy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>soft spoken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
self-reliant  sympathetic
self-sufficient  tender
strong personality  understanding
willing to take a stand  warm
willing to take risks  yielding

(Bem, 1974, p. 157)

Subjects were then asked to grade themselves and could thus be given a score for masculinity and femininity and, in addition, androgyny. The identification of these attributes is not intended to label males and females. The recognition of the importance of environmental factors means that in social psychological terms:

"females and males can be brought up with the capacity to express a range of characteristics independently whether they have traditionally been viewed as 'masculine' or 'feminine'. For instance, men can be tender and women assertive." (Nelson-Jones, 1986, p.44)

The concept of psychological androgyny therefore envisages that a range of qualities drawn from both lists can be found in managers.

In later work, Bem (1977) stated that for individuals scoring high on both masculine and feminine characteristics:

“The concept of psychological androgyny implies that it is possible for an individual to be both assertive and compassionate, both instrumental and expressive, both masculine and feminine, depending upon the situational appropriateness of these various modalities; and it further implies that an individual may even blend these complementary modalities in single act, being able, for example, to fire an employee if the circumstances warrant it but with sensitivity for the human emotion that such an act inevitably produces.” (Bem, 197, p. 196)
A refinement of the concept of androgyny as used by Bem (1977) is that it is applied only to those who score high on both the masculine and feminine dimensions, not to those who score low on both dimensions. These latter subjects were renamed “undifferentiated”. (Bem 1977, p. 201). Those rated as androgynous, i.e. scoring higher on both masculine and feminine ratings, showed greater independence, ability to nurture and self-esteem than those who scored low on both. Ferrario (1994) reports that such ‘androgynous’ individuals:

“are able to respond more effectively than either masculine or feminine individuals to a wide variety of situations.” (Ferrario, 1994, p. 116)

A similar range of masculine and feminine qualities has been used by Gray (1993) in his work in the training of female and male headteachers. The qualities are presented as gender paradigms, and are used to open up discussion about gender and such issues as self-awareness.

### Gender Paradigms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The nurturing/feminine paradigm</th>
<th>The defensive/aggressive ‘masculine’ paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>caring,</td>
<td>highly regulated,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creative,</td>
<td>conformist,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intuitive,</td>
<td>normative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aware of individual differences,</td>
<td>competitive,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-competitive,</td>
<td>evaluative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tolerant,</td>
<td>disciplined,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subjective,</td>
<td>objective,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informal.</td>
<td>formal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Gray, 1993, p. 111)
Whilst Gray recognises that complete generalisations about male and female management are not possible, he does comment on differential reactions to these paradigms:

“If I use these paradigms with large mixed groups of teachers, I invariably get very positive reactions from women, leading to excited discussion, but from men I receive not so much a negative response as an indifferent one. It therefore seems to me that women are much more aware of gender issues at a quite complex level, but that men are nonplussed when these issues are raised.” (Gray, 1993, p. 112)

Whatever the relevance of masculine and feminine management styles to male and female leaders, the experience of women headteachers is likely to be contextualised by their gender:

“there is no ungendered experience, only experiences of men and women of different sexuality, race and ethnicity. Ultimately such dualisms maintain unequal power relations. (Blackmore, 1995, p. 53)

The influences of gender are pervasive and are likely to have an effect on the leadership role and style of management adopted by both men and women in educational management. Hall (1996), in her study of female heads, explains that she assumes:

“commonalities in women’s experiences of leading schools in Britain which could be attributed to at least two factors: their socialization as girls and women in post-war Britain and the gendered nature of organizations (for example, women’s lower pay, unequal promotion opportunities, prevalence of sexual harassment).” (p. 3)

In addition, women who take on a leadership role may consider that they are seen primarily as women, as Grogan (1995) suggests for the USA context:
“Although most participants felt that they were first and foremost educational administrators, few denied, particularly in the context of aspiring to the superintendency, that they were judged as women administrators rather than simply administrators.” (Grogan, 1995, p. 82)

Empirical data relating to the management and leadership styles of female headteachers

Data relevant to the management and leadership styles of British female headteachers of secondary schools is relatively scarce. The main data comparable to the present research is the qualitative study by Hall (1996), whilst the work of Evetts (1994), Grace (1995), Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996), and, to some extent Jones (1987), includes gender as one of the variables considered. However, there is a growing body of empirical data from research undertaken with female principals in the USA and elsewhere, and from studies of women in leadership and management in business and industry.

Shakeshaft (1989) identifies the existence of a body of literature on leadership and management that documents “no differences” between men and women, but that this literature starts from the ways in which men manage and then asks if women also do these things as managers? Since the answer is likely to be that they do, it is possible to judge that there are no differences. Even in 1995, when considering the nature of management development in general, it was possible to say:

“we know a lot about certain classes of white males - their ambitions, their expectations, their values and their beliefs about how organizations should operate. On the other hand, we know almost nothing about what women’s experiences, values, beliefs, expectations and aspirations would look like if brought fully valued into the organizational arena.” (Betters-Reed and Moore (1995)

As Shakeshaft points out:
“What is not investigated in these studies, what isn’t even conceptualized, are the activities that women undertake and their motivation for doing so that are in addition to and different from those that men perform.” (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 167)

Shakeshaft herself conducted a meta-analysis of research in the area and indicated empirically derived differences in the following areas:

that women tend to have more contact with both superordinates and subordinates, teachers and students;

women spend more time with community members and with colleagues, although these are usually other women;

they are more informal;

they are concerned with the individual differences between students;

they view their position as that of an educational leader rather than a manager, and see the job as a service to the community;

there may be less acceptance of female than of male leaders amongst both men and women; female leaders may therefore live in a world that "carries an undercurrent of stress and anxiety" (p. 175);

they may gain more satisfaction from supervising instruction, and men more from administration;

in communication they may appear to be more polite and tentative than men, using qualifiers to simple statements. Body language may also be different indicating lower status for women;
women tend to use more participatory styles of management, and use collaborative strategies to resolve conflict.
(adapted from Shakeshaft 1989, pp 170 - 190)

A survey of the literature that does consider women apart from men, and documents the differences between them, appears to indicate a number of dominant trends that can be identified with regard to the management and leadership style of female headteachers. The themes identified are:

- the tendency toward a collaborative style of management;
- a feminine attitude to power;
- prevalent communication patterns;
- the importance of educational leadership;
- awareness of gender.

Some of the trends are inter-related, for example a collaborative style of management may tend to be linked to a particular attitude to power and the likelihood of good communication skills. This inter-relationship is exemplified by the research findings of Shakeshaft (1995) who claims that the effectiveness of women as leaders has much to do with their socialisation as women:

"I also believe that it is socialisation that accounts for women's greater ability to provide an environment that is empowering for teachers. Because women have been taught to pay attention to relationships, to be polite, to give technical and specific feedback, and to use power with rather than power over, they are more likely to use language that helps achieve these ends."
(Shakeshaft, 1995, p. 21)

A collaborative style of management

The collaborative and participative style of management encouraging the empowerment of others, and with an emphasis on working in teams, is the style most strongly identified with women leaders. Reference is occasionally but rarely made to
other styles (see Evetts, 1994). Summing up a range of studies, Blackmore (1994) states that:

"there is sufficient evidence in Australia, England, the USA, Canada and New Zealand, to suggest that [this] top down model of change is not the preferred way of working of many female principals" (Blackmore 1994, p. 18)

In studies in general management it has also been found that: "both female students and managers displayed a more participative leadership style" and that: "they had a distinctive style of management which displayed more understanding and sympathy for others" and that women managers had a "relations-oriented style", (studies quoted in Ferrario, 1994, pp. 116-7).

The value that women may bring to management has been recognised in transnational corporations, who may see: “women managers as bringing needed collaborative and participative skills to the workplace.” (Adler, 1994, p. 26)

For the female headteachers in Hall’s study:

"the women heads’ preference for working collaboratively was manifest in their support for teamwork, particularly when working with senior colleagues.” (Hall, 1996, p.189)

Quantitative research undertaken in the UK by Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) gives further support to the identification of a collaborative style of management predominating amongst female headteachers that is different to that of male heads. In a large scale study of male and female primary and secondary heads, Jirasinghe and Lyons administered a variety of well-tried personality tests, including the Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ), the Belbin Team Types questionnaire, and a leadership styles questionnaire derived from the work of Bass (1981). In terms of the OPQ dimensions female heads, both primary and secondary, described themselves as more:
affiliative (in terms of working with others in teams),
democratic,
caring,
artistic,
behavioural,
detail conscious,
conscientious, and
worrying.

They tended to prefer the (Belbin) team roles of: team worker, and completer and the most striking finding of the leadership styles questionnaire was that the women tended to identify themselves as participative and consultative leaders.

There were contrasts with male heads who perceived themselves as more:

data rational,
relaxed,
tough minded,
active, and
competitive.

The male heads did not show a particular preference for any of the Belbin team roles, and they identified themselves as delegative leaders.

Women identified themselves as participative and consultative and men as delegative leaders and the two descriptions have similarities in terms of not being autocratic. However, there are considerable differences in the way that female and male heads perceived themselves:

“Female heads claim a preference for a style of leadership which favours consensus decision making; seeking the involvement of all relevant colleagues thereby securing their commitment and motivation; and a warm and friendly social style.” (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996, p. 61)
The male heads choice of delegatory leadership did not imply the same level of empowerment and involvement of staff:

“Delegative leaders believe in delegation of tasks and responsibility. They tend to communicate less with their staff and are inclined not to give clearly defined instructions or plan the work of the personnel they oversee. Such leaders tend not to seek the staffs’ views as to how projects should be conducted, but are inclined simply to hand over the work to be done. “ (ibid. p. 61)

Since the personality tests involved have been used in respect of leaders in many areas of life, it is possible to compare the findings about male and female headteachers with findings about male and female managers in general. Findings which differentiated educational leaders from other leaders are the tendency to be democratic, consultative and participatory, but the headteachers, both men and women, have a slight tendency to be “controlling” in a way that other groups of leaders are not, and it is suggested that, whilst there were distinct differences between the male and female heads’ style of management, there are some:

“attributes characterising all headteachers, distinguishing heads from other managerial and professional positions.” (p. 65)

Something similar is reported by Hall (1996) when summing up the management and leadership style of the six female heads in her study. The picture of collaborative heads is slightly tempered by indicating that they had a clear view of their own role in the school as the key person, with a vision for the school:

“A picture emerges of women heads enacting strong leadership within a collaborative framework.”.. [they] were firmly committed to the belief that sharing leadership still required them to take the lead when appropriate, including having a personal vision for the school.” (Hall, 1996, p. 190).
Training needs identified by male and female heads relate to their identified strengths and weaknesses (Jones, 1987). These appear to link well with the research of Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) in that the female heads were concerned with the importance of relationships. They:

“were much more aware of their need for training in relating to the local environment than were the men. They were also more concerned than were the men about training for management of change and for managing interrelationships. They put greater value on the qualities of humour, stamina and creativity.”

The male heads, were concerned with motivation and delegation and would certainly appear more “data rational” and “tough minded” (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996). The male heads:

“recognised a greater need for training in self-management, in evaluation and in maintaining staff morale, for motivating staff and for delegating, and for training in written skills. The men were more aware of the need for qualities of toughness and quick thinking.” (Jones, 1987, p. 71)

The findings of Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996), relating both to a collaborative approach and the conscientiousness of women heads and their preference for the Belbin completer role in teams is echoed in findings of Hill and Ragland (1995) whose research with 35 outstanding female educational leaders in the USA included asking them to list five words that others would use if they were asked to describe their leadership style. These were then divided into two groups under the headings of “consideration”, referring to relationships with others and “initiating structures” relating more to their own style in managing activities and systems (see Figure 2.4).
Table 2.4: Leadership style of female educational leaders in the USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Category and Sample Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consideration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Models integrity: eg honest, dependable, trustworthy, candid, direct, fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Involves others: eg participatory, empowering, facilitator, delegator, collaborative, team builder, inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Approachable: eg listener, compassionate, considerate, open, helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Motivational: eg enthused, encourager, positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Supportive: eg sensitive, appreciative, understanding, respectful, coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Disposition: eg patient, harmonious, low key, sense of humour, happy, humanistic, flexible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiating Structures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Creative problem solvers and developers of vision and ideas: eg innovative, visionary, lifelong learners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(adapted from Hill and Ragland, 1995, p. 48)

The theme of collaboration and empowerment comes across clearly from the words listed in the “Consideration” category. Although the most frequently mentioned
quality was the integrity of the leader, “involving others” was the second most
important category in this list whilst other qualities in this section were clearly related
to the concepts of participation and collaboration, they include, “approachable”,
“motivational”, and “supportive”.

Under the category of “initiating structures”, the characteristics of “demanding of self
and others” and “competent manager” relate well to the personality test findings
indicated by Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) which showed women heads as detail
conscious and conscientious with a preference for the team role of completer.

Collaboration with male teachers

There is some indication that the spirit of collaboration may be affected by working
with males rather than females. In the case of the female heads studied by Hall, the
collaboration was dependent on openness with colleagues, which was reported to be
more difficult where the colleague was male, although differences tended to be
blamed by the headteachers on different ‘chemistry’ rather than gender. (Hall, 1996, p.
190).

Quantitative research carried out in the mid 1980s in the USA with a large national
sample of high school teachers and principals links collegiality and empowerment for
female leaders and female teachers, also identifying some potential difficulties where
females lead males:

“It is clear that the daily practices of principals are seen quite differently by
men and women teachers, and those differences are magnified when we
consider the principal’s gender. A strong and consistent finding from the
study is that women teachers feel empowered when working in environments
where their direction comes from women leaders, and male teachers do not. ...
Female leadership seems to have positive effects on female teachers.” (Riehl
and Lee, 1996, p. 892)
Several hypotheses are put forward for why men may be less comfortable working with women. One is the resistance to unfamiliarity, where leaders are stereotypically male, another that women leaders tend towards participatory management which men may see as a threat to their autonomy as teachers, and finally that an:

“in-group bias might also prejudice men against women leaders. Men have been well served in a system where their own gender dominates the principalship,” (Riehl and Lee, 1996, p. 893)

A further study carried out in the USA compared the empowerment felt by male and female teachers in single sex and co-educational schools (Leew, Loeb and Marks 1995). Empowerment was investigated in terms of both classroom autonomy and influence over school policies. Two of the main findings were that male teachers in single-sex schools (both boys’ and girls’): “see themselves as disenfranchized.. in comparison to their counterparts in co-educational schools”, this was particularly in regard to school policy. The second main finding was that women teachers in general saw themselves with power in terms of classroom policies but not with regard to school policies. However, women in all girls’ schools saw themselves as having more control over school policies than male teachers teaching in girls’ schools. (Riehl and Lee, 1996 p. 894) A consistent finding is that women appear to feel more empowered in schools headed by women.

The increasing proportion of female headteachers in Israel appears to have led to a situation where men have preferred to work for male principals and women for female, leading to a situation where 72 per cent of the male teachers work for male principals, who make up only a third of the total (Goldring and Chen, 1994, p. 179). The same research appears to indicate that female teachers working for a female principal report a greater sense of collegiality and of job satisfaction than teachers working with male principals, a finding that endorses that of Riehl and Lee (op cit).
Collaboration and school phase

Gray (1989, 1993) has suggested that the feminine style of management may be equated with primary schools and the masculine style with secondary schools. The traditional ethos of primary schools is one of a caring community, whereas the secondary school may carry connotations of competitiveness and formality. However, one of the conclusions of Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) who studied male and female primary and secondary heads was that:

"the majority of dissimilarities observed are likely to be a reflection of gender differences between male and female heads and their preferred ways of managing, rather than being attributable to a fundamental distinction in the way primary and secondary schools are organized and run." (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996, p. 65)

Hall (1996) studied three primary and three secondary headteachers, and did not differentiate between them in terms of their phase in relation to their management style. Characteristics of managers appear to be more associated with the gender of the headteacher than the phase of the school.

Teamwork

In a study of 88 primary and secondary headteachers in the UK of whom 24 were women, Grace (1995) was able to directly compare the accounts of male and female heads; like Hall (1996), he stresses the importance of teamwork for women heads:

"While commitment to teamwork and a culture of consultation could be found in the accounts of both men and women headteachers, the discourse of the women school leaders more frequently took teamwork to be a normal and
organic process whereas men referred to "their" creation of teamwork as an important innovation in the culture of a school." (Grace, 1995, p. 183)

In trying to introduce a team based approach to management, women may experience difficulties. There may be a tendency for females in management positions, in this case in higher education, to be judged by "male" values of leadership:

"I suggested, ... new non-sexist ways of working to try to allow for more democratic, co-operative methods. But this initiative was quickly misunderstood and interpreted to mean that I was a 'soft touch', incapable of providing a firm, directive framework of leadership." (David, 1988, p.211)

Teamwork is stressed for women in business. In summarising the experience of female managers at work in Britain, Davidson and Cooper (1992) state that:

"Interestingly, however, some women managers appear to shy away from the label of 'being the boss' and prefer the concept of 'being part of a team'."

The importance of teamwork in project management is stressed by Cartwright and Gale (1995), who identify teams with feminine cultures as opposed to the male dominated cultures that are usually found where project management is important eg the construction industry. They see power cultures as “epitomising masculinity” (p. 13) and that:

"power cultures are likely to be experienced by the vast majority of men and women as being less satisfying than are task or team cultures." (ibid.)

Empowerment

Related to the concept of a collaborative style of management is the intention to empower others and to foster the distribution of leadership. Certainly the heads in Hall's (1996) study appeared to be successful in adopting a style of leadership that was seen to be empowering by the staff:
"The heads' attitudes to power and their emphasis on empowerment emerged as strong driving forces of their leadership and management styles." (p. 147)

Shakeshaft (1989), reporting on an overview of research on women in management in the USA from the 1950s to the 1980s, was able to conclude that women were more likely to use a collegial approach to decision making than male colleagues, but that, at the same time, their style seems to enhance their position as principal in their school:

"it would appear that women decision makers are more inclusive than exclusive, using participatory management styles both to their advantage and to the advantage of the educational system." (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 188)

An example of collaboration and consensual decision making is described in full in regard to an all female faculty of nurse educators:

"The six key participants were asked the question: How were decisions made in the school? Their responses and the field notes revealed that the majority of decisions were made by group consensus by the teaching teams; a small number of decisions were voted upon." (Valentine, P. 1995, p. 348)

Reporting on her study of 500 secondary heads of whom 24 per cent were women, Jones (1987) commented that:

"My own view is that more female than male heads show particular skill in motivating and managing their staff, including involving them in shared tasks and in relating the inside of the school to the world outside it. However, this view may reflect the relatively small number of female heads now in post and therefore, the 'extra' skill they have to show to be selected." (p. 71)

Grogan (1996), reporting on 27 senior female administrators in the USA, also comments on the wish to involve others:
“involving all members of the community in genuine opportunities for shared leadership is valued by many of the women in the study.” (p. 14)

In a much earlier study, Gross and Trask (1976) found that women principals tended to interact more with their staff professionally and socially:

“We found that women exerted greater control over the teachers’ professional activities than men and that the women associated more frequently with members of the faculty outside of school than the men.” (Gross and Trask, 1976, p. 219)

**Styles other than collaboration**

A collaborative style of working is not always a clear cut finding of empirical work on female heads. In a study of ten female and ten male heads:

“some of the male heads emphasized collegial relations and participatory forms of management in schools while some of the female heads were inclined towards hierarchy and authority in management. Significant differences in styles of leadership are not difficult to demonstrate in general ... although the clear linkage of style with gender is more problematic.” (Evetts, 1994, p. 88)

Evetts concludes that: “there are difficulties, [therefore] in demonstrating gender differences in management and leadership style.” (p. 87) This conclusion is based on there being few significant differences between male and female heads in quantitative research, although she does mention that small-scale qualitative studies have indicated some differences in style. However, Evetts (1994) does agree that: “it is not difficult to show gender differences in the *experience* of headship” (p. 89)

Research with 98 heads in the Netherlands, although showing some distinct gender differences, found that there was no difference in the decision making styles of the female and male heads:
"women seemed to include others in decision-making processes as much as men and used relatively democratic styles." (Kruger, 1996, p. 453)

In Hustler et al's (1995) qualitative study of four male and four female heads, the range of management styles adopted by the heads is illustrative of the variety of ways in which heads, both male and female, perceive their management style. Two of the female heads exhibit a fairly "tough" management style:

"I generate some fear ... try to be very clear about what the task is and at time do this in a rather overbearing way" (Anita Higham, ibid. p. 59)

"I am fairly driven by goals; it's cut the nonsense and let's get to it. I try to get people to work with me either by exploring issues and ideas with them and making them realise that there are more possibilities than obstacles, or by being pretty directive." (Elaine Foster, ibid. p. 39)

In contrast the other two female heads apparently exhibit a softer, more people oriented style:

"I do find it easy and useful to talk to and listen to people: this may be a different culture for the next tier of management, used to a head who sits in a room. ... I believe, and hope I demonstrate my belief, in a collaborative and participative organisation" (Kathy August, ibid., p.11)

"As a head I am very involved ... too much perhaps and I found it very difficult to delegate in the early years. I see myself as a direct person and sometimes directive, but believe very much in consulting and using teams to come up with strategies and proposals." (Penny Cooper, ibid. p. 20)

The four male heads tended to be less expansive about their styles which varied, as did the styles of the female heads.
In two studies of “minority” managers, that is of white women and black women and men, Weiner (1995) raises the question of the relative importance of values rather than gender in affecting management and leadership style. Evidence of differences between the sub-groups, particularly in regard to a democratic style, lead her to an open conclusion that leadership style will be dependent on a number of factors:

“value position of the manager

ethos of the institution

specific conceptions of femininities (and masculinities)

endemic patterns of inequality, under-representation and prejudice.” (Weiner, 1995, p. 31)

Age and a collaborative management style

It may be that the factor of age and experience of headteachers is correlated with their management style; younger headteachers, male and female, being more likely to share the collaborative style that is often identified with female heads. In comparing “old” heads with newly appointed headteachers, Weindling and Earley (1987) commented:

“The cohort of new heads saw themselves as being more consultative and open to the views of staff than their predecessors and they felt their style of headship involved an ‘open door’ approach towards staff, pupils and parents.” (p. 181)

However, while most stressed participatory management, a small number used phrases such as “a cunning jovial dictator” and a “benevolent despot”, (p.172). Several heads in the study undertaken by Hustler et al (1995) comment on a change in their management style over the years, towards being more consultative and supportive rather than directive and autocratic. One of the male heads, Christopher Hampson specifically stated that his management style was very different from what it had been:
“Perhaps I was something of a benevolent despot or even an autocrat ... had to really because there was not any structure for decision-making in a context of necessary change. Now I operate much more of a collegiate senior management system.” (Hustler, et al 1995, p. 49)

A conclusion drawn about the dialogue with these heads supports the idea that they were changing with time:

“my feeling in these materials was that there was a reformulated version of the leading professional here, with a concern for managing people.” (Meryl Thompson, in Hustler, et al, 1995, p. 90)

Attitudes to power

Shakeshaft (1989), reporting on a range of research on women in educational management, comments that women will tend to try and “cool conflict out” (p. 190) and that they “see conflict as a negative state.” (p. 190). Similarly, researching the heads of 98 schools in the Netherlands, Kruger (1996) was able to conclude that women try to avoid conflict and use adaptation to do so.

Court (1995) in her study of women and anger reports on the experiences of women educational leaders faced with angry male parents or macho young male students:

“The women in my study were strongly aware of expectations that as women, they should not get angry, even though some situations fully warranted this. They felt that their expression of anger could reinforce others’ perceptions of their inappropriateness as managers who are also women.” (Court, 1995, pp. 159-60)

A particularly important difference in the way that many women perceive power as opposed to the way that men see power is reported by a large number of researchers. Riehl and Lee (1996) report on a range of such research which shows that women see
themselves as “having power with others, not power over others,” (p. 906) Hall (1996) identifies how the heads she studied:

“appeared to be differentiated from male heads in their conception and use of power.” (p. 200)

Researching in the Netherlands, Kruger (1996) found that women do not tend to see themselves as powerful, because: “they have learnt that power has a negative connotation.” (p. 454) This attitude to power appears to relate more to ideas of empowerment and to the concept of transformational leadership.

Taking the concept of power in the “feminine” sense of “power to” rather than “power over”, Brunner (1996) undertook a three year ethnographic study with fifteen women superintendents in the USA. Her findings relate to thirteen since:

“The two women not included in the final project had the rhetoric of collaboration, but in triangulation I found that others perceived them as top-down leaders.” (Brunner, 1996, p. 8-9)

However, an attitude to power that was typical of the thirteen was displayed by one superintendent who:

“believed that power is a gift to her from others. She feels strongly that the way she got things done is with other people - that is, relationships were key when accomplishing things.” (Brunner, 1996, p. 14)

Indeed Brunner includes as one of her main findings that the women in her study, although technically in positions of power, were: “uncomfortable with the mere mention of the word power.” (Brunner, 1996, p. 33) This same discomfort was expressed by the new female principal and vice-principal of a school in Victoria, Australia:
"When asked if they felt powerful, both women expressed discomfort at the use of the word. Whilst they recognised they had power as a consequence of their formal positions, both sought to immediately redefine the term as being power through and with others, of having the capacity to empower others." (Blackmore, 1994, p. 14)

Current research in general management also identifies women's attitude to power as: "stemming from and directed towards the entire community" (Ferrario, 1994, p. 117) an interpretation which tends to identify them as transformational leaders.

In feminist terms, the commonly held 'male' attitudes to power tend to "typify women as powerless" (Blackmore 1996), but a feminist redefinition of power tends to assume an equality and sharing of power within the community:

"It denies the unequal power relationships between women in formal authority and their subordinates, and how women in leadership are often seen to be complicit in, and to have an investment in, maintaining current institutional arrangements which are patterned by race, class, ethnicity as well as gender." (Blackmore, 1996, pp 1007-8)

Elsewhere, Blackmore (1989) defines a feminist reconstruction of power and leadership:

"a view of power which is multi-dimensional and multi-directional. Leadership is seen as being practised in different contexts by different people and not merely equated to formal roles. Leadership looks to empower others rather than have power over others." (Blackmore, 1989, p. 94)

An alternative formulation of the concept of power, as understood by feminist managers is:

"creating conditions in which members of the organisation themselves take responsibility for planning and development. ... it requires the use of power to
empower others, so that the power relationship is mediated and ameliorated, if not transformed.” (Ozga and Walker, 1995, p. 40).

Prevalent communication patterns

That there are differences in the written and spoken language of women and men is well documented (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 180). Women have a tendency to use correct speech, less slang, a wider range of pitch and loudness, and frame their speech more tentatively than men, often making use of an interrogatory tone. Shakeshaft reports that women:

“tend to use language that encourages community building and is more polite and cheerful than the language of men. ... women are more likely than men to express courtesy, gratitude, respect, and appreciation. Women show respect for their audience through listening, echoing, summarizing, polite speech, and non-antagonistic responses.” (p. 181)

In a broad review of research findings in the area of communication, Schick-Case documents a range of findings about female speech summarized below.

1. “The purpose of conversation is to share things about themselves and to learn about others.” (Schick-Case, 1994, p. 148)

2. Showing support for others is important in women’s speech, they tend to prompt with minimal responses eg ‘mm hmm’

3. Communication tends to focus on feelings and the relationships between communicators rather than on the content.

4. Conversational ‘maintenance work’ is a feature, acknowledging what a previous speaker has said. Questions are part of conversation maintenance rather than information requests.
5. Responsiveness is important; emphasis is on displaying similarities and matching experiences.

6. Tentativeness is characteristic; the use of tag questions, qualifiers and hedges.

7. Another feature is the personal concrete style, including personal disclosures and anecdotes.

(adapted from Schick-Case, 1994, pp 148 - 152)

The following generalizations from research are about the speech of men:

1. The goals of talk involve exerting control, preserving independence and enhancing status. The effect is of assertion and challenge.

2. Instrumentality, the use of speech to solve problems.

3. Conversational dominance, men talk more and interrupt more. Men use interruptions to control conversations by challenging, or changing topics. When women interrupt they are usually confirming and elaborating on another's theme.

4. Men tend to express themselves in assertive, absolute ways.

5. Men's speech tends not to be highly responsive to others. There is little expression of empathy and lack of self disclosure.

6. Compared with women, men communicate in more abstract terms and speak in a "linear manner, moving sequentially through points" (Schick-Case, 1994, p. 155). In contrast, women's speech may seem unfocused and rambling to men.

(Schick-Case, 1994, pp 152-155)

With particular reference to female school administrators, Shakeshaft (1989) reports research findings that show that women in these senior positions spend more time than their male equivalents in meetings, both formal and informal, more time in phone
calls, and more time talking and listening to subordinates. From the review of the literature, Shakeshaft is able to conclude that:

"it would seem that women's traditional and stereotypic styles of communication are more like those of a good manager than are men's stereotypic styles." (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 186)

Later research by Shakeshaft (1995) indicates that the communication of male and female principals in giving feedback to teachers on their work differed in that the female headteachers tended towards a "more collegial, professional to professional" (ibid., p. 16) relationship, whilst the male principals were: "more likely to lecture and to limit teacher talk." (ibid., p. 16).

Case studies of three female school principals in Texas (Carr, 1994), exemplify many of the findings referred to above. The analysis of data relating to verbal behaviour derived from this detailed study included:

- active listening behaviors, including prompts like 'right' and 'okay';
- vocabulary that stressed being positive;
- little use of colloquialisms;
- much use of qualifiers, eg 'kind of' and 'I guess', and;
- the use of humour
(adapted from Carr, 1994, p. 25)

The use of humour was also a notable feature of the case study of a female principal and vice-principal in Victoria, Australia:

"both the Principal and the Vice Principal used humour as a means of reducing tension and getting people to feel more comfortable," (Blackmore, 1994, p. 17)

Carr (1994) also comments on the non-verbal behaviour of the three female principals studied. In particular the way in which each had their offices arranged to promote a
feeling of comfort and an atmosphere of collegiality, paying particular attention to the position of their desk and choosing when to sit behind it.

"the hierarchical separation of management and worker seemed blurred in all three schools by the principals' accessibility and collegial approach to leadership." (Carr, 1994, p. 17)

Women operating in a male dominated culture, for example working in groups of secondary headteachers, may find some difficulty with the dynamics of committee processes which tend to exemplify male styles of communication. Reporting on management development courses, Gold (1996) identifies the following findings:

that males tend to dominate meetings, typically taking well over half of speaking time;

men tend to speak for several minutes, whilst women tend to "make short, succinct comments" (Gold, 1996, p. 426);

women tend, more than men, to be ignored by the chair and other committee members;

the contributions of women tend not to be acknowledged;

women may be inhibited by the sometimes aggressive nature of debate;

women more likely to lack confidence in addressing the meeting.
(adapted from Gold, 1996, p. 426)

The importance of educational leadership

Educational leadership is defined by Caldwell and Spinks (1992) as having a:
"focus on learning and teaching and outcomes for students; the image is that of school leaders engaged in ‘nurturing a learning community’." (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992, p. 115)

The term nurturing is used elsewhere in the context of the special qualities that women may bring to the educational context:

“most of the women in the study argue that the value of nurturing others is in what they, in turn, bring as individuals in an interdependent relationship to the teaching and learning process.” (Grogan (1996, p. 148)

There have been many reviews and meta-analyses comparing women leaders with men in the USA (Riehl and Lee, 1996). Some of the gender differences that emerge appear to particularly link female principals with this type of leadership:

“women principals have been demonstrated to have greater interest than men principals in the social and emotional development of students, to be more able and willing to help beginning teachers, and to be more effective at working with parents.” (Riehl and Lee, 1996, p. 904).

Early research, focusing on the differences between men and women leaders, concluded that:

“women on the average evaluated their performance more highly on, and derived more satisfaction from, supervising instruction that did men .... men and women did not differ in the importance they assigned to it [routine administrative affairs] or in the evaluation of their ability to perform it; however, the men derived more satisfaction from this component of their work than the women.” (Gross, and Trask, 1976, p. 219)

Shakeshaft’s analysis of many studies of female educational leaders in the USA indicates that women are more likely than men to be involved in learning and teaching
and the evaluation of student progress. They are also more likely to help and support new teachers. She links these factors with a claim that:

“academic achievement is higher in schools and districts in which women are administrators than in those run by men.” (Shakeshaft, 1995, p. 13)

Shakeshaft relates the apparently more successful performance of women to several potential causes including the likelihood that the restriction on career options for women might mean that the quality of women reaching the top in education is likely to be better than the quality of male principals, and the fact that women tend to have longer experience of teaching than men before becoming principals or administrators. However, she feels that the single most important factor lies in the life experience of women:

“Females, for instance, are more likely than males to be taught to be good listeners and to pay attention to the emotional lives of families and friends. It is this different socialisation that may account for the seemingly superior, or at least more appropriate for schools, administrative skills that I have found in women.” (Shakeshaft, 1995, p. 13)

Findings on gender differences in educational leadership in the Netherlands also indicate:

“that gender matters. Women heads seem to be more oriented towards the internal teaching processes in their schools, while their male counterparts show greater interests in external tasks.” (Kruger, 1996, p. 447)

Certainly, there seems to be some evidence from career patterns that indicates that women focus more specifically on teaching and learning than on technical management and administration. Whilst male headteachers may have anticipated their career progress to leadership from the beginning, female heads:
"usually enter teaching without a career map and initially focus on becoming good teachers." (Gold, 1996, pp 423-4).

Once in positions of leadership, there may be links between the management style adopted by the majority of women, and the encouragement of a learning environment. Restine (1993) makes a link between women leaders and leadership for learning and empowerment.

"that women enter education with a primary commitment to teaching is manifested in the climate and culture of schools that women administer. There appears to be greater emphasis on leadership for learning and actions directed toward achievement.” (Restine, 1993, p. 22)

She asserts that:

"women achieve the simultaneous combination of these qualities (leadership as teaching and learning) quite naturally.” (ibid., p. 44)

Writing of experience of the changing educational system in Spain, Santos (1996) makes clear links between what is termed “pedagogical leadership” and female qualities. These links are partly based on the traditional, stereotypical links made between women and children, with the emphasis on the patience of women and their ability to give attention, and partly on the practical fact that the majority of supervision of pupils’ progress by counsellors and pastoral workers is undertaken by women. In addition:

"If we add the natural tendency of women to change their working environment into something more personal and warm, thus favouring a learning climate which supports the creativity and expectations of the pupils and creating room for innovation and team training, we can say that the step forward towards pedagogical leadership is possible.” (Santos, 1996, p. 444)
A feminine leadership style does not sit comfortably with reliance on formal authority. Faced with a school with a heritage of masculine leadership and strict discipline, a new female vice principal determined to change the nature of discipline:

"On her arrival, Helen was dismayed at the focusing of responsibility for discipline in the authoritarian role of the VP and shocked at the level of violence, latent and overt, she had witnessed. She was determined that discipline should come from within the students, rather than by coercion. For this reason, the year level co-ordinator meetings, all male, were fraught with tension, conflict and bitterness. Many of these male teachers modelled themselves on the previous VP" (Blackmore, 1994, p. 12)

Hill and Ragland (1995), reporting interviews with outstanding women, state that it appears that:

"their motives for seeking positions of greater authority do not involve the search for power per se, but rather, motivation stems from a need to have a positive impact on the lives of students and teachers." (p. 63)

**Awareness of gender and the 'special' qualities of being a woman**

The six female heads studied by Hall (1996) rejected what they saw as 'masculine' management approaches with which they felt uncomfortable:

"These [behaviours] included those they associated with masculine approaches to management ('old-boy networks', 'wheeler-dealerig') and 'politics'.” (Hall, 1996, p. 150)

For these heads: "None recalled having modified her behaviour, as they assumed more management responsibilities,” (p. 152) Hall considers that the heads were able to develop their own management and leadership behaviour that was neither exclusively masculine or feminine, but had much in common with androgynous styles of management.
Further, she comments on the relative freedom from stereotypes that some women may experience when they value the role of both parents. They:

"may be exposed to a more diverse set of role options than men, as a result of the different conceptualization of men and women's roles in society." (Hall, 1997, p.317)

Possibly as a result of this, the female headteachers studied had been able to:

"develop an appreciation of their own feminine strengths and abilities that does not depend on male approval. None of the heads, either as child or adult, felt the need to be more like a boy or man in order to progress or win approval." (Hall, 1997, p. 318)

Grogan (1996), reporting on 27 female aspirants to the superintendency, refers to their self-image of why they are good at their jobs. The responses fell into three categories:

"1. people skills,
2. reflective approaches to administration with a focus on instruction, and
3. the offer of alternative perspectives to problem solving and decision making." (p. 138)

Grogan (1996) sums up by saying:

"It is clear in the narrative that women who have been constituted by the discourses of partnering and mothering in particular bring many of their relational strengths into their administrative practices. The data simply suggest that many of the women in this study would approach leadership from perspectives that have been influenced by experience different from those many men administrators have." (p. 139)
There are also indications that women will be more flexible as managers, and more prepared to make changes in their style and management performance:

"The data reveals that one of the most striking qualities in the women in this study is their ability to reflect on who they are and what they do. Their approaches to administration are founded on this capacity for reflection and subsequent willingness to make adjustments, to grow personally from their experiences. (Grogan, 1996, p. 150)

Restine (1993) points to a further way in which women may bring special qualities to leadership, that is the interconnectedness of public and private life for females:

"The public self and private self of the woman administrator are often interconnected. The connection between an individual’s life inside and outside of school influences behaviour, attitudes and the level of commitment and energy that is directed to one or the other." (p.22)

In a mainly male dominated environment, the impact of a new female vice-principal was limited by her appearance:

"She was short and slight in build, and was seen to ‘lack’ the same presence of the previous Vice Principal who was strong, highly macho and a strict disciplinarian. He personified the traditional connections between aggression, masculinity and good leadership (Blackmore 1993), and all staff in their interviews (over 35 interviews) mentioned the power of his presence in the school.” (Blackmore 1994, p. 13)

In 1980, Bilden drew attention to the marginality of women:

"when token women perform individual acts, these acts become loaded with extra symbolism because what individuals do is evaluated as a sign of how women perform. Token women, then, face special pressures. They get attention because of their high visibility, their differences are exaggerated by
those in the main-stream, and they are more easily stereotyped than people found in greater proportion. (p. 16)

Although Evetts (1994) does not feel justified in generalising about management style differences between men and women, she does comment on the way in which gender impinges on the heads’ experiences:

“For this woman head, gender was intrusive and prominent in her experience of headship.” (p. 92)

This is contrasted with the experience of men, for whom:

“their gender is positively associated with increased managerial responsibility and authority in their schools.” (p. 93)

**Awareness of gender issues**

Grace (1995) researched headteachers in the North-east of England, and reports on the “relative silence of these women headteachers on the gender relations of educational leadership and management” (p. 188). He concludes that their “silence” and unwillingness to espouse an openly feminist agenda, in a geographical area where men dominate numerically more than in most of the UK, means that:

“patriarchal domination of school leadership positions had not been seriously threatened by the promotion of these women headteachers. They had been accommodated in what remained a largely enduring culture of male leadership.” (Grace, 1995, p. 190)

The unwillingness to openly espouse feminist values is found amongst many of the successful female headteachers. In supporting equal opportunities one head stated: “I have had to take care not to be labelled the feminist head!” (Pat Collings, in Mortimore and Mortimore 1991, p. 39). Reference has already been made (p. 101) to the work of Matthews (1995), who differentiates between those women leaders who
fully support other women, "advocates" and "activists", and women who deny that
there are any difficulties related to gender in leadership, "isolates" and
"individualists", who do nothing to further the progress of women.

**Enduring differences between female and male styles of management**

In the study of men and women in education in African countries, Sri Lanka,
Malaysia and Hong Kong, Davies and Gunawardena (1992) identified five areas of
difference between the males and females. These were:

1. that men were more concerned with finance and salaries than women, who
   were more concerned with people within the school and their own workload
   (p. 82);

2. "the striking competitiveness of the male." (p. 82). In contrast the women
   were more concerned with co-operation and sharing, and in team work;

3. men tend to be completely satisfied with their work, women more hesitant;

4. men wanted status and recognition, whilst women "do not seem to want to
   be a subject of status envy". (p. 85);

5. the importance of male breadwinning: "a wife is there to provide stability
   and a reason for striving, not as an equal partner whose career has parallel
   significance." (p. 87)

However, the conclusion is not that all men and all women are in opposed camps, but
that some men tend to have dominated the culture of power and of education:

"a certain segment of men - possibly even the minority - stand out as revealing
uniquely forceful motivations and self-images around the themes mentioned
above - money, competition, status, success, perfection and breadwinning.
There were equally men who appeared hesitant, people-oriented and keen on
co-operation. ... Yet it is my contention that the quiet, caring sharing male, or female, even if in the majority, does not set the agenda for organisational culture. ... it is the small but powerful minority who are able to forge an institution in the ways which fit their drives. ... Hence the hierarchical, status-oriented, vertically differentiated institution comes to be taken as the 'natural' way of organising large numbers of people; and that everything revolves around winning and losing is equally seen as 'natural' to humanity rather than representing only one particular form of masculinity.” (p. 88)

Conclusion

In reviewing literature concerned with the place of women in educational management in the UK and elsewhere, themes have emerged that appear may often be common across countries. Theory and research relating to leadership in education has, until recently, been based on the unstated supposition that leadership is male. Where women have been mentioned, it has often been presumed that there is 'no difference', or there has been little more than passing reference to the fact that women are leaders and managers as well as men. Gender has generally not been a factor considered in the context of leadership in education, and the relative paucity of women in posts of responsibility in education has been largely unrecognised.

The discrepancy between the numbers of women teachers and the numbers of women senior managers can be partly explained by the fact that women tend to bear the major responsibility for domestic duties and child care. There are therefore quite practical reasons that inhibit their desire for career progression. The identification of women with the home also serves to typify them as ill prepared for roles of responsibility, partly because work in the home and the care of young children is generally considered to be of low status. There is a circular element to this perception, since the work is considered of low status partly because it is identified as women's work. Difficulties in combining domestic and professional responsibilities, have led women to develop a different model of career, and a range of strategies that allow the career plans of women to be deferred or compromised.
The identification of women with domestic responsibilities continues in the work place, where men still tend to operate as "gatekeepers" and may choose to encourage the careers of other men, rather than women and where women may be stereotyped as 'carers', whether at home or in a pastoral role in a school. Further impediments to the career progress of women in the work place may include the influence of a male culture in secondary co-educational schools, and in the wider environment in which a female senior manager must operate.

Women who apply for headship appear to stand as good a chance of success as their male equivalents, but many women lack confidence and under-estimate their abilities and do not get as far as applying. Encouragement for such potential applicants for senior positions may come from formal and informal mentoring, from the existence of female role models and access to suitable training for women. Structural factors such as supportive legislation and maternity rights are also helpful in enabling women to achieve.

For most women, work is combined with marriage and children, and as a result women may develop a range of organisational skills that are not always recognised in the workplace. In addition women operate in a world where men hold most of the power, and where norms have largely been established by men.

Although it would be wrong to identify all women as operating in a particular way, there is a distinctive style of feminine management, which is found more often amongst women than men. This style of management is collaborative, and places stress on the importance of relationships and teamwork. As such it is likely to be empowering. Research has shown that women tend to communicate in different ways to men, and that through their communication they tend to be more supportive and less combative than is the case in the predominant male style. There is a correspondence between the identified 'feminine' style of management and leadership and what is now generally regarded as an effective style of leadership. It would appear that the inclusion of women in senior roles, and the resulting feminine style of leadership, are likely to bring strengths to management and leadership in education.
The research methods used to investigate the research questions identified in chapter 1 are discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 3 Research Methodology

Introduction

Research in education, and elsewhere in the social sciences has been "androcentric" in focus (Shakeshaft, 1989, Blackmore, 1989, Schmuck, 1996), that is:

"the practice of studying male behaviour and then assuming that the results are appropriate for understanding all behaviour." (p. 150)

Androcentric research ignores gender as a variable and may lead to the operation of double standards in the evaluation of traits or behaviours found in males and females (Eichler, 1988).

Most of the studies of headteachers have ignored the variable of gender (see chapter 2, p. 29 - 30) or have taken account of gender as only one variable of the study, (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996, Grace, 1995, Evetts, 1994). More recent research on leadership and management styles in education in the UK has placed the female educational leader as central to the research which has been mainly qualitative in nature. Research has provided in-depth analysis through interview and observation of women headteachers, (Hall, 1996, Evetts, 1994). There are also accounts of individual careers from women who have analyzed their own situation, or a particular aspect of educational management, as it relates to women, (Ouston, 1993, Ozga, 1993). Adler et al (1993) conducted interviews with a large number of women (44) but their respondents were drawn from all phases of education and held a range of responsibilities.

The present research undertaken with the whole population of female English and Welsh secondary headteachers focused on the views of women, and seeks to present a synthesis of the experiences, views and values of this successful group of women in educational management incorporating a quantitative and qualitative dimension to the research.
The research design

The present research included two stages and methods:

1. five in-depth interviews with female secondary headteachers;

2. a questionnaire administered to all the female secondary headteachers in England and Wales.

The large scale survey of all the female headteachers in England and Wales, which was administered at the end of the academic year 1995-96, represents a significant addition to existing research. The presentation of findings from the survey adds a new dimension to the research data that have previously been available.

The research methods used here are both qualitative and quantitative. Pilot research took the form of five in-depth interviews with female secondary headteachers. The quantitative dimension was added through a postal questionnaire which included closed questions but also contained a number of open-ended questions and space for comments, thus providing a considerable amount of qualitative data in addition to that provided through the interviews. The questionnaire was based on the structure of the interview schedule which acted as a pilot for the development of the questionnaire and provided rich qualitative data to complement the data obtained from the questionnaire.

The survey

The purpose of the survey was to look more closely at the experiences of the whole population of female secondary school headteachers in England and Wales. At this level women represent only 24% of the total (DfEE, 1997), despite the fact that approximately half of the secondary teaching force is female. The research investigated the career and career progress of the headteachers, their experience of sexism both in relation to job applications and in relation to them as leaders, their perceptions of their management style and the values that they bring to leadership.
Johnson (1994) defines surveys as:

“eliciting equivalent information from an identified population” (p. 13)

In this survey, the information elicited was equivalent since a standard questionnaire was used. The identified population was female secondary heads in England and Wales.

A more detailed definition of the survey is given by Bryman, (1989, p. 104):

“survey research entails the collection of data on a number of units and usually at a single juncture in time, with a view to collecting systematically a body of quantifiable data in respect of a number of variables which are then examined to discern patterns of association.”

This more focused definition also applies to the questionnaire, which was administered in one week in June 1996, and which resulted in the collection of a body of partly quantifiable data from which patterns of association might be discerned.

Hoinville and Jowell (1978) identify three prerequisites to the design of any survey:

1. specifying the exact purpose of the enquiry;

2. a decision on the population to be surveyed;

3. a decision on the resources that are available.

1. Specifying the exact purpose of the enquiry

The purpose of the research is fully identified in Chapter 1. However, key research questions relate to the under-representation of women in educational management. The factors that relate to this include overt and covert discrimination, obstacles to career progress within the work situation, and limitations imposed by domestic
responsibilities and cultural stereotypes identifying leadership and management with males.

2. The population to be surveyed

The existing research on women in educational management is characterised by small scale qualitative studies. There has been an absence of data on the population of female secondary heads as a whole which might provide both contextual background to smaller studies and allow generalizations about the careers and management style of female headteachers to take place.

3. The resources available

Resources relevant to research are the time available, financial resourcing as appropriate, and the software and hardware to be used in collating and recording data. The research approach, which included a small number of in-depth interviews as well as a postal questionnaire, allowed time to be allocated by the researcher over a number of years. The interviews are expensive in researcher time, and were done during the summer of 1994 with the results initially written up in 1994-95. The postal questionnaire was administered in the academic year 1995-96. The recording and initial analysis of data were carried out using hardware and software that were available to the researcher through the University. Analysis of the questionnaire data was completed during 1996 - 1997.

Appropriateness of the survey

Robson (1993) identifies research purposes as being exploratory, descriptive or explanatory, and identifies that generally:

"surveys are carried out for descriptive purposes. They can provide information about the distribution of a wide range of 'people characteristics', and of relationships between such characteristics." (p. 127)
However, he goes on to say that it is possible to go beyond the descriptive level towards interpretation and the consideration of causal relations. The intention of this research was both to establish information on a range of life experience and characteristics and to attempt to generalize from the data collected. More detailed consideration is given to the choice of the survey as a research method in the section on the postal questionnaire (see pp. 217 - 229).

Underlying research approaches

There are two strands of theory which underlie research approaches. These are summarized by Cohen and Manion (1994) as two opposing conceptions of social reality, normative and interpretive. Some aspects of the two approaches are listed below in Figure 3.1:

Table 3.1 Research Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normative</th>
<th>Interpretive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>society and the social system</td>
<td>the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium/large scale research</td>
<td>small scale research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural science model</td>
<td>non-statistical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'objectivity'</td>
<td>'subjectivity'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>researcher is 'outside'</td>
<td>researcher is personally involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generalizations from the specific</td>
<td>interpretations of the specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explaining behaviour</td>
<td>understanding actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeking causes</td>
<td>meanings rather than causes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(after Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 39)
The normative, objectivist approach is largely linked to positivist thinking, that a social reality exists and that it is possible through empirical research to establish sets of social "facts". The alternative interpretive, subjectivist approach may be exemplified by phenomenologists who believe that it is the subjective experience of the individual that is important and that it is individual perception that bestows meaning, rather than there being any external objective meaning. Studies of women in educational management have tended towards an interpretive research approach. The complexity of the issues that are involved in the examination of the role of women in educational management; biological, social, cultural and political factors and their interplay, has meant that methods such as life history, interview and observation have been judged the most appropriate methods of research. The stress has been on the subjective reality for individuals. In this approach:

"The principal concern is with an understanding of the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world in which he or she finds himself or herself." (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 8)

Through a variety of qualitative methods it is considered possible to build up a picture of a social "reality". Such a view is opposed to a strictly positivist view, which is more often associated with purely quantitative methods. In interpretive research:

"the task of the social scientist should not be to gather facts and measure how often certain patterns occur, but to appreciate the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience." (Easterby-Smith et al, 1994, p.78)

In the alternative normative approach, positivist, quantitative methods are likely to be used. Positivist methodology is based on the use of the scientific method and, at its most extreme, seeks to "discover" general laws explaining the nature of the reality that the researcher is observing and recording.

Statement of the two extreme approaches masks the fact that, in practice, the approaches need not be mutually exclusive and are often used together. In practice,
research may encompass elements of the two apparently opposed paradigms. Cohen and Manion (1994) refer to systematic, scientific research that considers "people within their social contexts" (p. 40). Miles and Huberman (1994) comment on the difficulty of finding working researchers in a fixed position on the spectrum:

"we believe that all of us - realists, interpretivists, critical theorist - are closer to the center, with multiple overlaps." (p. 5)

Researchers may adopt a flexible approach to the gathering of data, complementing a questionnaire with a more in-depth qualitative research approach as in this research design concerned with aspects of the career and management style of secondary female headteachers. The combination of a postal questionnaire with detailed interviews were the two main research tools adopted. This provided the opportunity of obtaining a large amount of quantitative data, as well as rich qualitative data. However, the combination of the two approaches raises the question of the relative significance of the underlying research methodologies in this research project.

Easterby-Smith et al (1994) suggest that there are four key choices that may differentiate between the two dichotomies of research approaches, and these choices are now applied to the research under consideration.

**Key choices of research design**

- Researcher is independent vs Researcher is involved
- Large samples vs Small numbers
- Testing theories vs Generating theories
- Experimental design vs Fieldwork methods

**The place of the researcher**

In both the questionnaire and in the interviews, the researcher remained relatively independent and uninvolved. For example, there was no intention of entering into a dialogue with the respondents, and involving any of them in decisions as to the issues
to be researched, an approach that has been labeled as the co-operative enquiry approach (Reason, 1988). Research questions had been identified earlier in the process of research design, and decided on the basis of the judgment of the researcher following the review of literature. Judged by this criteria, the research was normative in the sense of the Cohen and Manion analysis referred to above. However, the interviews certainly allowed some opportunities for a level of involvement on the part of the researcher. The interviews were semi-structured and allowed a great deal of freedom for the respondents in their replies (a copy of the interview schedule is attached as Appendix 1). There is also the possibility that the level and quantity of responses to the questionnaire and the willingness of the interviewees to give of their time were influenced by characteristics of the researcher. Hall (1996) reports that in her intensive study of six women headteachers:

"I saw my experiences as a girl and women of a similar age to those in the study central to my researcher role." (p. 20)

She also reports that:

"recognition of parallels between the heads' personal and professional experiences and my own was an important component of the rapport that developed, as a necessary basis for the joint conversations around which the interviews were structured." (p. 21)

The quality of the response from headteachers in my research, in both interviews and questionnaires, may have been improved by the knowledge of the headteachers that the researcher was female and in a University Education Department. However, the strength of the potential influence would obviously have been much greater in establishing rapport in the face to face interviews and relatively small in the postal questionnaire.
The size of sample

The dichotomy of large samples versus small numbers is identified by Easterby-Smith et al (1994) as typified by a large cross-section sample on the one hand and a small sample studied longitudinally on the other. The longitudinal aspect was not a feature of this research, but the use of the two research tools meant that a large sample for the questionnaire and a small number of subjects for the interviews were both employed in the research. Effectively the research then has elements of both ends of the research philosophy spectrum, in-depth study of a small group; coupled with a large scale survey.

The place of theory

The key question that differentiates the research approaches is: does the theory arise from the data, or are the data collected to prove or disprove an existing theory or hypothesis? In the case of strictly positivist research, the research would be carried out to test an hypothesis. For the research on female headteachers, the questions asked were derived from a wide range of sources, including earlier research, and could be construed as being designed to test certain underlying hypotheses concerning the place of women in society. A general hypothesis relating to career progress is that women are restricted by the androcentric nature of society. A further hypothesis relating to leadership and management is that women tend to adopt a collaborative style and be relatively ‘people oriented’. However, the research did have something in common with the idea of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), whereby comparative analysis of data might lead to the development of new theory in addition to the testing of an existing theory.

Experiment or fieldwork?

In pure positivist research, the scientific method involves experimentation, with the use of a control group. This approach is rarely taken in educational research where the approach is more likely to be quasi-experimental. Alternatively a more interpretivist or phenomenological approach might be adopted which would make use
of a range of research tools. In the case of the headteacher research, a purely experimental approach would have been inappropriate. Examination of the career progress of the headteachers was largely a retrospective exercise, relying on the headteachers' own perceptions and recollections. Experimentation on management and leadership style would have been extremely difficult to achieve as well as raising ethical questions:

"The essential feature of experimental research is that investigators deliberately control and manipulate the conditions which determine the events in which they are interested." (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 164)

The methods used in the headteacher research are therefore not positivist in the pure sense, although the survey does allow for the possibility of generalization.

The in-depth interviews undertaken with the headteachers were more qualitative in nature, although they do not fit into the pure interpretivist paradigm, where the researcher is part of what is being observed and meaning is held to be subjective.

The research therefore draws from both positivist and interpretive stances, marrying the use of quantitative and qualitative research in an approach which combines an open-ended investigation with systematic research techniques, an approach that is taken elsewhere in educational management:

"a growing body of social research takes a stand somewhere between the two schools of thought. It is recognised that no piece of social research can be entirely objective, since no researcher is value free. Even in an overtly rigorous quantitative, head-counting study, some implicit decisions have already been made as to which heads are worth counting." (Johnson, 1994, p. 7)

One particular aspect of the debate and division between research approaches that is central to this research is the nature and relevance of feminist methodology.
Feminist research

Feminist research tends to reject positivist methodology, which is seen as part of "patriarchal dominance", (Atkinson et al, 1993, p.25). Objectivity may be "equated with masculinity" (Robson, 1993, p. 65). As such, feminist methodology is clearly identified within the qualitative, interpretive, phenomenological research approach. Feminist methodology places emphasis on the importance of the individual voice:

"The distinction between 'objective' and 'subjective' knowledge is frequently criticized as being an arbitrary distinction that is based on male standards." (Purvis, 1985, p. 183)

Adler et al (1993) when interviewing 44 women in education, state that:

"our sample was not representative in any way, nor did we try to generalize about women's experience from the data we obtained. Rather, we resisted accepting either of these ideas as meaningful. The research project itself and qualitative methods we used reflected our subjective approach." (p. 63)

Strachan (1993) researching women in educational leadership reported that her research was:

"full of the 'personal' and the 'subjective'. The research process was not very orderly or, at times, very coherent. I was however 'inside' the culture and participating in the process (Oakley, 1981). This 'personal involvement' was not a dangerous bias but a necessary prerequisite condition of the sharing of intimate information." (p. 76)

In addition, feminist research is likely to contain an overtly political agenda. Adler et al (1993) considered feminist research as: "essentially political, concerned not only with exposure but also with change." (p.57).

Acker (1994) has identified a number of basic assumptions in feminist research:
"1. Feminist research involves an acute state of awareness of the injustice women suffer because of their sex.

2. The purpose of this research is to improve women's lives.

3. Feminist research asserts the centrality of women and of gender to all aspects of human existence.

4. It rests on the belief that existing knowledge and techniques are deficient and need revision and replacing.

5. Women's experience in patriarchal society is the starting point for research: the personal is political and valid.

6. The researcher should enter into the same space as her subject, rather than taking up a powerful or detached position." (p. 57)

However, Acker is wary about the use of possible check-lists to identify the "correctness" of a research approach:

"As feminist scholarship becomes increasingly institutionalized, there is a tendency for it to develop its own rituals and practices of exclusion." (p. 69)

In attempting to broaden the view of feminist research, she stresses the importance of bringing to research "frameworks influenced by our study of feminist scholarship" (p. 70) and argues for making feminist research less rigid. Her view is, to an extent, one of expediency. Research opportunities should be pursued by feminists even where the research does not fit into a strictly feminist definition of research, for the research that is done will be informed by the feminist scholarship of the researchers.

If this wider view of what constitutes feminist research is taken, the headteacher research could be considered to fall within the boundaries of feminist research.
Certainly the headteacher research was conducted from a feminist point of view in the sense that:

"feminism is about putting women first - about judging their interests to be important and insufficiently represented within mainstream politics and the academic world." (Purvis, 1985, p. 180)

However, one of the main research tools used, the survey, is largely identified with a normative, objective, positivist approach to research that may be seen as antipathetic to pure feminist research. If judged by this criterion, the headteacher research owes much to a tradition that feminists would regard as male dominated and patriarchal. However, the interviews were more exploratory in nature and were more open to the individual responses of the participants.

Despite the feminist antipathy to traditional research methods, large scale enquiries that might be considered feminist, have been carried out elsewhere. Shakeshaft (1989) lists her study of over 200 dissertations and 600 articles and interviews with over 100 women administrators in helping her to reach a synthesis. She also considers that: "the literature on women in educational administration could profit from increased methodological and conceptual rigor," (p. 11) It is not clear exactly what is meant by the increased conceptual rigor referred to by Shakeshaft. However, rigor may be enhanced by the use of a large scale survey, where researcher interpretation is firmly based on numbers of particular responses and data cannot be regarded as anecdotal. Discussing the value of quantitative methods, long unfashionable in sociology, Silverman (1985) states:

"Such counting helps to avoid the temptation to use merely supportive gobbets of information to support the researcher's interpretation. It gives a picture of the whole sample in summary form, highlighting deviant cases and encouraging further qualitative analysis of regularities." (p. 17)

Chandler (1990) made use of both a large scale postal questionnaire and interviews in researching a group of women married to naval servicemen. She defends the use of
"masculinist" methodology, pointing out the possibility of feminism constructing a methodological ghetto and ignoring the previous "achievements of survey methods in detailing women's lives." (p. 121)

The aim of the research on female headteachers has been to both understand and represent the views of individual women through interview, and through open-ended questions in the survey, and to obtain a wider picture of the career patterns, and views on management and leadership, of the population of women secondary headteachers. The data provide a framework of the national picture relating to female secondary headteachers which both contextualises the interview data and which may enhance understanding of previous qualitative research.

The pilot study

A pilot study of the career progress and management style of female secondary headteachers was a research initiative that followed an initial literature review on the subject of women in educational management (Coleman, 1994).

Research design

Initial decisions on research design included:

1. what are the key research questions?

2. who should be the subject of research?

3. what is the most appropriate research method for the pilot exploratory research?

1. What were the key research questions?

The literature review on women in educational management had covered two main areas:
the career progress of women in education, and the barriers to career progress; the way in which women lead and manage in education and what differences there might be between the ways in which women manage and the ways in which men manage.

Within the first of these two areas, drawing on the work of Schmuck (1986), obstacles to career progress could be categorized within the following groupings:

- overt and covert discrimination;
- organizational constraints; and
- socialisation.

The area of organizational constraints included a large group of factors which the author categorized under the following headings (Coleman, 1994):

- (a) the point of application for promotion;
- (b) planning a career path;
- (c) differential levels of opportunities within the post;
- (d) the differential expectations of others;
- (e) the stereotypical roles that women may adopt in management.

In addition, the constraints associated with the demands of domestic life, and the prime care of any children were a major factor that emerged from the literature, and questions relating to the domestic life of women, as it impinged on their career, were therefore included. When researching female educational leaders in New Zealand, Strachan, (1993) commented that her respondents: “did not separate their personal and
professional values and beliefs.” and that “To focus only on their ‘public’ lives is likely to produce only part of the picture.” (p. 79)

Much of the theory in the literature was derived from research in the USA (Schmuck, 1980, 1986, Shakeshaft, 1989, 1993). Literature relating to women in educational management in the UK was either small-scale and qualitative, (see above p. 181) or based on experience in management and in-service training for women, (Al Khalifa, 1992, Gray, 1993, Ouston, 1993). In addition large scale research on women in management outside education in England, has taken place (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). It therefore appeared timely to explore the major concepts that had been identified from the literature, as they related to women in educational management in the UK.

Literature relating to feminine and masculine management styles, and the identification of feminine management styles with the effective management of schools raised questions about the extent to which women actually do manage in a feminine style. Questions relating to management and leadership included in the research concerned:

the identification of key adjectives relating to each headteacher’s style of management;
the key values that she promotes in the school;
her availability to her staff;
her attitude towards staff development, particularly that of women;
what is advantageous about being a female headteacher?

2. Who should be the subject of research?

Women holding senior positions in education were the potential research population. The initial decision was taken to undertake a pilot study with a small group of women, as a preliminary to further research work. Women are poorly represented at senior levels in all phases of education (see chapter 1). However, the percentage of female senior managers, although disproportionate, is higher in primary than in secondary and
tertiary education, where women may appear, and feel, more isolated. Secondary headteachers, rather than senior managers in further or higher education were chosen as the population to be researched.

The decision was made for the pilot research to concentrate on all the female headteachers of mixed secondary schools in one shire county. Middle schools deemed secondary were excluded, as was an all-girls school. In effect, the group chosen represented the entire population of female secondary headteachers of mixed comprehensive schools in the county. They could also be said to represent an opportunity sample of English female secondary headteachers since their choice was largely based on the fact that they were geographically accessible, and in some cases, were already known to the researcher. The proportion of female secondary headteachers in the English shire county chosen was five out of 38, a proportion which was approximately the same as that for the shire counties as a whole, where 13% of secondary headteachers are women (Edwards and Lyons, 1994).

Since the headteachers chosen were all heads in the same county, it was possible that there were some characteristics in common, since they were all working within the same Local Education Authority. In addition they would also attend some of the same meetings, and were likely to be known to each other professionally and/or socially.

The five headteachers have all been given pseudonyms for the purpose of reporting the research. They represent a range of experience in terms of their years of service as heads, but have all served as deputy heads. They are all married and, at the time of the research, were each responsible for a mixed comprehensive school each of which had about 1000 pupils.
The five headteachers

Table 3.2: Data relating to headship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of headships</th>
<th>Years of present headship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrea</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Personal data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age-group</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrea</td>
<td>forties none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>forties none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>sixties two (now adult)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy</td>
<td>forties one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>forties one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. What is the most appropriate research method for the pilot exploratory research?

The pilot study was intended to achieve two purposes, one being to explore further the areas highlighted by the literature review, and the other was to clarify the research questions in order to prepare for a more extensive piece of research. Wragg (1994) identifies:

“One common use of interviews is at the early stage of an enquiry which may or may not go on to use interviews in its main phase.” (p. 271)

Since the literature had highlighted the obstacles to career progress, the research could be carried out by asking the subjects to recount some aspects of their life history, a technique that is relevant to feminist research. Such information could have been collected through written accounts, but interviews provided an opportunity for the researcher to probe, and were also potentially less demanding for the subjects of the research.

The research was concerned with career progress and life experience but also with leadership and management style. Whilst interviewing was the most appropriate way of researching personal life experience, it was not the only research method that could have been used when researching management and leadership styles. It might have been possible, and indeed desirable, to make use of observation of meetings, and/or shadowing of the heads. These possibilities were discounted for a variety of reasons; one being that this phase of the research was intended to be exploratory in nature, testing out the themes identified through the literature review, thus acting as a pilot study for the later stage of the research. For a pilot study, data could be collected most efficiently, and in the least possible time through interviews.

“It [interviewing] is a powerful way to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives constitute education.” (Seidman, 1991, p. 7)
The interview schedule (see appendix 1) was constructed in order to cover all aspects of the research questions identified through the literature review. The interview schedule was fairly long, and an alternative might have been to have had a series of interviews rather than one. Seidman (1991) recommends a series of three interviews:

The first interview is focused life history, enabling the interviewer to put the respondent's experience in context.

The second interview is to establish details of the respondents' experience in the particular topic area of the study.

the third interview concentrates on reflection on experience: "the participants look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation." (Seidman, 1991, p. 12)

In effect, the long interviews carried out with the headteachers did cover these three areas, although by combining them in one session, overall interview time may have been reduced, and possible difficulties of negotiating access overcome. However, the weakness of the one long interview was in terms of the demands made on the time and concentration of the participants.

The question of triangulation

It is recognised that interviews are limited as a research method when considerations of management and leadership style are concerned, since the only information obtainable is the perception of the interviewee. Ideally the information on leadership and management style obtained from the headteachers should have been triangulated by other research, for example further interviews with colleagues, or observation of management meetings. Wragg (1994) recounts how respondents may give "public relations" answers rather than an accurate response:

"for example when Mildred Collins (1969) interviewed heads and asked what they did for probationers they tended to say they were always helping, ever a
cheery word. The probationers during interview reported lack of interest and few contacts." (Wragg, 1994, p. 267)

Reasons for limiting the pilot research to interviews with the headteachers only, are related to issues of access and ethics.

**Access and ethics**

All five of the headteachers were approached by letter, explaining the nature of the research and enclosing a copy of the original literature review (Coleman, 1994). The literature review was included so that they would know the nature of the research being undertaken, and the areas on which they were likely to be questioned. In view of this prior knowledge, it was not felt necessary to provide them with an interview schedule in advance of, or during the interview. It was made clear that the interview would be in-depth and that they should allocate one and a half to two hours for it. The interviews did in fact last for about two hours, although one headteacher provided so much detail, that it was necessary to return for an additional visit to complete the schedule. Two of the headteachers were already known to me and I therefore anticipated no problem in arranging to meet them. In the event, all of the five agreed to be interviewed.

Access is defined by Measor (1985) not only as obtaining agreement for the interviews, but also as:

"the process of building relationships with people you want to interview and hence getting access to their life and view of the world." (p. 57)

Whilst time was limited for the building of relationships, the fact that I was female, and had the academic credibility of being a University researcher were useful in establishing a level of rapport with the headteachers. Many of the questions related to the personal life of the headteacher, and Measor (1985) refers to the fact that:
"people find it easier, more acceptable, more 'proper' to talk about subjective aspects of their life with a woman." (p. 74)

Scott (1985) also reported that respondents appeared to be more willing to talk in an informal way to a women.

The decision to limit the research to interviews with the headteachers rather than engaging in further research within the school was largely taken in order to maintain the confidentiality of the relationship, and to impose as little as possible on the time and good will of the respondents. Whilst headteachers might be willing to respond fully to questions about their leadership style and educational values, they might have been less willing to have had a number of their staff subjected to questioning on the way they viewed the head. However, it is recognised that the responses of the headteachers relate to their own perceptions of their style and values rather than the views of any other members of the school community.

Rapport with the respondent may also be enhanced by the courtesy and attentiveness of the interviewer. Johnson (1994) refers to the need to ensure that the respondent has a largely interesting and enjoyable experience, and stresses the importance of using "respondent antecedents", whereby the researcher picks up an earlier reference and relates it to a later stage of the interview:

"the skilled interviewer ... is careful to return to the subject by saying 'You've already mentioned ... Can you tell me more?'" (Johnson, 1994, p. 49)

When requesting access for the interviews, I arranged to visit the school of the headteacher, partly to minimize inconvenience to the respondent, and partly to enable me to be able to place the headteacher in her context. However, no systematic field-notes were taken in relation to the school or on the layout of the headteachers' studies. The time and date of the interview were decided by mutual agreement, but the convenience of the headteacher was the key factor.
In the original letter seeking access, anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed for the respondents, although it was later agreed informally that those in education in the region would probably have little difficulty in successfully speculating about the identity of female senior figures in the secondary school sector.

It was agreed at the start of the original interview, that full transcripts of the interviews would be sent to the headteachers to ensure that they were comfortable with their accuracy. Few comments or alterations were made to the transcripts, although I was asked to ensure anonymity, not only of the headteachers and their present schools, but also their previous schools, and families.

Type of interview

The interviews were semi-structured in nature. A structured interview would have been inappropriate for the areas researched which required detailed comment from the respondents. Although an interview schedule was used (see appendix 1) the interviews sometimes took on some aspects of an unstructured interview, when the respondent expanded on particular areas at length, and gave information that was relevant elsewhere in the interview. Johnson (1994) compares the structured to the semi-structured interview, commenting that both have: "a similar aim of collecting equivalent information from a number of people", but that in the semi-structured interview:

"A more flexible style is used, adapted to the personality and circumstances of the person being interviewed." (p. 45)

Certainly, the more experienced headteachers tended to be more expansive, and confident in expressing their views on their leadership and management styles, and the younger, less experienced headteachers were more likely to require follow-up questions and probing in order to provide a similar quantity of equivalent information.

The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for probing where information would have otherwise been sparse, and for the transfer of information to other more
appropriate areas of the interview schedule when the respondent expanded and was particularly enthusiastic about an area of interest. However, probing and re-allocation of information, require what Measor (1985) refers to as "critical awareness" (p. 63), on the part of the interviewer. The ability to remain aloof and analytical during the interview, whilst at the same time nurturing rapport and trust.

**Nature of questions**

The initial questions in the schedule were intended to establish background information about the respondents. The answers expected were mainly factual, requiring short answers. However, questions such the first one: "How long have you been headteacher at this school?", and the subsequent questions about previous headships and deputy headships, prompted reminiscences. These questions along with those that related to influences on career path, and parental expectations, elicited information that was essentially the collection of life history data.

Cohen and Manion (1994) quote the four question formats identified by Tuckman (1972). These are:

- direct and indirect;
- specific and non specific;
- inviting factual answers or inviting opinions;
- statements or questions.

These formats can be applied to the questions in the interview schedule:

1. direct or indirect

   The majority of the questions were direct, eg "have you been aware of sex stereotyping in the responsibilities that you have been given on the way to headship?"

   However, a few are indirect, eg "Describe your ideal style of management."
2. specific or non-specific

Since the questions were all directed at the opinions of the respondents, they might all be termed specific, although some are more general and abstract than others, eg "What qualities would characterize your dealings with the people you manage?"

3. questions inviting factual answers and those inviting opinions.

The questions fit well into these two categories. Initial questions were concerned with factual questions eg on marital status, child care, domestic responsibilities. Later questions asked for opinions on matters like stereotyping, and values.

4. The interviewee may be presented with a statement or a question.

The interview schedule was entirely composed of questions rather than statements requiring response and comment.

Types of questions invite types of responses. The responses invited through this interview schedule were of two types. The majority of responses invited were unstructured, since questions were open-ended. In one case, respondents were asked to identify from a list those qualities that they felt applied to them. They were not asked to rank them, and as such they represent nominal categories. However, even in this case, the headteachers added comments which were recorded, and did not simply indicate which of the qualities they identified with themselves.

Method of recording

The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder. In addition, notes were made, partly as an insurance, and partly to act as a means of identifying the most important aspects of the responses. The transcripts of the interviews were very long, on average
over twenty sides of A4 typescript. Much editing needed to be done, and the notes made at the time of the interview would, in most cases have been more than adequate. However, the full transcripts were useful in providing verbatim long quotations, and in verifying the accuracy of the notes. Note taking was also used since it promotes the control of the interviewer over the interview. Note taking may provide a "non-verbal cue to the interviewee". (Johnson, 1994, p. 50). By putting the pen down, the interviewer can indicate that the area being expounded is not relevant to the research.

Analysis

Some initial steps in analysis take place before all the data are gathered:

"Once the interviews commence, the researcher cannot help but work with the material he or she is getting." (Seidman, 1991, p. 86)

However, there was no conscious attempt to pre-analyse the data before the completion of all interviews, and, as far as possible, the collection of data was kept separate from the analysis of data.

The small number of interviews posed an immediate problem that relates to the questions of the underlying research philosophy of the project. An interpretivist, phenomenological approach would have necessitated treating each interview separately:

"[phenomenologists] assume that through continued readings of the source material and through vigilance over one's presuppositions, one can reach the 'Lebenswelt' of the informant, capturing the 'essence' of an account - what is constant in a person's life across its manifold variations. This approach does not lead to covering laws, but rather to a 'practical understanding' of meanings and actions."
(Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 8)
In the development of the interview schedule, the individual questions or groups of questions were designed to elicit responses on particular aspects of career and management style. As such, it was intended that comparisons should be made between the responses of the headteachers, and that in a limited way it might be possible to generalize about the responses of female headteachers in the county.

Although the number of interviews was relatively small, the quantity of data accumulated was cumbersome and provided some initial difficulties in the handling of material since the general approach was to look for themes and similarities in the data accumulated from the five headteachers. Some initial classifying of data was accomplished through the use of cutting and pasting using the programme Word. Although this process in itself was time-consuming, it made the comparison and grouping of responses very much easier to accomplish.

Miles and Huberman (1994) define qualitative analysis as incorporating three concurrent flows of activity:

1. Data reduction: “Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that “final” conclusions can be drawn and verified.” (p. 11)

2. Data display: most commonly in the form of extended text, but can be in the form of matrices, graphs, charts and networks.

3. Conclusion drawing and verification: this process may begin lightly, with vague conclusions being drawn, but as the processes of qualitative analysis continue, the conclusions will be: “tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their “confirmability” - that is, their validity.” (p. 11).

The analysis of qualitative data may include the consideration of data collected from a variety of sources and research tools. In this case the analysis was of sub-sections of the five interviews and the process basically followed the three flows categorized above. Similarities of responses from all five or from three or four of the headteachers were particularly noted. The small number of interviews meant that in most cases data display remained in the form of extended text, although it was re-
organized through cutting and pasting. The only exception was the presentation of the
adjectives chosen by the headteachers as typifying their style of leadership and
management, where it was possible to present findings in a tabulated form.
Conclusion forming and verification tended to emerge from the establishment of the
patterns and themes that were established through data reduction.

The results of the interviews from the pilot phase of the research are discussed in
Chapter 4.

The postal questionnaire

The decisions that were taken in relation to the pilot research were:

1. what were the key research questions?

2. who should be the subject of research?

3. what was the most appropriate research method for the pilot exploratory
research?

A similar range of decisions were taken in respect of the second stage of research.

Research Design

1. What were the key research questions?

For the second stage of the research, the key research questions remained the same as
those for the pilot research. The minor modifications that were made to the questions
and to the order of the questions are outlined below in the section headed
“Construction of the questionnaire schedule”.

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2. Who should be the subject of research?

The decision in the pilot phase was that female secondary headteachers should be the subject of research, and in order to achieve an equivalence of information from the respondents in both stages of the research, it was decided to continue with a larger population of female secondary headteachers. The pilot research had been carried out in one county in England. The second, wider stage of research was then carried out with secondary headteachers in England and Wales. As in the pilot investigation, middle schools, even those deemed secondary were not included in the population of schools considered. However, the female headteachers of girls' and boys' schools were not excluded from the research population in the second phase, as they had been in the pilot phase. In the small scale pilot research only one female headteacher was excluded on the basis of heading an all-girls school, and the research was undertaken mainly for exploratory purposes rather than to lead to generalizations. In a national survey, the exclusion of female headteachers of single sex schools would have removed a large proportion of headteachers, many of whom might already have headed mixed schools, or who might aim to do so in the future.

There is no reason to believe that, in career terms, the situation for female headteachers in Scotland is different from those in England and Wales, (Darling and Glendinning 1996), but Scotland was not included in the research, partly to cut down on the size of the research population and partly because differences in the Scottish system of education would have added more complexity to the range of schools included.

The decision on who should be the subject of research then offered several possibilities:

1. sampling the population of female secondary headteachers;

2. questioning the whole population of female secondary headteachers;
3. sampling the population of female and male secondary headteachers;

4. questioning the whole population of female secondary headteachers, and sampling the male secondary headteachers;

5. questioning the whole population of female and male secondary headteachers.

In the event the decision was taken to question the whole population of female secondary headteachers. One reason for this, rather than sampling, was the probability that the response rate to any questionnaire might be poor. Robson, (1993) states that one of the major disadvantages of a self-administered postal survey is that they “Typically have a low response rate.” (p. 128) In view of this possibility, questionnaires were sent to all female heads to at least maximize the number of potential responses. A further reason to question the whole population was that representative sampling might have been problematic. The practical measure of drawing up a sample frame of all female headteachers and selecting either a simple random or a systematic sample from it would have been quite possible, but might have produced a sample that might not have been truly representative, since the proportion of female headteachers varies considerably in different areas of the country. In broad terms, the further from London, the fewer female secondary headteachers, (Edwards and Lyons, 1994). This difficulty in isolating a representative sample added to the decision to send questionnaires to the whole population.

The possibility of including either a sample or the whole population of male headteachers was excluded at present. The research was designed to reproduce the views of women, who have largely been under-represented in research. The inclusion of a sample of male heads would have produced a type of control group, and therefore a potentially useful comparison, but it would have widened the scope of the research and added research questions. A final pragmatic reason for limiting the research to females is the increase in scope and the resulting increase in resources needed to undertake the research. Both additional time and additional finance would have been necessary.
3. What was the most appropriate method for the second stage of research?

The second stage of research was intended to build on the exploratory, detailed data collected in the pilot stage and extend the research questions to the whole population of female secondary headteachers in England and Wales. The most appropriate way of doing this is a postal survey. Robson, (1993) sums up the advantages of postal questionnaires:

"Often this is the only, or the easiest, way of retrieving information about the past history of a large set of people.

They can be extremely efficient at providing large amounts of data, at relatively low cost, in a short period of time.

They allow anonymity, which can encourage frankness when sensitive areas are involved." (p. 129)

The research instrument required information on past history of a large number of people, and also touched on sensitive areas such as marital history, difficulties of combining childcare with a career, and experience of sexism.

Whilst the postal questionnaire was the most appropriate instrument for the second stage of research, there are disadvantages in this research tool. In particular, questions may be misunderstood, there is no opportunity for clarification or probing on the part of the researcher, and there is considerable scope for intentional or unintentional bias on the part of the respondent:

"The essence of a questionnaire, as a research tool, is that it is in the hands of the respondent, and is completed by him or her." (Johnson, 1994, p. 37)

Johnson (1994) notes that this leaves the respondent free to choose which questions to answer, and it is noticeable that few of the questions included in the postal...
questionnaire received an answer from 100% of the respondents, an example of item non-response (Hoinville and Jowell, 1978)

The population to receive the questionnaire were all those female headteachers of secondary schools, both local authority and grant-maintained, in England and Wales, listed in The Education Authorities Directory and Annual 1995.

Construction of the questionnaire schedule

Modifications in the light of the pilot research

In constructing the schedule, the aim was to maintain the ability of the research instrument to elicit information that was equivalent in type to that collected in the interviews, although in terms of individual responses, the information was unlikely to be equivalent in length or in depth. In addition, the questions were considered carefully in terms of their wording and order, in the light of the responses to the pilot interviews. It was possible to omit some questions which had been found to elicit overlapping answers in the pilot research, thereby cutting down on the number of questions asked. Some questions in the interview schedule on style of management included a number where overlaps occurred, for example, the question “describe your ideal style of management?” tended to elicit the same response as “How would you define your style of management?”

The section in the interview schedule that dealt with style of management contained several quite practical questions about management arrangements in the school, eg:

   “What are the basic management arrangements of the school?”;
   “What part do teams play in the management of the school?;
   “How would you summarize your relationship with the governors?”

In an interview, the interviewer is responsible for recording answers to such questions which, if answered fully, elicit a great deal of information. Such questions would have been likely to have discouraged headteachers from responding fully or perhaps
from responding at all. These questions were originally included in the interview to provide internal validity since they might produce factual data which could be compared with the headteachers' perception of her own management style. However, the recounting of fairly practical arrangements may also be subject to an element of distortion, and the answers to the questions were consistent with the headteachers' views of their own style. For example, a headteacher who perceived her style as consultative was likely to report a management structures which reflected this. The experience of data collection in the interviews led to the simplification of this section in the questionnaire.

In some cases interview questions were too vague to stand on their own in a questionnaire. When used in the interview the respondents often needed clarification or additional questions in order for equivalent information to be elicited. An example of such a question is "Have you ever made a "speculative" application for a post?" This question was omitted from the questionnaire.

Other questions were omitted because they did not elicit information that appeared to be particularly relevant to the research questions. In some cases these may have been too "broad" eg "Do you foster a spirit of competition in the school? If so how?". In other cases they did not appear relevant to the interview respondents, eg. "Do you have an active part to play in your partner's career? (eg entertaining).

Overall the questionnaire was constructed in a way that was intended to be as clear as possible and to eliminate questions that might be seen as duplications or irrelevancies. To this end the questionnaire was finally piloted with a small group of headteachers and ex-headteachers in order to try to eliminate any ambiguity or other distortions. One practical result of the piloting was to modify several of the questions which specified "husband" and replace the term by "partner".

Questionnaire design

The advice of Cohen and Manion (1994) is that:
"The appearance of the questionnaire is vitally important. It must look easy and attractive." (p. 96)

Efforts were made to ensure that the questionnaire was clear and attractive, and made extensive use of boxes where tick responses could be placed (see appendix 2).

Robson (1993) considers that it is advisable to cut down on the number of open-ended questions, unless willing to give considerable time to analysis. The majority of questions were closed, or had been pre-coded, but twelve out of thirty-three questions did invite an open ended response. This relatively large proportion was due to the nature of the research subject, where the capturing of individual feelings and perceptions was intrinsic to some of the areas included. Indications of examples of sexist attitudes, and of the key values that the headteacher was trying to promote in the school, were two examples of such areas.

Cohen and Manion (1994) consider that:

"Completing a questionnaire can be seen as a learning process in which respondents become more at home with the task as they proceed." (p. 243)

They go on to suggest that the first questions are relatively simple, to draw the respondent in. The more factual and simple questions were at the start of this questionnaire. They advise that the more complex questions are in the middle of the questionnaire, and that the: “last few questions should be of high interest” (p. 243) to encourage completion. The last questions included some that might have been thought-provoking eg “as a headteacher have you ever found it an advantage to be a women?” and some that, whilst stimulating, required only a tick, eg the list of qualities that might apply to them.

Mailing

The mailing took place in the first week in June, 1996. It was hoped that this timing would mean that the questionnaire would not get over-looked in an end of term rush.
The name of the headteacher, and the address of the school had already been entered into a database, so that it was possible to print off labels for each headteacher, and to personalize the letters.

Covering letter

The covering letter is included in appendix 2. It was deliberately kept to one page, and, in order to establish my credibility as a researcher, mentioned the published work that had already preceded this questionnaire. Before responding, several of the headteachers asked for copies of this published work.

Cohen and Manion (1994) list the purpose of the covering letter as:

- to convey the importance of the survey;
- to reassure respondents about confidentiality;
- to encourage their replies.

These were the intentions of the letter that went with the questionnaire. The letter gave a specific date for the return of the questionnaire, and offered the respondents a digest of the findings once the initial data had been processed. Summaries of the data were sent to those that requested the information when the survey had been analyzed.

Response rate

The questionnaire was sent to 676 female headteachers of secondary schools. 470 returned completed questionnaires, a response rate of 70%, and a further 28 were returned without being completed. In most of these cases, the headteacher had moved or retired since the compilation of the Education Authorities Directory and Annual 1995, from which the information on headteachers and their schools had been taken. In one case, a headteacher declined to participate since she had been one of the subjects of Valerie Hall’s study (Hall, 1996).
Headteachers of secondary schools are busy people, and I had anticipated that the response rate might be modest. In order to overcome this as much as possible, the questionnaire was designed so that it could be completed quickly, and did not necessitate looking up any information, for example, the responses to questions did not require the recall of particular dates. I anticipated that some headteachers might deal with such a questionnaire as they opened it, rather than putting it on one side to deal with later. In fact a large number of questionnaires were returned within the first week, which would seem to indicate that this was the case. The date stipulated for the return of questionnaires was 1 July 1996.

Hoinville and Jowell, (1978) comment that respondents, particularly those that respond early, tend to be favourably disposed to the aims of the survey and involved in its subject matter. This is likely to be true for the headteachers. The number of responses, and the detail with which many had completed their answers indicated a real interest in the subject of the questionnaire, and several returned questionnaires were accompanied by additional information, letters of encouragement and thanks, and requests for further information when available.

Follow-up of non-respondents

In view of the healthy response rate, the cost of mounting a follow-up and the proximity of the end of term for the respondents, it was decided not to undertake a follow-up exercise. A typical pattern of response according to the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, and quoted by Cohen and Manion (1994) is that the original dispatch will elicit a 40% response, a first follow-up 20%, and second 10% and a third 5%. Given the initial 70% response to this survey, the results of follow-up letters were unlikely to be comparable. In addition, it is possible to speculate that there would be some real resistance to response, amongst some of the population. One headteacher was moved to forbid me to contact her again, and expressed her resentment at the personal nature of the questions asked.
Recording the data

A database was established using Filemaker Pro 3, before the mailing of questionnaires. Data from the questionnaires were fed in to this database over the summer of 1996.

A small number of minor design faults in the questionnaire emerged with the recording of the data. Respondents had been asked for their formal qualifications. The number and variety of these meant that a decision was taken to record the highest formal qualification, rather than recording all of them.

The category "boys only" had not been included in the types of schools. In fact three respondents were heads of boys only schools.

The question about length of career break, should have specified which unit of time to indicate, since respondents were often vague in their responses.

Analysis of the data

The initial analysis of the data was done through SPSS to obtain frequencies and counts where appropriate. The number of responses tended to be less than 100% for any one item, and percentages of valid responses on counts were obtained. In addition, an initial complete print-out of all open-ended comments allowed some further initial analysis, and the isolation of a number of key words. Where appropriate, the data were then interrogated in order to establish the frequency of the key words in some of the open-ended comments. Further analysis of the frequencies were undertaken on the basis of four factors:

1. age - responses were divided on the basis of respondents in age groups up to 49 and in age groups over 50;
2. type of school, responses were divided on the basis of respondents from girls only schools and co-ed and boys’ schools;

3. marital status;

4. those who have children and those who do not.

This interrogation of the data allowed comparisons and relationships to be established between sub-groups of the population. In addition chi-square tests were carried out where there was a possibility of statistical significance.

The responses to the open ended questions were analysed by the establishment of themes in the same way as that described in relation to the interviews. This was a time-consuming process, but was considered preferable to the use of a qualitative data analysis programme like Nu*dist, partly because of the time that would have been taken in learning the programme and partly because of the wish to engage directly with the data.

Reliability and Validity

The question of reliability relates to the fitness for purpose of the research instrument, and the possibility of replicating findings:

“if exactly the same measurement procedures are repeated, then a perfectly reliable measure will produce exactly the same answer.” (Marsh, 1988, p. 26)

Whereas the concept of validity relates to the data:

“Validity is concerned with whether the findings are ‘really’ about what they appear to be about. Are any relationships established in the findings ‘true’, or due to the effect of something else?” (Robson, 1993, p. 66)
Generalizability refers to the ability to generalize from the findings of one research exercise to other, or wider circumstances.

These related concepts are potentially problematic in relation to qualitative research such as the interviews undertaken in the pilot phase of the research. However, qualitative researchers actually see the ability of the trained and informed researcher as a strength in terms of ensuring reliability and validity:

"in in-depth interviewing we recognize and affirm the role of the instrument, the human interviewer." (Seidman, 1991, p. 16)

Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 38) point out that since the interviewer is at least partially the research instrument, their familiarity with the research subject, their conceptual interest and good investigative skills are likely to improve reliability and validity. It is hoped that these qualities were brought to the interviews in the pilot research phase. In addition, Robson (1993, p. 73) makes a case for: "the kind of rich or 'thick'" data that in-depth interviews and case studies can provide.

Triangulation of findings between the data from the questionnaire and the interview, and the high response rate for the questionnaire indicate both reliability and validity. However, the likelihood is that those who did respond to the questionnaire tended to be in sympathy with the subject matter and this might have led to a degree of subject bias.

The fact that the questionnaire was sent to the whole population of female secondary head teachers, and that there was a high response rate strengthens the case for generalizability from the findings. Robson (1993) states that generalizability may be shown either by carrying out a further study, or by "making a case". (p. 72):

"Making a case is more concerned with persuading that it is reasonable for the results to generalize, with arguments that the group studied, ... is representative" (p. 72)
Conclusion

The combination of in-depth interviews and a large-scale survey provides a wealth of data. The size of the population surveyed by postal questionnaire, and the good response rate, allows some generalization about characteristics of the female secondary headteachers of England and Wales and provides a contextual framework in which to set qualitative data. At the same time the depth of the interview data provides richness and detail to supplement and triangulate the quantitative elements of the survey and this is augmented by the qualitative data from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire.

The five interviews are now reported in Chapter 4 and the findings of the survey follow in Chapter 5.
Chapter 4 Interviews with Five Headteachers

Introduction: the interview schedule

The first part of the interview schedule for the five female headteachers was based on an earlier analysis of theories of inequality (Coleman 1994) which in turn drew on the work of Schmuck (1986) and Shakeshaft (1987). Questions were organised under the following headings:

- overt and covert discrimination;
- constraints experienced within the work situation;
- constraints experienced through socially defined roles outside the work situation;
- early career influences.

The second part of the interview was concerned with the style of leadership and management espoused by the headteachers, and the extent to which they could be identified with qualities termed “masculine” or “feminine”. Questions concerned:

- the identification of characteristics that could be classified as masculine or feminine;
- style of leadership;
- style of management;
- the experience of being a female headteacher.
Throughout the interviews the focus was simply on the headteachers' perceptions and no account was taken of the ways in which their career progress or their style of leadership and management were perceived by others. The headteachers were given the pseudonyms of: Andrea, Barbara, Claire, Dorothy and Elizabeth (see chapter 3, p. 204). These pilot interviews are reported fully in Coleman (1996a and 1996b).

Theories of inequality

Overt and covert discrimination

Whilst overt discrimination regarding the appointment of women to senior positions has been made illegal, there is still some evidence of discriminatory attitudes. Elizabeth had evidence of discrimination when her application for a deputy headship was turned down in a letter stating that although her application was excellent, "in this case I have to interview men only". At one interview for headship recalled by Andrea, it appeared to her that a member of the interviewing panel had noisily and at length cleaned out his pipe and then moved on to clipping his fingernails in an attempt to sabotage the interview and ensure that a woman was not appointed.

When faced with overt barriers, such as this, the attitude of the heads tended to be pragmatic. It was generally felt that taking an aggressive stand against such attitudes could be counter-productive and that there are superior ways of dealing with discriminatory practices:

"if there isn't an obvious way, you just find a way around it to do what you want to do." (Barbara)

Claire, the oldest of those interviewed, when appointed as a deputy, had been given hostile treatment and an archaic job description which stated that she could not speak at meetings or interfere with the curriculum, but that she could look after such things as the flowers, and arranging social matters for the school. Her response was:
"I decided if I couldn't speak at meetings I ought to be looking at notice boards and things like that and communications. ...I managed the curriculum by getting other people to go and say bits."

However, the heads had often found it necessary to respond in situations where they felt that they were being patronised or demeaned by male colleagues, through the use of spoken or body language:

"when I took over here it was obvious that one man in particular found it very difficult to have a female head. I actually had to tackle him at the senior management meeting because he was looking to heaven, doing all sorts of things, because he had been used to having a more manipulative role elsewhere." (Andrea)

**Constraints experienced within the work situation**

The barriers to women's career progress are most apparent within the work situation. Constraints of this type may relate to the career path adopted, the qualifications held or to stereotyping of work roles. Women in educational management may be poor at envisioning career progress, hampered by career breaks for childcare or may lack confidence, indicating the importance of mentoring and career support. An obvious hurdle in career progress is the process of selection for headship and other senior management posts.

**Career paths**

Claire had moved directly from being a classroom teacher to deputy headship. The four younger headteachers all had experience of middle management, which might have included head of department or head of year, followed by experience of deputy headship and had pursued what might be seen as a traditional route for career progress.
However, one of the younger headteachers interviewed had started as an infants teacher and another, outside education, as a secretary.

Qualifications

The specialism of two of the headteachers was humanities, a subject area, which along with English and science accounted for the majority of headships in the Weindling and Earley study (1987). The academic specialism of two other of the headteachers is home economics which is much more unusual in terms of a background for headship. The headteachers interviewed had become academically very well-qualified. Four of the five have master's degrees.

Role stereotyping

Women promoted within secondary schools have often taken, or been directed towards, a route that has involved specialising in pastoral work. (Weightman, 1989)

All heads interviewed had been aware of this distinction between the "female" role and the "male" role and had taken care to avoid this stereotyping and the implications for promotion. They all valued the experience they had as deputy heads. The main responsibilities for the four younger heads had given them experience relevant to promotion, including for three of them, the "high opportunity" area of curriculum.

- curriculum and premises, with rotation being practiced within the senior management team, allowing experience of all responsibilities;
- curriculum development and discipline;
- personnel including all staff and students and dealings with the community.
They had been clear-sighted about the nature of the jobs that they wanted to do and those that were unacceptable. One of the headteachers commented unfavourably on an interview she had attended when seeking promotion to senior teacher:

"it became very clear indeed that what they wanted was a woman to be a typical senior mistress, and it was a matter of making sure the school looked nice, floral display and sort of 'sweeping up' children, and a pastoral system that wasn't to do with empowering youngsters and letting them grow but to do with carrying them and wiping their noses and that sort of thing. I made it very clear that that was not what I wanted and it became very clear that I was not what they wanted." (Andrea)

**Career Planning**

All of the five headteachers interviewed had developed career plans as their careers progressed, rather than aiming for headship from the start. Referring to the stage of middle management one of the headteachers commented:

"I saw my career progressing within the context of that school, so obviously I developed a career plan within that context, but even at that stage it didn't include thinking about going on further, deputy headships or headships." (Dorothy)

Although they may not have generated specific career plans or targets, there was a determination to "make progress" (Andrea), or an admission that "I am ambitious" (Elizabeth) or the realisation that:

"there are people in authority over you, doing the job and you think 'I can do at least as well as that'." (Andrea)
Career Breaks

Career breaks for childbirth and child care may be detrimental to the career development of women in education. Four of the headteachers interviewed had not taken a career break at all for purposes of childcare. Elizabeth had taken the basic maternity leave, Dorothy had a full-time nanny for her child who was still under school-age, and two had no children. Other career breaks had been taken in the form of secondments for management training or for Masters degrees.

Of the five heads, only Claire had two children, which meant that she took a longer break than the other heads with one child. In addition Claire had her children before the advent of maternity leave. However, she had returned to work at a time when a teacher shortage meant that as long as she was willing to work, having young children did not appear to debar her.

Confidence

The female heads interviewed appeared to have had a realistic view of their own capabilities, and had been confident in making applications. Andrea commented that it would not be necessary to have all the qualities listed in a job description:

"because I do think there are lots of experiences you have that give you transferable skills and if you are alert and aware and sensitive, I really do think you can do a lot of very good 'learning on the job'.”

Another commented that whilst it would be essential to have the stated minimum criteria, for instance graduate status:

"one of the reasons for moving is to do something that you have not done before," (Barbara)
Claire went further in saying that a job specification was not important:

"I'd look at the school and get a general view of what it is about. ... I would just make a judgment as to whether I would be able to manage in that school." (Claire)

Research reported by Shakeshaft (1989 and 1993) supports the perception that females tend to receive less constructive criticism than males in carrying out their work. As a result it is suggested that they are less able to deal with negative comment, in effect taking it too seriously and allowing their confidence to be unnecessarily damaged. Although this was not evident in their approach to job applications, the interviewees generally did not like the idea of being criticized in the work that they were doing. However, in their role as headteachers, they had found ways of handling criticism so that it would be to their benefit and that of the school: "I try to encourage people in the team to give me feedback" (Barbara). In one school the headteacher commented that the senior management team was sufficiently supportive to allow total honesty:

"We say the most dreadful things in here but we know that outside we will always stick together." (Andrea)

Alternatively they had learnt to cope with criticism through their philosophy of headship:

"I think as head your shoulders have to become broad or you won't survive and you have to take the knocks because you are so exposed" (Elizabeth)

Nevertheless the headteachers did show some sensitivities that accord with the findings reported by Shakeshaft (op cit):

"I think its always been important to me to prove how good I am at the job, because I suppose my identity is so strongly wrapped up in what I do, its always been very, very important." (Dorothy)
The importance of support

For all the women headteachers interviewed, support had been significant in their progress to headship. In particular there had been schools where the whole climate was one of encouragement and staff development. With regard to her first school, Barbara commented:

"you were just surrounded by these incredibly high calibre teachers, and you just couldn't help but learn, so they were all role models for me and if I hadn't gone to that school I don't think I would be where I am now."

After initially being in a school where she felt "held back" Elizabeth commented that:

"in the second part of my career I have had people helping me every step of the way, people who are willing to look at letters of application and to give mock interviews"

The encouragement of other deputy heads and of previous heads was also mentioned:

"she (the head) encouraged me to go for headship and probably more than any other person in my career, has been a mentor in that respect. She certainly was very instrumental in helping me think about headship and obviously in preparing me for it." (Dorothy)

Once they had achieved their own positions as heads, all commented on the importance of support. In addition to partners and their own senior management teams, the LEA and other new heads, both male and female, were mentioned. As women headteachers working in the same county the headteachers named each other as a source of support and advice. One headteachers stated that her main source of support was:
"close head colleagues, although there aren't many of those and they do tend to be women I must admit" (Barbara)

Selection

It is in the area of selection for senior positions that the barriers to women's progress may be most apparent. Some of the heads' comments show their perception of governors as holding stereotypical views about female headteachers. Dorothy, commenting on her appointment, stated that:

"Some governors I think, are very much prejudiced. Having been given this post, they still feel that perhaps there is a man lurking somewhere who is doing the hard-nosed bit."

The women headteachers interviewed had generally been successful after a relatively small number of applications. For one it was the first application and the first interview, for another it was the second interview where she was successful. For the most part they had found the interview procedure fair and even helpful:

"I felt fairly treated and that made me feel good, or people said 'we don't think it will be long before you actually do find a headship'. I think perhaps there were four [interviews] that I went to and then I was appointed." (Barbara)

For the five headteachers interviewed in this research, there had been few if any women on the interview panels when they were appointed to headships, in one case:

"they started off the interview by saying we apologise for the fact that we're all men here but that's just a challenge for you, and I remember thinking 'yes, well if I go and get the job its going to be a challenge for you as well'." (Claire)
Constraints experienced through socially defined roles outside the work situation

The constraints considered in this section arise from the socially defined expectations that women will take responsibility for domestic matters including childcare. The responses of the headteachers seem to indicate that their perception and that of their partners does not stereotype them in this way, but that their lives were characterized by partnership and a dual career structure.

General domestic responsibilities

All of the five female headteachers interviewed are married to other professional educators. Indeed two of them are married to headteachers, two to inspectors (one of whom is retired and had previously been a headteacher) and the fifth to a teacher. Given the dedication of the five headteachers to their work, the similarity of the interests of wives and husbands is probably helpful.

"I am prepared to work incredibly hard. I have put in a 70 hour week for 15 years." (Barbara)

Shutting off from work is not easy and not always desired:

"I try to have Saturdays off; if I have a lot to do I can't. The best way to get rid of stress is to get rid of work." (Claire)

The headteachers interviewed each had domestic arrangements that emphasised partnership rather than "woman's place", the major domestic responsibility was not theirs.
Childcare

Of the four younger headteachers, two did not have children and stated that they shared the domestic tasks including shopping and cooking.

Two of the headteachers each had one child. In the family of Elizabeth, the husband had taken the main burden of domestic responsibilities and childcare: "I suppose it is role reversal in a way although I don't think he would perhaps see it like that". For Dorothy, her child was born after her career had been established.

All benefited from the fact that their partner understood the pressures that they were under. For Dorothy, who had only recently been appointed headteacher:

"certainly at the moment the balance in terms of housework and child care ... is heavier on my husband. I think that also at the moment, because I'm new in the job, he's doing everything he can to support me in that,"

Claire, the oldest of the heads, had had complete responsibility for her children when they were young and employed a variety of sometimes innovative child care arrangements, including taking her baby with her to school for a whole year. At one point:

"A neighbour took the children to school by car, another person I paid to come in at the end of the day to look after the children until I got back and as they got older I moved on to having older students around the house after school."

She took approximately one year off for the birth of each child. Of the headteachers interviewed, she was the only one who had both pursued her career and had two children and at a time when this was breaking fresh ground:

"I think that when I was trying to work in the early '60s, I was trying to do something which people didn't think ought to be done."
Four of the five headteachers had avoided extended career breaks for bearing and looking after children, since two had no children and two had taken maternity leave. The fifth had still minimised a more extended career break, taking two relatively brief periods to take care of her two children, and returning to work between the births.

Role conflict

The difficulties of combining a career with a family are well documented (Ruijs, 1993, Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Evetts, 1990). Role conflict had been experienced by those headteachers with children. Claire, whose children are now adult commented about her elder child:

"One of the fears I had in my mind of course was that she might be damaged by the terrible life I'd given her and until she was quite grown-up I used to wonder whether she would be damaged"

Dual career families

For dual career families it is common for the career of the husband to take precedence over the career of the wife. As with domestic arrangements, the careers of the headteachers interviewed were unusual in that there were examples of joint decisions about career moves and of "taking it in turns":

"When it came to the headship, when it became obvious to my husband that that was the thing that was going to make me happy he then said 'we'll move to any part of the country and we'll manage our careers that way if that's what you want to do'." (Claire)

Further evidence for the need to balance careers was evident for Elizabeth, whose husband had moved three times to follow her career progress.
Early career influences

All five of the headteachers interviewed share some similarities in their backgrounds. All came from families that could be described as working class, but where education was highly valued and where expectations of them were high. In several cases they and in some cases their siblings, were the first of their families to go to University.

"I'm one of a family of six and it's six graduates, three male and three female, and my parents were just absolutely determined that we would use our abilities as best we could." (Andrea)

For one, the expectations of the family were particularly strong for the women:

"most of the girls are professionals, teachers, one architect, one dentist, one social worker and so on and the boys in the family aren't ... I come from a family where women are traditionally professional people" (Barbara)

In some cases there were other influences, a successful French exchange that fostered an interest in modern languages and "had a marked effect on my teenage years" (Elizabeth). Attendance at a girls' school was also recognized as an influence:

"I was educated from the age of seven by a religious order ... a French teaching order but very committed to the development of girls and it was just encouragement and the highest expectations all the way" (Andrea)

The career progress of the five headteachers exhibited certain similar themes. Although their career plans had developed rather than being clear from the start, they showed determination, and were clear about their own abilities. In different ways, they had minimised the effect of childcare, and they stressed the importance of support, particularly from their partners. All came from families where education was highly valued and they were encouraged towards academic success. The range of
similarities in their experiences might be considered as a factor influencing their leadership and management styles.

**Styles of management and leadership**

In the first of a number of questions relating to their management style, the headteachers were asked to identify which of a range of adjectives they considered might apply to them.

**Identification of characteristics that could be defined as masculine or feminine**

**Gender Paradigms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The nurturing/feminine paradigm</th>
<th>The defensive/aggressive ‘masculine’ paradigm</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>caring,</td>
<td>highly regulated,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creative,</td>
<td>conformist,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intuitive,</td>
<td>normative,</td>
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<tr>
<td>aware of individual differences,</td>
<td>competitive,</td>
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<tr>
<td>non-competitive,</td>
<td>evaluative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tolerant,</td>
<td>disciplined,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subjective,</td>
<td>objective,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informal.</td>
<td>formal.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Gray, 1993, p. 111)

This list of adjectives derived by Gray was presented to the headteachers in the course of the interviews, but was not identified as being gender related. In the context of their management of the school, the headteachers were asked to state which of the characteristics they thought they possessed. They were not prompted, and the amount of detail and explanation varied. However, there was a consistency in the replies of the headteachers which effectively cut across the two paradigms. The picture that emerged was certainly one which included the first four characteristics of the
'feminine' list, but which also gave prominence to three of the adjectives on the "masculine" list. In choosing the characteristics that they felt applied to them, the headteachers showed a great deal of consistency with each other, building up a picture of a leader that differs from the feminine stereotype. The adjectives chosen describe a leader who is:

caring,
creative,
intuitive,
aware of individual differences,
evaluative,
disciplined,
objective.

All five headteachers identified themselves as being caring, creative, intuitive and aware of individual differences. Dorothy saw being caring as central to the role:

"caring, I think that's an essential part of headship, you have to feel that you care for them".

With regard to being intuitive and aware of others, Elizabeth stated that:

"I do have a feeling for situations and not just an awareness of individual differences but a flexibility to take account of things."

From the 'masculine' list, the headteachers saw themselves as evaluative, disciplined and objective. Gray considers the 'masculine' paradigm as "a defence against self-awareness," (Gray, 1993, p. 112). However, in the view of the headteachers the three 'masculine' adjectives were equated with fairness rather than coldness:

"Evaluative, if in the sense of making sure that we are evaluating what we're doing, testing it out on people for their attitude and their opinion - yes. Discipline, I suppose ... if what it means is giving people the opportunity to be
involved, not just having a free-for-all where somebody might be ignored. But certainly not with any kind of authoritarian stamp on it" (Andrea)

In the defensive/aggressive (masculine) paradigm, identified by Gray (1993), the term "objective" is used in a rather negative sense as being the denial of emotion. However, the headteachers saw objectivity as preferable to subjectivity, and indeed regarded objectivity as a state that they "tried" to attain. In the case of these headteachers, it was unlikely that objectivity was an attempt to cut off from emotion. Striving after objectivity was allied with a view that management:

"has to be enlightened and aware and compassionate. I don't mean soft, I mean that we're going to be making demands on people for all sorts of standards, for training and outcomes and everything, we've got to do our very best to ensure that we recognise what people are doing and that we enable them to do it as well as we possibly can." (Andrea)

Some qualities from both 'feminine' and 'masculine' paradigms were rejected by the heads; highly regulated, conformist and normative from the 'masculine' list, and subjective from the 'feminine' list.

The quality of tolerance was viewed somewhat ambivalently:

"I am tolerant in a lot of things but I don't suffer fools" (Elizabeth)

"tolerant only to a degree, I have to say. If somebody is being downright awkward, bloody-minded or not willing to see the light, I'm not prepared to put up with that." (Andrea)

"sometimes I'm intolerant, can't stand low standards and sloppiness and idleness and so I am a bit intolerant." (Claire)

The heads felt that they were informal, in the sense that they tended to be known by their first names and be open to discussion with staff often without the formality of
appointments. However, all of the headteachers saw that their role required some elements of formality:

"we clearly have a very important, a very professional job to do and I don't think that we would do it well if we didn't have some sort of formal organisation" (Elizabeth)

Leadership

Whilst leadership in schools is not confined to the person of the headteacher, it is widely acknowledged that the qualities that are brought to that particular role, play a decisive part in establishing the ethos and the effectiveness of the school.

The interviews with female headteachers showed that they had a clear vision of what they wanted for their schools:

"I am a person who has quite a clear vision of what I want this school to be like and a clear philosophy, and some of that is not for changing." (Barbara)

"part of my vision is that once all those challenges have been met for certain people then this school is quite simply going to be the best school in the County. In a very simple way that's my vision, not just in terms of examination results but in all sorts of ways" (Elizabeth)

"I want people, children and teachers, to feel that they have achieved as much as they possibly can. I actually believe that people have a moral obligation to use the talents that they've got". (Claire)

Whilst these statements could have been made by any headteacher, male or female, the headteachers showed a remarkable consistency in the values they outlined as under-pinning their vision of the school. Two main sets of values emerged, on the one hand honesty and integrity, on the other, equality of opportunity for all, staff and students alike. Barbara simply listed her values as being: "openness, equality of
opportunity, equality of access and non-hierarchical”, Claire stated: “honesty and respect and equality”. These values of honesty, integrity and equal opportunity can be seen in the style of management favoured by the heads, and in their vision for both staff and students:

"Integrity for the students, integrity for the staff and integrity for the management team. I feel very strongly that people who are machiavellian do nobody any good, and I think honesty and integrity is very very important and I think they are true values that the children in school understand." (Elizabeth)

"a sense of the equal worth of everybody and a sense of the importance of being genuinely committed to your spoken word. I do not want a school where rhetoric rules, I want it to be reality. So we would be promoting the values of equality for all, values of justice and compassion, all those things that are really quite soft virtues but take an awful lot of commitment from people to make sure that they actually happen in real life. Trying to develop every youngster as fully as possible." (Andrea)

“two of the values that I think have become much more prominent in the school ... are the valuing of all students equally and promoting different kinds of success from students” (Dorothy)

Style of management

Consultative management

All of the headteachers were quite clear about the sort of school they wanted, and were also clear about the way in which they wanted to involve their staff:

"this is a school where we do consult ... new policy is put up for discussion and consultation and ... the role of the senior management team is to try and make decisions based on consensus." (Barbara)
The same combination of a personally held vision combined with the need for consensus was expressed elsewhere:

"My ideal style is to take people with me, because they share the vision. I want them to believe, there is nothing better than when you see that dream in someone else, you know that you all believe the same thing. Now there will be different ways of achieving it and I really don't mind so long as we are achieving the same thing." (Claire)

All of the heads advocated a consultative style of management, although initially it might have been difficult to communicate their intentions:

"It has to be consultative. Very early in my headship here I announced to staff that I was going to create an open management style and I think they misinterpreted that everybody would be deciding things and I would just be sitting back and listening and letting it all happen. So we had to correct that one fairly early on." (Elizabeth)

In several cases the heads, whilst advocating a consultative style, specifically ruled out anything approaching pure democracy:

"it's consultative and participatory as much as possible. Having said that, it's not democratic in the sense of ... having staff room votes on issues, so its consultative through a framework of a consultation structure, but at the end of the day I think decisions are made by the management team, having consulted and that's it.

(Dorothy)

The headteachers were unanimous on the need to have openness, to have "no secrets", with the obvious exception of not revealing personal information about individual members of staff:
"I will be telling the staff later on today what the cuts are going to be for education for next year and they will be sharing with me as I discover things" (Claire)

"my view is that there is nothing in this school which is private, it should all be in the public arena" (Barbara)

The desire to create an open and consultative climate was linked both with the belief that it would increase efficiency and with the concern for people that was evident in the choice of adjectives from the gender paradigms:

"I honestly feel so much more comfortable when things are open because I think you can tackle problems better, you can have far better solutions to everything that is going on anyway and you're just using peoples' strengths all the time. I think it creates a much better working relationship with people."

(Andrea)

Accessibility

The intention to maintain a collaborative and open style of management extended to the ways in which they were accessible to both staff and pupils. All of them made themselves available, whenever possible, for staff to talk to, although accessibility was stressed most by those who were still in the first few years of headship. In the case of one of the newer heads discussing relationships with staff:

"I felt the need to constantly try and put myself in their place and feel how they would feel and sometimes restrain myself in terms of what I felt on a lot of points. I compromised more than I might have done in previous positions just because of wanting to be sensitive to other people." (Dorothy)

The headteachers felt that it was a priority to spend as much time as possible in the school; for some this involved teaching as much as they could as a means of keeping in touch with the pupils and the day-to-day business of the school.
Management structures

The headteachers recognised that management structures might need modification if they are to support the collaborative, open style of management that they pursued. For the newer headteachers, the hierarchy of the Senior Management Team had largely been dictated by arrangements put in place before they had come to their schools. For those who had been in post longer, and had been able to adapt, there were several examples of innovation to support a more collaborative management style. In Claire's school, the management structure had been "flattened" and the senior management team augmented to include those who would normally be regarded as middle management. In Barbara's school, the secondment of one person at a time from the senior staff into the SMT for half a year, made the team more open and gave an opportunity for staff development. For Andrea the meeting of a middle management group with the head has become a focus for development issues:

"we're going to have to relate to staff development, with senior management, with staff meetings and everything so that we've got a completely integrated approach to what we're doing. ... Our meetings are now really, really good and dynamic."

All the headteachers considered teams to be an important aspect of the management of the school:

"Most things we would try to do in teams. ... People tend to work in little groups because then you can share the responsibility of it" (Claire)

Team development was promoted by Elizabeth, who had initiated a major change concerning the deployment of staff in a split site school. Instead of staff moving to the pupils, the pupils now move between sites when necessary. This has meant that faculties can be grouped in teams in suites of rooms.
"That has had a marked effect; we have been able to put into place a rolling programme of refurbishment and redecoration so that rooms are now cared for, there are displays up, the staff are there to receive children, the children leave, the staff stay and that's been a major factor in the formulation of a team spirit."

**Staff development**

There was a very positive attitude to staff development, where issues were addressed equally for male and female staff, with no stress on affirmative action for female staff:

"I try to generate the climate that staff feel that they are getting somewhere. All staff can have advice about their careers, about CVs and having practice interviews. If they are struggling to ask, then I make an appointment and help prepare them. I give them tips, build up their confidence. ... I try to do the same for women and men. Women in this school realise they can get promotion. If you can do the job you get promoted." (Barbara)

However, the existence of role models for other women in the school was seen to be important in encouraging their progress.

"we have very strong role models now in school, as women in management roles, female technologists and female physicists and all the traditional gender issues are really covered so I don't make particular staff development arrangements for women." (Elizabeth)

**The experience of being a female headteacher**

The headteachers in this study were asked to consider why they had been successful in such a competitive field, and to comment on how they felt that being a woman had impacted on their career and its progress. Their responses mirrored the research dilemma in both identifying the similarities in the management styles of men and women, and, occasionally, identifying some areas where they felt that they, as women, tended to differ from men.
They largely linked their own success to qualities that might be linked with the traditional male leader; the qualities of determination, having good qualifications and a capacity for hard work:

"I'm determined and I'm also committed to my job and I like my job" (Andrea)

"one of the reasons I'm here now is that I've never let people walk over me." (Barbara)

"I think coming up through the academic route was important in particular, and I suppose that kind of profile is still quite important for headship." (Elizabeth)

"I think I've always worked tremendously hard and been prepared to put an enormous amount of time into my job" (Dorothy), and:

"I worked harder. I have no pretences about what I can do."(Claire)

Despite hard work and commitment, the headteachers were aware of subtle attitudes and behaviours that may cause more difficulties for women aspiring to management positions. One of the heads, reporting on a recent meeting she had attended, mentioned that:

"I spoke on a number of occasions, I think very much to the point and one man actually turned to the person he was with and said 'who is that?' And it was very much a matter of 'what right has she got to be speaking?'" (Andrea)

The heads reported that training courses tended to contain implicit assumptions about the maleness of managers, helping to establish a climate where it is difficult to overcome gender based expectations. In regard to one course where there were two women amongst forty men:
"Cartoons and pictures of managers that were used as teaching and learning aids were all of men and that kind of sexism which obviously influences your perceptions of the role has been ever present." (Dorothy)

To some extent they were able to identify ways in which being a woman had actually helped them, and been advantageous in their position as female leaders and managers. One way in which this occurred was in relations with other people, both staff and parents. In this respect the scarcity of female heads was seen as advantageous, as behavioral precedents may not have been established:

"Sometimes you can get away with things because you are a woman, because you are breaking new ground. ... I've worried about the amount of time I spend talking to staff, but it is one of the best ways of moving things on and giving them confidence. Because there is no stereotype for women [heads] you can be more relaxed, it is not so stressful." (Claire)

"I think there is an intuitive female sensitivity which people appreciate. They don't expect heads to be particularly sensitive people somehow and I think that [being sensitive] has been important." (Elizabeth)

In recognising the advantages of being a woman head, the disadvantages of being a male head were identified:

"They [men] are socialised into having to be hard-nosed ... I think it's considered more acceptable for women to be reflective, for women to talk about what might look more like the softer side of educational thought." (Andrea)

"They [parents] seem to have a perception that a headmaster would not have time to listen, but a headmistress has more time to sit and talk to them." (Claire)
The headteachers recognised that being caring was not the prerogative of the female, but that it might be a more acceptable trait in a female head than in a male:

"Men and women have the same qualities, but women are expected to be caring so they can be. Men can be just as caring. As a woman you can put your hand on someone's shoulder to reassure them, for a man that might be misinterpreted." (Claire)

Although the women interviewed recognised the need to be formal when the occasion demanded, they did not see themselves as formal people. Dorothy explained that:

"I'm not very good at maintaining a cool distance or being authoritative in a kind of instant and immediate way with people. I think I have to earn that sort of authority, whereas some people have a bearing about them that's almost instantly authoritative."

Male heads were seen as likely to be more concerned with the maintenance of authority and status than female heads:

"There are differences between men and women in the job. Women are more likely to own up when things are going wrong. ... One of the things I don't like is pomposity and status."

(Barbara)

Conclusion

The interviews set out both to explore the perceptions of these women senior managers of their career progress, and to establish their views on their own leadership and management styles.

All of the headteachers interviewed had avoided or overcome problems brought about by career breaks for children, and were generally free of the burden of sole responsibility for domestic affairs. In this, their success had been achieved by
following what might be deemed a male career pattern. The headteachers shared similarities in background, in that their families had held high aspirations in terms of education and career for their daughters.

The headteachers shared a clear vision, determination and capacity for hard work; qualities that might be exhibited by both female and male educational leaders. They identified both 'feminine' and 'masculine' qualities as defined by Gray (1993), and to this extent could be identified as androgynous leaders able to select from a wide range of qualities. However, the aspect of their style that they defined as specifically 'feminine' appeared to be their 'freedom' from the more formal images associated with male leaders, and their ability to communicate with staff, parents and pupils. The headteachers interviewed showed considerable similarities in the identification of characteristics that they felt applied to them, the values that underpinned their vision of the school and in their consultative style of management.

The similarities shown in the responses of the headteachers, both in their career experiences and in their views on leadership and management were notable, but the small number of respondents made generalisation beyond the group impossible. Research on a wider basis, taking into account the experience of women throughout the country was felt to be necessary in order to establish more clearly the interplay and range of factors that affect the career progress of women in education and the style of leadership and management adopted by female headteachers. Issues such as the importance of age, marriage, having a child or children or working in an all girls' school were addressed through a large scale survey. The report of the survey of all women headteachers in England and Wales follows in Chapter 5.
Chapter 5 Survey Findings

Introduction

The questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was sent to the whole population of female headteachers of secondary schools in England and Wales, 676 in all. 470 returned completed questionnaires. This represents a response rate of 70 per cent. The response was not only good in percentage terms, it was also excellent in terms of the degree of detail that was often provided. The general goodwill of the respondents is indicated by the fact that 88 per cent of the respondents stated that they were prepared to be interviewed. In all, there were thirty three questions in the survey. The first section includes questions designed to elicit general biographical data, including career details and domestic circumstances. The second section covers possible barriers to career promotion, and the importance of mentors and role models, and the final section relates to the role of the respondents as leaders and managers of secondary schools.

Where a respondent has omitted to answer a particular question, the analysis is expressed in terms of a percentage of valid responses.

The data were analysed in several different ways. First, in overall terms, and then to allow for the following variables:

1. the age of the respondent;
2. marriage or partnership;
3. having, or not having children;
4. the type of school, particularly the headship of girls only schools, and headship of all other schools, i.e. mixed or co-ed and boys only.

These variables represented certain hypotheses that underpin the research:
1. the experience and opinions of headteachers in general, and female headteachers in particular, might vary according to their age-group;

2. the experience of married headteachers might differ from that of headteachers living without a partner;

3. the responsibility of child-care might raise particular issues for female headteachers;

4. the experience of headteachers of all girl schools might vary from that of headteachers of mixed schools.

Data on the ethnicity of the headteachers were not requested, but three of them identified themselves as black or Asian in origin.

The age group of the headteachers

The headteachers were mainly in their forties and fifties with very few under 40 (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Age groups of headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 59</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and over</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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</table>

Since there were so few under 40 or over 60, for the purposes of much of the analysis, the headteachers are broadly grouped into:

- those under 50 54.4% and
- those over 50 45.6%.
Those who were headteachers of girls' schools were slightly more evenly divided between the over 50s (49.6 per cent) and the under 50s (50.4 per cent).

The marital status of the headteachers

Table 5.2: Marital status of headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Married</th>
<th>67.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seven of the respondents indicated that they were widowed, and their responses are included amongst those categorised as single. Also amongst the single, are eight headteachers of church schools who are members of religious orders. There were 20 nuns in all, in the total population surveyed.

Of the under 50s, who responded to the question about marital status, a slightly greater proportion were married than amongst the older cohort; the difference appears to be accounted for more by a higher level of divorce than by spinsterhood. In Table 5.3, those under and over 50 are treated as separate populations.

Table 5.3: Marital status of those under and over 50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>under 50</th>
<th>over 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of those heading all girl schools, a slightly lower proportion were married. This may reflect the fact that several of the girls’ schools are headed by members of a religious order (see Table 5.4):

Table 5.4: Marital status of headteachers of girls’, co-ed and boys’ schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Headteachers of girls’ schools</th>
<th>Headteachers of co-ed and boys’ schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only three respondents indicated that they were the heads of boys’ schools, and they are included with the headteachers of co-ed schools.

Children

Just over half of the responding headteachers had children; 227 had no children, and 243, (51.7 per cent) of all respondents had a child or children (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Proportion of headteachers having children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No children</th>
<th>48.3%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One child</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two children</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three children</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four children</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five children</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A number of the headteachers who had children were single parents. Amongst the population of headteachers that had children, 17.6 per cent were either divorced, separated or widowed.

There was some variation in the proportion of the under and over 50s having children (see Table 5.6). Of those over 50, 61.6 per cent had a child or children, and this was true for only 44.4 per cent of those under 50. A chi-square test showed this difference to be significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. In addition, a slightly higher proportion of the over 50s had two or three children than those under 50. In both age groups only the very exceptional had four or five children, two under 50 and one over 50 each had four, whilst one in each of the two age groups had five.

Table 5.6: Headteachers under and over 50 having children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under 50</th>
<th>Over 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one child</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two children</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three children</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four or five children</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has already been noted that the heads of all girl schools are slightly more likely to be single than the heads of co-ed and boys' schools. It is therefore not surprising that they were also slightly less likely to have children than the population as a whole, with 48.5 per cent having at least one child against 51.7 per cent of all respondents.

Types of schools

Whether the headteacher was in charge of an all girls, a mixed and, in a few cases, a boys only school, is an important variable in the analysis of the data, since it is possible that the heads of the different categories of school may face slightly different career circumstances.
Table 5.7: Proportion of headteachers in co-ed and single sex schools

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls only</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys only</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A slightly greater proportion of the over 50s (37.1 per cent) than the under 50s (29.3 per cent) were heads of all girls schools. In all, only three of the respondents were heads of all boys schools.

In addition, the headteachers were asked for other indications of the nature of their schools, for example whether the school was grant-maintained, whether it was voluntary aided or voluntary controlled and the age group of the pupils. 75 or 16 per cent of those responding, indicated that they were heads of GM schools, only 27 or 5.7 per cent stated that they were heads of voluntary aided schools and eight or 1.7 per cent stated that they were heads of voluntary controlled schools.

Qualifications and Career Path

Qualifications

The headteachers indicated a variety of qualifications, but the highest qualification recorded by the headteacher is shown below (see Table 5.8). For example, the majority of those holding masters degrees also held bachelors degrees, but only the masters degree, as the higher qualification, is indicated in Table 5.8.

A large proportion of the total, particularly the under 50s, hold a masters degree, possibly indicating the increasing appropriateness of obtaining higher qualifications in more recent years. This difference is significant at a 95 per cent level of confidence. Having children does not appear to reduce the likelihood of holding a masters degree, since 44.2 per cent of those with children have Masters degrees against an average of 42 per cent. The qualifications of the heads of all girl schools were very similar to
those for the population as a whole, with 43.2 per cent holding a BA/B.Sc. and 44.7 per cent holding a masters degree.

Table 5.8: Highest qualifications of headteacher population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>under 50</th>
<th>over 50</th>
<th>Girls School</th>
<th>Co-ed and Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert Ed</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEd</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA/B.Sc.</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appointment as head

The majority of the headteachers are in their first headship, this is true for 84.2 per cent of them. Of the 15.8 per cent who had experience of headship in more than one school, the majority had held one previous headship, with just ten individuals having been head of two previous schools and one headteacher who had been head of three schools previous to her present headship. In the case of all girl schools, 86.6 per cent were in their first headship.

It is not surprising that a larger proportion of the older headteachers had been head of more than one school. For those over 50, 21 per cent had previously been a head, whilst this was true for only 11.2 per cent of those under 50.

The year of appointment to the present post varied between those that had been appointed in the year of the research, (1996) to one who was appointed in 1968, with the mean date of appointment being July 1989, indicating an average of seven years experience of the present headship at the time of the research.
Deputy headship

The vast majority of the headteachers (97 per cent) had previously held the post of a deputy headteacher; those who had not were almost all in the over 50 category. In most cases only one deputy headship had been held, with the mean duration of the post being five years, but 13.9 per cent of the respondents had held two posts as deputies, and in these cases the mean length of the second post as deputy was nearer four years.

The headteachers were asked to state main area(s) of responsibility as a deputy head. Some wrote in three or four areas or indicated that they had had “various” responsibilities during the course of their deputy headship or bracketed responsibilities together. However, the most common single area of responsibility indicated was for the curriculum followed by pastoral or discipline responsibility (see Table 5.9). Other areas that were indicated included finance, TVEI, staff development, the school development plan, time-tableing and responsibility for a particular part of the school, e.g. lower school. In some cases it proved impossible to differentiate. One respondent indicated that she had responsibility for: “everything! just one of me!”

Table 5.9: Indication of main responsibility as deputy head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral/discipline</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premises</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous experience

The heads were asked to state which posts they had held other than that of deputy head. The large proportion that indicated that they had held the post of head of department combined with the overwhelming proportion that had been deputy head,
appears to indicate that for most of the headteachers, there had been a rather regular career progression including the first stepping stone of departmental head, a more senior post, and finally deputy headship leading to headship (see Table 5.10).

Table 5.10: Posts previously held

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Department</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post of Pastoral responsibility</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. head of house)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher or equivalent</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Faculty</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The large percentage of "other" posts includes a range of more diverse experience, including seventeen headteachers who had been advisory teachers or advisers for the LEA, and fourteen who mentioned responsibility for the sixth form. Other areas mentioned included TVEI responsibility, head of careers, examinations officer, library, school counsellor, staff development co-ordinator, special needs, industry links and in two cases, lecturing in higher education.

There are links between areas of subject expertise and issues of career progression. For example, it is possible that being head of department in certain subject areas may be regarded as good training for more senior posts (MacMullan, 1992). The most popular specialist areas amongst the headteachers were English and humanities (including religious education). Under the heading "creative" are included subjects related specifically to the arts including drama. Amongst those listed as "other" are those who named two specialities or considered themselves "generalists". In addition there were some headteachers whose specialist subject was not included in the groupings indicated below in Table 5.11. These included specialists in classics, physical education, information technology, social sciences and in business studies. There was no significant difference in the range of subject specialities of the heads of all girl schools and the rest.
Table 5.11: Specialist subject of headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Languages</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Creation of career plan

The relative rarity of a woman becoming a secondary headteacher may be linked to a particular determination and ability to plan on the part of those who achieve headteacher status. Having a clear focus on a career, high aspirations and a positive attitude towards achievement may be facets of the career progress of these successful women. However, for a substantial minority, clear career planning was not evident, with over 20 per cent claiming that they had “never” formulated a career plan (see Table 5.12).

Table 5.12: Stage of formulation of a career plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At school</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In higher education</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On becoming a teacher</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On gaining a post of responsibility</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the women headteachers had only formulated a career plan that included headship or deputy headship at a point when they were already becoming established in their career. Many of the respondents emphasised the need "to plan one step at a time."

"I only decided to be a deputy headteacher as Head of Faculty"

"As my work developed, I assessed each stage."

Some headteachers claimed to have "never" formulated a plan at all. This tendency was slightly stronger in the older headteachers, with 24.8 per cent of the over 50s saying that they had never formulated a career plan against 18.9 per cent of the under 50s. This response was also slightly more likely to come from heads of all girl schools, with 26.9 per cent claiming that they had never formulated a career plan. Perhaps it is possible that career progress in all girls' schools is slightly more "automatic" than in other schools, and may require less planning ahead. However, only 15.9 per cent of those headteachers with children stated that they had never formulated a career plan. Possibly the presence of children may encourage ambitious mothers to think ahead. Responses illustrate the sometimes piecemeal nature of career planning:

"I have applied for interesting jobs as they have arisen - no single path mapped out"

"I didn't [plan] - opportunities presented themselves"

or even:

"What plan?"

Other influences included confidence building through the advice from others to progress in their career, or the realisation that:

"he was so useless, I decided anyone can be a head."
The headteachers were asked “what or who has had a major influence on your career path?” They were invited to indicate all those that applied to them. The most important single influence on the career path of the headteachers appeared to be that of their husbands/partners, although the comments that were made indicate that the influence might sometimes be unintended:

"A personal crisis meant I was in it for the duration and that decided me to go forward."

The headteachers were asked to indicate one or more important career influences (see Table 5.13).

Table 5.13: Career path influences on headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband/partner</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A headteacher or deputy</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their domestic circumstances</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own teachers</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large proportion indicated “other” influences, and this is particularly true of the headteachers of all girl schools, and those headteachers with children. Amongst “other” influences mentioned were a range of people who have acted as mentors, other family members, including aunts, sisters and children, the religious community and the importance of "self":

"My own ambition", 
Perhaps there is a growing recognition of difficulties with increasing age, or alternatively life today may be a little simpler for the younger headteachers than it was for their older sisters. However, the over 50s recognised a greater influence of domestic circumstances on their career path than the under 50s. 25 per cent of all the over 50s rate this as a major influence, whereas only 17 per cent of the under 50s do so. This represents a difference significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. In contrast, all the other categories of influence are mentioned equally by both groups, or proportionately more often by the under 50s. However, the influence of domestic circumstances was rated most highly by those who had children. For this group, 27.5 per cent rated domestic circumstances as an influence on their career path, compared to 20.9 per cent of the population as a whole.

Certainly the influence of partners and domestic circumstances were mentioned by many of the heads. Some of the major domestic circumstances itemised include divorce and widowhood, but more everyday matters had also impacted on professional life:

"I returned to full time in 1976 and was happy at this stage to aim at head of year. Like Topsy "responsibilities" grew. In that school deputy headship came up. I didn't apply, but it made me realise it was something I could do and wanted! Plus mother had moved in to run the house!"

**Family and Domestic Responsibilities**

**Childcare**

In view of the age profile of the respondents, it is perhaps not surprising that the majority of their children were moving into adulthood. Only ten of the headteachers
had children under five years old, and an additional 34 had children between age five and eleven (see Table 5.14).

Table 5.14: Percentage of all the children in age groups by number of children in family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>age group</th>
<th>one</th>
<th>two</th>
<th>three</th>
<th>four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age 5 - 11</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age 12.19</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 plus</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless 51.7 per cent of the headteachers, those with children, have had the experience of taking all or partial responsibility for one or more children at a time when they were likely to have been teaching or progressing up the career ladder beyond classroom teaching. It is therefore likely that they had to make arrangements or still do make arrangements, for the care of their children, either during the day or before and after school.

The headteachers were asked what had been the main method of childcare when their children were young (see Table 5.15). Of the headteachers who had children, the largest group had used child-minders. Some had used more than one method of childcare.

Table 5.15: Method of childcare adopted by headteachers

| Child-minder | 49.7% |
| nursery     | 27.1% |
| relative    | 23.0% |
| nanny       | 20.5% |
The use of a nanny was more common amongst the under 50s and the use of a nursery or relative more common amongst the over 50s. One of the older group commented that:

"In the late 1960's there was a shortage of teachers and it was easy to find places at a reduced rate for children of teachers."

Of those that made use of a relative, the most common was a grandparent, usually a grandmother. Only nine of the headteachers stated that it was their husband who looked after the child or children.

Over 95 per cent of the respondents stated that their childcare arrangements were satisfactory, with the under 50s being slightly more positive than the over 50s. Presumably where there had been problems with childcare, the headteacher concerned had taken steps to render the situation satisfactory. However, there were very few positive statements about childcare. One example of the more positive view being that:

"My children all derived benefit from pre-school education."

There were many more comments indicating the difficulties involved. For example, some of the older headteachers had continued to work, despite the lack of maternity leave, at the time they had their children. The most common theme related to the guilt that the headteachers had felt:

"it was never easy - guilt/overburden of role conflict and responsibility."

"I suffered - not the children."

"I was a pioneer working mother - got lots of disapproval, but wrote guilt out of my script."
Many mentioned the financial cost and the need for relatively expensive arrangements:

"you have to be prepared to spend the bulk of your earnings on good quality child care."

"but expensive - I worked to pay the costs associated with having a job."

About a quarter of those who commented, mentioned delaying their career until the children were at least in school:

"I stayed at home. I ran a play-group and they came too."

"I stayed at home for several years in part-time jobs - I nearly missed out on headship because of my advanced age!"

The majority concentrated on the difficulties of finding childcare pre-school, but there were also difficulties as children got older:

"More difficult in pre-teen years to find suitable "light supervision" for 10 - 14 year olds before and after school."

The difficulties concerning childcare may come to a head when children are ill. Those most often mentioned as looking after sick children were the headteacher herself or her husband/partner or a combination of both. The next most often mentioned categories were a grandparent, usually a grandmother, or child-minders. Friends and neighbours were mentioned less frequently. Only three respondents referred to the possibility of paying for an agency nurse. Several respondents commented on their good fortune in relation to the good health of their children:

"I have been lucky to have a very healthy child."
"The main thing was to decide that on the whole we would not be ill. I employed people as backup though."

The job held by the headteachers' husband/partner

A job for partner or husband was written in by 371 of the headteachers, indicating that this question was answered by many of those who were divorced, separated and widowed as well as those that remain married. Two of the respondents indicated the occupations of their first and second husbands. What is most apparent is that the majority, (60 per cent) of the husbands are in educational occupations. There are 76 teachers, 40 headteachers or deputy headteachers and 30 lecturers, and a variety of professors, advisers, inspectors and researchers amongst the husbands and partners. The next biggest single group (9.4 per cent) is comprised of the retired, whilst managers, directors and self-employed each comprise about five per cent of the total. Only three individuals are listed as "house husbands".

Relationship with husband/partner

The headteachers who were married or had a partner were asked to rate the extent to which they or their partner took responsibility for domestic responsibilities such as housework, shopping, cooking, washing and the organisation of holidays and social life (see Table 5.16). Even where there is considerable sharing of tasks, the responsibility for domestic arrangements is more likely to be that of the wife.

Table 5.16: Sharing domestic responsibilities with husband/partner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>under 50</th>
<th>over 50</th>
<th>children</th>
<th>no children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More responsibility taken by the respondent</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility shared 50/50</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More responsibility taken by husband/partner</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For those over 50, and those with children it was more common for the respondent to take the main responsibility. This was true of 46.9% of those over 50 and 40.2% of those under 50, and for 47.5% of those with children against 36.6% of those without children. The largest groups where more responsibility is taken by the husband or partner occur where the respondent is over 50 with no children, possibly reflecting the retired or semi retired status of her husband/partner. The group where responsibility is shared most equally is those without children, possibly indicating a couple who have taken a joint decision to be a two career family.

Career difficulties may occur for married women if their husband/partner changes jobs and location. The headteachers who were married or had a partner were asked about any occurrence in their lives of being obliged to move to follow their partner, if their partner had moved to follow them or, if they had needed to operate two separate households as a result of career commitments (see Table 5.17).

Table 5.17: Moving to follow partner, or operating two households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>under 50</th>
<th>over 50</th>
<th>children</th>
<th>no children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteachers changing jobs to follow husband/partner</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband/partner changing jobs to follow headteacher</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operated separate households</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is apparent that those over 50 have been more likely to follow their partner/husband than those under 50. In this latter group it is slightly more likely that the husband/partner will change jobs to follow his wife/partner and this may also be associated with couples who have no children, who are the group most likely to have run two separate households. Presumably for couples with children, there is a greater
incentive to try to maintain one household. This is borne out by the fact that those with children have been more likely to change their jobs to follow their husband/partner than those with no children.

Other domestic responsibilities

In addition to childcare and normal household responsibilities, the care of the elderly or other dependent relatives may lead to additional concerns and workload for the household. The headteachers were asked to indicate the nature of these responsibilities if they had them. Of the total population of headteachers, 31.5 per cent indicated that they had such additional concerns, and these were slightly more prevalent amongst the over 50s, whose parents might be more likely to need help. In this group, 36.9 per cent indicated positively against 27.2 per cent of the under 50s. For those with children, 29.0 per cent indicated that they had additional domestic responsibilities. A slightly higher incidence of additional responsibilities was also true for heads of all girls' schools, where 36.6 per cent responded positively.

The major type of responsibility was for an elderly parent or parents, with a few other relatives, such as sister or aunt, also being mentioned. The level of involvement indicated varied from visits and financial help to care of the housebound and dying, but most comments indicated a high degree of commitment and involvement:

“parents still alive in their late eighties living independently. When they are ill I do shopping and washing, also ferrying to hospital appointments and occasional gardening.”

“elderly mother in need of regular visits.”

However, a few commented that in their case: "it was not arduous", and one that:

"I live with my mother, mine is the financial bit. If I'm honest she looks after me."
Career breaks

Nearly half (46.4 per cent) of the headteachers had taken a career break of some type. Respondents were asked to indicate the career break in weeks and the mean length of each type of break is given in Table 5.18 below.

Table 5.18: Type of career break

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Career Break</th>
<th>% of All Heads</th>
<th>Mean Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternity Leave Only</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>28 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer Career Break (Children)</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>2.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Secondment</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondment for Qualifications</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Career Break</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>1.1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those headteachers that had children, 29.1 per cent reported that they had not taken a career break. This could have been due to having children before the start of what they deemed as their career:

"Gave up teaching in 1967. No such thing as maternity leave. Went back part time in 1972 and full time in 1976 when both children were at school."

Or it could be due to not counting maternity leave as a career break. In some cases maternity leave was very brief:

"As my children were planned and arrived in late June and August, I had minimal time off and was able to return in September both times."

One headteacher pointed out:

"I don't consider maternity leave a career break!"
For those with children the vast majority of career breaks were for maternity leave or longer breaks associated with childcare (see Table 5.19):

Table 5.19: Career breaks for headteachers with children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Break Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No break</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternity leave only</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer career break (children)</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial secondment</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondment for qualifications</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other career break</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The impact of the introduction of maternity leave may be indicated by the different pattern of career breaks for the under and over 50s indicated in Table 5.20. Chi square tests show statistically significant differences at a confidence level of 99.9 per cent between the proportions of those under and over 50 who have had a career break. Those under 50 are significantly more likely to have taken a maternity break and significantly less likely to have taken a longer break for children. The levels of confidence are 98 per cent for the difference in taking maternity leave and 99.9 per cent for the difference in taking a longer career break.

Table 5.20: Career breaks for those under and over 50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Break Type</th>
<th>Under 50</th>
<th>Over 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had a career break</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternity leave</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer break (children)</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For all those who had a career break, there was the consideration of returning to their career after an absence that might be considered a handicap by employers. However, of those that indicated having a career break, 74 per cent indicated that they were able to resume their career at the same level as before the break. This was true for 70.2 per cent of those in all girls' schools. The large proportion of those that did resume at the same level, may be due to the taking of statutory maternity leave or an agreed secondment at a time when the career is already relatively established, rather than making a clear break with the job. Indeed, resuming the career was slightly more problematic for the over 50s than the under 50s, with 21.3 per cent of the over 50s stating that they were not able to resume their career at the same level after the break. This was only true for 7.3 per cent of the under 50s, indicating that circumstances had changed somewhat for the younger cohort in terms of their ability to take maternity leave and resume their previous jobs with no obvious work-related barriers.

Job Applications and Promotion

Sexism in connection with job applications

The headteachers were asked if they had ever been aware of sexist attitudes in connection with job applications or promotions, and a majority of them, 62.5 per cent indicated that they had. The remainder (37.5 per cent) answered that they had not experienced sexist attitudes.

Amongst those who indicated that they had been aware of sexist attitudes, those under 50 were more likely to report sexism in applications, as were headteachers who were married, particularly those who were separated and those with children. Conversely, the heads of girls' schools and those who were single were less likely to report sexism in relation to applications. Women are often expected to be heads of all girl schools and are therefore presumably less likely to be subject to sexist comment at the time of application.

It is possible that the younger headteachers were more sensitized than their older peers to potential sexism in respect of their applications and therefore reported it more
frequently. Those headteachers who were married, particularly those who were separated and/or had children, were more likely to be subject to comment in regard to their domestic responsibilities. Single women were less likely to experience comments relating to their domestic responsibilities (see Table 5.21).

Table 5.21: Percentage of headteachers stating that they had experienced sexism in applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>over 50</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 50</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separated</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divorced</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of girls schools</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of other schools</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The headteachers who indicated that they had experienced sexism when applying for jobs, were asked to indicate the circumstances. There were altogether 325 comments; many headteachers gave several examples of experience of sexism relating to appointment. The many comments relate to overall experiences of applications for jobs, including heads of department and deputy heads’ jobs as well as applications for headship. Some of the retrospective comments cover a considerable period of time and there is implicit recognition of a change in culture during the last 30 years.

“In the 1960/70s I was told I was the best candidate, but they gave the job to a man because he was the breadwinner.”
One headteacher recalled that when she was applying for Head of Department posts in 1973, when discrimination on grounds of sex was still legal, a school secretary told her:

“There’s no point in my sending you the details, dear. I know the Headmaster wouldn’t even consider appointing a woman to this post.”

Several heads referred to being the first female head in their area, where there had previously appeared to be resistance to having women in headship:

“based as a deputy head in county X, I became aware that from 1973-79 there had been 18 new upper schools created with only one female head (and she’d previously been head of a girls’ grammar school that became an upper school). I became the first female head to be appointed to an upper school in 1988.”

The large number of comments on experience of sexism at the time of application, have been grouped in the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type of comment</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. comments on husband and/or children as likely to be problematic</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. comments on femininity, women not fit for headship</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. prejudice on the part of governors</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. knowing or being told that they are/were the token women</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. relating to boys’ discipline or boys’ sport</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “sexist” questions</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. stereotyped job 4.9%

8. no females amongst the “gatekeepers”
or the presence of an obstructive male 3.4%

9. seeking appointment in single sex school/
lack of success in mixed schools 2.8%

10. being too abrasive, including feminist 1.8%

11. the opposition of other women 1.5%

12. other comments 4.3%

1. Comments on husband and/or children as likely to be problematic

The largest single group of comments were related to the presumption that the
headteacher would have the major responsibility for childcare. Presumably these were
addressed particularly to those respondents who were married and to those who had
children. Comments reported related to questions about childcare, particularly leaving
young children, and what might happen if they were ill. However, there were also
many reports of being asked about the possibility of having children. One headteacher
commented:

“In my first successful interview, I was asked, as a young woman, whether I
intended to start a family. I recall that I felt this was not relevant.”

Several of the heads were asked questions along the line of:

“What does your husband think of this headship lark?”

Another head commented on her experience of interviews for secondary headships:
"Where it (sexism) became apparent - everything from subtle questioning re domestic arrangements to one interviewer indicating that my husband must find me intimidating!"

There were also several comments relating to the presumption that a husband's job would come first:

"I was asked on applying for my first headship if I would stay in post long as my husband worked further afield."

2. Comments on femininity, women not fit for headship

The comments grouped in this section were aimed at the candidates as women, rather than specifically as wives and/or mothers. Many of the reported comments on the femininity of the candidate, implying that she was not a suitable candidate for headship, were extremely personal:

"An all male panel interviewed me for my Deputy Headship. Apparently they spent a long time discussing whether they were appointing me on merit rather than my personal appearance/qualities."

"From staff and governors (some) who questioned whether a 'small' woman could run large comprehensive school!"

"Going for a deputy post - I was told I was only at the stage in my career because of my long legs and pretty face (I had just touched 40!)"

"A quote from the Chair of Governors upon accepting this post - 'LEA was not wholly in favour of appointing a 36 year old blonde to such a post, but we liked the look of you'!"

The need for a woman to be better than a man in order to succeed was quite overt in some interviews:
"in interview being told I would have to be better than the male applicants."

"it seemed women had to be outstanding in comparison to men to be appointed to a management post."

Other comments classified in this section related more to the perception that women were simply not as able as men to lead a school;

"As the only female in a senior management team of five there were occasions when it was implied that as a woman I was 'less than fit' for headship."

"On three occasions I was short-listed for headship and was told in PRIVATE, that 'I was the best candidate, but the mainly all male panel couldn't bring themselves to appoint a woman.'"

"feedback from headship interview by the director for secondary education (who was female) 'they wanted a man for the job'."

"I was appointed head of a boys' comprehensive - many doubted the wisdom of my appointment and told me so."

The effect of these attitudes is invidious. One head reported sexism:

"in myself. I used to look at the other interviewees (mainly males) and assume they would be more eligible than me."

There was also the absolute assumption on the part of some schools that the new headteacher would be a man:

"I am still receiving post addressed 'headmaster'."
"When I was interviewed for the present post there was a letter on the
headteacher's wall to all governors, inviting them to discuss the appointment
of the new headmaster."

3. Prejudice on the part of the governors

The particular influence of the governors or of the chair of governors was referred to
unprompted by 11.8 per cent of the headteachers. The important role of the governors
in the choice of headteacher is evident:

"governing body members suggested the job was too much for someone with
children (headship interview)"

"Governor attitudes reflect a sexist attitude. You have to be considered
'tough' for some to take you seriously."

Some governors are reported as being less than sensitive to social occasions! One
head reported:

"Some stupid comments from governors at the 'trial by sherry' part."

Another that:

"I was once asked by governors at interview how a little thing like you would
discipline a great big boy, would you say 'hey is it cold up there?'"

One head in responding to the question on experience of sexism at the point of
application reported:

"Being groped by an interviewer during lunch."
4. knowing or being told that they are/were the token women

It was quite commonly reported that the heads identified themselves or were quite explicitly identified as “token” women, or “statutory woman on the short-list”. Being the token woman can be allied with awareness of the prevailing “maleness” of the culture:

“I applied for headships in many Home Counties, south west, south east, east of England shires. Usually I was the only woman short-listed out of six. Often men wore Rotary or similar badges, - as did the panel! People obviously knew each other. I felt I was a ‘token’ woman, but that the outcome was often pre-determined.”

Even if there is more than one woman on the short-list, they may be made to feel unusual:

“There were two women in the final panel whose surnames began with B and C. The governors asked for the interviews to be not in alphabetical order, because the two women came together! I look back in shame that I just took this!”

5. relating to boys’ discipline or boys’ sport

Approximately ten per cent of the headteachers referred to the interviewers’ concerns about their ability to discipline boys or men:

I applied for the job I currently have when it was previously advertised three years earlier. One reason I was not appointed was because some of the panel felt a young woman would not ‘cope with’ teenage boys.”
In two cases the necessity of caning being part of the job was the reason given against appointment.

The business of maintaining discipline amongst males was also allied to difficulties that women would have with male sport:

"only men can maintain discipline. In one case, that women cannot project authority even in assembly, and in another that a woman couldn’t be trusted to maintain a good rugby team."

6. "sexist" questions

Many of the headteachers’ comments that have been classified in this section did simply refer to the experience of being asked sexist questions at interview:

"At interview - on several occasions - comments either overt or subconscious betraying prejudice."

"nature of interview questions at deputy head and head level."

Some of the comments of this general nature were quite tentative, and illustrate the subtlety of the situation:

"But perhaps a little when first applying for headship"

"difficult to decisively prove."

The women who were answering this question had been successful, and a few comments indicated this:

"mainly some [sexist] attitudes at interviews, but not a problem."
Some recognised the existence of sexism but felt that they had not actually experienced it themselves:

"not applied to me personally, but a general atmosphere that some jobs (including headship) are for men.”

"Not so much personally as observing other peoples’ experiences and standards for various jobs.”

7. Stereotyped job

When asked for examples of sexist circumstances, some of the heads made reference to the stereotyping of jobs for men and for women, for example the assumption that women will undertake pastoral work:

"Expectations that I would be pastoral care - look after the girls/flowers/coffee/tampax machines.”

"Interviewed for head of science, the Governors considered it odd that I should want such a male dominated subject.”

There were also examples of stereotypes of male behaviour to contend with as a lone female:

"Feeling very isolated at meetings especially of heads and LEA officers, - comments about “old boys network.”

8. No females amongst the “gatekeepers” or the presence of an obstructive male

There were a few comments about the difficulties of having an obstructive headteacher who did not approve of females being promoted. One headteacher’s experience of sexism was:
“When I was deputy head to a very chauvinist headteacher. At one interview they explicitly remarked they would not appoint a women.”

Women may be helped by others who are in senior positions:

“Advantage gained for me from having a woman in the senior management team.”

Alternatively they may be held back where there are no female role models:

“My first attempts to get a headship were in an LEA where there were no women heads at secondary schools.”

9. seeking appointment in single sex school, lack of success in mixed schools

Several comments related to applications being unsuccessful for mixed schools, and of being quickly successful when they applied to girls schools. One headteacher commented on the difficulty in getting headship interviews despite having very good references and CV and an MA in Education:

“then I applied for an all-girls school, which I had not done previously. This immediately brought me my first interview and I got the job. At my first Secondary Heads’ Meeting I realised that I was the only women secondary head in that Borough - there was, after all, only one girls’ school!”

Having experience in girls’ schools has also led to some experience of sexism:

“I’ve never got anywhere with applications for co-ed schools, but I have always been in girls schools, therefore ‘limited’ experience!”
10. being too abrasive, including feminist

A few of the respondents felt they had experienced sexist circumstances at interview when they were labelled as aggressive or feminist:

"The Governors were apprehensive of appointing 'an assertive women' - a report back by an advisor!"

"I was asked at interview for headship: 'as one of your references refers to you as Ms, does this mean that you are aggressive?'"

11. the opposition of other women

Although some of the respondents referred to the benefits of female role models, others commented on the opposition of other women to their appointment:

"women colleagues were appalled that I had applied for deputy head when I had a fairly young child."

One respondent commented on her experience of interview with a female headteacher for deputy headship:

"When applying for deputy headships one head said 'your qualifications and experience are what we need - but I need a man', - on reflection she probably did!!"

12. other comments

There were a few comments that related to very specific circumstances, but still indicate the experience of sexism. Two respondents indicated that they were not appointed to headship because they were divorcees. Two mentioned racism as well as sexism. One that, as a childless woman, she was considered to be unlikely to
understand children. Three mentioned that they were considered unsuitable because of the importance of handling money and that men were considered to be better at financial matters. Two of the respondents mentioned the difficulties of being in boys' schools. Several specifically mentioned some geographical areas eg the north of England, as being more unlikely to have female heads.

Composition of the interview panel

Prejudice on the part of governors, and the importance of “gatekeepers”, were identified as two of the major themes that were present in the comments of the headteachers relating to sexism in association with job applications. The relative rarity of females in positions of power in relation to the appointment of others may be a significant feature of barriers to career progress for women.

The headteachers were asked if they could recall the gender composition of the interview panel for selection as a headteacher. Although 15 per cent did not answer this question and there were some comments indicating hazy memory of the exact number on the interview panel, it was clear that the majority of panels contained more men than women. The mean number of men quoted was 7.03 and that for women was 2.92.

Encouragement for promotion

The headteachers responded overwhelmingly that they had received encouragement for promotion (see Table 5.22). 96.3 per cent indicated that they had been encouraged, and this was true of all age-groups, those with and without children and those heading all types of schools. The only category where encouragement had been less prevalent was those who were separated. Although they constitute a small proportion of the total, only 78.6 per cent of them reported encouragement as against 93.2 per cent of those who were divorced, and 97 per cent of the married and single.

Of the categories of people who had encouraged the headteachers towards promotion the most important had been a former headteacher. Senior managers in schools and
other colleagues had also been important, as had their husband and family. The number indicating that their husband had influenced them includes some who are categorised as separated, divorced and widowed (single).

Of the other categories mentioned, about half were LEA personnel, including inspectors and advisers, other categories mentioned included unspecified mentors, and "myself".

Table 5.22: Encouragement for promotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All %</th>
<th>married %</th>
<th>with children %</th>
<th>girls school %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband and family</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Managers</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other colleagues</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pattern of influence is fairly uniform, except for the understandably greater influence of husband and family over those who are married and have children. The influence of the headteacher is greater with those who have become heads of all girls' schools than with those who are heads of co-ed and boys' schools.

There were few differences in those perceived to have encouraged the headteachers under and over 50 (see Table 5.23). However, there appeared to be a greater influence of colleagues, rather than senior managers, and of "others" for the over 50s. The category of "others" included LEA advisers and inspectors. The difference between the over 50s and under 50s in relation to the encouragement of colleagues was statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level, and at the 98 per cent confidence level for the encouragement of others.
Table 5.23: Encouragement for promotion by age-group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>under 50</th>
<th>over 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband and family</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Managers</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other colleagues</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mentors and role models

The vast majority of headteachers had been encouraged to aim for promotion. They were asked if they had ever had a mentor or role model who had inspired them, and 250 or 54.6 per cent indicated that they had (see Table 5.24). Of the mentors mentioned, the most common was a previous headteacher or headteachers. In some cases it was specified that the headteacher in question had been male or female, and there were approximately equal mentions of each (23 male and 22 female).

Table 5.24: types of mentors named by headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteachers</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy heads</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspector/adviser</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend or colleague</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the category "other" were included a variety of individuals acting as mentors including heads of department and designated mentors including "an industrial/business partner". In addition eight individuals were named, most of whom were well known figures in education. These included Anne Jones, Anita Highams, and Margaret Maden who was mentioned by two of the heads. Margaret Mathieson as PGCE tutor was also mentioned. There was also mention of the impact of several courses, including an LEA women into management course and a course run by the Industrial Society.

The fact that 45.4 per cent of the headteachers stated that they had not had a mentor does not necessarily indicate that mentors are not valued. One headteacher wrote that:

“I’ve never had what I would call a role model - indeed I’ve often felt the lack of someone to learn from - I think I’ve had to make my own style and learn by my own mistakes. Neither have I been aware of anyone I could think of as a mentor, though since I became a Head I have tried to act in that role for a number of young women, and see that as part of my job.”

Confidence and career planning

There are obviously difficulties in the route to senior management for women. Some of these are circumstances that would be faced by men as well as women, but some may be specific to women or more common amongst them; it appears to be more difficult for women than for men to achieve headship. The headteachers were asked: "Was there a point in your career when you thought you would not achieve headship?" The majority (57.2 per cent) of those responding, indicated that there had been no such point for them, but the remainder (42.8 per cent) identified a time or span of time when they felt that they would not achieve headship (see Table 5.25). There were some differences in the experiences of those under and over 50, and those who were married and not married.
Table 5.25: Was there a point in your career when you thought you would not achieve headship?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>57.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 50</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>62.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 50</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separated</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divorced</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of girls schools</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of other schools</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The headteachers who were under 50, and single or with no children, were less likely than those over 50, those who did not describe themselves as single and those without children to have experienced doubt about their ability to achieve headship. Domestic difficulties and responsibilities might be expected to have played a part in any doubts experienced, as indicated in some of the comments following, particularly those grouped as gender-related factors.

The large minority of heads who had experienced a point when they thought that they would not achieve headship were asked to comment, and they mainly explained their doubts in terms of their lack of career planning, their lack of confidence, their experience of rejection and gender related factors, including their age and limited experience, which was related to their life experience as women.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type of comment</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lack of career planning</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Experience of rejection</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of confidence</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gender related factors</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Age and limited experience</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Other</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Lack of career planning

Since 21.7 per cent of the headteachers claimed “never” to have made a career plan, it is perhaps not surprising that so many stated that they never anticipated achieving headship until they were at the point of deputy headship:

“I did not consider headship until I was well within my deputy head role - I did not think being largely out of the classroom would suit me.”

“I didn’t think of applying for headship until I had been a deputy head.”

However, the majority of comments in this group showed even less decisiveness:

“I did not actually seek headship, I sought deputy headship and then achieved internal promotion due to unforeseen circumstances.”

“Always before I was appointed, I never considered it possible.”
In some cases the speed of promotion took the candidate by surprise. Several of this group had achieved headship at the first try:

"I attempted the first headship interview to gain experience and was appointed!"

"I really never had any intention of applying for one - this was my first and only application."

Amongst this group were some heads who stipulated that they had become positive once they had decided to go for headship:

"Once I began to apply, I was confident that I would succeed."

"yes and no - not once I had made the decision to try. I did have doubts about my abilities before that - particularly my lack of qualifications."

2. Experience of rejection

A large proportion of the comments referred to discouragement after failure at interview, or even failure to achieve interviews:

"20 or so applications for headship before interview obtained."

Obtaining positive feedback but still failing to achieve the job led to discouragement in some cases:

"As a result of five applications and three interviews as a runner-up."

"I had seven interviews and went into the final round each time and thought I might not make it to the headship."
“After about the sixth interview when I was being turned down by some awful schools - I couldn’t believe I’d get a decent one which I did.”

3. Lack of confidence

Many of the headteachers referred to their need for encouragement, their lack of confidence and their uncertainty.

“I was not confident of headship of a large mixed comprehensive as a first post - that was all I was interested in, and I succeeded on first application.”

“I didn’t know that I wanted it or was capable!”

“Although I am a confident person, I have always underestimated my abilities.”

Some of them were content to remain as a deputy:

“Because I was not single minded enough to go all out for it. I was happy as a deputy and questioned my ability.”

“While a deputy in a closing school, I had to move up faster than I would have wished. It took me a long time to make the psychological leap that I was a head-in-waiting.”

4. Gender related factors

Some of the headteachers related their lack of confidence to the fact that they were women, or compared themselves unfavourably to men:

“after four interviews some self doubt as all successes were male.”

Others were simply aware that men were more likely to be given headships:
"After six unsuccessful interviews at which all except one were given to a man."

In some cases female candidates were struggling against a male "agenda":

"when I failed to be appointed head having done a great job as acting head for eighteen months. The chairman of governors constantly used the phrase 'when the new headmaster comes'."

"After about the fourth headship interview, the sense that governing bodies seemed overwhelmingly conservative, opting for safe candidate (i.e., usually middle-aged, male, second headship)."

"Between deputy head and headteacher (1987 - 89) I perceived the glass ceiling."

In addition, some of the women were tied down geographically through their families:

"When my children entered KS4, I accepted that I could only apply within a limited area."

"At first I was restricted to a small geographical area (daughter in A level, husband in job). As soon as I was free to look more widely, (my husband agreed to follow me) it became easier."

Taking time out to look after children means that some women reach the stage of application for headship after the perceived optimum age.

5. Age and limited experience

Several of the headteachers commented on the feeling that time was running out:
"At 49, after several interviews for headships in mixed schools. Being of slight stature, there was often a question from male governors concerning ability to ‘deal with big lads’! Also the age thing - seven years out has been costly."

"I realised that if I didn’t gain a headship by 1986, I would be too old."

"I was 44 when I became a deputy, and I felt that this was too old to enable me to become a head."

There was also concern about lack of a range of experience:

"I had not moved enough, I was not ambitious."

"Having been in a single sex school for many years, I felt my experience was limited."

6. Other factors

Amongst these reasons for feeling that they might not “make it”, were included lack of qualifications such as a Masters degree, or the fear that they were inappropriately qualified:

"As a deputy, it didn’t occur to me to move further. I felt as a PE teacher, I couldn’t attain headship."

Three of the heads mentioned serious illnesses, and one that, since she lived alone she was “worried about being alone at the top.”
Managing as a female headteacher

Sexist attitudes from peers

The headteachers were asked if they had ever been aware of sexist attitudes from peers and those they worked with. 45.4 per cent of the headteachers reported that they had not been aware of sexist attitudes, despite the fact that one respondent said:

“I can’t imagine any of your respondents have said ‘no’ to this question.”

The 54.6 per cent stating that they had been aware of sexist attitudes is a slightly smaller proportion reporting sexism from peers than the proportion that indicated sexism at the point of application. The ratio of comments was about four to three. However, as in the earlier question relating to sexism, its recognition was stronger in those under 50, and amongst those who were married and had children, rather than those who were single and childless. Similarly, the heads of girls’ schools were less likely to report sexism from their peers than the heads of co-ed and boys’ schools (see Table 5.26). This difference is statistically significant at the 90 per cent confidence level. The difference between those who are married and those who are not is also statistically significant at the same level.
Table 5.26: Percentage of heads stating that they had experienced sexism from peers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>over 50</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 50</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separated</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divorced</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of girls schools</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of other schools</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were fewer sexist comments from peers relating to the domestic role of the respondents than there were from those concerned at the time of their appointment. In this section the heads are reporting on their experience once in post. However, once established as headteachers they were strongly aware of the fact that men found difficulty in dealing with female leaders. Being patronised and feeling isolated were two common features of the experience of headship.

The comments relating to the sexism of peers have been grouped under the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type of comment</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Male resentment of female leadership</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Isolation of head through male ethos</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Patronising attitude and “funny” remarks</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Stereotyping of females 11.9%
5. General sexism 10.3%
6. Aware of sexism but not a problem 5.2%
7. Bullying 3.2%
8. Women are favoured 2.8%
9. Women must prove themselves 2.5%
10. Other comments 7.9%

1. Male resentment of female leadership

Many comments express: "difficulties with the concept of woman as a boss". Some were more specific:

"I inherited a school with a good number of staff who didn’t want a female head. The secretary and caretaker threatened to resign, some male teachers made it clear they didn’t want a woman telling them what to do."

There were particular difficulties associated with age and in working with colleagues who had been passed over for promotion:

"Older men find it difficult to have a female boss."

"one male teacher said ‘he wasn’t going to listen to a chit of a girl’, - I was 42 years old!"
“[attitudes of] senior management team members (male) in some schools including a deputy head (male) who failed to be appointed to the headship of my present school.”

Occasionally the resentment is linked to disapproval of management style that is not seen as “traditional”:

“Some staff wanted as Head a ‘big man who shouted’ - I’m the opposite.”

2. Isolation of head through male ethos

The fact that the response to the survey was so good, both in terms of the response rate and the quality of the comments, and that the majority of the heads were willing to be interviewed would appear to support the hypothesis that many of them feel isolated and welcome the opportunity to give vent to their feeling. One respondent stated that she was: “very isolated as a female Head. I could write pages.”

The isolation that was reported was usually related to meetings of other headteachers, the LEA, or unions:

“A very ‘male’ attitude exists at headteachers level in the area, it is apparent at heads’ meetings. The LEA (which I greatly value) is very male dominated in many respects”

“An LEA officer (senior) tickled my neck once in County Hall! He didn’t do that to any of the others (all male heads). I intend to one day point this out to him but I’ll choose my moment.”

“Secondary Heads’ meetings in that authority were painful in the extreme at first, an old boys’ club of really unreconstructed men in waistcoats - I felt completely marginalized. But they too were capable of change .....”
3. Patronising attitude and “funny remarks”

Headteachers report being patronised by colleagues, by governors and by males subordinate to them:

“Sometimes patronised or flirted with (by governors)”

“Some males similar in age but junior in the hierarchy try to patronise.”

“Remarks at meetings - when is a jocular remark not a jocular remark?”

In some cases women as well as men were seen as patronising or vindictive

“Put down by men who did not wish me to open my mouth in staff meetings (only men could speak), obscene jokes about me by male members of staff when appointed head - much enjoyment by small group of females.”

“Patronising about family commitments. Women were worse than men.”

4. Stereotyping of females

Stereotyping reported included the expectation of the female head or deputy taking on the traditional female role:

“as a deputy head I experienced difficulty in being allowed to manage curriculum aspects. As head my deputies (all male) appeared to expect me to perform the ‘woman’s role’ and support their ‘lead’.”

This extended to the traditional domestic role:

“As a Deputy I had to make a conscious effort not to do what was expected, eg always make the coffee for the (otherwise all male) SMT meeting. It was
quite difficult ..... as they demonstrated such a high level of planned incompetence, but we got there in the end.”

There were examples of the automatic presumption that the female must be in the subservient position:

“I have worked as a head with male deputies - it is always assumed I am the secretary or at best a deputy by first-time callers who don’t know the school.”

There was also expectation that females would manage in a certain way:

“The assumption was that you will be a female stereotype - keep changing one’s mind, can’t handle difficult male pupils etc.”

Whilst the stereotype of the woman as a “soft” manager predominates, there is evidence of a different range of stereotypes associated with women:

“the suggestion that career women are cold, hard and single minded.”

“more a question of little bits of prejudice against single woman role. Rumours seemed to vary: I’m assumed to be either a promiscuous heterosexual or a latent homosexual.”

5. General sexism

Some of the headteachers just agreed that they had experienced sexism, they referred to diffuse sexism in the school: “difficult to be specific”, “frequently in the past, very occasionally now.”, “numerous in a range of subtle ways over 20+ years!”.

In other cases it was possible to identify the focus of the sexism in specific individuals, such as previous heads or present deputies:
"My particular problem at the moment is two sexist deputies and I see no opportunity of moving them on."

Several of these general references included a comment that things had improved over the years.

"Not amongst people I work with now, though some heads in previous years were guilty."

6. Aware of sexism but not a problem

Several of the heads, whilst recognising that sexism existed, were personally untroubled by it:

"But it's always done in a jokey way and I don't really feel threatened."

"minor, - caused me no problems."

"Not overtly towards me - but attitudes are present from some."

7. Bullying

Bullying is a strong term, but some headteachers were quite specific in using this word:

"Secondary Heads meetings are always 80 per cent men, and bullying is commonplace. I have been subjected to extremely insulting verbal abuse from a 'colleague' and no one said a word!"

In another case the term was not used, but the situation might certainly be termed one of bullying:
“Not recently. In the school where I was deputy all female staff were put on top of the lockers in the staff room. Had to cope. A sort of rite of passage. After that - fine.”

8. Women are favoured

In some cases sexism was identified where it was felt that women actually had too much power and influence. A few of the headteachers indicated that colleagues felt that the pendulum had swung too far in favour of women, and this applied even in cases where women constituted a half of a group.

“Comments that equal numbers of male/female interviewees was sexist, and that women are only interviewed to have the right “PC” balance.”

“Some feeling in my current school that the management structure is too heavily female, when it is actually 50/50.”

In addition, the view was expressed that it was easier for women than men to get certain jobs:

“Initially some staff thought I’d been appointed because I m a woman. It’s largely been overcome.”

9. Women must prove themselves

Several of the heads commented on the fact that they “had to work hard to gain respect”, and that this was more true because they were female:

“I believe that I have to be better than a male equivalent to gain the respect of my senior male colleagues.”
10. Other comments

The range of other comments included reference to particular prejudice against single women, and two comments that peers considered the headship of a girls school an "easy option". Three of the heads specifically mentioned difficulties in gaining respect from parents, and there was a reference to the difficulties that can occur through physical size:

"As I'm 5'1", men often talk over my head!"

and to the difficulties of race as well as gender:

"A greater willingness to question decisions and to doubt my abilities, but ... both sexism and racism apply here."

The need to "prove your worth"

The majority of the headteachers, 62.7 per cent stated that as a woman they had felt the need to prove their worth in a management position. There was little difference in the proportion of women who felt it necessary to "prove their worth" amongst those of differing age groups, but some differences between those of different marital status, and those who headed girls only schools compared with the rest. The need to "prove your worth" is felt more strongly by those with children, and less strongly by the single and heads of girls' schools. The difference between heads of girls' schools and other schools is statistically significant at the 99 per cent confidence level.
Table 5.27: Percentage stating that they had felt the need to “prove their worth” in management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>over 50</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 50</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>62.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separated</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>divorced</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of girls schools</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heads of other schools</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the comments that accompanied the responses to the need to “prove their worth” as women appear to be related to the need to break out from the stereotypes that are associated with women in management, the presumption that women will be best in the pastoral role, and be weak in relation to discipline, and matters to do with finance and premises. In addition many of the respondents felt that they had to show themselves as much better than a man in order to achieve respect as a head, and that once in headship, they were isolated as women and could be observed in a somewhat judgmental manner.

One group of comments (8.7 per cent of the total) specified that all managers have to prove themselves, whether they are women or men. In effect, these comments are saying that there are no special difficulties for women in this area.

Several of the themes that have been identified in relation to the sexism of peers were also identified in the responses to the question on the “need to prove yourself”. These related to the areas of:
stereotyping; isolation; being patronised; and the need to be “twice as good as a man”.

However, the dominance of these themes differed in the range of answers to the two areas of questioning. Stereotyping was only mentioned by 11.9 per cent of those who commented on the sexism of peers, whilst it was the largest single category in terms of the question on “the need to prove yourself”, with 31.5 per cent of the comments being grouped in this way. Naturally there were many comments on having to be “twice as good as a man” in answer to the question on proving themselves (22.8 per cent), whilst such comments made up only 2.5 per cent of the comments on sexism.

The responses to the question on “the need to prove yourself” have been grouped in the following categories:

1. The need to break away from stereotypes 31.5%
2. The need to be “twice as good as a man” 22.8%
3. Feelings of isolation 12.9%
4. The need to be generally better 12.5%
5. All managers have to prove themselves (not just women) 8.7%
6. Being patronised, experience of overt sexism 6.8%
7. Other comments 4.5%
1. The need to break away from stereotypes

Within this grouping, there were six distinct sub-groups, these related to:

(a) the domestic roles held by women;
(b) stereotypes relating to the ways that women manage/lead;
(c) stereotyping of the deputy head role;
(d) presumption that women cannot manage issues such as finance or buildings;
(e) stereotype that women could not deal with disciplinary problems;
(f) putting women "to the test" in roles not usually identified with females.

(a) There were, as in the previous comments on sexist peers, examples of general stereotypes placing women in a more "domestic" role:

"As head of department, I was the only woman at that level. It was hard to change attitudes: I was expected to take minutes, make the tea and have nothing interesting to say."

The perceived effect of the domestic role also concerned some of the headteachers, who felt the need to distance themselves from their genuine domestic role and to underplay their existence as wives and mothers:

"As a deputy head with a young child, I felt under pressure to show extra commitment - but this came from myself largely."

"Work extra long hours, not take time off for my own health or my children’s, take on extras like conference work."

"Never mention domestic circumstances that are problematic."

(b) In addition, and again similarly to some of the responses in the "sexist peers" question, stereotypes extended to the ways that women would manage:
“Some governors assumed when I was first appointed to a headship that I might be ‘too nice’ - they assumed that only aggression could change opinion.”

“The Chair of governors frequently praises my ‘decisive firm approach’, because it was like his, i.e. masculine.”

“I had to demonstrate that I could take tough decisions when needed eg staff discipline.”

“male governors, especially in the past, have expected tears or illness or whatever!”

“I have had to prove I have ‘inner steel’ to some governors!”

(c) The reported stereotyping of roles was more obvious at deputy head level and below, and at this level the heads had fought to take on roles that were associated with men:

“I always felt I had to avoid the ‘female deputy’ role - so in some ways my pastoral experience was actually quite limited compared with curriculum/financial.”

“Not accepting the traditional role of female deputy - sick children and flowers!”

(d) However, even after headship had been achieved, there was still a need to prove the stereotypes associated with females to be inappropriate. These occasions sometimes arose in relation to meetings with males outside the school:

“There has been a presumption that my husband helps with the finance.”
“We have had major building [plant] problems - LEA officers patronise (or tried!)”

“Difficult financial decision making frequently in male dominated meetings, particularly with industrial and commercial partners.”

(e) The need to show the ability to deal with disciplinary problems was present at all levels:

“Discipline - I have never had a problem with discipline, but the staff were watching me to see if I could ‘handle’ disaffected or disruptive pupils initially. I was ‘on trial’ particularly with my response to discipline issues.”

“‘Macho’ style ability to do any task was required when I was a Deputy Head - eg I had to stop fights, snowballing, and deal with trespass.”

(f) Some respondents felt that they had been “put to the test” as women, by being given roles that might have been considered hard for a woman:

“As a deputy head - having more difficult and challenging tasks than two fellow male deputy heads.”

“Given staff absence cover from day one of my deputy’s job, with no assistance, not knowing the staff or curriculum well, to fill in the last six weeks of the summer term before starting my proper job spec. in September. Told later it was a test to see if I would survive.”

2. The need to be “twice as good as a man”

Many of these responses simply related to working harder:

“Working harder and being more efficient than anyone else.”

“You have to be seen to be twice as good as male colleagues.”
Sometimes the need to work harder is seen in relation to the dual role that women may operate:

“by working harder than anyone. By juggling the demands of home with school and trying to do the ‘right thing’ by everyone.”

“Providing superhuman commitment, energy and hours either side of maternity leaves!”

“I always felt that I had to be first into school and last to leave. (I still do!)”

The need to work harder may also be linked to beliefs and stereotypes about the way that women work and manage:

“not allowed mistakes, not allowed to be decisive, - considered only a male quality.”

“Not allowed to make mistakes, judged more harshly than men, more is expected of you, you have to be efficient and nice.”

“Women need to be twice as calm as their male counterparts and demonstrate their toughness in difficult situations and in a crisis.”

Knowledge of the difficulties faced in appointment to headship, led one respondent to comment:

“but I felt I stood a better chance of headship if I applied for difficult schools, i.e. the men could afford to be choosy, I could not.”
3. Feeling of isolation

The isolation of a female head in relation to a predominantly male ethos was a theme that emerged in relation to proving themselves as a manager as well as in relation to sexist attitudes from peers. The headteachers commented on difficulties in dealing with male dominated senior management teams:

“As a deputy, the only female in a team of four. As a new head following a male head.”

“As the only woman in the SMT.”

It does appear that female heads are particularly aware of the male ethos dominating headteachers’ and other external meetings:

“Frequently in meetings when I am the only woman present, especially meetings with other heads.”

“When I first became a head, as the only woman secondary head in the LEA, at headteacher meetings.”

4. The need to be generally better

The recognition that women have to prove themselves in management was reported as vaguely as “a feeling” by some;

“Hard to give a specific example, it’s more of a feeling.”

“it is daily an issue.”

Several of the respondents reported a general sense of needing to do better and prove themselves:
“All the time at head of department, deputy and headship level.”

“All the time. I was terrified of making any administrative or disciplinary slip.”

“Every time I have been promoted.”

5. All managers have to prove themselves

A relatively small group of the comments on proving yourself at work, did not identify any specific problem for women. These comments related to the fact that all managers and new headteachers have to prove themselves, whether they are men or women. These comments implicitly or explicitly stated that this was no more difficult for women than for men.

“As a manager, not particularly as a women.”

“As a head of science - to prove that I was right for the job and in every post since, but I think that this applies to men as well.”

“Tough enough, hard working enough, committed, - but so do men.”

6. Being patronised, experience of overt sexism

Some of the headteachers reported the need to “prove themselves” in the face of patronising and sexist attitudes. The attitudes reported varied from the ridiculous:

“As a deputy, I was told by men at middle management level ‘your predecessor used to serve out the custard’.”

to the more devious:

“Initially as a deputy, I was seen as a threat and marginalized.”
Patronising attitudes on the part of other headteachers and male staff were experienced:

"Headteacher (male) colleague used to say 'my dear' …"

"Doing the timetable on a computer for the first time with the male deputy who used to call me 'lover'."

7. Other comments

The remainder of the comments fell into two groups: those that related to working in girls schools, and those that related to the difficulty of proving yourself, not only as a woman in management, but as an Asian or black woman in management.

The comments relating to working in girls' schools referred to the perceived narrowness of the experience which was seen to be less useful than working in mixed schools.

"But my experience is largely in girls' schools with female dominated staff"

"I had to move from deputy head of a girls school to deputy head of a mixed school before I'd be eligible for headship (LEA advice)."

"Within the structure small girls schools are thought easy to manage even in inner London."

The need to prove themselves was felt keenly by the respondents who were black or Asian:

"As a black Muslim woman I had to do more than that [i.e. prove herself as a woman manager]."
"Both as a woman and a black person."

"On my third day of headship I had to cope with a very irate member of staff who took great pains to inform me that I had only got my job because I was an Asian female."

The management style of the headteachers

The questions included in the survey that related to the management style of the headteachers were intended to allow them to express their own perceptions of their style and the values that they are trying to promote in the school. Questions were also asked about the extent to which the headteachers freely communicated with their staff, how much time they spent out of their office whilst in the school, and their own attitudes to the professional development of teachers, particularly female teachers, within the school. In addition they were asked why they felt that they had been so successful, and if they felt that it had ever been an advantage to them as a headteacher to be a woman.

In considering the many comments that related to the stereotyping of the management style of women, it is apparent that there are certain qualities that are identified with a feminine style of management. The lists of qualities identified by Bem (1974) and by Gray (1989, 1993) are both attempts to identify such a paradigm or ideal type. In the survey, the headteachers were presented with the masculine and feminine qualities identified by Gray (1993), and were asked to indicate which of the qualities they felt applied to them. Just as in the interviews, the qualities were not identified in any way as 'male' or 'female' in the questionnaire.
Qualities identified from male and female paradigms

Table 5.28: Qualities identified by respondents from the male and female paradigms of Gray (1993)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% indicating that they felt they had the quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female paradigm</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware of individual differences</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-competitive</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male paradigm</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly regulated</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformist</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six of the adjectives and descriptions that are included in the feminine paradigm (see Table 5.28) were identified by 59 per cent or more of the headteachers. More than three-quarters of them judged themselves to be “Aware of individual differences”, “caring” and “intuitive”. However, there were also four adjectives in the masculine paradigm which were also identified by over half of the headteachers as applicable to them. Those adjectives which could therefore be identified with this group of
headteachers ranged across both paradigms, (see Table 5.29) although female traits were identified more often by more headteachers than were male traits.

**Table 5.29: Qualities identified by 50 per cent or more of the headteachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of individual differences (f)</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring (f)</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive (f)</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant (f)</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative (f)</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative (m)</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined (m)</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal (f)</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive (m)</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective (m)</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(f) = feminine (m) = masculine

In contrast there were two adjectives from the feminine paradigm and four from the masculine paradigm that were identified by relatively few of the headteachers, 21.5 per cent or less (see Table 5.30).

**Table 5.30: Qualities identified by 21.5 per cent of headteachers or less**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-competitive (f)</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal (m)</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective (f)</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly regulated (m)</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformist (m)</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative (m)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(f) = feminine (m) = masculine
Overall, it would appear that there is a strong identification with most of the female traits on the part of the headteachers, and a weak identification with most of the male traits. However, there are a number of male traits, specifically "evaluative", "disciplined", "competitive" and "objective", which are identified by 50 per cent or more of the respondents, and which therefore temper the picture of a pure "feminine" paradigm of management style amongst the female secondary headteachers of England and Wales.

Key words to describe the headteachers' style of management

The headteachers were given the opportunity to list three separate words that described their style of management. This question appeared in the survey before the question involving the list of male and female paradigms, so it is unlikely that the feminine and masculine adjectives had any influence on the free choice of the three words. No guidance whatsoever was given, to allow them to provide unprompted responses. This led to there being a large range of adjectives offered. However, it was possible to group them, and establish some idea of the prevalent styles of management that the female headteachers considered that they adopted. A very small number of the adjectives offered have not been included in the groups below. These were words that could not easily be classified such as "all-embracing", "female", "integrated" and "corporate". In addition, without a context, it is difficult to classify single words, so that the word "perfectionist" has been included in the autocratic style of management, but could have appeared in the "effective" style or even the "values" style. In addition, some adjectives might have been included in more than one category, eg, the adjectives "team-based" and "empowering" were included in the group termed "people-oriented" rather than the group termed "collaborative".

Most of the respondents did list three adjectives, none listed more than three, but in some cases, one or two adjectives only were given, eg "participative", "open" and "honest" appeared as single words, whilst a small number of heads made statements, eg:
"I am a pragmatic idealist", or

"I believe staff should be supported in accepting professional responsibility for all aspects which effect and promote the highest levels of pupil achievement."

The total incidence of adjectives can therefore be divided by three to give an indication of the numbers of respondents who indicated support for a style of management. The themes that were identified are listed below in order of their relative importance:

1. A collaborative style of management;

2. A people-oriented style of management;

3. An autocratic/directive style of management

4. An efficient style of management;

5. A values style of management.

1. A Collaborative style of management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective offered</th>
<th>number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultative</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. A People-oriented style of management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective offered</th>
<th>number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team related</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowering</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People-oriented</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegating</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approachable</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsive</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-confrontational</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives offered</td>
<td>Number of occurrences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisive</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanding</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigorous</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forceful</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloody minded</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belligerent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolent dictator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 177

3. An autocratic/directive style of management
4. An efficient style of management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives offered</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efficient</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands on</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunistic/pragmatic</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target setting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountable</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorough</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-prepared</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipatory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**5. Management driven by values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives offered</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of vision</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughtful</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-led</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far-sighted</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truthful</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a clear indication that the single most popular style of management was that termed “collaborative” in terms of the numbers of occurrences of such adjectives (458). The potentially overlapping “people-oriented” style of management was also strongly indicated by the choice of adjectives that could be grouped within that theme (283). The range of adjectives that are chosen is very wide, but, judging from these two broad categories, there is a clear indication of a favoured style of management that is probably consistent with the adjectives that were most often chosen from the female paradigm; “aware of individual differences”, “caring”, “intuitive” and “tolerant”.

In addition, there were a considerable number of adjectives offered that were grouped as either “autocratic/directive” (177) or “efficient” (139). Although a lesser two groupings than the first two styles of management, they still represent a substantial number of headteachers who, through their choice of adjectives, identified their style of management as more akin to the male paradigm than the female. This style of management might be identified with some of the “male” adjectives, such as “disciplined”, “evaluative”, “formal” and “competitive”.

It would appear that there is one dominant style of management, but there is a secondary style that is adopted by a minority of the heads, particularly those over 50. When the groupings of three words are considered for the two age groups, those under 50 and those over 50 there is a statistically significant differential with a 99.9 per cent degree of confidence. For the under 50s about ten percent have chosen at least two of their three words from the autocratic/directive style of management and/or the efficient style of management, but the proportion of those over fifty doing so is just over 20 per cent.
The final group of adjectives represents a strand of thinking that is probably not separate from the others, but identifies the values that may well underpin the management style of many headteachers. The category of "management driven by values" is certainly not identified or stereotyped as either male or female.

The grouping of the adjectives into five styles of management has been done on the basis of the list as a whole. However, the headteachers were asked to give three adjectives, and the clusters of adjectives given by each headteacher do not necessarily all fit within one of the single identified themes. This is not entirely surprising since individual themes identified may be consistent with one another. For example, it is likely that a headteacher with a collaborative style may also be "people orientated”, listing adjectives such as; open, supportive and encouraging as her three choices. Very few groups of the three adjectives appear inconsistent with one another, but there are a few, eg one headteacher lists; consultative, considerate (occasionally) and autocratic, and it is a little difficult without further investigation to understand how a headteacher can be both consultative and autocratic.

Overall, there appears to be a range of management styles indicated by the lists of adjectives provided, with one side of the spectrum occupied by the majority of the headteachers who adopt a "collaborative” and “people orientated” style of management and the other side of the spectrum occupied by minority of the headteachers operating an autocratic/directive style of management often linked to choice of the more “efficient” adjectives. The “values driven” style may well underpin any or all of the other styles (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Spectrum of styles of management

```
collaborative/people orientated  efficient  autocratic/directive
values driven
```
Key values promoted in the school

The headteachers were given a similar opportunity to indicate a free choice of the key values that they are trying to promote in the school, but no number of values was suggested. In the case of the promotion of key values, the respondents tended to indicate phrases, rather than individual words. The sentiments that are included in the value statements can be divided into those that stress:

1. academic excellence and educational achievement;
2. the importance of every individual achieving their potential;
3. respect for self; and
4. respect and caring for others.

1. academic excellence and educational achievement

Many of the value statements mentioned academic achievement sometimes in association with caring values:

"academic achievement in a caring community which develops all pupils for their own potential."

"achievement in a safe and happy environment."

"emphasis on learning and achievement for all."

"Positive attitude to learning."

"The pupils' learning is central."
2. the importance of every individual achieving their potential

These statements are often linked to the importance of hard work:

"everyone committed to the success of each student."

"everyone has the potential to achieve, but you must work hard to succeed."

"I would like pupils to develop into responsible caring and mature adults, with the knowledge and skills to cope with the demands of a changing society, having realised their potential."

3. respect for self

There was awareness of the need to promote:

"high self esteem for all."

"personal worth and achievement."

"The importance of self-worth, and valuing others."

4. respect and caring for others

"respect for individual differences; valuing others (pupils and staff)."

"care of all within the school community."

"students should aim high with compassion for those around them."

The achievement of academic excellence could be considered an objective that is innate to the purpose of almost any school. However, the remaining three themes of
values are related to the qualities of caring and respect for individuals that the
headteachers have already identified within the Gray (1993) paradigms, where the four
most popular qualities were all drawn from the feminine paradigm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of individual differences</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A simple frequency count of words was applied to the group of statements about
values. (All words that appear ten or more times with the exception of words like “a”
and “the” are included in Appendix 3)

The words below in Table 5.31, are those that were mentioned the most in all the
statements about values from the headteachers. These words indicate the importance
of both achievement and respect as key values; achievement, sometimes but not
always, specifying learning, and respect including respect for self and for others
including individuals and the community.

Table 5.31: Words mentioned most often in statements relating to key values
promoted in the school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>times used</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>times used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>respect</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high/higher/highest</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>care/caring</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>value(s)/valued/valuing</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>others</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>individual/s</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pupil/s</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management in action

The headteachers were asked a limited range of questions relating to their style of management. In particular, they were asked about their availability to staff, and the amount of time that they spent out of the office when in school. They were also asked about the ways in which they encouraged all teachers to develop their careers, and if there was any special way in which they tried to encourage the careers of female teachers.

The availability of headteachers to see their staff

The majority of headteachers seem to make themselves available to their staff whenever possible (see Table 5.32).

Table 5.32: Opportunities for staff to talk to the head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any time if not in meeting</td>
<td>84.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any time within specified limits</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By appointment</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The headteachers also appear to be visible in the school for quite a large proportion of their time (see Table 5.33). In answer to the question "while you are in school, what proportion of your time do you spend out of your office?" approximately 80 per cent spent between ten per cent and 50 per cent of their time in the school, but out of their office.
Table 5.33: Time spent out of office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 10%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%-25%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%-50%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%-75%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the headteachers appear to spend a considerable proportion of their time out of their office. They were not asked how this time was spent, but presumably some of it would be in teaching, and some would involve "management by walking about". When coupled with the information about the availability of the majority to talk to teachers, there would appear to be evidence to support the dominant management style indicated by the majority of the headteachers. It seems that a large proportion of the headteachers operate in an open way and are highly involved with their staff and the operation of the school.

How do you encourage all the teachers in your school to develop their careers?

The headteachers were offered a range of possibilities of how they might encourage teachers to develop their careers, and were also asked to specify other ways in which they encouraged teachers. Of the development opportunities specified, courses, appraisal and mentoring were the most often cited, but "other" ways were written in by 52.9 per cent of the respondents (see Table 5.34).

Table 5.34: Means of encouragement of teachers to develop careers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Play</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of those that indicated "other", most indicated that they were encouraging one to one meetings for all members of staff to discuss career planning. Other possibilities mentioned were career development opportunities inside and outside the school and other, generally practical, means of encouragement such as practice interviews.

Meetings

Meetings were specified by 31.8 per cent of those headteachers who indicated "other" means of encouragement for staff. The meetings either took place with themselves as headteacher, with another member of the senior staff, the INSET coordinator, a consultant or an unspecified person. The general feeling was that it is:

"very important to find time to have one to one conversations about individual strengths and needs."

In the case of headteachers who met staff themselves, there was sometimes recognition that they were acting as "role models" for staff. About ten per cent of the headteachers specifically stated that they conducted these interviews personally:

"I interview all staff, teaching and support staff for 45 minutes each, in every spring term."

However, whether "meetings" are with the heads or with others is not defined in many of the cases. Certainly, the majority of the headteachers are prepared to see staff and talk to them at any time as long as they are not in a meeting, as indicated above in table 5.32.

Specific career development opportunities

Although few of the headteachers chose "role play" as one of their favoured means of staff development, about one third (30.1 per cent) indicated that they provided specific career opportunities for their staff. These included fairly general possibilities:
"By creating opportunities for involvement in management; by empowering staff."

They also included specific interventions:

"departmental monitoring, work shadowing, teacher placement."

There was some indication of encouragement of development through means other than promotion:

"Involvement in teams to develop projects."

"Opportunity for role rotation, being given support to lead initiatives (curriculum and pastoral)."

One headteacher specified the development opportunity that was available in a largely female school:

"Taking on 'acting' responsibilities during our frequent maternity absences."

**Encouragement**

About 20 per cent of the headteachers mentioned general encouragement, which was often described as "informal", and indicated the personal interest of the respondent:

"personally watching over them, directing/suggesting."

"by talking to them personally and encouraging them to consider the possibilities."

There was also more specific and practical encouragement, indicated by a small number of the respondents:
"Assistance with all application processes including debrief after interviews here or elsewhere."

Some of the respondents re-iterated the use of INSET and general staff development programmes, and the Investors in People programme was specifically mentioned by ten of the respondents.

**How do you encourage female teachers in your school to develop their careers?**

Since a minority of headteachers in England and Wales are women, they present important role models for other female teachers. The heads were asked if they particularly encouraged women teachers in their career progress. The largest single group responding to this question, indicated that they did not treat women differently from men (see Table 5.35).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.35: How do you encourage female teachers in their career progress?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No special ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women only courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the headteachers indicated more than one way in which they encouraged female teachers. The large proportion indicating "No special ways" is actually greater than 46.6 per cent, since some of those commenting in the "other" category re-iterated that all staff were treated equally in their school (18.6 per cent) or that staff were all treated according to the equal opportunities policy (4.2 per cent). A further 6.7 per cent stated that they pursued the same policies that they had indicated for the staff as a whole.

In addition, some of the headteachers of all girls' schools commented in the "other" comments, that the question of treating female staff differently does not really arise.
for them, since the majority of their staff are women. Such comments accounted for
about ten per cent of those in the “other” comments.

It is therefore likely that the majority of headteachers do not have any special policies
with regard to the encouragement of female headteachers. However, over 40 per cent
do state that they encourage women through women only courses and through
mentoring, and in addition, the largest proportion of comments written in as "other",
referred to specific encouragement of women. This encouragement often included
the headteacher’s own importance as a role model, and in some cases referred to the
doubts and lack of confidence evidenced by their women staff. Of all the additional
comments in the category "other", virtually 60 per cent fell within this category of
encouragement. Of these, the comments have been divided into general comments,
those related to special courses, to the importance of role models and to arrangements
related to job sharing or the handling of maternity leave (see Table 5.36).

Table 5.36: "Other" comments relating to the encouragement of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General encouragement</th>
<th>32.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special courses and help for women</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job sharing, maternity leave</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several of the comments grouped as "general encouragement" include references to
the lack of confidence shown by women:

"Personal conversation. I always encouraged competent women, from being a
scale 1 teacher onwards, making sure they see themselves as possible runners,
and boosting their confidence."

"Individual discussion, also with male staff; but I find many women, although
very good, do not have confidence to put themselves forward for promotion.
Three examples in my school spring to mind."
The special courses included, women in management courses, assertiveness training, women's groups and women's conferences and the local training courses run by a group of female secondary heads in North Yorkshire, Supporting Women in Secondary Schools (SWISS).

The encouragement of women through being a role model was seen to be important, particularly in the context of the domestic role of women:

"I talk to them about the issues, making it clear I have children etc. - i.e. trying to be a role model."

There was also awareness of the need to overcome stereotyping:

"There is a high percentage of female role models, - SMT, heads of science and maths etc."

The importance of being a role model was linked to external activity:

"Act as a role model, pressurize the authority and professional association to do more for women in education."

Finally some of the encouragement specifically addressed to women was associated with issues such as the handling of maternity leave, and more radical suggestions to help women, such as job sharing.

"Being flexible about moves between part-time and full-time. Job shares (though not yet at present school).

"finding opportunities for responsibility in a variety of ways - particularly important for returners. Enhancing the role of positive women in whole-school issues."

"Flexible return to work after maternity leave."
Whilst there is a commitment to staff development as a whole, it would appear that a substantial minority of the headteachers are aware of a need to separately foster the career progress of women. However, it is only a small minority of the headteachers who have moved beyond courses and mentoring to actively encourage female staff in practical ways such as job sharing and flexible work practices.

**Reflections on being a successful female headteacher**

The headteachers were asked to reflect on the factors that made them successful in an arena where relatively few women succeed. They were also asked if, as a headteacher, they had ever found it an advantage to be a woman.

**Why do you think that you were so successful in such a competitive field?**

The headteachers were given several options from which to choose and also asked to write in any "other" factor which they felt had made them successful (see Table 5.37).

**Table 5.37: Reasons for success - headteachers under and over 50, with and without children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>under 50</th>
<th>over 50</th>
<th>children</th>
<th>no children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through hard work</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from others</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing what you wanted</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic prowess</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a woman</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those over and under 50 showed very little difference in terms of their rating of factors leading to success, although those under 50 did not rate the support of others quite so highly as those over 50. This difference was statistically significant at a 95 per cent confidence level. However, there was a tendency for those under 50 to rate the importance of "knowing what you want" more highly than did those over 50. For the under 50s, 42.1 per cent saw "knowing what you want" as an important factor, against 33.1 per cent of those over 50. For those headteachers with children, "knowing what you want" was also a slightly more important factor than for the group as a whole, with 41.7 per cent rating this as important.

Table 5.38: Reasons for success - headteachers' marital status and type of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All %</th>
<th>married %</th>
<th>not married %</th>
<th>girls school %</th>
<th>other school %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through hard work</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from others</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing what you wanted</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic prowess</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a woman</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heads of all girls schools tended to rate the importance of academic prowess and of being a woman as more important than for the group as a whole. The difference between heads of girls' schools and other schools in relation to their rating of academic prowess is statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. All girls' schools will be more likely to actively seek women heads than co-ed and boys' schools, and many of them have a reputation for academic excellence. Conversely, the heads of all girl schools rated "knowing what you want" less often as a factor of
importance than any other group; the difference here is statistically significant at a 98 per cent confidence level.

Marital status appears to have relatively little influence on the rating of factors that lead to success, although many of the factors, including hard work, support and being a woman were rated slightly higher by the married as a group than the total population of respondents and those who were not married (see Table 5.38).

A large minority (42.3 per cent) of the respondents wrote in "other" factors that they felt related to their success. Of these, the most important groupings were particular personal qualities and abilities, luck, vision and determination (see Table 5.39). In a few cases there was overlap with the categories that were pre-specified, for example reference to academic qualifications, and the support of others.

**Table 5.39: “Other” factors contributing to the success of the headteachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>% of comment indicated as &quot;other&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal qualities</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability and academic qualifications</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luck</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant experience</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman preferred for the headship</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons (including support)</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal qualities that were mentioned were wide-ranging, including:

"the ability to understand, relate to, win trust of, inspire and manipulate colleagues."

"because I am competitive and have a certain kind of confidence."
"being clear, honest, making demands, - high expectations."

"Good organisation, being articulate and assertive, zest, sense of humour."

The qualities that were mentioned the most were those that related to communication and "people" skills, but tougher aspects of management skills were also mentioned:

"By exhibiting qualities sometimes deemed to be 'masculine' - I am analytical, thorough, outspoken and sometimes seen as frightening by men. Hard definite views on what I wanted also helped."

Ability and academic qualifications were often related to personal qualities, for example several of the respondents simply stated that they were "good at my job".

A number of the respondents did not put their success down to their own abilities but to: "being in the right place at the right time", or to "circumstances" or simply "luck".

Vision and determination were mentioned by a proportion of those indicating "other" reasons for success:

"Because I was, and am, clear about what I believe in."

"Clear goal and determination."

"Commitment and clarity concerning the job."

"Having a strong sense of direction that communicates itself to others."

"I'm an enthusiast and it shows on interview. I believe passionately in the value of young people."
Several of the heads indicated specific career experience that had led to their success, including:

"background in industry before teaching."

"having the experience of dealing with people in a wide range of contexts - worked in UK, USA and Pakistan."

"working in difficult schools in London for the first sixteen years."

Some of the respondent specified that a woman was preferred for the job. In some cases this was for a girls school:

"Governors wished to have a female head as it is a school for girls."

In others it was felt that a woman was particularly suitable:

"Being a 'good woman' can be advantage. I think my school was looking for a woman"

Amongst other comments were those that referred to the support of others, in particular three of the comments referred to the importance of the religious community or the Christian faith:

"My Christian faith bought me into education, to realise a vision for the young. As a head I can drive that forward more carefully."

Others mentioned specific support that they had received:

"Support of three excellent headteachers - all male, and most importantly my husband."
As a headteacher, have you ever found it an advantage to be a woman?

In response to this question, a majority, 64.1 per cent of the respondents, indicated that they had found being a woman an advantage as a head, and 35.9 per cent that they had not. There was very little difference in the responses of the two age groups, with 62.9 per cent of those under 50 stating that they had found it an advantage to be a woman head and 65.3 per cent of those over 50. The respondents were asked to give an example of any advantage that they had become aware of through their experience. Some gave more than one example, but most of them related to the different ways in which female headteachers were perceived in comparison with their male counterparts (see Table 5.40).

Table 5.40: Advantages in being a woman headteacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>% of total examples given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to diffuse &quot;macho&quot; behaviour</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being noticed</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not constrained by male stereotype</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approachable to women and girls</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using &quot;feminine guiles&quot;</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy and use of emotion</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of a girls school</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Being able to diffuse “macho” behaviour

There were in all a total of 312 separate examples given. Of these, the largest proportion of comments (35.6 per cent of the total) related to the ability of a woman
headteacher to diffuse aggressive male behaviour, particularly that of fathers and adolescent boys, but also sometimes that of male staff:

"Men are less aggressive - they don't have to maintain their 'macho' image with me. (Staff or parents)"

“angry teenage boys are not threatened by a woman - reason can prevail before the discipline”

“Avoidance of confrontation. Ability to be myself rather than play the role of 'headmaster'. I'm glad to be a woman in this job.”

The ability to diffuse aggressive behaviour is also linked to management style:

“A woman can diffuse conflict more easily, perhaps 'soft' management styles can work if used judiciously.”

Being noticed

One of the positive aspects of being a woman headteacher is that they are often "noticed" and their rarity value may lead to opportunities that might not otherwise come their way:

"I do tend to be invited to working groups as the 'woman'."

"Because we are in a minority, I feel officers in the county make a conscious effort to involve us in county initiatives."

"It opens opportunities for my own development because there are so few female headteachers. Achievements are more readily noticed/recognised by colleagues within education for the same reason."
Not constrained by male stereotype

One of the major benefits experienced by the headteachers is that their perceived difference enables them to act in ways that are free from the normal stereotypes surrounding headteachers. One head stated that:

"It is sometimes difficult for others to easily label you."

Another that:

"Most male colleagues don't know how to deal with an Asian woman headteacher."

Several mentioned that they felt being female allowed them to ask for help more easily, or that they were: "less afraid of admitting ignorance or being tentative."

In some cases the change from a previous, more traditional head was welcomed:

"Following an extremely autocratic male head, a complete change, with some sensitivity, was very helpful."

"My position as head followed a particularly macho (and disastrous) male head."

Some women certainly feel free of the more restricting aspects of the male head stereotype:

"Not worrying about status/other people's image of me enables me to talk more directly with staff, and I hope makes me more approachable. I think this helps me to know what is really going on! It's an awful generalization, but I think women managers play fewer games."
Approachable to women and girls

A further aspect of how women heads are perceived is in the advantage that women staff, mothers of pupils and girl students may find that a woman head is more approachable:

"In dealing with girls only and a staff which is predominantly female, I have an understanding, that men could not have, of some issues."

"In dealing with parents. Generally, pupils are represented/accompanied by mothers/female guardians. They seem to find it easier to talk to another female."

The fact that some of the headteachers are mothers and can fully understand the difficulties that parents and female staff may face is also seen as an advantage:

"As a mum as well, I can see issues from a parental viewpoint. [Headship involves] similar skills to running a busy household with five in the family."

"Most teachers are women, most heads of department at my last school were women (married and mothers) we understand the demands of family/parenthood/career and shared and supported each other."

Empathy and use of emotion

In addition several of the heads referred to the particular skills that women may be able to exhibit in times of emotion, and their ability to empathize with others. This was mentioned in association with the trauma caused by the death of pupils or in cases of abuse or domestic violence. Again, they felt their freedom from the 'male' stereotype of headship:

"It's easier to deal with emotions and to show feelings."
"Empathizing with distressed parents."

"I can touch children of either sex (a hug when upset) without people suggesting ulterior motives."

Using "feminine guiles"

A number of the responses were also concerned with the perception of the 'femaleness' of the headteachers in the eyes of males. There were examples of some of the headteachers admitting that they, quite knowingly, turned on the charm and used "feminine guiles" in order to achieve something.

"The Chief Education Officer is susceptible to feminine charm."

"With older men, I deliberately use appalling wiles."

"I'm a hypocrite! I use feminine tactics to get my own way - especially with the governors - as they are the ones who like a stereotypical image!"

The aim may be to obtain funds or goods for the school:

"Most people with available funds are men - I'm afraid I am occasionally guilty of what might be called feminine wheedling."

No advantages

A few of the comments simply stated that they thought there were no particular advantages to being a female headteacher. One stated:

"And if there was, I would not use it. Rational management is my tool."
There may be advantage in being a woman, if you are applying to be head of an all girls school:

"Some parents believe that in a girls school a female head is more appropriate."

A few responses recognised that there were advantages but that: "they were too numerous to give".

**Conclusion and summary of the survey data**

The population of headteachers were analysed as a whole, and in terms of the four variables of age, marital status, having children and the type of school, in particular whether it was an all girls’ school or a mixed or boys’ school.

The majority of the headteachers are between 40 and 60 and are, or have been married. Just over half of them have had at least one child, and the majority of them are heads of mixed secondary schools. The population of headteachers is far from homogenous. Distinct differences emerge between groups, and these are now summarized in terms of:

- age group;
- marital status and children;
- girls’ schools and other schools.

**Age groups - differences between the under and over 50s**

Differences between these two groups are evident, and it is possible that a five year rather than a ten year age grouping might have indicated even clearer differences and trends. The differences that are evident between the two groups, the under and over 50s may be stronger between those at the younger end of the age spectrum and those at the older. However, the decision to place the headteachers in ten year categories makes it impossible to do more than compare the two main groups.
One important difference between the two groups may lie in the provision of maternity leave as a statutory right and the effect that this has had on taking a career break for the under 50s. Only 4.5 per cent of the under 50s had taken a long break to look after children, as compared with 26.9 per cent of the over 50s. Amongst the younger headteachers, having children does not appear to have interrupted their careers, although it may be that many of them have chosen to have no children or to limit the size of their families. The under 50s are more likely to be married than the over 50s, a larger proportion of them are childless, and they are less likely to have children than the over 50s.

Over 40 per cent of all headteachers take the greater share of domestic responsibilities, but there is some evidence that the younger headteachers are slightly less likely to do so with responsibility marginally more equally shared amongst this age group. Certainly there is less chance of the under 50s having to move to follow their partner. Only 30 per cent of the under 50s had changed their job to follow their husband or partner, compared to 47.4 per cent of the over 50s. Overall there is some evidence of a greater sharing and equality between partners of the younger age-group.

The younger headteachers appeared to be slightly more sensitized to experience of sexism, both at the time of application for jobs and experienced from peers. Differences were small. In relation to applications, 64.5 per cent of the under 50s noted sexism against 61.5 per cent of the over 50s. In management 56.9 per cent of the under 50s reported sexism against 52.4 per cent of the over 50s.

The under 50s are also more likely to have formulated a career plan, to have a masters degree and to rate highly the importance of knowing what you want. However, the over 50s were considerably more likely to have thought at some point in their career that they might not achieve headship.
Marital status and children

The variables of marital status and having children may be particularly relevant to job applications, where many of the comments provided by the headteachers indicated that the interview panels were alert to the potential difficulties of employing headteachers who were married and who might also have children. The experience of sexism in relation to job applications was most strongly felt by those with children (67.4 per cent) against those with no children (57.1 per cent) and by those who were separated (76.9 per cent).

In addition, some of the comments from the headteachers referred to the additional difficulties of age and geographical location in relation to having taken time off for children, and taking the location of children's schools into account.

Those who were married and those with children were understandably more likely to indicate the importance of the influence of husband and family than others. 77.9 per cent of those who were married and 74.3 per cent of those with children rated the encouragement of their husband and family as important against 61.6 per cent of the group as a whole.

It was noticeable that those who were single and those who had no children were less likely to have thought that they might not achieve headship. Only 36.8 per cent of the single and 38.1 per cent of those without children reported this against 42.7 per cent of the married, 58.1 per cent of the divorced and 46.9 per cent of those with children.

54.6 per cent of the group as a whole indicated that they had experienced sexist attitudes from peers. However, this percentage was higher for those with children (57.7 per cent) and those who were married (55.7 per cent) or divorced (66.7 per cent).

The need to prove their worth appears to be felt more strongly by those with children (65.4 per cent) than those with no children (59.7 per cent). Those that were married were no more likely than the group as a whole to need to "prove their worth" but for
those who were divorced, the proportion was 75.6 per cent against 62.7 per cent of the population as a whole.

Those with children were more likely to indicate that "knowing what you wanted" was a factor in success. 41.7 per cent gave this as a reason against 33.9 per cent of those without children. Academic prowess was also rated as important by those with children, 24.0 per cent of this group mentioned this factor against 20.0 per cent of those with no children. Marital status did not appear to have much influence on the choice of factors leading to success, although those married did rate the support from others slightly more highly than the group as a whole, 48.4 per cent against 45.7 per cent of those who were not married.

Differences between headteachers of girls' schools and headteachers of mixed and boys' schools

The heads of all girls' schools are slightly more likely to be single than heads of other schools, 22.7 per cent are single compared to 18.8 per cent of heads of other schools. They are also understandably slightly less likely to have a child or children, 48.5 per cent compared to 51.7 per cent of all respondents.

The heads of girls' schools are slightly more likely to have a masters degree than the heads of other schools (44.7 per cent, against 42.2 per cent), but were less likely to have formulated a career plan than any other group (26.9 per cent compared with 21.7 per cent of the group as a whole).

The heads of girls' schools were understandably less likely to say that they experienced sexism in relation to applications than any other group. Perhaps it is surprising that as large a proportion as 54.3 per cent did state that they had experienced sexism, even though it was true for 67.8 per cent of heads of other schools. The relatively high proportion of heads of girls' schools stating that they had experienced sexism could relate to their attempts to obtain posts in mixed schools, or reflect the fact that the majority of those on interview panels are male. Certainly
some of the respondents reported that they had applied to girls’ schools following lack of success in applications for other schools.

Encouragement for promotion for the heads of girls’ schools was particularly high from their previous headteachers, with 82.0 per cent including the head against 73.6 per cent of the group as a whole. The influence of other colleagues was also strong. There was virtually no difference in the views of the heads of girls schools and other schools in relation to a point in their career when they doubted that they would achieve headship.

Whilst the heads of all girls’ schools are likely to have predominantly female staff and experience less sexism from within the school, 47.7 per cent still report sexism from peers, presumably other (male) headteachers, local business and local authority personnel.

Heads of all girl schools were less likely to indicate that they had felt the need to prove themselves as managers. However, this was still true for 52.7 per cent of the heads of girls schools compared to 69.1 per cent of the heads of other schools. Since the majority of the comments relating to this area were connected to the need to break away from stereotypes, heads of mixed and boys schools are more likely to feel this need.

The heads of all girl schools are more likely than others to rate academic prowess, and being a woman as important reasons for success, “knowing what you want” and the support of others were rated less highly by the heads of all girl schools than the heads of other schools.

**The importance of encouraging career progress**

The headteachers who took part in the survey are those that have been successful in achieving leadership positions in education. The importance of one to one meetings in order to discuss career planning is a notable feature of the means of encouragement adopted by the headteachers. In addition about 30 per cent of the headteachers
actively ensure that they provide specific career opportunities for staff including role rotation and special projects. Over half of the headteachers probably do not encourage their female staff in any particular ways. However, over 40 per cent do take steps to actively encourage women, in particular through ensuring that there are role models, through special courses and through general encouragement. Only a very small proportion take active and practical steps to encourage women through such radical notions as job-sharing and flexible work practices.

The management style and values of the headteachers

The responses of the headteachers with regard to their predominant management style and the values that they wish to promote within the school have been analysed for the group as a whole. There would appear to be strong evidence for the predominance of the qualities outlined in the feminine paradigm identified by Gray (1993). The five qualities most often chosen came from this group; aware of individual differences; caring; intuitive; tolerant and creative. Informal, a further feminine quality was also chosen by nearly 60 per cent of the group. However, there were also four “male” qualities chosen by at least 50 per cent of the headteachers: evaluative; disciplined; competitive and objective. Four of the characteristics that were chosen least frequently by the headteachers were masculine: formal; highly regulated; conformist and normative, but the least chosen adjectives did include two of the feminine characteristics; non-competitive and subjective. When compared to the ideal types identified by Gray (1993), the female headteachers of England and Wales appear to offer a list of qualities that are basically feminine but include a range of masculine qualities sufficient to suggest a more androgynous style of management.

The picture of a management style that is predominantly feminine but has clear undertones of a more masculine style also appears from the lists of adjectives chosen freely by the headteachers. The majority of these adjectives have been grouped as either “collaborative” or “people orientated”, but there is a minority of adjectives that are either “autocratic/directive” or to do with “efficient” management, styles which might be allied more with male than female stereotypes of management. These adjectives are chosen more often by the over 50s than the under 50s. Adjectives
relating to values in management provide an alternative formulation of management style that could underpin the other styles. The prevalence of headteachers being available to their staff at almost any time, and the extent to which they are in the school and out of the office, seems to validate the self-perception of most of the headteachers as collaborative in their management style.

The headteachers identified values to be promoted in the school which also reflect the dominance of feminine qualities such as "aware of individual differences" and "caring". For example, the importance of the individual achieving their potential, and the importance of respect for self and others are key values that occur in the lists of phrases offered. In addition there is the value of the achievement of academic excellence that appears as a key value to be encouraged in the school. This is not readily identified as either masculine or feminine. The stress on raising standards and overt academic achievement is likely to affect all headteachers whether male or female.

The special qualities of female headteachers

There is an image of a headteacher and of a leader that is linked to a male stereotype. Most of the female headteachers that have responded to the survey provide a very different and alternative view of educational leadership.

The majority of these headteachers have responsibilities in the home that are unlikely to fall in the same way on their male counterparts. Over half of the headteachers have had the experience of responsibility for childcare and nearly half take the major share of domestic responsibilities. Career breaks are becoming increasingly rare as the headteachers have taken advantage of the statutory maternity leave.

Whilst they are most likely to rate their success as being due to hard work, they also tend to be very conscious of the importance of the support of others.
The most prevalent management style is that of collaboration and of concern for people, backed up by the availability of the headteachers to the staff and the stress that is placed on one to one meetings to monitor career progress.

In addition, the headteachers experience a freedom from mainly male stereotypes of how a headteacher should act, for example they feel able to admit ignorance and to sometimes be tentative in their judgements. They are able to operate in a way that defuses confrontational behaviour particularly on the part of men and boys, and find strengths in the way that they are seen as more approachable by women and girls and can deal with situations where empathy and the use of emotion are appropriate. They are also aware of their femininity and, in some cases, consciously make use of it to achieve their aims, in an environment where access to power and resources is dominated by men.
Chapter 6 Analysis

Introduction

The female secondary headteacher has only recently become the subject of research in the UK (Hall, 1993, 1997). However, the type of study that has been undertaken has largely been qualitative, (Ozga, 1993, Ouston 1993, Adler, 1993, Evetts, 1994, Hall, 1996). More quantitative data relating to larger cohorts of secondary headteachers both male and female, (Weindling and Earley, 1987, Jones, 1987, Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996) are available, but the picture that is built up of the population of male and female headteachers is limited because the studies are not focused primarily on gender issues. Some of the general descriptive factors that have been considered both in earlier research and in the present study include: qualifications; career pattern; age and marital status of headteachers.

Some attributes of the female secondary headteacher population

Qualifications

The limited existing data on gender differences in the qualifications of headteachers indicate that women tend to be less well qualified than men. This is the situation in the USA (Shakeshaft, 1989) and in the UK, (Weindling and Earley 1987). In the latter study, 35 per cent of the male and 21 per cent of the female heads had a master’s degree or doctorate. However, for the female heads surveyed in the current research in 1996, 42 per cent held a masters degree and 1.1 per cent a doctorate. A larger proportion of the under 50s (45.6 per cent) held higher degrees than the over 50s (38 per cent) and this may indicate a continuing trend towards female headteachers holding a higher degree. The findings of Gold (1993), and the relatively large numbers of women candidates for NPQH and master’s courses in educational management at the Open University and the University of Leicester, indicate that women who may be aspiring to senior management are continuing to enrol for higher qualifications.
McMullan (1993) has identified that maths, science, technology and humanities tend to be predominantly male subjects and carry more responsibility allowances for teachers, whilst English, languages, arts and special needs are subject areas which are predominantly female and these areas tend to carry less allowances. Female teachers who succeed in obtaining senior positions may do so in spite of having ‘female’ specialisms, or may be more likely to come from the ‘male’ subject areas. The existing research on heads and subject specialism indicates that there is no significant difference with regard to gender, with the exception of English, where 35 per cent of females compared to 20 per cent of males had this specialism (Weindling and Earley, 1987). In the current research, English was the specialist subject of the largest single group of heads, but the figure was 26.1 per cent. The headteachers actually came from a wide range of specialisms, 21.3 per cent in Humanities, 14 per cent in Science, ten per cent in Modern Languages and nine per cent in Mathematics, a range of both ‘male’ and ‘female’ subjects. The range of specialist subjects was considerable and it may be that the subject range from which headteachers are now drawn is less restricted than in previous years. In the five in-depth interviews undertaken as the first part of the female headteacher research (see chapter 4), the headteachers illustrated a wide range of background including two who had home economics training and one who had begun her career in primary teaching.

Career pattern

Existing research indicates that female headteachers are generally appointed later than males, having stayed longer in intermediate management posts, and that they generally follow a traditional career path through deputy headship and middle management (Weindling and Earley, 1987). Virtually all of the headteachers in the present study had previously held the post of deputy head, and the average length of that post had been five years, compared to 7.8 years for the ‘new’ heads and 6.2 years for the ‘old’ heads in the Weindling and Earley (1987) study. Most of the current female heads appeared to have had a regular career progression, with 73 per cent having had the academic post of head of department and 41.9 per cent having a pastoral post such as head of house. A smaller proportion, 32.6 per cent and 18.9 per cent respectively, had
held the post of senior teacher or head of faculty. Evetts (1994, p.6) also notes that the twenty headteachers she studied had been promoted “via the curricular route as heads of subject departments.”

Altogether, 24 per cent of the women surveyed in 1996 identified “other” posts that they had held. Again this indicated the varied background of a proportion of the female heads, including working in an advisory capacity for the LEA, responsibility for the sixth form, for TVEI, careers and a range of others.

There has been a stereotype of female members of senior staff tending to be found in pastoral posts (Weightman, 1989, Litawski, 1992). The survey data relating to the responsibilities of deputy heads do not entirely support this stereotype, since 53.6 per cent indicate that curriculum was their main responsibility, against 37.7 per cent indicating pastoral/discipline. In addition many of them indicated that, as deputy heads, they had held a variety of responsibilities. This area will be covered in more detail in the section relating to role stereotyping.

Age

Research that touches on the ages of male and female senior managers indicates that women, whether married or single, tend to be appointed to headship when older than their male colleagues. (Gross and Trask, 1976, Weindling and Earley, 1987, Shakeshaft, 1989, Evetts, 1994). The latter notes that, of the twenty headteachers studied, the ten male headteachers were in their late thirties or early forties when appointed, the ten women in their late forties or early fifties. The findings of Weindling and Earley (1987) indicated that the age on appointment of the female headteachers in the 1980s was around 44, two to three years older than their male equivalents.

It is difficult to make a direct comparison with the female headteachers researched in 1996, since they were not asked for their age on appointment but for their age at the time of the survey, and they were only asked to indicate within a wide range of age-bands, i.e. under 40, 40 - 49, 50 - 59 and 60 and over. However, the respondents had,
on average, seven years experience of the present headship, and the largest group were those in the age range 40 - 49, with less than one per cent under 40 and only one and a half per cent over 60. This might suggest an average age that is not very different to that found by Weindling and Earley (1987).

Jones (1987) does not distinguish the gender of her sample of headteachers, but 50.4 per cent of the whole sample were under 50 and 49.6 per cent over 50. The group of female headteachers surveyed in 1996 were, on average, slightly younger than those of both sexes surveyed a decade earlier with 54.4 per cent under 50 and 45.6 per cent over 50. As previous research has shown that women tend to be appointed to headship later in their career than men, the slightly larger proportion of female heads who were under 50 in 1996, might indicate a tendency for the average headteacher, both female and male, to be a little younger in the 1990s than in the 1980s. It is possible that any reduction in the average age of headteachers may be due to the bulk of retirements taking place by the age of 60 since only one and a half per cent of the population of female heads was over 60 in 1996.

Marital status

There is little existing data relating to the marital status of female headteachers. In general, it is less common for female principals to be married than for male principals. Shakeshaft (1989) reported that 59.8 per cent of female principals were married compared to 92 per cent of male principals; Davidson and Cooper (1992) state that in the UK as a whole 58 per cent of women managers against 93 per cent of male managers are married. Statistics quoted in Weindling and Earley (1987), collected for an earlier EOC survey, indicated that married women were actually in a minority as female heads. Evetts (1994) hypothesises that:

"The one-person single career might be more a female than a male strategy since, certainly in teaching, the spinster headteacher is more common than the bachelor head." (p. 66)
The proportion of female heads that indicated that they were married at the time of the survey in 1996 indicates that the spinster headteacher may now be very much in the minority. The overall proportion of the survey population that was married was certainly greater than that for UK managers as a whole. In all, 67.2 per cent stated that they were married, with an additional 13.3 per cent indicating that they were separated or divorced. Under 20 per cent chose the category “single”, and amongst these, eight were widowed and eight were members of religious orders. However, it is still likely that single status is more common amongst female than male headteachers, although the trend would seem to indicate that the differential is narrowing, since over 70 per cent of those under 50 were married compared to 64.1 per cent of those over 50.

Children

Previous quantitative research on headteachers has not provided data on whether or not they have children, although more recent qualitative research has considered the impact of having children on the career of female headteachers and teachers, and considered concepts of role conflict and strain (Evetts, 1990, 1994, Acker, 1994). The guilt imposed by role conflict was reported by many of the surveyed headteachers who had children and highlighted by one of the headteachers who had two children in the author’s pilot interviews. Of the other four headteachers, two had one child and two had none. Four of the six headteachers in Hall’s (1996) study had children and for these it was stated that: “having children had equal priority with a career” (p. 48).

The survey does reveal the fact that nearly half the current population of headteachers have no children, this is true for only twelve per cent of women as a whole (CSO, 1996). Within the group of headteachers there are differences between the over and under 50s. Those under 50 are actually less likely to have a child or children than the over 50s despite the fact that marriage is more favoured amongst the younger age group. It is possible that a number of those under 50 have not yet completed their families. One of the headteachers interviewed had a child after she achieved headship, and delaying a family is one of the career strategies identified by Evetts (1990). Nevertheless the reduction in the proportion of female headteachers having
children compared to their slightly older sisters, is somewhat surprising in view of the increased popularity of marriage and the opportunity to take statutory maternity leave which would have been more of a reality for the younger than the older heads.

The younger group of headteachers were also less likely to have two or more children than the group over 50. The proportion having one child was similar between the two groups, but only 22 per cent of the under 50s had two children, compared to 33 per cent of the over 50s. It would appear that there may be more of a tendency for the younger women to limit their families to one child or to have no children. This may be a realistic recognition of the continued difficulties associated with career ambition and motherhood.

**Barriers to women’s progress**

**Domestic responsibilities including responsibilities for child care and for parents**

Research undertaken in the UK, the rest of Europe, the USA and elsewhere indicates that generally the major responsibility for all domestic tasks including childcare and care of other dependants falls on women. In addition, the identification of women with the domestic role adds to the stereotype that places them in the role of carer in the work situation. There is evidence to indicate that, despite rhetoric, there is little increase in the male share of housework and other domestic tasks, and in addition nothing has changed to shift the actual responsibility for the running of the household from the woman in a partnership. (Ruijs, 1993, Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Burke and McKeen, 1994, Lewis, 1994).

The findings of the headteacher survey indicate that more responsibility is taken by the headteachers in 43.4 per cent of households, and responsibility is shared equally in 38 per cent of households. The findings of the five interviews indicated a partnership arrangement and a norm where the full range of responsibilities was shared. In one case the husband had taken on the major responsibility for the home and family. There is some evidence that responsibility is being shared slightly more by those under 50 than those over 50. In addition, there is a minority of men, 18.7 per cent,
who appear to take the major responsibly for the running of the household. This is most apparent in those over 50 with no children, presumably some of these are likely to be husbands who have retired or semi-retired (9.4 per cent of the husbands for whom an occupation was listed) and taken on a new, more domestic role. However, only three individuals are actually listed as “house husbands” in the list of occupations of partners. This evidence appears to indicate that there may be some slight movement towards a more equal sharing of responsibilities amongst these couples, although it is still true to say that in nearly half the households, the woman is taking the main responsibility.

The issue of support in what is often a dual career family, is an important one. Existing research seems to indicate that, even where there is a dual career family, women carry the major responsibility and suffer from not having a ‘wife’ (Acker, 1994, Grogan, 1996) and that both of the partners are subject to the demands of two ‘greedy institutions’ (Coser, 1974), that is work and family. The headteacher research considered the occupational role of the husbands/partners of the headteachers, and it was notable that the largest single group, 60 per cent of the husbands, are in educational occupations. For the five interviewed heads, four of the five husbands are, or had been either headteachers or inspectors or both and the fifth is a teacher. It would seem likely that such husbands/partners are in a position to offer understanding and support to their wives, both because they understand the particular demands that are being made of their partners, and because they may have the relative flexibility of the working hours associated with teaching.

Family concerns in the shape of caring for dependants other than children is not a theme dealt with in the existing literature, but such responsibilities were a feature of the lives of about a third of the headteachers. The range and extent of responsibilities varied, but for those over 50 it was not surprising that a slightly larger group, 36.9 per cent indicated such responsibilities.
Role conflict and guilt

The potential for role conflict and the associated guilt is a theme that runs through the existing literature on women in senior management in education (Evetts, 1990, Adler, 1993) The issue of guilt associated with child care was also a common theme for the headteachers responding to the survey, and amongst those interviewed, one of whom referred to the fear that her daughter would be somehow “damaged” by the experience of having a working mother.

For the majority of the headteachers with children in the survey, the care of small children had largely ceased to be the concern since, for most of them, children were now over twelve years old. Only ten of the headteachers actually had a child or children under five years old. However, approximately half of the total of headteachers did have a child or children, and they would have carried the major load of childcare when their children were younger and establishing their career. For example, they named themselves as the person most likely to be looking after children when they were ill. Both headteachers in the present survey and those elsewhere (Evetts, 1990) comment on being fortunate in that their children were seldom ill, or that they “managed” to be ill in the holidays, a recognition of the difficulties that would be caused if the children were less “co-operative”. However, like the headteachers interviewed and observed by Hall (1996), the majority of the headteachers appeared to have successfully managed the difficult job of combining work and motherhood. Over 95 per cent of the respondents answering questions on children felt that they had been able to obtain satisfactory childcare arrangements, even though some indicated piecemeal measures, and the older headteachers had not had the benefit of maternity leave.

Some role conflict is likely to be handled by developing career management strategies.
Career strategies

In respect of female and male secondary headteachers, Evetts (1994) identified that within a dual career there tends to be three options that can be adopted:

- the postponement strategy;
- the modification strategy; and
- the balancing strategy.

These strategies can be observed in the responses to the survey of female headteachers. Many of the respondents indicated that they had delayed their careers until their children were older, and the evidence of the small number of children under twelve confirms this. A quarter of the comments on childcare indicated that the headteacher’s career had been postponed while children were young. This indicates the existence of a clear postponement strategy for a number of the headteachers with children. There are also indications from over 20 per cent of the headteachers that domestic circumstances have been a big influence on their career pattern, and that a similar proportion never made a career plan. Both of these factors could be evidence of either postponement or modification.

The additional responsibility of caring for other dependent relatives such as parents was experienced by over a third of the over 50s and a quarter of the under 50s. Whilst this was not always identified as a particularly heavy responsibility, it is likely that it might be a factor in modification strategy for some of the heads. Careers may have been subject to modification in the case of the 37.7 per cent of the married headteachers who indicated that they had, at some time, changed jobs to follow their husband or partner. It is interesting to note that those under 50 and those with no children were less likely to have done this than the older headteachers and those with children. In fact, nearly the same proportion of husbands of those under 50 (26.2 per cent) had changed their jobs to follow their female partners as the reverse (30 per cent) which indicates more of a balancing strategy with regard to career planning.
The balancing strategy was certainly evident amongst some of the interviewed headteachers, who had discussed taking 'turns' with their careers. The evidence of a dual career was clear in that nearly a third of all married respondents had at some time operated separate households. There does appear to be some evidence from the surveyed heads of an increase in the balancing strategy, since more of the under 50s shared domestic responsibilities, and more of their husbands were likely to move house to follow them than was true of the over 50s.

Evetts (1994) also identifies the possibility of the one person single career, more common amongst women than men, which is followed by the 19.5 per cent of the single headteachers and by some proportion of those who have been married but are now divorced or separated (13.3 per cent). The possibility of the two person single career (Evetts 1994) is more commonly adopted by men, whose wives support them, but there is evidence of a tiny proportion of house husbands in the current research who are breaking the mould and supporting the career of their wives.

Hall (1996) in her qualitative research, follows the more detailed classification outlined by Evetts (1990) in differentiating types of career strategy that she identified amongst female primary school headteachers. These are: the antecedent career; the accommodated career; the subsequent career; the two-stage career and the compensatory career. The identification of some of these strategies, particularly the subsequent career, is possible from the data obtained in the survey but more detailed evidence of some of these strategies is indicated in the more qualitative data obtained from the interviews. From this data, it is possible to identify examples of the "antecedent career" where work has taken preference, in the case of the two headteachers without children. However, there are no true examples of the "accommodated career" where role conflict is minimised by rejection of promotion, or even of the "subsequent career" where promotion is deferred, although there is an example of family being deferred, in the case of the head who had her child after achieving headship. The "two-stage career" with a longer break for child care is hardly applicable to the two other heads with children, since both were able to carry on virtually uninterrupted careers, one supported by a husband who took the major responsibility for the household, and the other because the teacher shortage of the time
meant that she was in demand and could rely on a variety of somewhat unorthodox help including taking her child to school with her. These headteachers can be contrasted with four of the six headteachers in Hall’s (1996) research where the accommodated and subsequent careers were more common. However, in both cases it would be true to say that there was evidence of: “continuing centrality of their commitment to teaching as a work activity,” (Hall, 1996, p. 51), irrespective of a range of family commitments, and of the need to find strategies to accommodate competing demands.

Career breaks

There is a perception that the career break is the main factor responsible for the poor representation of women in educational management (Evetts, 1990). This is despite the fact that the average length of career break appears to be lessening, the most recent figure for women overall being 3.5 years (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). In addition Adler et al (1993) report that the proportion of women taking career breaks for children is lower than generally thought and may be as low as 11 per cent in the London area. The population of headteachers surveyed is not typical of women as a whole, since they represent those that have been successful. All of the headteachers were asked if they had taken a career break, and for how long, and just under half (46.4 per cent) had taken a break of some kind. Although a minority had taken a career break for qualifications or industrial secondment, the majority had taken a break related to childbirth and care. It was apparent that for those under 50 the pattern of such career breaks was different from that of the older age group. In particular more of the under 50s had taken maternity leave and only a tiny proportion had taken a longer break. It would appear that the opportunity to take maternity leave has been important for the younger headteachers, who have been able to resume work without formally making a break in their career progress. This is also borne out by the indication that resuming the career at the same level after the break had been problematic for 21.3 per cent of the over 50s but only 7.3 per cent of the younger age group. The phenomenon of the apparent demotion of women taking a break in their career was reported by Morgan et al (1983), and it may be that this is less common for women in the 1990s. It had not been true for the five headteachers who were
interviewed. Of the three who had children, two had taken maternity leave, and the third had reached a senior management position in her twenties despite having children.

Women may be aware of the importance of the experience gained in the home, and how the expertise acquired in the management of multiple tasks can be a real advantage when addressing the manager’s role in school (Ozga, 1993, Ribbins and Marland, 1994, Ribbins, 1997). The headteachers surveyed were not specifically asked about the benefits of career breaks. However, in commenting on the advantages of being a woman headteacher, there was recognition that the experience of running a household was not dissimilar to managing a school, and that being a mother and handling the demands of family life in addition to work made women headteachers more approachable to parents, particularly mothers.

**Barriers to progress associated with factors within the work place**

The barriers to the career progression of women that are experienced within the work place are inter-twined with the perception of women in their domestic role, which has led to the presumption that women may be ill-fitted for management and leadership. At its most extreme this can lead to overt and covert discrimination against women in relation to their promotion and appointment for more senior roles. The prevailing culture of many mixed secondary schools is male (Cunnison, 1989, Mac an Ghaill, 1994) and, for women in senior management, there is the additional difficulty of dealing with the predominantly male culture that may be experienced through the LEA, local meetings of heads, and meetings with local industrialists or contractors. Schmuck (1986) referred to the fact that men were often gatekeepers at every stage of career progression. This may extend to access to informal opportunities for development as well as to the more formal procedures leading to promotion and appointment. A further barrier that women may meet in career progress is the stereotypes that identify them with the caring and pastoral roles and may exclude them from others.
Overt and covert discrimination

Despite the fact that sex discrimination is illegal, there is still some evidence that it exists, although mainly in a covert form. There are difficulties associated with bringing a successful case of overt discrimination before an industrial tribunal (Chadwick, 1989), and most employers in education claim that they are committed to a policy of equal opportunities. However, women in general management still report perceiving the existence of bias against them (Davidson and Cooper, 1992) and there is also evidence of similar perceptions in education (Adler et al, 1993). The women interviewed as the first stage of the author’s research were able to report some overt discrimination. In one case, a headteacher was formally told that women were not being considered for this post. This case may have been unusual, since it occurred fairly recently. The evidence of most of the overt bias that emerged from the survey connected such official discrimination with an earlier period. For example several headteachers referred to the 1960s and 1970s when discrimination on grounds of sex was still legal, and when they were told that they would not be considered for a particular post simply because they were women. Evidence of scarcely less blatant differentiation at the point of interview was rife, and will be considered in association with job applications and promotions in a later section.

Structural factors

A further form of institutionalised discrimination may be found by looking at factors that exist within the educational systems and structures of different countries. Perhaps the most common example is the tendency for women to predominate in the teaching of younger children, and to be present in smaller proportions in secondary and tertiary education.

Research in the USA indicates that women are directed towards the less desirable positions in secondary education. Women who take such positions are called by Hill and Ragland (1995) “Messiahs, Scapegoats, and Sacrificial Lambs”. There was little evidence of this phenomenon amongst the data collected from the female headteachers in England and Wales, although one head did refer to her view that “men could afford
to be choosy, I could not” when applying for headship. However, there is a form of
discrimination that relates to girls’ school that might be considered analogous.
Several of the headteachers had been unsuccessful in achieving headship in co-
educational schools and then met success in applications for girls’ schools. In
addition, experience in all female schools was found to limit the opportunities for
headships elsewhere. One head referred to the fact that her experience in girls’
schools was regarded as too “limited”, another to the advice she received to move
sideways from a deputy post in a girls’ school to a deputy post in a mixed school in
order to broaden her experience. However, in contrast with other European countries
where single sex schools have largely been phased out, the opportunities afforded to
women to become heads in girls’ schools in the UK could be seen as an advantage,
leading to a larger number of female heads than might otherwise have been expected.
(Ruijs, 1993).

Other examples of such structural factors include the system in France, where women
in senior positions may be disadvantaged by a system that directs them to specific
geographical areas, causing clashes with family responsibility, (Fave-Bonnet, 1996)
and in the Netherlands, where the tendency to move to larger schools has favoured the
appointment of male rather than female heads (Kruger, 1996, Ruijs, 1993). No such
structural factors were referred to by the female headteachers surveyed in England and
Wales.

A “male culture” in secondary education

A predominantly male culture is a pervasive factor that women must contend with in
making their career progress in mixed secondary schools. Mac an Ghaill (1994) has
identified the “power of masculinity as an institutional force, operating to marginalize
and exclude women” (p. 29). Cunnison (1989) identified the ways in which “gender
joking” can be seen to maintain these power relationships between men and women.
Similar research evidence from Australia, a range of European countries and the USA
(Ramsay, 1995, Ruijs, 1993, Hill and Ragland, 1995) testify to the difficulties of
women in coping with a predominantly masculine culture, which in its most extreme
forms could be interpreted as sexual harassment.
Sexual harassment is probably reported more in industry (Davidson and Cooper, 1992) than in education. However, at least one incident reported by female heads in the 1996 survey could have been construed under this heading. This was the case where all female staff went through a “sort of rite of passage” of being put on top of lockers in the staff room. Some headteachers also used the term “bullying” when referring to their treatment in meetings of headteachers.

In addition, some of the headteachers referred to patronising attitudes and to “funny remarks” which echo the gender joking identified by Cunnison (1989). In particular, she found that gender joking is often related to defining women in stereotypical sexual or domestic terms which “detract from their image as professional” (p. 166). Headteachers in the survey also referred to being aware of obscene jokes and references to domestic circumstances. However, in some cases, this joking was endorsed by other female staff.

The female headteachers in the survey experienced the masculine culture both through dealings with their own staff, and in their wider experience in the LEA and in district meetings of other headteachers. One overt way in which a masculine culture impinged on their actual selection for headship was the supposition on the part of some selectors that a woman would not be able to cope with disciplining teenage boys. This was also sometimes allied to the difficulties that women would have with male sport. Some ten per cent of the heads reported comments of this kind at the interview process.

In all, 54.6 per cent reported that they had experienced sexism that is strongly related to the culture of the school, and of the wider educational environment, that is sexism from their peers and colleagues. It is perhaps surprising that as many as 47.7 per cent of heads of all girls’ schools reported experiencing sexism. However, some of the heads of girl’s schools had worked elsewhere and could have been referring to a co-educational environment. In addition there were several references by heads of girls’ schools to the difficulties experienced in local meetings of heads. Sexism from
colleagues and peers was reported more widely amongst those who were heads of co-educational and boys schools (57.7 per cent).

The most common theme that emerged from the headteachers’ answers in respect of sexism from peers and colleagues was that of male resentment of female leadership. This theme was evident in about a quarter of all the comments. This attitude is implicit in earlier research, particularly that relating to masculine culture (Cunnison, 1989 and Mac an Ghaill, 1994) but resentment of women in senior positions may not have been reported so clearly elsewhere. The responses indicated that men, and sometimes women, did not disguise the fact that they did not wish to have a female as leader, sometimes going so far as to threaten resignation.

The experience of the three Asian or black headteachers that were part of the survey population endorsed the accounts in the literature, for example the comment of Vasanthi Rao in Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) that as a black female she had to work doubly hard to prove herself. All three of these survey heads made the comment that doubts of their abilities were due to both sexism and racism and that they had to prove themselves both as a black person or an Asian and as a woman.

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

The existence of a masculine culture and of male “gatekeepers” may limit the prospects of women. Some of the factors that come into play can be termed development opportunities, which include the preferential development of young male teachers, difficulties in accessing informal networks, which may be male dominated, and a lack of confidence and aspirations that may affect women more than men. All of these factors play a part in the gender issues associated with selection for promotion and appointment. Women may also suffer in their career progress through their identification with certain stereotypical roles.
Development opportunities

From existing research and writing it appears that the most difficult stage of career progress is associated with the development phase in schools. This stage certainly presents more difficulties than educational achievement and selecting a career, and even more than the period of difficulties encountered in combining work and family (Hill and Ragland 1995, Gupton and Appelt Slick, 1996). Van Eck et al (1996) considered that it is the anticipation, or preparation, phase of working life when women are least favoured, missing out on opportunities such as attending conferences, or representing a group within the school. They consider that such opportunities are often unwittingly given to young men rather than women, by men who are in the position to allocate such opportunities. In this analysis they may be drawing on the work of Schmuck (1986) who had earlier emphasised this point. Still (1995) refers to the “glass walls” and “sticky floors” which may limit the possible progress of women at an earlier stage than that of approaching headship, when they wish to move from stereotyped female roles to roles that will give them greater career options.

The women in the author’s survey were not specifically asked about the range of development opportunities open to them in their progress through their careers. The interviewed headteachers referred to mixed experiences which varied from school to school. However, all were aware of the power of “gatekeepers”, and some of the surveyed headteachers referred to difficulties where there was the absence of a female gatekeeper or the presence of a strong-minded obstructive male who might bar the path. In addition, the most important gate-keepers of all, the interview panel for selection of headteachers, tended to be predominantly male. For the surveyed headteachers, the average number of men on a panel was seven, and the average number of women was fewer than three.

Informal networks

There is evidence that the existence of “old boy networks”, sometimes informal, sometimes more formal, in the form of clubs may play an important part in supporting
men in their career progress both in education and elsewhere (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Ruijs, 1993, Burke and McKeen, 1994, Mann, 1995). The extent to which this does occur impacts on women who may quite literally be debarred from the informal networks and events such as Rotary lunches. Hall (1996) refers to the distaste that her six female heads had for the informal old boys networks that they observed.

Although the female heads surveyed were not specifically asked about this area of their experience, some comments were made which endorsed the view that such informal networks both exist and have an influence. One headteacher, referring to her applications for headship in the shire counties identified that the successful men at the interviews often wore “Rotary or similar badges, - as did the panel!”

Many of the comments on sexism from colleagues and peers related to the male culture of leadership and the resulting isolation felt by a female head when faced with the predominantly male ethos of the meetings of other headteachers. One head referred to “an old boys’ club of really unreconstructed men in waistcoats”. This view of meetings was endorsed by the responses of the heads interviewed in the first stage of the research, one of whom referred to the feeling that men were questioning her right to speak simply on the basis of her being a woman.

**Issues of confidence and career planning**

It is not surprising that, faced with a largely male culture, a predisposition for “gatekeepers” to be male and for men to be seen as leaders, women may tend to be less confident than men in their career planning and in their own abilities to become senior managers.

Issues relating to confidence and career planning for women are evident in research both in the USA and the UK. The indications are that women are more likely to expect to have the majority of qualities required for a job, whereas men are confident about applying with only some of the qualifications and experience (Shakeshaft, 1993, Rogers, 1993). The career success of the headteachers studied means that they are not likely to be typical of the majority of women in education, who do not become senior
managers. The interviewed headteachers were fairly confident in making applications, and appeared to be making realistic judgements about their own abilities. In this they were similar to the headteachers in Hall’s research (1996) who made a reasoned assessment of their ability to be heads. The interviewed heads were also like the heads in Hall’s (1996) study since they had been subject to a range of positive influences from their own homes. In particular, the families of all the interviewed heads had stressed the importance of educational achievement for both boys and girls, and, in most cases they were the first generation in their family to go through higher education.

A minority of the surveyed heads indicated that they had harboured doubts in their ability to obtain headship. Other existing research seems to indicate that women’s lack of confidence may prevent them from aspiring to headship as early in their careers as men (Hustler, et al 1995, Gold, 1996). The latter refers to their need for encouragement, their ability to “drift” into headship and their final recognition that they have been managed by someone less effective than themselves. All of these factors can be seen in the responses of the headteachers in the survey. Whilst more than half, 57.2 per cent, had not doubted that they would achieve headship, the 42.8 per cent who did, mainly explained their doubts in terms of career planning, lack of confidence, experience of rejection and factors related to their life experience as women, such as taking time off in mid-career. Those under 50, the heads of girls’ schools, the single and those without children were less likely to doubt their potential for success. Those who were married or divorced with children and over 50 were more likely to have lacked confidence. It would appear that the younger headteachers and those who do not carry the full stereotype of domesticity are those who are more likely to be confident in their career planning.

Over 20 per cent of all the headteachers claimed that they had never formulated a career plan. Of those who had experienced doubts about their success, 35 per cent met Gold’s (1996) suggestion that women may just “drift” into headship. Typical comments from the survey headteachers included the fact that they had not considered headship until they were established as a deputy, or that they made one application just for the experience and got the job. Others of the heads took rejection
to heart or commented on their lack of confidence and under-estimation of their own abilities. The interviewed headteachers varied in the clarity of their plans to achieve headship, but indicated their belief in their own abilities and their determination to achieve.

One strand of thinking that does emerge from the survey heads relates to the factors that specifically affect women. These factors include: awareness of the male “agenda” of governors; geographical restrictions on where they can apply for headship because of family ties and reaching the stage of application for headship later than is desirable because of taking time out of the career to look after family, and the consequent fear of “missing the boat”. One head referred to the fact that “seven years out has been costly.” The geographical factors and the longer breaks in career for childcare do appear to be slightly less of a feature of the lives of the younger headteachers where husbands and partners are almost equally likely to move to follow their wives as are their wives to follow them, and where maternity leave guarantees the right to return to a job.

The interviewed heads were asked about the ways in which they dealt with criticism in their job. There is some evidence that females are criticised less than males, and as a result may be less good at dealing with criticism in a constructive way, taking it too much to heart (Shakeshaft, 1989) To some extent, the interviewed heads bore this out. They had found ways of coping with criticism as an expected and normal part of their development as heads, but they still found it difficult, one commenting on how her “identity is so strongly wrapped up in what I do”.

Selection and Promotion

The issues relating to confidence and career planning may be vital in what Schmuck (1986) refers to as “the winnowing process”: those intermediate stages through which any aspirant to senior management must pass. They also apply to the final hurdle in becoming a head; the vital step of passing the selection process. The POST project did indicate that for those women who do get as far as applying for headship the chances of achieving success are proportionately as good as a male candidate’s.
Women only accounted for 11 per cent of the applications for headships of mixed comprehensive schools in 1980-83 and they were also 11 per cent of those appointed. (Morgan et al, 1983, p. 68). Despite the proportionate chances being good, women remain in a minority as candidates for headship, and it appears that all selection procedures may be subject to bias in relation to gender. Morgan et al (1983) did comment on the need for women candidates to have qualities additional to their male peers, and considered that women were likely to be disadvantaged where the majority of the selectors were men. Alimo-Metcalfe (1994a) concluded that even the more "scientific" methods of selection such assessment procedures including psychometric tests and personality measurements have an inbuilt male bias which may be even more difficult to counter than the more obvious prejudices of some interview panels.

The POST research (1983), in particular, identified the likelihood that selectors, who tend to be male, had difficulty in overcoming the stereotype that links women with the home and family. More recent research still confirms that this is the case (Grant, 1989, Evetts, 1991). It is only in Hall’s (1996) study that a more enlightened view on the part of the selectors is indicated; at least two of the six headteachers being appointed against their own expectations as they did not fit what they thought of as "the desired stereotype." (p. 59). For the interviewed heads in the current study, the experience of selection had generally been positive. Two achieved headship very quickly, and the process had been viewed as supportive. However, the majority of selectors had been male, and there were individual instances of sexism from governors and others.

Of the heads surveyed in 1996, a majority, 62.5 per cent felt that they had experienced sexist attitudes and bias in respect of job applications or promotions; a proportion that indicates that the findings of the POST survey in the early 1980s are still largely endorsed in the 1990s. The women under 50 are more likely to report sexist attitudes than the women over 50, indicating that the attitudes reported are recent, rather than just the recalled experience of the older heads. In addition, the heads with children were more likely to comment on sexism, a fact that accords with the likely bias of many male selectors. In fact 23.6 per cent of all the sexist comments related to the husband and/or children of the aspiring head. The comments included questioning on
the attitude of the husband “to this headship lark” and questions on care of children, or whether the applicants might have children. The next most common set of comments related to aspects of the femininity of the applicant that might make her unsuitable for headship, these included comments on her appearance, and those implying that as a woman she was simply not as able as a man to be an educational leader.

One aspect of the reported comments is the intrusive and personal nature of much of what had been said, relating to private family arrangements, and the physical appearance of the candidate. Selectors, who are mainly male, appear to feel free to make such comments about women, who may be subject to greater scrutiny than men in the selection process (Morgan et al, 1983). Certainly many of the comments from the surveyed headteachers related to the need for a woman to be better than a man to succeed. Even when they were judged better, it was possible for the woman to be rejected on the basis that “the mainly all male panel couldn’t bring themselves to appoint a woman”.

The research undertaken for the POST project (Morgan et al 1983) indicated that the influence of the LEA tended to benefit female candidates. There have been some questions raised about the impact of the diminution of the role of the LEA in relation to selection and the relative increase in the power of the governors. Prejudice on the part of some governors was a concern of 11.8 per cent of the headteachers surveyed, who commented on the rather crass attitudes exhibited by a few governors. This was endorsed by some of the pilot headteachers who indicated that some of the governors could not always come to terms with the appointment of a female head.

Geographical location is a further feature that has been documented with regard to the appointment of female headteachers. Edwards and Lyons (1994) researched the distribution of female headships, discovering that the further from London, the less likely are women to be appointed to secondary headships. In particular, candidates in the north of England, East Anglia, Wales and Scotland face increased odds in attempting to achieve a headship. It is likely that this is related to stereotypes about women as leaders in the more traditional areas. London has the highest proportion of female heads in the country, and this may reflect the influence of the ILEA which
placed importance on gender equality. The survey research confirms the findings of Edwards and Lyons (1994) in regard to location. Although no analysis was done on the basis of geography, there are several comments from the survey heads about the difficulties of achieving headship in the north, and the difficulties associated with the more conservative shire counties.

**Role stereotyping**

One of the main limitations on the career progress of women can be the stereotypes that are held about them simply because they are women. Such stereotypes may define the perceptions of what a woman is achieving, and what she may be capable of achieving, the concept that Still (1994) refers to as “glass walls”. Probably the most common stereotype about women relates to the perception that they are primarily bound up with the home, children and domesticity, and will naturally take on the equivalent role in a work situation, that is a caring or pastoral role. Such roles have been seen to be diverse in nature, giving experience that is specific to the school and which may be considered less important than the “harder”, more straightforward roles (Weightman, 1989). In turn these diverse caring roles do not provide good experience for promotion which is more likely to follow the academic or curricular experience (Weindling and Earley, 1987). Even where the role is not necessarily defined as pastoral, women are more likely to be expected to take on a caring role (Singleton, 1992).

The role of the female deputy head has been subject to research which indicates that it has often been a gender stereotyped role. In particular, the work of Litawski (1992) on the female deputy head outlined a role that was often concerned with the “social-emotional” and where lower status tasks associated with cleanliness might predominate. Both the interviewed and the surveyed heads gave clear examples of knowledge of the same type of role. References to being in charge of “noticeboards”, “flowers” and “coffee” were common aspects of at least some female deputy heads’ roles. However, there now appears to be an awareness of this type of stereotyping, and it is possible that there is a move towards consciously avoiding such stereotyped roles, including ensuring that experience before deputy headship equips the potential
deputy or head for a range of responsibilities. For the majority of the heads surveyed, curriculum had been their main responsibility, and although pastoral responsibility was the second most common area, the range of specialisms quoted was very wide. In addition, several of the heads commented on the need to avoid the traditional domestic and supporting role that colleagues expected them to fulfil.

The interview data support the fact that there have been changes in the way ambitious and realistic women view the posts of responsibility that they are offered since the heads interviewed were well aware of the need to have all round experience outside the normal stereotype and had all managed to achieve this. The work of McBurney and Hough (1989) also suggests that female deputy heads are awake to the need to adopt a more diversified role than the old stereotype suggests, and the need for varied experience has been endorsed by Roach (1993).

It was the question “have you felt the need to prove your worth in a management position?” that provoked most of the comments about stereotyping from the survey heads. Over 60 per cent of the headteachers answered this question positively, and for the heads of co-ed and boys’ schools the proportion was just under 70 per cent. Of this group, around a third made comments about the need to break away from stereotypes. The large number of comments allowed the opportunity to identify the different types of stereotypes that the headteachers had faced. One was the specific stereotyping of female deputy heads into pastoral roles, that has already been referred to. As might be expected the majority of the comments did relate to the domestic role stereotyping of female headteachers. As a result of this some of the headteachers themselves felt the need to underplay this part of their lives. In addition, there were several comments about visitors automatically presuming that the headteacher was the secretary. A further theme referred to the stereotype about women in management, that they would be too soft and unable to cope. The reverse of this was also experienced by some headteachers, illustrated by one referring to the stereotype held by governors, that as a career woman she would be “cold, hard and single minded”.

Other themes relating to the stereotyping of women were: that there are certain issues such as finance and buildings that women cannot deal with and that they cannot cope
with disciplinary problems. Some of the women reported that they were “tested” by being put in roles that are considered hard for a woman.

A further belief that exists about women in leadership roles, is that they have to be better than a man to get the job. This view was actually endorsed by a large number of the heads. Specific comments of this nature were made by over 20 per cent of the heads that responded, and this view was also taken by the interviewed heads. Many of the heads referred to the long hours of work that they were prepared to undertake. One of the interviewed heads referred to working a 70 hour week as a matter of routine. Whilst this meant that they were thorough and conscientious in doing their job, this might make them, like the heads in Hall’s (1996) study, rather daunting as role models for other females, or even males. Again the three black or Asian heads made reference to the need to overcome stereotypes that apply to both gender and race.

Whilst those women who aspire to headship may be more aware of the dangers of taking on roles that stereotype them and thus make it more difficult to progress, stereotypes about the work that is suitable for men still continue. Davies and Gunawardena (1992) have identified the clear differentiation of roles in schools on a gender basis across countries. The sort of roles associated with men, for example curriculum related, are likely to make men more “visible” and identify them with management and leadership positions.

Ways in which progress for women in educational management can be encouraged

A smaller proportion of women than men reach senior positions in education and elsewhere. Some of those who succeed perceive no difficulties associated with gender (Matthews, 1995, Schmuck and Schubert, 1995). Of the surveyed headteachers, 37.5 per cent stated that they were not aware of sexism in job applications and 45.4 per cent were not aware of sexism from peers. However, despite this, the majority do report sexist attitudes and the relatively low proportion of women in management.
would seem to indicate a range of career obstacles for women, at the individual, institutional and societal levels.

Women may be faced by career difficulties that result from a predominantly male culture in secondary schools and management, discrimination that may be underpinned by unquestioned stereotypes, and issues related to poor confidence and career planning. Some of these factors may be structural and cultural and may not be responsive to small scale change. However, it may be relevant to look at those factors that have helped women to obtain senior positions in education. One of the factors that appears to be most important is mentoring. Other encouragement may come from informal support from family, friends or women's networks, from the influence of role models or from attending training, including that specifically designed for women. In addition, women's career progress may be encouraged by institutional changes, such as raising the awareness of "gatekeepers" or by changes in society brought about by government legislation and the guarantee of equal opportunities.

**Mentoring and role models**

Mentoring is generally recognised as useful, if not essential, in inducting someone new to a post. However, longer term mentoring can go beyond induction to include the concepts of "sponsorship", "coaching" and "counselling" which imply a more positive role in guiding another's career. It is this aspect of mentoring, which can be either formal or more informal, which may be particularly valuable in progressing the career of young able teachers. Mentoring has been seen as particularly important in the development of female leaders (Evetts, 1990, Hill and Ragland, 1995, Grogan, 1996), who may need support and encouragement additional to that offered to males. In addition, it appears that males may more automatically obtain informal career sponsorship (Schmuck, 1986).

Over 50 per cent of the survey headteachers referred to a mentor or role model, of whom the most common was a headteacher. Several of the heads named specific individuals in education who had proved inspirational, and others mentioned that they had designated mentors including "partners" from the business world. Although half
of the heads recognised that they had mentors, there is a discrepancy between the 96 per cent of heads who considered that they had been encouraged and those that positively identified that they had a mentor. This was recognised by some heads who commented on the importance of mentoring and who had themselves felt the lack of a mentor. The concept of role model was not considered separately from that of mentor in the survey. However, the idea of the heads themselves acting as role models for other women is considered in a later section dealing with the headteachers and their attitudes to professional development of their staff, particularly their female staff.

The interviewed heads commented on the importance of support, identifying whole schools where the ethos was supportive, and commenting on the particular importance of previous heads and deputies who had sometimes given practical help, for example mock interviews or help with letters of application. Similarly the heads in Hall's (1996) research recognised the importance of support and help in career advancement.

The benefits of mentoring are generally not disputed. However, there is a question as to whether women are best mentored by other women or by men. The advantages and disadvantages are summed up clearly by Kram (1983) and Hurley and Fagenson-Eland, (1996).

Men are more likely to have access to powerful positions than women, and therefore may be more available as mentors, and more effective as career sponsors. However, there may be difficulties for men and women paired as mentor and mentee in view of the intimacy of the mentoring relationship, and a tendency for a dependency relationship to be cultivated. Women as mentors do provide appropriate role models, but there are fewer of them in positions of power, and, as mentors and career sponsors, they may not be seen as being as influential in the organisation as their male equivalents.

In education, issues of gender and mentoring have not been raised to the same extent as in the business environment, but in the USA, senior women administrators in education report being mentored by men more often than by women, which is
unsurprising, given the relatively small numbers of women in senior management. The only adverse comments in relation to this cross-gender mentoring in education were in regard to clashes in styles of management between the male mentors and the female protégés, who often wished to adopt a more collaborative management style (Grogan, 1995).

The headteachers in the survey usually did not specify the sex of their mentor, but in the cases where they did, there were approximately equal mentions of each, 23 in the case of male headteachers and 22 in the case of females. All the mentors were viewed positively, and the heads were not specifically asked to comment on the relationship between mentoring and gender.

Support from family, colleagues and women's networks

Support for women in their career progress is recognised as important. Hall (1996) has identified the value of support both from colleagues at work and from the husband or partner rather than any more formal network or group. The female secondary heads in the survey rated the importance of support very highly. Almost all (96.3 per cent) of them indicated that they had received encouragement for promotion, and the largest category of those that had encouraged them was a former headteacher. Other senior managers in schools and husband and family were also very important influences.

Qualitative research supports the hypothesis that female headteachers receive support from their partners. This was very important for the five headteachers interviewed in the first phase of this research whose husbands shared, or had experience of, a common career and with whom they “took turns” in career advancement. The support of family was also extremely important for those included in Hall’s study (1996).

The surveyed headteachers overall placed a headteacher as the single most important influence in encouraging them (73.6 per cent) with other senior managers also an important source of encouragement. However, for those who were married, husband and family were identified as influential by 78 per cent. The importance of the
husband/partner was also evident as they were identified quite separately as the main career influence by approximately half of the headteachers. In this capacity, a headteacher or deputy was mentioned by a quarter of them, and colleagues, their own teachers and friends were also rated highly.

For those headteachers who are married, the influence of the husband/partner and family is clear. Although some women headteachers may feel a need to distance themselves from their domestic life whilst at school, career decisions tend to be taken in the context of the marriage. In addition, for just over 20 per cent of the headteachers, 25 per cent of those with children, the actual domestic circumstances are considered a major influence on the career path.

The importance of informal and more formal support for women by other women is indicated by researchers in the USA (Schmuck, 1995, Gupton and Appelt Slick, 1996). There, women's networks may be particularly identifiable in respect of the establishment of advocacy groups. In Australia, research indicates the importance of women's groups, (Blackmore, 1994) and, in the UK the importance of women's networking and support is also recognised (Perry, 1993, Peace, 1994, Hustler, 1995).

However, not all women feel the need for the support of other women. The heads in Hall's (1996) study clearly felt that the support of work and family was sufficient, and the work of Matthews (1995) and Schmuck and Schubert (1995) identifies that women do not always seek or give support to other women. Matthews has produced a typology ranging from activists and advocates for women on the one hand and isolates and individualists on the other. The second two groups basically deny that women face any differential treatment. It may be that the general responses of the heads in the survey bear out these groupings. Whilst about 60 per cent of the heads consistently identify sexist treatment and comments, the remainder effectively deny that any discrimination or differential treatment for women exists. When analysing the returns it is possible to see that the identification of sexism is greater amongst those under 50, those who are married, divorced or separated and those with children and it is also greater amongst those who head co-educational or boys' schools. However, this still leaves approximately 25 per cent of these groups who consider that
they have not met sexism either in selection and appointment or from colleagues at work.

The women heads who were interviewed did comment on their reliance on the informal contact that they had with female peers, but the heads surveyed were asked about support in general, and did not especially comment on whether the support they received from colleagues was from male or female colleagues. Support from colleagues, who may have been male or female, in encouragement for promotion was indicated by nearly half of the heads.

Several of the heads sent letters with their returned questionnaires and one identified the local importance of the Senior Women in Secondary Schools (SWISS) group, which operates in North Yorkshire, an area where there are few female secondary heads.

The importance of role models

It appears to be important that role models relate as nearly as possible to those that may be emulating them. It is possible for males to act as role models for females, but it appears preferable and more effective that females should do this (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). In addition it is seen as important that black women relate to other black women as role models (McKellar, 1989, Adler et al 1992, Hustler et al 1995). It is not necessarily the case that women will take only one role model. Hall (1996) indicates that the heads she studied drew on several role models, some of whom acted as object lessons of how not to run a school. The same instance of negative role models was identified by Gupton and Appelt Slick (1996) and can be found amongst the surveyed heads.

Research on senior women in education has also identified that these women are aware that they are now in the position to be role models. (Adler, 1992, Hall, 1996). Sometimes they consciously set out to provide a role model, having not had one themselves (Hill and Ragland, 1995).
The interviewed heads were aware of the importance of role models, but, as in the research mentioned above, they were more aware of the importance of being a role model themselves to other female teachers, than of how they had in the past been influenced by role models. The issues of mentoring and role models for the headteachers were generally not treated separately. However, when asked about encouraging all teachers, especially women teachers, to develop their careers, the survey heads emphasised and developed the idea of themselves acting as role models.

About ten per cent of the headteachers in the survey actually found time to have one to one conversations with all their staff on their individual development needs. In doing this many of the heads were aware of acting as role models. However, it was in respect of the encouragement of female staff in particular that the concept of role model was important, although only about 40 per cent of the headteachers specified that they considered women in any way separately from men. The concept of promoting role models was seen to operate in several ways:

- to show other women that the headteachers themselves had a family and it was possible to combine family and career;
- to act as a role model of a female head in the local authority;
- through the provision of female role models in “male” occupations, eg head of science;
- to provide role models of women returning to work in the school.

Training for women

The main issues relating to training for women are equality of access to courses, the proportion of women attending courses, and the extent to which the content of courses relate to women as well as men (Gold, 1993, Atchison, 1993, Hite and McDonald, 1995). Shakeshaft (1989) comments on the fact that management courses have rarely been changed to include the experience of women.
It is possible to identify both the benefits and disadvantages of women only courses. Women are thought to benefit from single sex training since men will not dominate the group, and the methods of communication and ways of learning most appropriate to women can be followed. In addition women only courses may provide informal opportunities for support and networking, (Al Khalifa, 1992, Ruijs, 1993, Atchison, 1993) and encourage female confidence (Jayne, 1989, Shakeshaft, 1989). An alternative view is that women only courses could be seen as discriminatory and actually belittling to women, and that, in real life, women and men must work together and be able to manage both sexes (Ruijs, 1993). Gray (1993) identifies the contribution that women heads make to training sessions, and by implication the case is made that the sessions are better for both men and women when both sexes are present.

The interviewed heads reported that they had attended training sessions for secondary heads in the local authority, and commented on the feeling of isolation in the company of a majority of men, where training aids such as overhead transparencies, inevitably contain pictures of men only, and where the presumption is that the audience is male. The survey heads were also aware of the feeling of isolation in meetings where the majority of the audience was male. Training specifically for women only was occasionally referred to.

In promoting the professional development of their own staff the majority of heads felt that it was not necessary to do anything special for female staff, although the heads of girls' schools did comment that, in any case, most of the staff was female. The most common form of professional development for all staff was identified as attendance on courses, mentioned by 87 per cent of respondents. However appraisal, and mentoring in connection with professional development were also mentioned by over 60 per cent of the heads. Just over half wrote in other methods of development of which the most important were, one to one meetings and general encouragement including practical assistance such as help with application processes. An additional and more innovative means of development was the creation of specific career
opportunities, such as working on a short term project, role rotation and taking on acting responsibilities during maternity leave absences.

For the minority (approximately 40 per cent) of headteachers that gave particular attention to the professional development of their female teachers, the main tactic was encouragement to women, particularly to combat poor levels of confidence, allied to acting as a role model. Some headteachers did promote special courses for women, again the SWISS group in North Yorkshire was mentioned in this capacity. In a few cases more radical measures for staff development of women were mentioned. These often related to the flexible handling of maternity leave, and possibilities of job sharing. The headteachers were, in general, committed to professional development of all their staff, rather than considering the needs of women as a special group. However, a large minority of the heads were concerned with promoting women in their career progress through the use of specially thought through measures although only a tiny proportion adopted more radical strategies such as flexibility related to maternity leave.

Raising awareness and addressing organisational factors

Women now make up nearly 50 per cent of the workforce. However, they only occupy about ten per cent of the management positions in Europe as a whole (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Vinnicombe and Sturges, 1995). Secondary schools in England and Wales employ approximately equal numbers of men and women teachers. Women account for about 24 per cent of secondary heads (DfEE, 1997), but growth in this proportion has been slow. From very different sources, there appears to be an agreement on the sort of measures that are necessary to increase the proportion of women in management positions in education and elsewhere.

Changes are necessary at many levels, eg cultural, organisational, individual, and governmental (Still, 1995). However, some quite practical and pragmatic measures can be identified, including at the level of organisations and individuals:

awareness raising of issues relating to women;
development of role models and mentors;
monitoring and training of gatekeepers, including selectors and appraisers;
ensuring access to management training for women.

At the cultural and governmental level:

better maternity and paternity rights;
aiming to diminish negative stereotypes about women;
ensuring and implementing equal opportunities;
affirmative action, such as a quota system.
(Schmuck 1980, Adler et al 1993)

Many of these measures are being addressed, but the issue of negative stereotypes is perhaps the most difficult to alter, since stereotypes in general are so much part of the way that people think and operate, unconsciously guided by preconceived ideas that allow people to make quick decisions about individuals and their suitability for a role. In the context of management and leadership, there are important stereotypes about women, which affect their own ideas about careers, their promotion prospects and the manner in which they operate and are perceived to operate.

The women who participated in this research are those who have been successful. However, it is possible from their responses to identify a succession of potential gender related barriers that may affect the career of women in secondary schools, including the ways in which they manage and lead once they have achieved headship.

**Gender-related barriers experienced by the female secondary headteacher in England and Wales - a Model**

The following model of the barriers experienced by women secondary headteachers in England and Wales draws on two sources, van Eck et al (1996) and Still (1995). The "Management Route" model outlined by van Eck et al differentiates the types of factors that influence progress towards a management position; these groupings are termed, "personal, organisational and social". Similarly Still (1995) summarises
career barriers as “cultural, organisational, individual and governmental”. Both authors also distinguish different phases of career development. In the case of van Eck et al, the phases are termed “Anticipation” or “Preparatory Phase”, which refers to the early phases of career when experience is built up and before responsibilities are assumed. The “Acquisition Phase” is the second stage considered, that of actually obtaining a management position. The third phase is the Performance phase, where the management position has been achieved.

Still (1996) does not differentiate phases of career in quite the same way, but does identify several metaphors which have relevance to the difficulties that women may experience in progressing from one stage of career to the next. These metaphors include the “glass ceiling” used to describe the barrier that prevents women rising above a certain level whilst giving the appearance that rising is possible. However, she also introduces some newer concepts such as that of “glass walls” which help to keep gender segregated roles, and prevent the movement sideways into areas that might be more helpful in terms of career progression. Other terms are “sticky floor”: the identification of women with relatively low level jobs, and the concept of “sticky cobweb” (Newby 1992) which indicates the morass of potential difficulties that women may face.

If data had been collected relating to the life histories of the women in the survey an initial stage would have related to the socialisation of the women. Shakeshaft (1989, 1995) considers that the particular socialisation of women and girls contributes both to the stereotypes about women and to their tendency to be good communicators; an important skill in leadership. The interviews with five headteachers revealed a surprising similarity in their backgrounds and socialisation, in particular a history of encouragement from their families with expectations that they would be successful. Hall (1996) traces the paths of her six headteachers and was able to conclude that they had exercised a large degree of choice about their careers, and that the influence of parents, particularly fathers had been very strong.

Most of the data from the survey are relevant to van Eck et al’s (1996) second and third phases, but it is possible to identify from the survey and interviews where
particular barriers to progress have been experienced in the earliest phase of career. Some factors arise in more than one phase, but have been linked to the one that is most appropriate.

The following analysis of the career barriers experienced by women headteachers in England and Wales considers the start of career, as in the modelling of van Eck et al (1996) and considers personal, institutional, cultural and governmental/social factors, similarly to the analysis of career barriers undertaken by Still (1995). The career progress is divided into three stages which are:

1. Preparation and consolidation;

2. Promotion to management;

3. The experience of headship

A summary of the most relevant existing research evidence is indicated in brackets in the left hand column, the experience of the surveyed heads is in the right hand column.

**First phase - Preparation and consolidation**

This phase includes the period of work before the achievement of middle management.

**Personal factors**

1. Subject specialism choice
   (Some subjects seen as feminine some as masculine, masculine subjects generally linked with success)

**Experience of survey heads**

Although English was the most common specialism, they had a wide range of specialisms from both "masculine" and "feminine" subjects
2. expectations - career planning
(women tend to be poor at career planning)

institutional factors

1. extent to which male "gatekeepers" control informal development opportunities
(young men traditionally offered more opportunities)

2. opportunities to be mentored
(traditionally more open to males than females)

3. provision of role model
(clearer role models for males than females, particularly in leadership and management)

4. Access to management training
(an issue for female managers, there may be an argument for women only courses)

experience of survey heads

over 50 per cent referred to a mentor or role model

over 50 per cent referred to a mentor or role model

no specific data on management training

2. expectations - career planning
(this stage, the majority did not plan their career until after they had achieved a post of responsibility)

15 per cent had planned their career by

1. extent to which male "gatekeepers" control informal development opportunities
(young men traditionally offered more opportunities)

over 50 per cent referred to a mentor or role model

experience of survey heads

evidence of sexist stereotypes widely held

cultural factors

1. women may not be expected to aspire to management positions
(the manager is male)
2. women may be “groomed” for pastoral/caring positions (female stereotype)

3. women may be subject to a “masculine culture” and gender joking

governmental/social factors

equal opportunities legislation recalled instances of overt sexual discrimination

Second phase - Promotion to management

This phase includes the span from the achievement of a position of responsibility to the point of obtaining a deputy headship. It also includes the stage of life where women are most likely to make decisions about marriage and children.

personal factors

1. expectations - career planning

(women tend to be poor at career planning and lacking in confidence about their own abilities)

2. obtaining additional qualifications, eg masters degree

(women have tended to be less well qualified than men)

experience of survey heads

46 per cent planned their career at this stage, over 20 per cent never formed a career plan

42.8 per cent had doubts about achieving headship

42 per cent have a masters degree, 1.1 per cent a doctorate, more of the under 50s than the over 50s held a higher degree
3. career management strategies
(career may be deferred in the case of those who marry and decide to have children, size of family may be limited or decision may be made to follow a single career)

4. decisions about childcare
(guilt experienced through role conflict)

5. for those who are married, possible decision about following partner's job
(women have traditionally followed a career dependent on the location of spouse)

6. decisions about career choices
(women may be stereotyped in regard to caring roles, eg special needs)

7. women are appointed to headship later than men. This may relate to institutional and cultural factors as well as personal.

Institutional factors

1. role stereotyping, linked to both domestic responsibility and career choices (pastoral roles, glass walls)
(women carry the main responsibility for

67 per cent are married and 19.5 per cent are single, 48 per cent have no children, more of the under 50s are married but are less likely to have children. Evidence of deferring career for those with children.

95 per cent stated that arrangements were satisfactory but the most common comment related to guilt

37.7 per cent had changed their job to follow their partner but for the under 50s the percentage was 30 per cent, with husbands following wives in 26.2 per cent of the cases.

73 per cent had been head of department, 41.9 per cent had held a pastoral post, the headteachers had tended to resist stereotypically female roles as deputies

no specific evidence, but span of deputy headship shorter than that reported in the 1980s

experience of survey heads
sexist comments linked to domestic responsibilities indicated for this stage

43.4 per cent took more responsibility for
the home) the home, 38 per cent shared 50/50, 18.7 per cent of partners took main responsibility

2. selection for promotion

(gatekeepers tend to be male and may hold stereotypes about women) 62.5 per cent had experienced sexism in connection with applications awareness of male gatekeepers, but 96.3 per cent said they had received encouragement for promotion

3. provision of role model or mentor

(as in first phase) over 50 per cent referred to having a role model or mentor

4. preparation for promotion

(males are more likely to be groomed for promotion; need for career mentoring) 96.3 per cent had received encouragement for promotion. 73.6 per cent had received encouragement from a headteacher, 57.4 per cent from senior managers

5. women may hold a range of responsibilities where men hold one (pastoral roles tend to be diverse in nature) most wrote in a range of responsibilities as deputy head, although curriculum was the most common single area

6. where women aspire to deputy headship, they may be directed towards pastoral responsibilities 53.6 per cent indicated that their main responsibility was curriculum, 37.7 per cent pastoral

7. when women return from maternity leave or childcare they may be side-lined, no credit given for the experience of looking after children 21.3 per cent of the over 50s were not able to resume their career at the same level, but this was true for only 7.3 per cent of the under 50s
(evidence that women did not always maintain their status when they returned to work)

**Cultural factors**

1. women may not be expected to aspire to management positions (the manager is male)

2. female domestic and pastoral stereotypes (as in first phase)

**Governmental/social factors**

1. equal opportunities legislation

2. existence of maternity leave

3. encouragement for the provision of childcare eg workplace crèches, day nurseries, tax relief

4. paternity leave (the UK is the only EU country that does not provide this)

5. affirmative action (as in USA)

experience of survey heads

male antipathy to female leadership clearly indicated

stereotypes of females remain important

experience of survey heads

as in first phase

maternity leave has changed the pattern of career breaks for the under 50s

half the headteachers used childminders, the rest used a nursery, a relative or a nanny

only nine of the fathers undertook full responsibility for childcare

not mentioned
Third phase - the experience of headship

This phase relates to the period of time when the women apply for and achieve headship. Since the majority of headteachers are under 50, a proportion of them are still concerned with the issues of childcare covered in the second phase.

**Personal factors**

1. having the confidence to apply
   (women may lack confidence, or be put off quickly by rejection)

2. coping with the selection process
   ("women have to be twice as good", governors may be biased against female heads)

3. career management strategies
   (as in second phase)

4. decisions about childcare
   (as in second phase)

5. women may feel that they are "token"
   (women may find it hard to become part of local male-dominated networks)

**experience of survey heads**

42.8 per cent had experienced doubts about achieving headship, the most common reasons for this were lack of career planning, experience of rejection and lack of confidence

62.5 per cent had experienced sexist attitudes in connection with applications

62.7 per cent felt that they had to prove their worth as a woman in management, many comments about prejudice on the part of governors re selection

Evidence of modification of career and use of balancing strategy, particularly for the under 50

knowing they were the token woman was common at the point of application, a feeling of isolation was common once they had achieved headship
6. Women may choose to manage and lead in a "different" way (women are associated with participative and co-operative ways of working).

The dominant style of management for the entire population was collaborative and people oriented, a minority adopted a more autocratic and/or efficient style, this was particularly so for the over 50s.

7. Women may need support from family for those that were married, 77.9 per cent had received encouragement for promotion from their husband. 60 per cent of the husbands worked in education.

Institutional factors

1. Gatekeepers are male

Experience of survey heads the average selection panel was 7 men and 3 women

2. Women may have to face stereotypes about the way that they manage

54 per cent had experienced sexist attitudes from peers and those they worked with, stereotypes are common

3. Governors may be biased against women heads

Evidence of stereotypes being held by governors about the ways that women manage and cope with discipline

4. Special attention may be paid to helping to promote the careers of younger women by female headteachers (evidence that not all women are likely to do this)

Over 40 per cent do give special encouragement to women Few encourage job sharing and flexible work practice

Importance of role models recognised
5. women may need support from colleagues and female networks

6. access to management training (may be an issue for women)

7. awareness of discrimination, but little evidence of a feminist stance amongst principals/heads

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cultural factors

1. women may have difficulty with the male dominated culture of the larger community (this may be particularly true in the north, Wales, Scotland, the south west and East Anglia)

2. women may meet antipathy from the male culture of the school, particularly in respect of their management style

3. the image of the manager is male

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experience of survey heads

54 per cent had experienced sexist attitudes from peers, naming local groups, eg secondary heads comments on difficulties of achieving headship in the north and shire counties

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evidence of resentment of female leadership and feminine leadership style

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a great deal of unease with female leaders and managers
4. opportunities for women heads may be limited to certain types of school. There is limited evidence only related to the fact that some women were directed towards all girls' schools (in the USA some evidence that women are directed towards the less desirable schools).

**Governmental/social factors**

(as in second phase)

The review of the research evidence from the survey appears to endorse many of the findings in existing literature including those relating to the predominant management style of women. The data also support previous findings on the possible difficulties faced by women in the present cultural climate in respect of combining families with holding management positions in education. Career management strategies clearly take this into account. The under 50s are more likely to be married, but less likely to have children than the over 50s. The impact of maternity leave has been to minimise career breaks and the possibility of demotion, but has not encouraged the career orientated to have children. Another aspect of career management is evidence of the importance of the balancing strategy, particularly for the couples under 50 where the male partner is almost as likely to follow the female than the more traditional option. The survey data support the findings of previous qualitative research in respect of sexism and discrimination, but also indicate that these are not considered noteworthy by a large minority of the heads.

The survey data indicate differences from some of the previous research in showing the relatively high proportion of those with masters' degrees, the resistance to female stereotyped roles and also the extent to which the headteachers had been encouraged in their career progress, particularly by their own previous headteachers.
and senior managers. However, a high level of resentment of female leadership is also clearly indicated.

There are some references in the third phase, the experience of headship, to the predominant style of management used by women and to their experiences whilst leading the management of the school. The next section of the conclusion focuses on the ways in which the women headteachers lead and manage.

**Gender and leadership and management style**

The identification of management and leadership with male characteristics

There are clear indications from research undertaken across countries and over time that those qualities that are identified as being held by a good manager are largely the same as those qualities that are identified as male (Brenner, et al 1989, Ferrario, 1994, Schein et al, 1989, Schein, 1994). The presumption that good managers will have identified male qualities such as being ambitious, competitive and analytical remains strong over time, particularly amongst males. The research indicates that there is some amelioration in the views of women over time, who are now more likely to identify some perceived female qualities as also being those of good managers (Brenner et al 1989).

Theories of leadership are also based on the assumption that characteristics identified as male are those of the good leader (Blackmore, 1989, 1994). In addition, most theorising about leadership has been based on research where men have predominated as subjects (Fiedler, 1967, Hersey and Blanchard, 1977). Leadership studies are also generally written from a cultural viewpoint that is embedded in the values and assumptions of the male discourse (Shakeshaft, 1989, Blackmore, 1989, Gosetti and Rusch, 1995). It is partly because the study of women in leadership is so rare, that this occurs. Hall (1996) makes the point that:

"I found it difficult at first to avoid using men's behaviour as educational leaders as a yardstick for describing women in similar positions. ... Putting the
picture straight by changing the subject from men to women does not involve saying women are different or better. My purpose is rather to explain how they are in this role (headship), in this context (schools) in this period of time (1990s).” (p. 3)

Women who are educational leaders may experience the feeling of discontinuity, since on the one hand they are generally accepted as professionals in education, but on the other hand, as women, they may be perceived to be, or feel that they are perceived to be, “outsiders” (Gosetti and Rusch, 1995).

The letters and comments that accompanied the returned questionnaires, and the very good response rate itself, indicates that the majority of female secondary headteachers do feel the need to have their views known, and do not get many opportunities as women headteachers, to do so. Many of the comments in the questionnaire and in the accompanying letters refer to the isolation that is felt by some female secondary headteachers. This isolation can be related to the possibility that some women in leadership positions may feel that they are “outsiders”.

“Feminine” and “masculine” styles of management

Whilst no claim is made for the fact that men manage in one particular way and women in another, there is a spectrum of management and leadership behaviour that includes masculine and feminine characteristics (Bem, 1974, Bem, 1977, Gray, 1993). It is thus possible to measure individuals in terms of having more or less feminine, or masculine, attributes or indeed of being classified as an androgynous leader. Bem, (1977) and Ferrario, (1994) indicate that the androgynous leader, defined as one who has many of both feminine and masculine attributes, is likely to be an effective leader, able to handle a large range of situations.

Gray (1989, 1993) has used a range of adjectives which are identified as masculine and feminine paradigms in the training of headteachers. He does not mean that men and women will have the particular range of characteristics identified, but he does note that women are more aware of gender as a factor than men (Gray, 1993).
Possibly this interest in gender factors in leadership on the part of women is a further indication of their awareness of the basically male culture in which they operate. Research on female headteachers does tend to indicate that regardless of their style of management, their working lives are defined and contextualised by their gender (Blackmore, 1996, Hall, 1996, Grogan 1995, Evetts, 1994).

Underlying the identification of certain characteristics as feminine or masculine are the stereotypes about how men and women operate as managers and leaders. The female secondary headteachers who were surveyed and interviewed were presented with the two lists, each of eight adjectives, termed gender paradigms by Gray, (1993). The list of feminine attributes was much more likely to be drawn from than the list of male attributes. Six of the feminine attributes were chosen by a large majority of the headteachers, these were: aware of individual differences; caring; intuitive; tolerant; creative and informal. Only four of the adjectives from the masculine paradigm were chosen by a majority of the headteachers. These were: evaluative; disciplined; competitive and objective. However, the proportion choosing these characteristics was lower than the proportion who chose the three most “popular” words from the feminine list.

The five headteachers who were interviewed showed consistency both with each other and with the surveyed heads. All five chose the words “caring, creative, intuitive and aware of individual differences” from the feminine list and the words: “evaluative, disciplined and objective” from the masculine list. Several of them also identified themselves as competitive in at least some ways. The only word chosen by a large number of the surveyed heads and not the interviewed heads was “tolerant”, where the interviewed heads made the point that they did not tolerate poor standards.

It would seem that some aspects of the stereotypical view of the ways that women operate in management are largely borne out by the survey of women secondary headteachers. However, the choice of four adjectives from the masculine paradigm does indicate a range of attributes that might be equated with the androgynous leader identified by Bem (1977).
The qualities indicated least often by the heads obviously came mainly from the masculine list. These were: "formal, highly regulated, conformist and normative". The two words from the feminine list were non-competitive and subjective. It would seem that the two gender extremes of leadership are rarely endorsed. One of these could be seen as stereotypically male, almost in the military sense of conforming and being highly regulated and formal. The other, represented by the terms non-competitive and subjective, represents a style of leadership that could be identified as feminine but implies a way of working that might be difficult to maintain in the educational world of inspections and accountability.

**The management and leadership styles of female headteachers**

Many empirical studies of leadership in education have largely been constructed on the basis of "no difference" (Shakeshaft, 1989) between men and women. This literature therefore starts from the basis of how men manage, and is unlikely to take account of anything that women do that is different from men. One of the main factors that may not generally be considered is the socialisation of women. Their experience as girls and women is likely to cultivate their communication skills and give them a heightened awareness of others and the importance of relationships (Shakeshaft, 1989).

One of the main themes that has emerged from research on women as leaders and managers is that they tend towards a collaborative, co-operative style of leadership and management.

**A collaborative style of management**

Research on female headteachers and principals in the USA, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada appears to indicate that female managers are likely to work both in a co-operative style and to tend towards empowering their colleagues, characteristically making use of team work. (Blackmore, 1994, Adler, 1994, Hall, 1996). This generalisation is borne out by research findings from outside education (Ferrario, 1994). Whilst the work of Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) was concerned with
male and female headteachers they also related their findings to managers outside the world of education. Their research findings established through quantitative techniques that there was a difference in the management and leadership styles of male and female headteachers. Making use of personality tests, it was established that female heads were collaborative and participative. In addition, they liked working with others and were caring, conscientious and worrying. They tended to prefer Belbin team roles of team worker and completer. However, when compared with leaders in general, there was a slight difference in that they tend to be “controlling” in a way that leaders outside education were not.

The author's survey of female secondary headteachers largely replicates the findings of Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996). The headteachers were asked to give three words that typified their management and leadership style. From the analysis of these words and phrases it was possible to identify that their preferred style of management is collaborative and people oriented. However, it is notable that most of the headteachers use the terms “consultative, “open”, “collaborative” and participative” rather than “collegial” or “democratic”. The last two terms are used, but by a relatively small number of heads. In the interviews, the main style of management identified was also collaborative and open, but the point was made, that in the end, the decisions were going to be made by the head and the senior management team, and that in no way would they be made by voting on the part of the staff. A typical example of the three words/phrases chosen to represent the management style of the survey heads was “collaborative, informal, decisions finalised by me”. The tempering of the democratic process by a realisation that the headteachers take the ultimate responsibility was also a finding of Hall (1996) and may be linked with the “controlling” aspect of headteachers identified by Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996).

Female educational leaders in the USA were also asked to give up to five words that summed up their leadership style. (Hill and Ragland, 1995) The number of women involved was only 35, and the language used was slightly different to that of the British headteachers. However, there are considerable similarities in that one clear dimension of their leadership can be equated with the collaborative and people-oriented style of management favoured by the English and Welsh heads. Words
chosen in this dimension related to being honest and trustworthy, participatory, and empowering, approachable and open, motivational and supportive.

The view that female headteachers are likely to be collaborative in their style of leadership and management is a clear finding of the present headteacher research and replicates the previous findings.

Although it is clear that the preferred management style of female headteachers is collaborative, there may be some difficulties where female headteachers are working with a number of male teachers. Hall (1996) reports that the female headteachers found some difficulty in maintaining the openness essential to collaborative working with male subordinates. Similarly Riehl and Lee (1995), working in the USA, found that men were uncomfortable working for women. In Israel, where an increasing proportion of the principals are female, there has been a tendency for men to move to schools that are run by male heads (Goldring and Chen, 1994).

The heads in both the pilot study and the survey reported considerable unease from some of their male subordinates. As indicated above (p. 327) the most common example of sexism experienced by the heads in their working environment was male resentment of female leadership. Some of this resentment was linked to the softer, more participatory style of management of the female heads on the part of subordinate males who were used to a more decisive autocratic style. The present research appears to replicate the findings from qualitative research in this country and quantitative work in the USA and Israel that there are considerable difficulties for some men in adjusting both to working for a woman and adapting to the preferred management style of most women.

Teamwork in association with a collaborative style of working appears to be the favoured management style of female headteachers. Grace (1995) emphasises the importance of teamwork for women who regard it as a natural way of working rather than something to be imposed. The headteachers in Hall's (1996) study also exhibited a preference for working in teams. Experience in general management is also that women tend to work well and naturally in teams (Davidson and Cooper, 1992,
Cartwright and Gale (1995), whereas teamwork may be viewed with suspicion by male subordinates (David, 1988).

In the free choice that the female headteachers had for words that summed up their management style, team related terms were often mentioned, and can be grouped with a range of people management and collaborative working terms as the preferred management style of the majority of the heads. The interviewed heads all stated the importance of teams in their schools, and all the headteachers had promoted teamwork, sometimes as a means of initiating change in the school.

Empowerment of those that make up teams is essential if they are to have any real meaning, and empowerment follows naturally from the establishment of the importance of collaboration and teamwork for female heads. The success of female heads in empowering others has been established in headteacher research in Britain (Jones, 1987, Hall, 1996) and in the USA (Gross and Trask, 1976, Shakeshaft, 1989, Grogan, 1996). The present headteacher research supports this finding, with empowerment being mentioned by both surveyed and interviewed heads, along with a range of adjectives that implied concern for staff, and a participatory, collaborative approach. For the interviewed heads there was practical evidence of their intentions to empower staff. Two of the more established heads of the five interviewed had taken real action to create management structures that were collaborative and empowering, flattening hierarchies and involving middle management to a greater extent than previously in decision making and planning.

**Styles other than collaboration**

Despite the fact that the predominant style of management of female heads is that of collaboration and encouragement of participation, there is evidence of alternative styles amongst them. Evetts (1994) found no real difference in the management styles of the ten female and ten male heads studied. Research in the Netherlands has shown no difference in the management styles of female and male heads in terms of decision making, although differences were found in attitudes towards what is important in managing a school (Kruger, 1996). These are studies which show that feminine and
masculine styles of management can be adopted by men and by women and would seem to indicate that there may be no substantive evidence of an alternative style of female management.

It would appear from the survey data heads that the majority of these women heads do operate in a manner that could be termed collaborative and people oriented, but there is a minority that operate in a very different way. Two strands of management style other than collaborative and people oriented could be detected in the three words or phrases that the headteachers chose to exemplify their own management style. One of these strands has been termed autocratic/directive, with examples of the use of words like “decisive, firm, strong” as well as autocratic and in one case “bloody-minded and belligerent”. The other is an “efficient” style, with the use of words such as “energetic, hands on, planning and organised”. Adjectives relating to these two themes tend to be used by the same heads. This style could be equated to aspects of the theme identified by Hill and Ragland (1995) which identified some of the leaders as falling into the categories of “demanding of self and others” and “competent manager”.

The current study is concerned with gender as a variable in management and leadership. Weiner (1995) raises the question of whether it is values rather than gender which affect management and leadership style. The final grouping of adjectives is the smallest, and has been termed “management driven by values”. This grouping covers references to vision and to values such as “honesty, trust and fairness”. However, the words are normally grouped with others that have been analysed under different headings. It would appear that the “values” adjectives represent a strand of thinking that runs through dominant leadership styles rather than being a style on its own.

**Age and a collaborative management style**

A collaborative style has been found to be the major management style identified with female heads both in the current study and elsewhere. However, there is some evidence to show that it may be younger headteachers, both male and female who are
more likely than their older colleagues to exhibit a collaborative management style. This may be linked to a freshness and idealism being brought to the task by younger heads. The tendency to be more collaborative, was identified amongst the "new" heads studied by Weindling and Earley (1987). Alternatively a change in style may be linked to a change in the expectations of what is required in headteachers in the last years of the twentieth century. Hall (1996) comments on the need for a different style of headteacher to cope with the demands of the post 1988 reforms and identifies that all six of the women heads she studied are different from their predecessors whether male or female. In addition, a more collegial style of management is now generally considered to be normatively superior to other styles (Wallace, 1989, Bush 1995), and there appears to be an awareness amongst some heads in recent years that they should at least try to move towards this style (Hustler et al 1995). However, the majority of the survey heads stopped short of collegiality and preferred terms like collaborative and participatory to identify their management style.

From the survey heads, there is some evidence that it is the younger age group who are significantly more likely to identify their style of management as "collaborative" and "people-oriented". When the headteachers chose three adjectives that typified their style of management, the majority tended to choose words that could be identified with this style. However, about 15 per cent overall chose words that were classified within the style "autocratic" or "efficient" indicating an alternative style of management adopted by a minority. This group of headteachers tended to be the over 50s; about 20 per cent of this age group as opposed to ten per cent of the younger age group chose adjectives that could be termed "autocratic" or "efficient".

Attitudes to power

Brunner (1996) has clearly identified a style of management of women who adopt a truly collaborative approach that could be termed "power to" rather than "power over", an attitude that is consistent with transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). Power "over" implies dominance, and with power used in this sense, both Brunner (1996) and Blackmore (1994) have identified the discomfort that women heads feel at being labelled "powerful". For the headteachers studied by Hall (1996) there was also
a general feeling of the use of power for empowerment, although there was recognition that in some circumstances they might wish to exert some “control”. In her study Hall (1996) identifies the implicit contradiction that the heads needed to establish their formal authority, whilst maintaining their “acceptability” (p. 188) as women.

In the series of three adjectives identified by the female secondary heads, the vast majority chose terminology that could only be interpreted as congruent with the idea of “power to” rather than “power over”, that is the empowerment of others. The bulk of the adjectives fell into the categories of “collaboration” or of “people-oriented”. The adjective “powerful” was not chosen by any of the heads, although the choice of some words may be indicative of the same need to establish authority identified by Hall (1996). Such words as decisive, firm, determined, leading, directive, strong and autocratic were chosen by a proportion of the heads.

One aspect of power is the ability to resolve conflict. The ways in which women resolve conflict appear to be somewhat different to the stereotypical male approach, and in keeping with the concept of power “to” rather than power “over”. Research appears to confirm that women generally do not respond to conflict in an aggressive way, but commonly attempt to “cool” the situation (Shakeshaft, 1989, Kruger, 1996). This would certainly appear to be true of the headteachers surveyed. When asked of the advantages of being a woman headteacher, the largest single group of comments related to the ability of female heads to diffuse aggressive male behaviour and avoid confrontation. In addition the headteachers commented on their ability to act in ways that were not constrained by male images of power, so that for example they felt free to ask for help or to admit ignorance. The headteachers were not specifically asked about their attitudes to power, but this welcoming of the freedom from perceived male stereotypes of behaviour, which was also mentioned by the interviewed heads, implies a distaste for the stereotypical image of the powerful headmaster.
Styles of communication

Headteachers represent their schools in the local community, and reference has been made above (p. 328) to the difficulties that the female headteachers reported in attending meetings of secondary headteachers, and other meetings where men predominate and the culture is likely to be antipathetic towards women. Gold (1996) comments on the difficulties that women may face in male dominated meetings, commonly being ignored by the chair and not having their contributions to the meeting acknowledged. The experiences of heads, both those interviewed and in the survey, certainly supports the idea that at least some female heads feel marginalized and isolated in such meetings.

Methods and styles of communication relate strongly to style of management. There is clear research evidence to show that there are prevalent communication patterns amongst women which differ to those commonly found in men. For example women's conversation with other women tends to be supportive and responsive rather than engaging in point by point debate. Women's speech also tends to be more tentative than that of men. (Shakeshaft, 1989, Schick-Case, 1994). No research was specifically undertaken on the headteachers spoken communication. However, some of the heads commented on the advantage of being a woman in dealing with girls, female staff and mothers. As a female head they are seen as being more approachable by other females, and it is usually the mother who tends to have dealings with the school. Similarly, the women headteachers felt freer to share emotion in difficult circumstances and empathise with families where tragedies had occurred, in a way that men might find more difficult. The interviewed heads also referred to this easier type of communication with parents and pupils as an advantage of being a woman headteacher.

Shakeshaft (1989) reported that women spend more time than men in talking to their subordinates and superordinates, and that they spent more time, in general, on communication. The findings of the headteacher research certainly concurred with this, since nearly 85 per cent of the heads stated that staff could talk to them at any time if they were not actually engaged in a meeting. In addition most of the
headteachers spent a considerable amount of their school time out of their office; nearly half estimated that they spent between 25 and 50 per cent in this way. The interviewed heads too felt it a priority to be available to staff whenever they could, and all spent time out in the school; for some this involved a commitment to regular teaching. The level of openness implied in both the accessibility to staff and to others would seem to endorse the idea of supportive heads consistent with the dominant style of management revealed by the choice of adjectives which stresses the importance of people management and collaboration.

Shakeshaft (1995) comments on the professional, collegial feedback given by female principals on their performance to their staff. A notable finding of the attitude of the female headteachers to the professional development of their staff was the large number who took the time to arrange one to one meetings to discuss individual development of staff, and the large proportion who commented on the importance of encouraging their staff. Hall (1996) also found that the headteachers she researched were committed to active management of the professional development of the teachers in their schools.

The importance of educational leadership

Research, particularly in the USA, has tended to identify women principals with aspects of the role that are directly concerned with the education of the pupils, such as teaching, and supervising teaching, the pastoral support of students, and the support of young teachers (Gross and Trask, 1977, Shakeshaft, 1989, 1995, Hill and Ragland, 1995, Riehl and Lee, 1996, Grogan, 1996). This aspect of the role of the principal or headteacher could be termed “educational leadership”. Research in the UK and the Netherlands (Gold, 1996, Kruger, 1996) also endorses the idea that women are particularly concerned with the teaching and learning aspects of their role in comparison with administrative or other responsibilities. It is also implied that women are likely to be aware of the importance of pastoral support within the school, (Santos, 1996) and may try and promote an atmosphere where there is respect for the pupils and staff, and a reliance on self-discipline rather than imposed discipline (Blackmore, 1994).
Aspects of educational leadership can be seen very clearly in the key values that the headteachers, both in the survey and in the interviews were trying to promote in their schools. For the surveyed heads there were four clear themes that emerged:

- academic excellence and educational achievement;
- the importance of every individual achieving their potential;
- respect for self; and
- respect and caring for others.

Without a companion survey of male headteacher key values, it is impossible to say whether these values represent the views of female headteachers, rather than headteachers working in a competitive environment at the end of the twentieth century. However, there is no doubt that the two key value words used most frequently: achievement and respect, are in keeping with the concept of educational leadership and very much in line with existing research on the ways in which women in educational management operate.

**Awareness of gender and the 'special' qualities of being a woman**

It may be that being a woman in management allows a freedom from stereotyped roles (Hall, 1996) and gives the opportunity to the female headteacher to develop in fresh ways that are unencumbered by the perceptions of others. In addition Grogan, (1996) refers to the life experience of women, as wives and mothers, moulding them as administrators; the experience making them different from males in the same positions. It is certainly the case that the interviewed headteachers identified that the lack of stereotypes relating to female heads gave them freedom to operate in a different way.

The advantage felt by the surveyed heads of being able to diffuse “macho” behaviour in men and boys has already been referred to, as has their appreciation of the fact that they did not feel constrained by male stereotypes. However, only ten per cent of them identified that “being a woman” was a reason for their success in professional life and
this was felt more strongly by the heads of all girls' schools than the heads of other schools. On the whole, the female heads surveyed put down their success to their hard work, with 85 per cent rating this as an important factor, and about half rating the importance of support from others. "Knowing what you want" was also important with nearly 40 per cent of headteachers mentioning this, others separately specified the related qualities of vision and determination. Academic prowess was mentioned by just over 20 per cent of the heads as a whole. Personal qualities and luck were also seen to be factors that played their part.

There were very few comments that directly linked experience in the home as wives and mothers with success, but the interviewed heads did comment on the encouragement that they had received from their parents and own home background. Being noticed as a woman head was named as an advantage by over 15 per cent of the heads, and some of them unashamedly admitted to using the fact that they were female, and operating in a male world. In this they were often consciously making use of a stereotype held about them by males such as governors, and senior officers in the LEA. In her study of six female heads, Hall (1996) also notes that the heads refer to their use of "feminine wiles" (p. 181), linking this to the work of Van Nosstrand (1993) and the prevalent relationship patterns between men and women. In general, women are taught from the beginning to be understanding of men, and men, in return, expect their needs to be understood and anticipated.

The tendency of selectors and governors to refer to the physical appearance of the female candidates for headship, has already been mentioned. Appearance, particularly short stature, as a possible difficulty for females in management positions, is noted by Blackmore (1994) and is referred to by some of the female headteachers as an area where colleagues and others may make disparaging comments. Hall (1996, p. 100) comments that female headteachers are judged as school leaders but also are seen as: "a woman on show."
Awareness of gender issues

It appears that very few female headteachers or principals consciously espouse feminism. Grace (1995) was surprised that the relatively few female headteachers included in his research in the north-east of England, were unwilling to adopt a feminist stance. His findings were endorsed by Hall (1996) in her study of six female headteachers. Generally female headteachers seem wary of being identified as feminists, and perhaps this is not surprising. Governors and others who select headteachers are often quite conservative in their thinking. One headteacher reported that her use of the address “ms” was construed as being a feminist statement. Many women do not actively support other women (Matthews, 1995), and it is notable in the headteacher research that it is a minority of heads who supply any professional development specifically for their female teachers, the majority firmly stating that they make no distinction between men and women. Of the minority that do provide special encouragement to women, only a very small proportion have taken any practical, more radical, steps such as the encouragement of job-sharing and flexible work practices. Hall (1996) also found that the heads she studied were unlikely to offer any form of positive discrimination to their staff, and tended to deny that they had been disadvantaged because they were women.

It must also be considered that 37.5 per cent of the headteachers surveyed did not perceive any sexism in respect of their job applications, 45.4 per cent that they had not experienced sexist attitudes from peers and 37.3 per cent that they had not felt the need to “prove their worth” in management as a woman. There is obviously a large minority of the heads who would either consider that there is “no problem” (Schmuck, 1995) or who are not sensitised to the cultural context in the same way as the majority of women in management positions. It is possible to see from the survey returns that those who do not see sexism or feel the need to prove their worth tend to be the older heads, those who are not married and do not have children or who work in all girls’ schools. The younger heads, those who are married, and/or have children and work in a mixed or male environment are more likely to recognise gender bias even if they do not overtly espouse feminism.
Conclusion

The female secondary headteachers of England and Wales have not previously been identified separately as a group, although there have been some surveys of headteachers that did consider gender issues. The survey undertaken in 1996 provides an opportunity to consider the characteristics of the population of female secondary heads, and to know more about their career progress, and experiences as women, in reaching senior management positions in schools.

The headteachers are approximately equally divided in two age groups; those under and over 50; two-thirds of the total are married and about a half have one or more children. Whilst marriage is more common amongst the under 50s, it is more likely that the over 50s will have had a child. The headteachers are better qualified than their predecessors and have come from a wider range of subject specialisms. They are less likely to have been pigeon-holed into pastoral or “feminine” roles in senior management than women have been in the past. However, they are still subject to the range of experiences associated with what is generally considered to be the female role within the family.

Despite the existence of the dual career family, women are still the most likely to bear responsibility for the household, (Lewis, 1994) although there is some evidence from the survey and interviews that indicates the growth between couples of a partnership relationship based on mutual support. However, the domestic role that is still normally associated with women may cause there to be constraints on the career progress of women in comparison to that of men. Associations with domesticity may also fuel largely negative stereotypes about women, but the wider domestic role of women may also contribute positively to influence the ways in which women operate in the work situation as managers and leaders.

It is claimed that the prevailing culture of secondary schools is masculine (Gray, 1989, 1993, Mac an Ghaill, 1994). There is certainly evidence for the existence of covert, and even overt, discrimination against women often linked with stereotypes related to domesticity. Obstacles to career progress faced by women who may aspire to senior
management may be most apparent in what Schmuck (1986) refers to as the "winnowing" process, that is the stages of career progress involved in readiness for headship. Informal networking and mentoring have tended to benefit males and exclude females. In addition there appears to be evidence of more self doubt and lack of confidence amongst females. Whilst this may not always be evident in those female headteachers who have been successful, a large minority of those surveyed did recall that they had been doubtful about their eventual success, and had not been confident in planning for headship. Such doubt may be more evident amongst those female candidates for headship who are currently unsuccessful, some of whom are presumably the equal of many male heads.

The final stage of the process towards headship involves selection and appointment. There is considerable evidence of the tendency to appoint in the image of those interviewing, (Morgan et al 1983) and interview panels tend to include a majority of men. In the survey, the female heads recalled something like a seven to three ratio of male to female interviewers. The need for a woman to be better as candidate than the equivalent man was recognised by many of the headteachers in the survey, and elsewhere (Morgan et al 1983). About two-thirds of the surveyed headteachers indicated that they had experienced sexism in the process of application for promotion.

At all stages of career, women are likely to be faced with stereotyped attitudes that identify them with caring or pastoral roles, whilst the more demanding and respected roles are more likely to be associated with men. Around 70 per cent of the headteachers in co-educational and boys' schools had felt the need to prove their worth as managers and to break away from the stereotypes that branded them as unable to cope.

Support may be particularly important for women who wish to progress to headship. The lack of informal mentoring for women as opposed to men has already been noted (Schmuck, 1986), and women who do become successful often identify the importance of mentors and role models. Recent research (Hall, 1996) has strongly identified the importance of the support of both family and colleagues. Other women
identify the importance of women’s networks. All of these aspects of support are also mentioned by the female headteachers in the survey, with the influence of a former headteacher being especially important, along with the support and encouragement of husbands for those who are married. Access to appropriate training for women aspiring to management is also an important issue, and one that is addressed by the female headteachers in the survey, although only a minority consider that they give special attention to the professional development needs of women teachers.

Women are identified with caring and pastoral roles, but the image of leadership is male (Schein, 1994). Many of the headteachers in the survey reported on their experience of resentment on the part of males and some females at being subject to female leadership. Studies of leadership and management are written from the assumption of male experience, and the different life experience of women is not generally taken into account (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Leadership and management can be analysed in a range of different ways, and it is possible to identify styles that could be described as feminine and masculine. These styles are not exclusive to the sex to which they relate, but provide a means of classification of management. Gray (1989, 1993) has made use of a set of gender paradigms in headteacher training. When the range of adjectives included in these paradigms was offered to the headteachers surveyed and interviewed, the majority chose a range of adjectives from both lists, but those most often chosen came from the feminine paradigm. However, some of the qualities from both lists were effectively rejected, giving rise to an identification of an androgynous style of management (Bem, 1974, 1977) drawing on a number of attributes from both gender paradigms. Such an androgynous style is claimed to be effective in being relevant and adaptable to a range of management situations (Ferrario, 1994). This style appears prevalent amongst the headteachers surveyed and interviewed and was also found in the six headteachers researched by Hall (1996):

"for reasons relating to their own formative experiences, the women heads in the study developed the confidence to enact their own interpretation of
management and leadership, based on characteristics that are neither exclusively masculine or feminine." (Hall, 1996, p. 153)

Existing research on women in management indicates that they tend to adopt a collaborative style of leadership, including the empowerment of colleagues through teamwork. They are distrustful of the concept of power as dominance, but see power as a means of working with others to achieve mutually desired ends. They tend to have good communication skills, although they are more tentative in speech than men. Shakeshaft (1989) reports that they tend to spend more time in communicating with others than their male equivalents. A further theme that emerges from existing literature is that women tend to be educational leaders, placing stress on the learning of their students rather than the importance of administrative tasks.

The headteachers’ choices of adjectives to describe their management style and values generally reflected and endorsed the findings of previous research. The predominant management style was collaborative and people centred. The values that they chose were indicative of the values of educational leaders, “achievement and respect”.

It is clear from existing literature on the ways in which males and females manage that there is an identifiable male type of management that can be found across cultures (Davies and Gunawardena, 1992). This style encompasses competitiveness, rather than teamwork, confidence in the male leaders’ abilities, and may include desire for status and reward rather than concern with and for people.

There is also an alternative style of management that can be adopted by men and women, but which appears to be more strongly identified with women. This involves co-operation, concern for others and a more reflective and tentative attitude to leadership. However, it is the male leadership style that provides the stronger stereotype of leadership, (Schein, 1995, Davies and Gunawardena, 1992) and both men and women who wish to adopt a different style may have to contend with this. The research undertaken with the female secondary heads of England and Wales shows that they may incorporate a range of attributes that can be identified as masculine as well as feminine, but confirms that the predominant management style of
the women heads is that which stresses co-operation and concern for others. However, there is a small proportion of the heads for whom this is not true. About 15 per cent of the heads may be adopting, consciously or unconsciously, a style of management and leadership that may have more in common with elements of the more stereotypical "masculine" style which involves a more confrontational stance and a more directive way of operating.

Further consideration is given to styles of management and leadership in chapter 7.
Chapter 7 Conclusion

This thesis is concerned with the investigation and collection of data relating to a specific group of women managers, the female secondary headteachers of schools in England and Wales. Although initial pilot research for the thesis was small-scale and qualitative, the major original contribution of the research is the large scale survey carried out with the entire population of female secondary headteachers in England and Wales in 1996. The data collected by the survey provide the opportunity of establishing a range of parameters with regard to the research population. It includes data relating to the characteristics of the population, and has also allowed an overview of the experience of becoming a female secondary headteacher, and the ways in which this group actually aim to manage and lead. The focus is solely on the experience of this population of women, and how they perceive themselves as headteachers.

Although some of the information collected through the questionnaire is purely quantitative, many of the questions are open ended, allowing the collection of data that are qualitative in nature. Questionnaires do not allow the freedom to probe, but many of the responses are full and rich in detail.

Most research and theory on leadership and management in education and elsewhere is based on the assumption that male is the norm. Research has generally been carried out with a population where males predominate, and theory based on research has usually been developed without taking into account the experience of females. The proportion of female managers means that they would normally be a minority of research subjects unless the sample was deliberately biased to include equal numbers of men and women (Evetts, 1994).

In relatively recent years there has been recognition of the fact that women have been omitted from research and theory (Shakeshaft, 1989, Blackmore, 1989, Hall, 1993), and there is a growing body of work that relates to the experience of women in educational management. However, this research has mainly been small-scale and qualitative. There are very good reasons for this. In order to take account of the experience of women it is essential to gain in-depth understanding, and record details
of life history, perceptions and ways of operating. This may be best achieved through qualitative methods, such as interviews and observation (Hall, 1996). However, the absence of gender as a factor in larger scale studies means that until now there have been no indicators relating to the range of characteristics and views of the population, and no data relating to the predominant management styles of the woman secondary head.

Any research that is concerned specifically with women raises the issue of the stance of the researcher in terms of feminism. The range of approaches and philosophical stances that have been encompassed by feminism includes both the stress on equal opportunities by liberal feminists to more radical views which move towards an emancipatory praxis, that is a position which frees for action for change. This thesis presents the viewpoint of women headteachers, most of whom recognise the difficulties they have faced and still face in a culture where men tend to hold positions of power and where a successful career path is usually defined in male terms. The data indicate that there are certain differences between the experiences of the older and younger heads that can be linked to changes in legislation and expectations. However, the context within which they work still appears to stereotype women and men in ways which perpetuate the status quo. The data from the large scale survey reported in this thesis may go some way to increase awareness of this. Feminist methodology has tended to stress the importance of qualitative, interpretive methodology, but more recently there has been an acceptance by feminist researchers of the need to use a wide range of methods to investigate and elucidate the experience of women. The importance of this thesis is that it presents data that provide a quantitative dimension to an area where previously there has only been qualitative research. The findings drawn from this approach may therefore have more impact for change than qualitative work, since the investigation of a whole population and the response rate of 70 per cent provides a firm basis for the findings and conclusions.

The specific research questions that were asked were drawn from the existing literature on women in educational management and relate to the career progress of women and the potential difficulties they may face in reaching a senior management position. The questions also relate to the particular ways in which the headteachers
might operate in leadership and management once they had achieved that position. The literature reviewed was primarily from the UK and the western world, particularly the USA. However, in also reviewing some literature relating to Asia and Africa, the intention was to focus on comparable findings about women in educational management and consideration was not given to the contexts within which the data were gathered. To this extent the themes relating to women in educational management are presented from a “culture free” perspective and it is possible to identify themes which appear to apply to women in management in a range of cultures. Attention is given here to the similarities rather than the differences in the experience of women across cultures.

The main underlying hypothesis of this study is: that in a culture where males tend to hold the positions of power, and where stereotypical views are held on the appropriate roles for both men and women, it is likely to be more difficult for women than men to succeed in being promoted, and that their experience will be different from that of men. Associated questions relate to the ways that women who do achieve senior management positions actually operate and whether their management and leadership styles tend to be different from the stereotype of male management and leadership. In addition, it may be that those women who do succeed are entering a man’s world, and tacitly agree that there is “no difference”, or it may be that they choose to manage and lead in new and different ways to the stereotypical “masculine” pattern. It is also relevant to consider the extent to which these successful women act as role models to other women and actively encourage their career progress.

The broad research questions identified on the basis of the existing literature were posed in chapter 1, and related to obstacles to career progress and the ways in which women manage and lead. The conclusions that follow do not necessarily relate to one or other of these two areas but provide findings that may be relevant to both.

Experience of sexism

The main hypothesis, that women are likely to find career progress more difficult than men and that they might meet specific barriers to their progress, is endorsed by the
majority of the responses to questions about sexism. The extent of discrimination that is reported by these heads provides graphic evidence of the difficulties faced by women and the extent to which perceptions of both men and women are coloured by stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes.

However, the hypothesis, as it relates to career progress up to headship, appears to be effectively denied by a group that probably constitutes about a third of the respondents to the survey. In relation to this large minority who are effectively saying "no problem", it must be considered that these data emerge from a questionnaire that did not allow the opportunity for further probing of those who stated that they had not experienced any form of sexual discrimination. The five headteachers interviewed for the first stage of research were all able to give examples of sexism at some stage in their careers. Indeed some of the examples were linked to overt discrimination. However, rather than dwelling on discrimination, they had tended to find ways of overcoming the obstacles when they encountered them, and, to some extent were then likely to dismiss them. Probing provided opportunities for additional incidents of sexism to be revealed. It is quite possible that many of the surveyed heads who reported that they had not experienced sexist attitudes, may also have been able to recount examples of sexist or discriminatory behaviour if prompted to do so. Women are sometimes unwilling to admit that they have experienced sexist behaviour. Principals interviewed by Schmuck and Schubert (1995) who actually recognised that they may have experienced differential treatment still denied that they had experienced any discrimination. A proportion of women who reach senior positions may see their success as evidence that there is "no problem" and, in effect deny that there are particular obstacles for women's progress (Matthews 1995).

The data from the survey do indicate that those who said that they experienced sexism are more likely to be drawn from those who are married, have children, are heads of co-educational schools and are under 50. The headteachers who are effectively saying "no problem", are more likely to be drawn from the ranks of those who are not married and who are childless, who are over 50 and who head all girls' schools.
However, more in-depth research of the group would be required in order to judge both the nature of their views and the extent to which they may actually have experienced any sexism or discrimination in their career progress.

The importance of stereotypes and attempts to overcome them

Throughout the analysis of the data from the survey, the importance of a range of stereotypes relating to female managers and leaders was apparent. These stereotypes appeared to underpin much of the discrimination that was evident from the responses of the majority who stated that they had experienced sexist attitudes at the time of making an application, and in the attitude of peers, both during the progress to headship, and as a head. The existence of a range of stereotypes relating to women in management appears to contribute to the existence of barriers to progress for women who aspire to headship. They also fuel overt and covert discrimination, and link stereotypes about women and home to the ways that women are expected to operate in the work environment, thus contributing to obstacles to development in the workplace.

Amongst the strongest of these stereotypes is that which identifies women with the home, husband/partner and children. The largest group of comments relating to sexism at the time of application and promotion reported questioning that implied that the woman was somehow less fitted to undertake the job of headship because the needs of her husband and/or children came, or should come, first. Paradoxically, the single female heads are not immune from stereotyping; responses from the survey included evidence that the single headteacher may be typified as cold, career minded and not understanding of children.

Related to the domestic stereotype where women are seen as identified with the home and with a caring role, is the supposition that the roles most fitted to them in school are also caring roles. Particularly at deputy head level, women may find themselves directed towards pastoral roles. However, the women in the survey showed that they had achieved a range of responsibilities at deputy level, and that the most common responsibility that they had held was for the curriculum. Those interviewed had been
quite clear that they wanted a range of experience as deputy heads that would fully fit them for leadership. It would seem that once a woman has decided that her ambitions might lead her towards headship, she is conscious of ensuring that she is not identified only with a caring role, and she does ensure that she experiences a range of responsibilities.

Stereotypes about women finding difficulty with handling issues such as finance and buildings still exist. It was particularly noted that some governors found it difficult to accept that women could be capable of the whole job of headship, including being responsible for the disciplining of boys. The interviewed heads also mentioned the difficulties that governors had in coming to terms with a female headteacher. Indeed the survey data provide evidence that there is a strong theme of resentment of women as leaders from a proportion of men and indeed from some other women. Whilst it is implicit through the existing research that leadership is identified with the male, this study shows the extent of the resentment that the headteachers provoked simply because they are women. In addition, the majority of headteachers of the co-educational and boys' schools stated that they felt the need to “prove themselves” as women headteachers.

Differences in the experience of the under and over 50s: Evidence of change?

The women respondents have been analysed as two large groups each covering a ten year age span, therefore it is impossible to show gradations within these groups. However, it would appear that there are some distinct differences in the life experience and views of the under and over 50s, and it may be that further differences will emerge with the next “cohort” of female headteachers, those who at present are in their 30s. In the existing population, more of the younger women have been able to benefit from maternity leave, and for these women aspiring to headship, a long career break for children is increasingly rare. The existence of maternity leave has not encouraged the younger women to have children. Those over 50, few of whom have taken advantage of maternity leave, are more likely to have had children than their younger peers. The difficulties of combining motherhood and a demanding career have not been diminished by the existence of maternity leave. Having children
appears to exacerbate all the problems that are associated with marriage and domestic responsibilities and it is possible that recognition of these difficulties has contributed to a decision taken by some of the younger women to remain childless. The data indicate the difficulties that women face in terms of having career breaks or deferring promotion until after their children have passed a certain age, and of thus falling behind in the career race.

The under 50s were slightly more likely than the over 50s to report the experience of sexism both in relation to applications for jobs and in their experience with their peers. In fact, the younger group have had much more legal protection from sexist behaviour than the older group; the increased reporting of sexist behaviour amongst the under 50s is likely to arise from an increased sensitisation rather than an actual increase in sexist behaviour.

Although there may be changes in the behaviour and life experience of the under 50s compared to that of the over 50s it does not extend to any substantial change in the sharing of domestic responsibilities. For those who are married, the sharing of domestic tasks does not appear to have significantly changed between the two age groups. It therefore seems that the findings of this research confirm that women still bear the major responsibility for household duties (Ruijs, 1993, Davidson and Cooper 1992, Lewis, 1994) and that this is likely to continue to contribute to difficulties in career achievement. However, there is some evidence of more joint career planning for the dual career couples. The possibilities of “taking turns” in career moves may be evidenced by the increasing proportion of the under 50s where the husband and wife both moved at different times to follow a career change of their spouse. Research on the management of careers refers to a “balancing strategy” (Evetts, 1994, p. 53), and this appears to be more common amongst the younger groups of headteachers.

Are heads of all girls' schools different?

Approximately one third of the headteachers responding to the survey were in charge of all girls’ schools. Compared to the whole group, there was a slight tendency for these heads to belong to the older age-group and for them to be single and childless.
There are no data to indicate how many of them had previously worked in co-educational or boys' schools. Several of the heads reported that they had felt that their chances of achieving headship were greater in an all girls’ school, and that women were preferred for these posts. Heads of all girls’ schools were much more likely to rate “being a woman” as a reason for their success than heads of other schools. A further reason for success identified by this group of heads was “academic prowess”, mentioned by more of the girls’ school heads than the other heads, possibly an indication of the selective nature of many girls’ schools and the resulting emphasis on academic achievement. However, there is a fear of girls’ schools being identified as a sort of ‘ghetto’. Some of the survey respondents commented that they had to take sideways moves from deputy headship in an all girls’ school, since experience there was not seen to be as valuable as experience in a co-educational school.

Despite the fact that women may be preferred for the headship of all girls’ schools, the majority of the respondents from all-girls’ schools reported that they had experienced sexism in respect of applications for jobs. Although this is much less than the heads of other schools, it is likely that many of the heads of girls’ schools may have had experience in the co-educational world, and it is to this that they refer. There is no real indication from the survey data that the female headteachers of all girls’ schools are a very different group from those that head co-educational and boys’ schools. Some differences in perceptions do exist, but further investigation would be required to identify more clearly if there is a group of headteachers who are restricted to all girls’ schools, and if their views are distinct from the rest.

The importance of support

Many of the headteachers commenting on sexism from peers identified their isolation as female heads which must make it particularly important that they are able to turn to others for support. Hall (1996) identifies the importance of support for women headteachers from two sources, the husband/partner, where the headteacher is married, and the support of colleagues. The wider research undertaken with the female headteachers of England and Wales also identifies the same two sources of support, with husbands/partners and colleagues, including previous headteachers.
being both the strongest career influences and the main source of encouragement. The fact that around 60 per cent of the husbands are in educational occupations may provide more informed psychological support for the headteachers.

It is noteworthy that virtually all respondents (96.3 per cent) indicated that they had been encouraged to seek promotion. Mentoring is identified as particularly important in encouraging the career progress of women (Evetts, 1990, Hill and Ragland, 1995, Grogan, 1996) and previous headteachers were again named as the most common mentors. Whilst only just over half of the headteachers indicated that they had mentors, two thirds indicated that they encouraged the career development of younger teachers through mentoring.

The concept of “career success” is relative. It may be that many women identify career success in terms of successful marriage and parenthood and would not consider a career in senior management a realistic option in terms of their aims in life. These data are derived from women who would be considered successful in the more generally, male defined sense of success, women who had achieved headship. However, a substantial minority of them had experienced doubts about their ability to achieve headship, and had rarely formed a career plan before reaching a position of responsibility. A majority of the heads were reasonably confident about their abilities and it is likely that those who make it through to headship are those women who are reasonably confident of their abilities and that levels of confidence are lower in those who do not.

Theories about management and leadership and research in these areas have tended to concentrate on the male, and presume that there is “no difference” in the way that men and women operate, effectively denying that there is any difference in the general life experience of men and women. One of the main questions that may be asked about the management and leadership of women is whether they bring different qualities and views to the role? Since management and leadership are likely to be informed by the life experience and socialisation of the individual (Shakeshaft, 1989, 1995), the gender specific variables of women’s lives cannot be divorced from a study of the way that they operate as leaders and managers. Gender is a central feature of the lives of
human beings and, until recently, has largely been ignored as a variable in management and leadership. However, feminine and masculine management styles have been identified as ideal types (Bem, 1974, 1976, Gray 1989, 1993, Schein, 1994), and can be used in the analysis of the ways in which men and women manage and lead.

The use of the adjectives presented by Gray (1989, 1993) with the interviewed and surveyed headteachers has presented an opportunity to re-define those adjectives and qualities that can be seen as ‘feminine’. The women headteachers were consistent in their choices of adjectives which included evaluative, disciplined and objective in addition to caring, intuitive, tolerant and creative and rejected concepts previously linked with feminine styles such as non-competitive and subjective.

Is there a predominant style of management?

The findings of the survey endorse previous research in that the majority of the heads perceived themselves as collaborative and people oriented managers. The collaborative and open nature of the management style of the majority of the heads would seem to be evidenced in the fact that nearly 85 per cent of them were available to talk to their staff any time if they were not actually in a meeting. In addition most of them spent a considerable time out of their office and in activities that directly involved them in the day to day life of the school.

One finding related to the management style of the female headteachers is that there is a minority that do not necessarily lead and manage in the favoured collaborative way. There were two alternative themes that came through the adjectives; these have been termed here the “autocratic” and the “efficient” styles. There appears to be a minority of perhaps 15 per cent of the headteachers who may adopt a more directive style and one that could be compared to the stereotypical masculine style. Of the headteachers who do operate in this manner, a significant majority are over 50 rather than under 50. The possibility is that a collaborative style may be linked with a younger age group.
What values are women promoting in the school?

It is clear from the data that the headteachers put achievement as a priority, and that this did not relate just to high academic achievement, but to everyone reaching their potential in every way. The other set of values that were consistently presented related to respect, both for self and for others. The values to be promoted identify the majority of respondents as educational leaders, and the emphasis on caring is consistent with the range of adjectives chosen by a large proportion of the headteachers in respect of their management style. A companion study of the opinions of male headteachers would be necessary to establish whether or not the values expressed by the respondents to this research do differ from those of their male colleagues, or if they simply represent the areas seen as important by present day headteachers.

How do women managers promote the development of their female staff?

One of the effects of the life experience that women bring to school leadership, might be a realisation that they could provide particular support and encouragement to younger women in their careers. The headteachers were asked how they encouraged the career development of all their teachers, and if they did anything special to encourage the women of their staff. Only about 40 per cent did indicate that they offered special help to women and the majority of these comments related to general encouragement. It was the exceptional head who identified special courses for women or more radical notions of job sharing and more flexible arrangements over maternity leave.

Although the majority did not treat women members of staff any differently from the staff as a whole, there was a recognition of the importance of the provision of strong female role models and the need to overcome stereotyping. The indications from the survey are that a minority of female headteachers are very clear that there may be a need to undertake some special measures to provide a “level playing field” for their female teachers, but few are involved with more radical measures such as flexible work patterns. Grace (1995) found that feminist attitudes were not a feature of the
thinking of most of the female headteachers that he researched, and the headteachers in Hall's (1996) study were committed to equal opportunities rather than the particular support of women. Although many of the headteachers in the survey were very aware of sexism and discrimination, no radical feminist views were offered.

Do they consider that, as a woman, they bring special qualities to headship?

The group surveyed have been successful in terms of a male career path and have often adopted the norms that are associated with a career that takes little account of family life. Although the benefits of being a woman as a headteacher were recognised by the majority of heads, the reasons they gave for their success were generally not related to their femininity. Only ten per cent identified “being a woman” as a reason for success. By far the most frequent reason for success quoted was “hard work”, with support from others being the second most important reason. Both of these tend to indicate the difficulties that a woman may face in reaching a position of leadership, particularly when the leader is stereotypically expected to be a man.

The headteachers were asked if they had ever found it an advantage to be a woman headteacher and the majority felt that this was the case. However, the advantages tended to be based on their perceptions of how others (men and women) see them as women, emphasising their isolation and ‘difference’. The advantage most mentioned was in terms of being able to defuse macho behaviour on the part of males, students, teachers and parents. In this case the fact that men feel the need to be aggressive with other men, and that aggression is not associated with females, acts to their advantage. A number of the headteachers quite consciously acted up to the stereotype of femininity and played on the susceptibilities of males such as governors or local authority personnel who were likely to perceive them first and foremost as women.

Another advantage quoted by the headteachers was “being noticed”. Since they were a relative rarity as a female, they tended to be offered opportunities, particularly by the LEA. It is possible that a rise in the number of female headteachers, which would lead to a reduction in such opportunities, might therefore not be entirely welcomed by some of the heads.
The headteachers were positive about their gender in terms of their approachability. They felt that people, particularly girls, mothers and female members of staff, could approach them more freely than they might a man. In addition they considered that they had the freedom to empathise with families and be sympathetic in a way that most men could not. Allied to this was their freedom from the stereotypes of headship, which were mainly associated with men. Although the stereotype of the leader and manager as male may prove a handicap for the female manager, there is the other side of the coin, the freedom of the female manager to behave in a way that is not constrained by the normal stereotypes associated with leaders.

**Contributions to the field**

The research, particularly the survey of the entire population of female headteachers in England and Wales, has contributed in a number of ways to the understanding of the careers and management styles of women headteachers in education in the 1990s. The 70 per cent response rate to the survey gives confidence in the findings and allows the possibility of some generalisations to complement existing and future qualitative research.

One of the major findings emerging from the research is the continuing and high level of discrimination faced by women who aspire to senior management in education, the discrimination being fuelled by stereotypes that include the identification of women with their domestic role. Related to this are the more practical domestic factors that women face in terms of generally bearing the brunt of domestic responsibilities in addition to work outside the home. Marriage is generally less common for the female headteachers than for women as a whole and the tendency appears to be for more of the younger headteachers to choose to remain childless than the older age group indicating that the combination of a career and motherhood remains a difficult prospect.

The research strongly endorses the view that most women manage their schools in a way that can most clearly be identified as consultative and people orientated. The
majority of the headteachers, particularly those under 50, chose adjectives that identified them as collaborative and caring. The choices also endorsed the importance placed on teamwork and on “power to” rather than “power over”. However, they do not claim to be democratic, rather they would say that the final responsibilities for decisions rests with them. In reviewing effective management in schools, Bolam et al (1993) commented that the headteacher of an effective school:

“Has consultative ‘listening’ style; is decisive and forceful but not dictatorial; is open to other people’s ideas; and is easily accessible to staff.” (Bolam, et al, 1993, p. 119)

Whilst the quality of leadership may best be judged within the context of the individual school, the majority of women in leadership roles operate in a manner that largely coincides with this summary of effective leadership. The under-representation of women in senior management represents an issue of equity. Since women tend to operate in a collaborative manner that is likely to empower others and endorse values of educational leadership, their under-representation also indicates a loss of potentially effective leadership in schools.

The difficulties recounted by the headteachers indicate that they are operating in a context which is inimical to women succeeding in educational management unless they are prepared to adapt to the prevailing values. These might include opting for a single state, childlessness, a ‘balancing’ career strategy or working harder and longer than any competitors, male or female.
Appendix 1

Interview Schedule for use with Women Headteachers June 1994

Career path

1. How long have you been headteacher of this school?

2. Were you previously a headteacher, if so where and for how long?

3. Were you a deputy head, if so where and for how long?
   
   What was the main responsibility?

4. Previous posts?
   
   What responsibilities?

5. Specialist subject area?

6. Did you have a career plan? If so when was it formulated?

7. What do you think has influenced your career path?

Domestic details

1. Married? if so, since?
   
   Children? if so how many? What ages?

If children, what methods of child care?

How satisfactory?
2. Have you regularly had paid help in the home?

If so since when?

3. Have you had other domestic responsibilities, such as the care of elderly relatives?

4. To what extent have you experienced role conflict?

5. If married, are you a dual career family?

Husband's job?

To what extent do you share domestic responsibilities?

Housework  
Shopping  
Washing  
Ironing  
Gardening  
Car maintenance  
Cooking  
Arranging social life  
Organising holidays

Have you ever had to move job to follow your husband?

If so details?

Have you ever had to run two separate households?

6. Have you had a career break? If so for how long?
If you had a career break were you able to continue your career at the same level as when you took the break?

7. Do you have an active part to play in your husband's career? (eg entertaining)

Does your husband play an active part in your career? (eg involvement in school activities)

Overt and covert discrimination

1. Have you ever felt that you have been disbarred from promotion or responsibility because you are a woman?
   (eg considered a "poor risk" in terms of training and promotion)

   If so, details.

2. Have you ever been faced with sexist attitudes with regard to jobs or training?

Organisational Constraints

1. Were you encouraged at any time to apply for promotion?

   If so, by whom?

2. Could you say that at any time you had a mentor, or role model who encouraged or inspired you?

   If so how was this done?

Have colleagues been generally helpful and supportive in your career progress?

3. Have you ever made a "speculative" application for a post?
If so, give details

Would you feel it necessary to have all or nearly all the qualities and experience listed in a job specification before you applied for it?

4. What was the nature of the interview panel that selected you as headteacher? How many of the panel were men and how many were women?

5. Did you ever feel like giving up at any stage in your progress towards headship? If so when and why?

6. Did you ever receive formal training that helped you in your career progression? If so when and of what kind?

7. How do you react to criticism?

8. Are you able to "shut off" from work? If so how and when?

9. Have you ever felt that as a woman you had to "prove your worth" in a management position? Example?

10. Have you been aware of sex stereotyping in the responsibilities that you have been given on the way to headship?

11. Are you aware of sex-stereotyping in your present role as head? If so with whom?

12. As a head to whom do you turn for sympathy or advice?
Socialization

What were your parents' expectations of you in career terms?

What other factors were influential in forming your own expectations of your career?

Style of management

1. Describe your ideal style of management.

What are the values that you are trying to promote?

How would you define your style of management?

2. What qualities would characterise your dealings with the people you manage?

3. What is the basic management structure of the school?

4. What part do teams play in the management of the school?

5. How do members of staff address you?

6. Do you have an "open door policy"? How easy is it for staff to talk to you?

7. What proportion of your time do you spend in the school and out of your office?

8. How important do you consider school uniform to be?

9. Do you foster a spirit of competition in the school?

If so how?
10. Who is mainly responsible for discipline in the school?

General questions

How do you ensure that women teachers in your school are encouraged towards promotion?

Do you still have a career plan?

If so, what remains to be achieved?

Why do you think that you were successful in such a competitive field?
11 April 1994

Dear

Women in Educational Management

I have been awarded a small amount of money by the University for a pilot research project on women in educational management, and should be very grateful if you would agree to being interviewed as part of this project.

The initial intention is to interview women headteachers of mixed secondary schools in the summer term and to follow the interview stage with wider ranging quantitative research.

The interview would cover some of the issues raised by a review of the current literature on women in educational management that I undertook for a chapter in Principles of Educational Management, edited by Tony Bush and John West-Burnham (1994). Much of what has been written on the subject has not yet been tested by research in Britain.

It is likely that the interview would take one and a half to two hours and my intention would be to use the material for two purposes:

1. to inform further wide-scale research;
2. to write an article for one of the refereed journals on educational management.

When making use of the data, I should not name individuals, their school or their county. I do hope that you will feel able to participate in this research which I think will make a valuable addition to the field.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Coleman
Lecturer in Educational Management
Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Female Headteachers in England and Wales Summer 1996

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

Formal Qualifications ............................................................................................

Marital Status: .................................................................................................

Age group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

please indicate which of the following apply to your school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>11 - 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girls only</td>
<td>11 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grant-maintained</td>
<td>13 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>other age group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voluntary aided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voluntary controlled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Year of appointment to present post ..........................................................

2. Is this your first headship?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

   If no please indicate the number and duration (in years) of previous
   headship(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headship</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>headship one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>headship two</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>headship three</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Before you became a headteacher, were you a deputy head?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

   If yes please indicate the number and duration (in years) of deputy headship(s)
deputy headship one years
deputy headship two years
deputy headship three years

Your main area(s) of responsibility as deputy head? ..............................................

4. Please tick any of the following posts you have held:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>senior teacher or equivalent</th>
<th>head of faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>head of department</td>
<td>post of mainly pastoral responsibility eg head of house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What is your specialist subject area? ..............................................................

6. At what stage of your life did you formulate a career plan that included headship or deputy headship?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>at school</th>
<th>in higher education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on becoming a teacher</td>
<td>on gaining a post of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>other (please specify below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. What or who has had a major influence on your career path?
   (mark all those that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>parents</th>
<th>husband/partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friends</td>
<td>your teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domestic circumstances</td>
<td>other (please specify below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are or have been married or in a permanent relationship, please answer the following questions 8 - 14, if you are single, please go to question 15

8. Number of children ....................... their present age(s) .......................  

9. If you have children, what were/are the main methods of child care used?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nanny</th>
<th>childminder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nursery</td>
<td>relative (indicate which)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Were/are you able to make arrangements that were satisfactory to you and your family?

Yes  No

Comment ....................................................................................................

Who looks/looked after your child/children when ill ...............................  

10. What is your husband's/partner's job?  

11. To what extent do you and your husband/partner share domestic responsibilities eg housework, shopping, cooking, washing, organising holidays and social life? Indicate an approximate overall percentage undertaken by each of you.

myself  husband/partner

12. Have you ever changed your job to follow your husband/partner?

Yes  No

13. Has your husband/partner ever changed his job to follow you?

Yes  No

14. Have you ever operated run two separate households as a result of career commitments?

Yes  No

15. Have you had domestic responsibilities, such as the care of elderly relatives?

Yes  No

If yes please indicate nature of responsibilities .....................................

16. Have you had a career break?

Yes  No
If you had a career break was it for:

(Please indicate length of break)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>maternity leave only</th>
<th>longer term child care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>secondment to industry</td>
<td>secondment to obtain qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (please indicate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. If you had a career break were you able to resume your career at the same level as before the break?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

18. Have you ever been aware of sexist attitudes in connection with job applications or promotion?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, please indicate the circumstances ..........................................................

..........................................................................................................................

..........................................................................................................................

19. Have you been aware of sexist attitudes from your peers or from those you work with?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes please indicate the circumstances ..........................................................

..........................................................................................................................

..........................................................................................................................

20. Were you encouraged at any time to apply for promotion?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If so, by whom?

(mark all those that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>husband/partner/family</th>
<th>colleagues at work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>senior managers at work</td>
<td>headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (please indicate who)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. Have you had a mentor, or role model who encouraged or inspired you?

Yes  No  

If yes, please indicate the circumstances ..........................................................

..........................................................

22. Of the interview panel that selected you as headteacher, approximately how many were men and how many were women?

Men  Women  

23. Was there a point in your career when you thought you would not achieve headship?

Yes  No  

If so when and why? ..........................................................

..........................................................

24. Do you feel that as a woman you had to "prove your worth" in a management position?

Yes  No  

If yes, please give an example? ..........................................................

..........................................................

25. Give three key words to describe your style of management. .................

..........................................................

26. What are the key values that you are trying to promote in your school?

..........................................................

..........................................................

27. What opportunities are there for staff to talk to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>any time as long as you are not in a meeting</th>
<th>any time within specified limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by appointment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28. While you are in school, what proportion of your time do you spend out of your office?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>under 10%</th>
<th>between 10 - 25%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between 25 - 50%</td>
<td>between 50 - 75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. How do you encourage all the teachers in your school to develop their careers?
mentoring role play
courses through appraisal
other (please specify below)

30. How do you encourage female teachers in your school to develop their careers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>no special ways</th>
<th>courses for women only</th>
<th>mentoring programme</th>
<th>other (please specify below)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

31. Why do you think that you were so successful in such a competitive field?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>through hard work</th>
<th>support from others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knowing what you wanted from life</td>
<td>academic prowess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because you are a woman</td>
<td>other (please specify below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. As a headteacher, have you ever found it an advantage to be a woman?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Please give an example ........................................................................................................

33. Would you be prepared to be interviewed as a follow up to this questionnaire?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Finally, please would you tick in the list below, those qualities that you feel apply to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caring</th>
<th>Creative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intuitive</td>
<td>aware of individual differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-competitive</td>
<td>tolerant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subjective</td>
<td>informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly regulated</td>
<td>conformist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>normative</td>
<td>competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluative</td>
<td>disciplined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective</td>
<td>formal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
Please return it before the 1 July if possible. A stamped addressed envelope is enclosed.

The questionnaire should be returned to:
   Marianne Coleman
   EMDU, University of Leicester
   Barrack Road
   Northampton, NN2 6AF
May 1996

Dear

Questionnaire for Women Headteachers of Secondary Schools

I have been awarded a research grant by the University to undertake the first ever complete survey of English female headteachers of secondary schools. I should be very grateful if you could find the time to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire.

The questionnaire is being sent to all the female headteachers of secondary schools in England and Wales and covers many of the issues raised by a review of the current literature on women in educational management that I undertook for a chapter in Principles of Educational Management, edited by Tony Bush and John West-Burnham (1994). The questions were piloted through interviews, and I am grateful to the five female headteachers of secondary schools in one east Midlands county who contributed their time to be interviewed by me for the pilot research. The data from this initial research formed the basis for two articles which are being published in Educational Management and Administration Vol 24 No 2 and Educational Research Vol 38 No 3.

The questionnaire covers two main areas:

- the career progress of female headteachers who make up just over 20% of the national total of heads;

- the management style of women headteachers.

Whilst there have been many small scale qualitative studies of life histories and styles of management of headteachers, there is no national data to form the context for research findings.

I anticipate that the results of this survey will create a great deal of interest, but can assure you that your anonymity will be guaranteed in any publication. When making use of the data I shall not name individuals or individual schools. I do hope that you will feel able to participate in this research which will provide unique and valuable data. I should be more than happy to send you a digest of the results if you would wish to receive them.

I look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire by 1 July.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Coleman
Lecturer in Educational Management
### Appendix 3

**Word count of words used most often in key values promoted in the school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Values</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Key Values</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>respect</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high/higher/highest</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>care/caring</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>value(s)/valued/valuing</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>others</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>individual/s</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pupil/s</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellence</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>opportunity(ies)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsibility</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>standards</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esteem</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>potential</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>worth</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>staff</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school(s)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>honest/honesty</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equal</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>expectations</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>students</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>each</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education/al</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>success(ful)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>personal</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>everyone</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hard/hard work</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>mutual</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consideration</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>best</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>development/al</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tolerance</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>discipline</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrity</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>ethos</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important/ce</td>
<td>concern</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raising</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love</td>
<td>teaching</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Lyons (1974) The Administrative Tasks of Head and Senior Teachers in Large Secondary Schools, University of Bristol, Bristol.


Partington, G. (1976), Women Teachers in the 20th Century in England and Wales, Windsor, NFER.


Gender and Changing Educational Management, Rydalmere, NSW, Hodder Education.


Tuckman (1972) in Cohen and Manion (1994), (op cit.)


