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The 'glass-ceiling' phenomenon in the career development of successful academic women

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ABSTRACT

The research makes an original contribution to social psychology theory related to the success of academic women in higher education. The literature review reveals that there are differing views on the reasons for women failing to break through the glass ceiling in the higher education setting. Some authors concentrate on the environmental factors that are having an effect on women. Others concentrate on the effects of patriarchal organisational structures. Fewer commentators make reference to the notion of the female psyche. The existence of the glass ceiling phenomenon in the higher education setting is attributed to psychological, cultural, and technical factors. Little primary research has been conducted on the perceptions of female academics at the middle management level in the higher education setting, and much of the published work is anecdotal in nature. It is the aim of this research to give new insights into the perceptions of women at middle management level. The research makes no prior assumptions about the nature or categorisation of the mental constructions that emerge, but produces a more informed and sophisticated perceptual map. It investigates the respondents' perceptions of the glass ceiling phenomenon in relation to the features of their lifeworld. The research uses the essences of the lifeworld approach to analyse the views and feelings of the women participants. The perceptions that emerge from the research include the issue of a long term juggling act that the respondents have to achieve to be successful (*Temporality*). The women also demonstrate a ruthless pursuit for a voice in an increasingly difficult environment (*Selfhood*). The relationship of the women to other people in their lives is one of the most important findings in the research. The women always find that they have a series of bitter-sweet relationships with others and often feel guilt about missed opportunities (*Sociality*). The respondents also demonstrate that they feel that it is better to have suffered hardship to enable them and others to progress (*Embodiment*). One of the respondents graphically illustrates the development of academic women with reference to the metaphor – the relay race in time which emphasises the importance of influence and mentoring that the respondents think is important but often find difficult to achieve (*Spatiality*). The women often appear to have conflicting projects and address this issue with passion which often leads to conflict (*Project*). The language that the women use often portrays their disappointment with the emerging emphasis on management and administration rather than research and discovery (*Discourse*). The accounts do have some flashes of joy and celebration but overall they tend to epitomise feelings of sadness and regret. The thesis ends by suggesting that there are certain typologies for successful academic women based on their relationship to others or their inner psychological state. These are used to make some suggestions in relation to practical steps that could be taken to help women to achieve greater academic success. The new insights in the thesis will hopefully enable organisations to take positive steps to encourage more women into senior academic posts.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DECLARATION

Whilst registered as a candidate for the degree for which submission is hereby made I have not been a registered candidate for another award of any other degree awarding body. No material contained within this dissertation has been used in any other submission for any other academic award.

Susan Horner

June 2004

1. INTRODUCTION

1:1 Aims

To construct a perceptual map of the lifeworld of a sample of successful female academics in middle management roles in higher education so that a telling view can be derived in relation to the glass ceiling phenomenon.

1:2 The research questions

The research questions that are addressed are as follows:

1) To identify a successful group of female academics at middle management level and discover what they actually do in their positions at a 'new University'.

2) To explore the reasons for the success of the female academics in the chosen sample through their perceptions.

3) To identify the positive and negative influences on the career development of the respondents through their perceptions.

4) To identify practical suggestions for policy changes at the University in relation to the encouragement of women into more senior academic posts on the basis of the research programme.

1:3 Objectives

The first objective of the research is to identify a sample of successful female academic leaders at the University. The sampling method is discussed early on in the thesis in the methodology section. The second part of the thesis seeks to identify what the role of the respondents is at the time of the research. It is important at this initial stage of the research to begin to analyse the respondent's background. This section of the thesis investigates the views of the respondents in relation to their current role, and begins to analyse their views on success. The autobiographical reflections seek to explore the reasons for success in academia in some more depth. A particular focus here is the psychological changes that a female academic leader perceives she has to go through before success is achieved. It is also important to try to tease out the perceptions of the female academic leader about cultural barriers that exist in higher education that prevent women from gaining senior academic positions.

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Mentions of positive schemes such as mentoring programmes, and the development of networks are also noted from the autobiographical reflections. The analysis of the autobiographical reflections using manual analysis and the Ethnograph 5 package allows an initial idea about the perceptions of the respondents and provides a focus on some key themes that emerge at this stage. The follow up interview allows these themes to be followed up and a more detailed picture to be drawn. The use of the fractions of the lifeworld for this analysis helps the reader to gain a richer picture of the underlying issues associated with the glass ceiling in the academic institution. A final objective of the research is to offer practical suggestions for policy change at the University in relation to the encouragement of women in the institution to gain academic success.

1:4 Personal biography and its relevance

My own personal biography provides me with a powerful reason to conduct this research. I consider that I have had a successful career in industry before joining the University over a decade ago. This has allowed me to live in the higher education setting and experience a very new type of organisational culture compared to my previous work experience. I have also lived through the massive changes that have occurred in the higher education setting over the last decade, and experienced at first hand the ways in which the organisation had changed as a result of increasing pressures. I have striven to develop my own career alongside all this change and have made massive changes in my own lifeworld along the way. I ponder on the reasons that more women are not achieving success in the higher education setting. It is my belief that simple policy changes will not alter the situation but am I right? The only way to find out is to conduct a programme of in depth research with a small number of respondents. I consider that I should be included in this process so that I can reflect more critically on my own experiences.

1:5 Orientation to the research

My orientation to the research is important to identify so that the results can be judged in respect of this. I hope that the research provides some guidance for the future planning of careers for women in a higher education setting. I also hope that the continuing barriers to the progression of women that are identified in the research can be considered by University policy makers and that positive

steps can be taken to address these in practical human resource strategies. The issue of the nature of structures and culture of the institution that emerges from the research through the eyes of the respondents is also an issue for consideration. The nature of the feminine psyche is explored in some depth and the thesis attempts to assess the implications of this on the career development of academic women. It is my belief that this is the critical issue in relation to a woman's attempt to break through the glass ceiling.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2:1 Introduction

The research programme focuses on the experiences of female middle managers in a higher education setting. The methodology and research design have been developed on the premise that successful women have an important contribution to make in terms of perceptions of their career development and the academic culture as they perceive it. The literature review to support this research programme has been drawn from four important strands, but has had to be selective with regards to breadth to allow the necessary depth to be derived.

Research from a wide variety of fields (Kidd, 2002, Storey, 2002) has shown that most organisations have experienced major changes over the last ten years, and this has often resulted in fundamental changes in terms of organisational design, structure, culture and management practices. It has been suggested that the complex and chaotic environment of international business means that organisations should foster cultures that are flexible and experimental and which place an emphasis on learning (Turner, 1996). It appears that the higher education institutions have not escaped this period of rapid change, albeit perhaps emerging a little later in comparison to commercial organisations (Pritchard, 2001).

The first part of the literature review considers the **changes in organisational culture** in general and more specifically the changes in academic life in particular. This is an important theme in the literature review because these changes in organisational culture have had a fundamental effect on the working patterns and career development of individuals within that environment. It has been argued that human resource strategies should be affected by and interact with their business environment. This means that human resource strategies have had to change in organisations which have adopted a global rather than a local focus (Brewster, 1994). It is likely that the human resource strategy will be in a state of flux in a University that has changed in focus and this in turn will affect individuals in their daily lives and change the nature of work in fundamental ways. There has also been an increased emphasis on academic leadership to cope with these changing circumstances (Simkins, 1999). These

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changes have affected both women and men, although some researchers have found that they have had a more fundamental effect on women (Clark *et al*, 1997).

The second part of the literature reviews **the role of women** in organisations in general, and more specifically in the higher education institution. The literature review considers the issue of gender and the role of women in organisations. It concludes that an important aspect of this is perceptions of individuals with regards to work in general, and progression and organisational culture more specifically. An important focus in the literature is the meaning of career development or career progression for women.

The third part of the literature review explores **the glass ceiling phenomenon**. This appears to be a widely used metaphor in the literature, but what does it mean and is it used in different ways in different settings? Would it be of any practical use in the development of the research methodology? The most important aspect of the glass ceiling metaphor are the themes that appear to emerge from the literature in terms of suggested causes for the low representation of women in senior management roles.

Leading on from this, the fourth part of the literature review focuses on **the coping strategies** that individuals, and particularly women, adopt to overcome the obstacles to progression in a period of rapid change. Particular issues here includes psychological states of mind such as *ambition, stress, pragmatism, assertion,* and *feminism,* and deliberately planned coping strategies such as *staff development, changes in organisational culture* and *mentoring.*

2:2 Changes in organisational culture

2:2:1 The context of higher education in the UK

The concept of career pattern or development has to be seen within the context of organisations in general. It is well known that there have been a number of factors that have brought about fundamental changes to organisations and most importantly to personal perceptions of organisational life. External factors such as globalisation, technological changes, labour market deregulation, and increased competition have resulted in shifts in employment patterns, and changes in organisational design and leadership styles (Kidd, 2002). These

changes have meant that the paternalistic nature of organisational design has been emphasised and that life even in Universities has become more thrusting and male orientated (Pritchard, 2001), due to changes in organisational design and particularly in the adoption of aggressive management styles. This situation has escalated in the parts of the world such as the USA and the UK where deregulation and increased competition has meant that many public organisations have been privatised and thrust into a new quasi-competitive world. This has resulted in individuals having to face new stresses that were not previously an issue for them. The need for individuals to constantly update their skills and knowledge to improve their prospects of employability within the context of fewer life-long employment prospects for example has brought many opportunities but increased stress (Storey, 2002). But all of this research has considered work organisations in general, and there is a need to focus particularly on the higher education institution in more detail now to consider whether these general phenomena have been mirrored in this particular type of organisation.

The role of women in higher education has to be seen within the context of the rapidly changing environment. This is a situation that I have personally experienced during the last decade. The environment that higher education is facing today in the United Kingdom is characterised by a rapidly changing world that institutions face on a global basis. Many of these changes have been brought about by the agendas of the national politicians, as well as changes in the global economy and an increasing quest for knowledge and qualifications. This changing environment has had to change from one that was developed for the elite in society to one that encourages mass participation (Ramsden, 1998).

The Polytechnics and Colleges were given increased independence from central control in the UK during 1992 when the Education Reform Act was introduced in Parliament (Rustin, in Jary and Parker, 1998). This has had important implications for women who have found it more difficult to challenge the increasingly paternalistic culture and thrusting management style because of the 'old boy network' and an increasingly aggressive approach (Pritchard, 2001).

The Dearing Committee (1997) attempted to make suggestions that would overcome the serious financial situation that was facing the higher education institutions and students in the 1990s, which was predicted to get worse at the beginning of the new millennium. The Dearing Committee suggested that students should be expected to pay a graduate tax on completion of their course but the Labour government decided to introduce a harsher system than had been suggested by Dearing. A system of tuition fees and the replacement of student grants by student loans swiftly followed. Commentators such as Ramsden (1998) have suggested that new radical approaches to higher education management have been required to lead the institutions into this brave new world based increasingly on profit motivation. An important aspect of the literature review was to consider the strategies that academic leaders have had to adopt to become successful in this new environment. A preliminary review showed that women have been encouraged to take up senior positions in the 'new' universities, and as a result there was a higher representation of women in senior positions compared to other more traditional institutions (Hasly, 1995). The new role of the successful academic leader is important to the research because it has important consequences for women who are trying to develop their careers. The environment of the higher education institution has changed and this has had the implication of these institutions focusing on academic leadership.

2:2:2 What makes a good academic leader?

One of the key aspects in this new academic world is the way in which leadership skills should be developed. This has an impact on the career development of academics, and influences the criteria that are used to judge success. This section of the literature review considers the concept of academic leadership with reference to three authors who offer different perspectives on academic leadership. These authors were selected on the basis of the relevance of their research findings in relation to the research programme

Sharon McDade has been carrying out a long-term research project entitled 'Leadership Learning in Higher Education'. This research has become particularly relevant in the US because the presidents of colleges and universities are increasingly leaving their posts early, and not accomplishing their organisational goals. (McDade 2001). Her research has focused on

leadership development in the US education setting, and the ways in which educational leaders become better in their job. The aim of the research was to talk to senior managers in higher education about their personal development with the aim of improving the recruitment and retention of senior managers in the sector.

The previous research that she had carried out with colleagues suggested that their personal characteristics, previous experience and socialisation in the higher education setting were all critical to the development of a leader in higher education (McDade and Lewis 1994, McDade and Green 1991, 1994). The research findings suggested that the ideal educational leader owes some of their expertise to their adolescent experiences which shape their political leadership skills in terms of style and approach. This was an interesting set of results, which suggested to me that early life experiences will have a fundamental effect on career development and progression. It suggested that it is important to reflect on the psychological state of the individual woman on the basis of her earlier life experiences and that reflections of earlier life needed to be an important focus for my research programme.

The ideal educational leader should be 'socialised' into the leadership form that is favoured in a higher education setting, which is very different in the US from the leadership styles favoured in other organisations such as large commercial companies, because the organisational culture is based on research as well as profit motivation. Another person whom she referred to as a 'wizard' should mentor academic leaders. This makes reference to the mythical character, Merlin. This seemed to be particularly relevant for female academic leaders, although she also found that male academic leaders also benefited from mentoring by a suitable 'wizard' (McDade 2001). The whole of this research programme focused on the selection process and development strategies for successful academic leaders. The limitations of the research is that it has been carried out in an American higher education setting, which may be culturally very different from other settings because of the increased emphasis on sponsorship and money generation in this setting.

Craig Pritchard is based in New Zealand but he carried out much of his research in the UK in a long interview programme that sampled seventy senior

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academic post holders in a cross section of higher education institutions. The book that he wrote after the research programme was completed reflected on the interviewing process and he found that a number of startling results were echoed by a number of different respondents. Many of the respondents were finding the new post-Dearing world of higher education a threatening place. The book told the stories of senior academic leaders who were hamstrung by the bureaucratic centralism of university structures and those who had been repositioned as the new entrepreneurial managers in the 'new marketised further education'.

The newly formed academic leaders have to increasingly think of their students as funding units and in the case of female academic leaders, have had to challenge the deeply embedded paternalistic culture of the senior managers in the Universities (Pritchard 2001). This author suggested that the academic leader has had to adopt a new managerialistic approach, become more entrepreneurial, and challenge the stifling university bureaucracies. It also suggested that the effective academic leader has also had to become more student focused and market orientated. This provides the academic leader with a dilemma because of the apparent contradiction with the research agenda. This is an important book because it provided a vivid picture of the frustration of respondents in a large sample of higher education institutions. It considered in some depth the personal feelings of academics to this change in culture. It does have the problem, however, that it never probed individual feelings of female academics in any depth. It does however, mirror my own experiences of higher education over the last decade, where women have found it increasingly difficult to operate.

Susan Weil made a very early assessment of the ways in which change could be achieved in Universities and Colleges in the UK. The research that she carried out relied on personal accounts given by ten heads of institutions, representing a range of traditions in the higher education setting. She found from this research that the academic leadership role was becoming much more difficult because of the complex and rapidly changing business environment that all the organisations were facing.

> The key to the future is to balance two factors: the need for the imaginative delivery of education opportunities to meet the needs of lifelong learning and the pressuring to conform to traditional standards in teaching and learning.
>
> Susan Weil (1994: 181)

Primary research carried out in 2001 (Horner, 2002) in Sheffield and Hong Kong, did indicate that two academic leaders who responded to the questionnaire had found that the mentoring of their juniors was a very important feature of their jobs.

> We have a young and enthusiastic staff here. There are two main issues that we have to deal with. The first is to encourage the potential stars to be as research active as possible in a focused manner. The second task is to encourage more people to be research active.
>
> Academic Leader HKPU (Horner 2002: 3)

This quote indicates the important mentoring and development role that is required in research leadership, which forms an important part of the academic leadership role. There are two important findings that emerge at this stage. The first observation is that academic leadership requires a heavy emphasis on mentoring. There is of course a difference between mentoring and being mentored. The experience of being mentored is obviously an important issue in terms of supporting women early in their careers. It is not clear, however when the critical times are in relation to this mentoring process.

The demands on academic leaders have grown since the early research work but the findings of the research still, in my opinion, remain true because of the increasingly complex and demanding environment. Academic leaders in educational institutions have had to respond to changing demands and become much more aware of new market opportunities. The primary research showed that both Universities had introduced new market orientated suites of courses and research programmes (Horner, 2002). This had required the strong academic leadership that had been found by researchers in other settings (Ramsden, 1998, Pritchard, 2001).

The review of the literature suggests that the task of academic leadership is becoming more complex and requires the development of a special type of senior academic leader who adopts a managerial and entrepreneurial approach

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in combination with a student focused style. A very special type of person indeed! Or should the senior academic leader rely on more junior colleagues to fulfil these three dimensions? The research did not give any indication, however, of the respondent's personal career progression, or their personal feelings about the new academic culture, which I wanted to explore further.

2:2:3 What factors have an effect on the academic at a national and international level?

I propose in this section of the literature review to consider the contextual factors that influence academic leaders, and to consider the impact of these at a local, national and international level. This analysis will lead to the next section where I will consider the degree to which global factors are beginning to override local and national factors in the domain of the academic leader. This will provide a richer picture of the characteristics that are required of a person who wants to become a successful academic leader and review these characteristics in relation to the gender of the individual. It will also provide an important backdrop to the position that female academic leaders find themselves in at the present time.

Rosemary Deem's work is interesting, because it examined the importance of global and local factors in Western universities. It challenged the work of authors such as Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Clark (1998) on the basis of the theoretical and empirical bases of their research programmes. These authors had suggested that academic capitalism, entrepreneurial universities and new managerialism had something in common. She contrasted this with the work of Gibbons (1998) who argued that it was local knowledge and innovation that were the critical issues for academic leaders.

> It is therefore important that these dimensions are fully encompassed by the theoretical frameworks and methodologies used by those who investigate the ways in which universities in different countries respond to international and global pressures.
>
> Rosemary Deem, (2001: 18)

It was interesting to note here that it suggests that future researchers should concentrate on the local context, as well as the global context. It also suggests that researchers need to be more sensitive to the local/global dimensions of their work in relation to academic leadership.

Paul Ramsden (1998) carried out a large survey of academic leaders in the middle management role in a cross section of British and Australian universities during 1996-7. It is interesting to note that although the author has been working in Australia, he has carried out much of his research in the UK, and has a deep understanding of the cultural context of the UK. The research did not focus on any countries outside the UK and Australia, and so questions must be asked about the applicability and relevance of the findings to other settings.

> We face an almost certain future of relentless variation in a more austere environment. There will be more competition for resources, stronger opposition from new providers of higher education, even more drastically reduced public funding.
>
> Paul Ramsden, (1998: 3)

What is clear from the work, is that the future success of Universities in a competitive world will depend largely on the academic leader's capacity to respond energetically to change. He suggests that the requirements mean that a new style of leader is required who recognises and exploits global opportunities, such as new co-operative course development. This should be coupled with a transformational leadership style to increase the teaching productivity and quality alongside the need to increase quality research output amongst all the academic staff. It is interesting to note here that commentators on organisational behaviour suggest that transformational leadership style is a phenomenon that favours women over men (Rosenar, 1990). This is where a leader uses their personal qualities to engage individuals in a change process. This could suggest that women may be favoured in terms of promotion if they are able to demonstrate the transformational qualities that are required to change the behaviour of the academic staff in relation to these new leadership challenges.

Geerte Hofstede's work (1980, 1985, 1991) represented the most extensive piece of research that has been carried out into the cultural differences between managers in different countries. The research was based on 116,000 respondents from a wide range of countries and the results were analysed and comparisons made between the data. Hofstede was able to derive four cultural dimensions. It is an important piece of work to underpin this research because it explored the cultural setting of the workplace and made observations regarding

the preferred styles of organisational design and management approach in different settings.

Four cultural dimensions were derived by Hofstede that he termed power distance, uncertainty, individualism and masculinity and femininity. He found that there were distinct features of organisations with a base in the UK. Respondents in the UK favoured a flatter and less hierarchical organisational design, but this had not been achieved in reality. There was a preference in the United Kingdom for the organisations to be led by people who were outward going, decisive and practical and these characteristics favoured men. Organisations in the United Kingdom were also set up on the basis of individual and conflictual decision-making, a feature that also favoured men, but this could be expected since most of the respondents were men. The organisational culture in the United Kingdom was found to be more biased towards the masculine rather than the feminine and therefore more performance orientated. This is important for the research because it could suggest that organisational design and culture in the UK in general favours men over women. It is important to note that the work has been criticised since it was published. One of the main criticisms is that the sampling of individuals from countries was not representative because it was derived from staff at the large multi-national IBM. A further criticism is that Hofstede's work was biased towards Western values and did not take into account Chinese cultural values. Further research was carried out by Michael Bond and identified a fifth dimension in Chinese respondents that he called 'Confucian dynamism' (Chinese Culture Connection 1987).

Despite this, the work of Hofstede was a landmark in cross-cultural research, and although it is now dated, and does not relate to higher education institutions directly, it is still of considerable relevance for academic leaders in large academic institutions. Hofstede did address the preferred management styles of men and women in organisations. He found that in the UK a 'masculine' culture was preferred, which does reflect the patriarchal culture that has been adopted in most UK based organisations. Universities have also been recognised as being examples of organisations that have adopted patriarchal and hierarchical organisational structures and this could provide a possible explanation for the barriers that women meet in their quest for promotion. The return to a market

orientated organisational culture that has already been suggested in the literature could explain the reasons for the continuation of the choice of men as academic leaders because they are more suited to the style and approach of organisational design that was identified by Hofstede

It can be suggested at this stage that organisational design is an important factor in the higher education context and will have a considerable effect on the career progression of female academic leaders. The key parameters of organisational design include the organisational structures, the pervading culture and the management styles that are adopted.

2:2:4 Is the academic leader becoming more influenced by global factors?

In this section of the literature review, I will consider the balance of factors that have an effect on academic leaders, and try to assess the influence of global factors in relation to those in the local and national context. Several authors have written extensively in this area and I propose to review their work to assess how important global factors are becoming to the academic leader in a middle management role in a higher education setting.

Marieke Van der Wende (1997) suggested that education in general is currently trying to become more international in nature, rather than focusing on global developments, such as joint course initiatives and student exchange agreements. She has had a long career in research and stresses the importance of the practical application of international themes in higher education institutions.

The internationalisation of higher education is being fuelled by a series of interrelated factors which are leading academic leaders down the route of making the curriculum and staff more focused on international issues, rather than relying on student mobility to develop an international focus. This has been as a result of recent developments including the growth of information and communication technologies, the increasing harmonisation of degree structures in Europe, and the internationalisation of quality assessment and quality assurance systems. She argued that the wide range of skills that are required by graduates who want to work in an international setting are best acquired through a combination of international content in the curriculum, the

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'international classroom' setting and a strong emphasis on interactive and collaborative learning processes (Van der Wende, 1997).

Clark's (1998) book relied on in-depth interviews that he carried out in five universities, in the UK (Warwick), the Netherlands (Twente), Scotland (Strathclyde), Sweden (Chalmers) and Finland (Joensuu), during 1997. He suggested that the move to globalisation has been as a result of national factors such as the increase in the diversity of the student body. An expanding professional labour market that is based on knowledge, coupled with new fields of knowledge that are similar in a wide range of countries, are also contributory factors.

He referred to the concept of globalisation in rather vague terms, making claims that many of the interrelated themes that emerged during the research for the case studies in the book relate to the desire of higher education institutions to answer a 'global problem of growing university insufficiency', *i.e.* a desire for more collaboration with other institutions across the world to strengthen their offering. His case study reports suggested that there are many differences between the universities in the sample, in relation to their strategies and organisational form (Clark, 1998). He concluded that universities were at the crossroads in terms of globalisation. They are increasingly being taken down similar paths towards internationalisation or globalisation, but are also affected by local conditions that remain very significant.

There is still the question of whether research based on a European setting is of any significance in other cultural settings. Research by David Chan and Ka-Ho Mok (2001) found that the global trend of 'marketisation' that had been influential in the decision making of social policies around the world, is becoming an increasingly important phenomenon in the Asia-Pacific region. They suggested that the marketisation in higher education seems to be a global trend, but that different governments are implementing their interpretation of what this meant in different ways.

> We must not analyse 'marketisation practices' in education in these two places simplistically in terms of a one-dimensional movement from 'the state' (understood as non-market and bureaucratic) to 'the market' (understood as non-state and

corporate). Marketisation should not be treated as a simplistic notion of an undifferentiated universal global trend.

Chan and Mok (2001: 38)

Gibbons (1998) in his book 'The Globalisation of Education' reflected on the ways in which universities have reacted to the trends in globalisation. He argued that universities were primarily national rather than international and although knowledge production can be carried out anywhere, it was the innovation that takes place locally in relation to the knowledge that was the most important factor. This could be interpreted as a 'Think global, act local' strategy which was originally suggested by the American business theorist Theodore Levitt (1983).

The authors discussed in this section do have a variety of views on the nature of the factors that were affecting academic leaders. There does seem to be an underlying set of ideas, that suggests that although globalisation is an important theme, and there are a myriad of global factors that are shaping higher education policies and practices, it is the local factors that in the end are still the most influential factors. Leadership style does seem to be fundamental in a local setting. This section of the literature review has shown that academic leadership is becoming an increasingly global pursuit but requires a local focus. Academic leaders are facing more challenges and the suggestion is that a change of culture has been required to deal with these increased pressures. All of these factors have meant that new leadership styles have been required, although it is not always clear what these are. Women who are already in a minority in senior positions have come under increasing pressures. The interesting question is what this has meant for female academic leaders and what strategies have been adopted to cope with this changing environment?

2:2:5 Leadership styles to cope with new managerialism

New approaches and leadership styles have been required and there has been a threat of the rationalisation in the total number of higher education institutions (Rustin, in Jary and Parker, 1998). It has been reported that women have coped with this changing environment by using a strategy of accommodation and/or resistance (Clark *et al.* 1997, Thomas and Davies, 2002). It has been reported that women have often had to gain male skills and attributes to cope with this new culture of higher education (Brewis, 1999), which suggests that male

leadership styles persist. The problem with this research is the fact that it is not made clear what these male skills and attributes are and whether the skills of transformational leadership style can be attributed entirely to women. It is a dangerous assumption perhaps that all men have distinct characteristics that are different to those of women.

These changes in the higher education scene have been accompanied by a fundamental shift in the culture of educational institutions to a more "managerial" order (Simkins, 1999). This has resulted in the old collegial models of higher education being swept away in many Universities, and has seen the growth of the important middle management functions with substantial authority and responsibility. It has also resulted in the growth of tighter management controls that are open to external verification and checking. The new leadership task has been to put in place procedures that replicate the realities of the market (Hall, 1993), with an increased emphasis on entrepreneurial and financially based appraisal. This has been the new environmental setting that female academic leaders have found themselves in. So how have all these changes affected women in a higher education setting?

2:3 The role of women

2:3:1 The meaning of gender and a feminist stance

It is important within this literature review to define the meaning of **gender** and consider how it affects the psychological state of individuals at work. It is also important to define **feminism** and explore what this means for me to underpin the design and approach of the research programme.

The research programme considers the psychological reflections of female academic staff. For this reason, it is important to consider briefly what the meaning of gender is to individuals and how this influences women in the work place and more generally in their lives. The sexual differences between women and men are at the most basic level due to the differences in biological make up as a result of genetic differences and the effect of the sex hormones – the androgens and oestrogens that control bodily development and sexual behaviour. It has been suggested that the hormone testosterone is responsible for the aggressive behaviour in men that is not demonstrated as much by women (Dabbs *et al*, 1990). Recent researchers, however, have suggested that

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'new women' are increasingly taking on the characteristics of men despite their hormonal make up and becoming 'laddish' in their behaviour (Wilkinson, 1995). The differences between men and women at a biological level will, however, affect the behaviour of individuals in the work place, which is important for this research.

The biological difference between the sexes is only the beginning of the story of gender and sexuality. Social scientists have explained the way in which external factors such as culture, society, and rules and mores are internalised into people's thinking and the way in which they affect the way people behave and act in the world that they experience. Anthropologists suggested that culture has the most fundamental effect on the way in which the different sexes behave (Mead, 1928, 1930). The sociologists focused on the broader social process related to gender. Talcott Parsons for example focused on sex role theory and the idea that gender differences can be explained by structural functionalism rather that by simple biological differences (Parsons and Bales, 1953). Psychologists concentrated on the process by which children gain their sexual identity as a result of their contact with their family and other institutions such as school and work. This often leads to gender stereotyping where individuals have a rigid set of beliefs of how women and men should behave (Brannon, 1996).

The differences in gender roles and the topic of gender stereotyping is an important issue for academic women because their career develops as they are going through the socialisation process. The stereotypical view that men and women manage differently, for example, derives from the suggestion that women and men behave differently as a result of their socialisation process. Postmodern researchers have developed their ideas on gender and sexuality even further. At the forefront of this thinking was the work of Foucault. He argued that sexuality is not a given thing that relies only on biological factors. Rather, it is a result of a social and cultural construction related to specific times and places. He saw sexuality as being a very potent source of power, and therefore the regulation of sexuality as being critical in society. He also suggested that sexuality forms a powerful means of resistance to individuals or organizations that have this elite power at their disposal (Foucault, 1980).

Commentators in the modern world have suggested that views on gender are changing and new women, new men, and new relationships are emerging to challenge more traditional views (Mulgan, 1994). Changes in economics and employment patterns have both contributed to these changes. More women work and most organizations, including academic institutions, have seen an increase in numbers of women in the work force. Some commentators suggested that this has resulted in changes in organizational cultures because male strengths such as competitiveness and aggression have been overtaken by women's strengths such as teamwork, greater openness and flexibility (Kanter, 1993). It has been suggested that there is a new agenda for gender researchers to include the development of strategies that embrace and enable diversity, rethink male and female roles, and provide more supportive structures to help people to balance their wants, needs and responsibilities (Wilkinson and Mulgan, 1995). It is interesting to reflect on these ideas on gender in relation to feminist theories.

The research adopts a feminist stance in relation to design and approach. It is important for me here to define what **feminism** means for me and how this relates to my research process in relation to the literature. Feminism is a difficult and controversial term that conjures up a vision of women thumping tables and causing problems for men. At the heart of all feminist thinking is the general idea that we should be committed to theorizing the bases of inequality and should then design programmes in all spheres of life to address these issues. There are different views of why there is still gender inequality, and of course there are different stages of development in different parts of the world today. This research programme is based on some of the fundamental principles of feminism so it is important for me to define what I mean by a feminist approach, and review some of the critical literature in the field.

Early orientations to feminist thought reflected on the concentration of main stream research on the male dominated approach and the lack of opportunities that were open to women. The four traditions that emerged – **liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism** and **radical feminism,** created the foundation for modern feminist thought which is referred to as **postmodern feminism.** I shall now consider each of these movements in relation to the implications for work and career development for women.

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Liberal feminism concentrated on the unequal rights issues that had emerged for women across the world and talked about reform and redistribution of opportunities for all women. Liberal feminists argued that women should have the same opportunities for career development as men and should put all their priority on career rather than be distracted by other issues such as having children. A more enlightened view is that the fabric of our society should be designed to benefit all people at different stages of their life. This new view means that the design of work practices have to be constantly reviewed.

Marxist feminism was an influential school of Western feminist thought in the 1960s and 70s. Marxist feminists believed that sexual oppression was a dimension of class power and that the overthrow of capitalism was viewed as a pre-requisite to the dismantling of male privilege. **Socialist feminists**, on the other hand, asserted that women's subordination predated the development of class based societies and therefore could not be a result of class division alone. They suggested that a woman who desires both paid work and family often experiences feelings of conflicting interests and this often questions the rules of a traditional marriage. It also causes problems for her in relation to traditional views of women as homemakers and men as dominant wage earners.

Radical feminism considered the sexual oppression of women who, it is suggested, are oppressed because of their sex. Radical feminists suggested that sexual oppression is entrenched and suggested revolutionary change (Chester, 1979). Radical feminism also placed the concept of 'patriarchy' at the centre of the debate and suggested that it is the social structures that men have embedded in all walks of life that have dominated, oppressed and exploited women (Walby, 1999). Radical feminists therefore suggested that women have been oppressed by men in all walks of life including both at home and at work. They advocated the idea of women talking together to share the experience of being a woman in a particular setting, so that they can become more conscious about the real issues facing them. This is an important concept that is embedded in the research programme.

Post modern feminism has considered the differences between women and men and celebrates the diversity that this offered (Mitchell, 1974). It rejected the concept that women can be viewed as one group and advocated the

concept of 'modest' feminism which encourages loose associations of women with different perspectives achieving their goals in different ways (Beasley, 1999).

This short review of feminist thought provides some sign posts in relation to the position of women at work. The use of feminist research methods that derive from this theoretical development is also of prime importance to my research programme. A summary of the features of feminist research was suggested by Rogers and Rogers (2001) and this is considered in relation to the design of my research. They considered that feminist researchers should research topics that are of importance to women's concerns and priorities. The research methods should be informed by feminist theory and the interpretation of the data obtained and the dissemination of the findings is critical. They also suggested that the feminist researcher should consider feminist ethics when designing the research and should not seek to trick respondents into engaging with the research process. Feminist research is often multi-disciplinary in nature and often uses a variety of original techniques to develop ideas that can be used to create social change (Rogers and Rogers, 2001). My research programme adopts all of these strategies and takes the post modern view of feminism that aims to give all women an individual voice but celebrates the differences between women.

> Women do not need to eradicate difference to feel solidarity. We do not need to share common oppression to fight equally to end oppression. We do not need anti-male sentiments to bond us together, so great is the wealth of experience, culture, and ideas we have to share with one another. We can be sisters united by shared interests and beliefs, united in our appreciation for diversity, united in our struggle to end sexist oppression, united in political solidarity.
>
> Lugones and Spelman (1993:378)

My research programme considers each of the respondents as an individual with a voice to be listened to and respected. It does, however, seek to provide answers to the low representation of women in senior academic roles. It celebrates the diversity of women at different stages of their life and careers but seeks to create a united picture of real issues.

2:3:2 The success and career development of women in higher education

A preliminary review of the literature suggests that much of the research on female academic leaders has focused on those in senior positions. It has neglected the views of the growing numbers of female middle managers, who it can be hypothesised, can give a richer picture of the frustrations and barriers to their development in this new environment. Women are still poorly represented in senior management roles in universities on a global basis (Lie and Malik, 1994).

This problem has been recognised by major global organisations and is taken especially seriously as a major issue in the Scandinavian countries where there have been measures taken to encourage participation of women in academic life (UNESCO, 1996; ETAN, 1999; Fögelberg et al., 1999; Husu, 2000). The numbers of women in higher education in the UK compared to men is small particularly at the most senior level of professorial post and above. Women tend to occupy lower status roles associated with pastoral and guidance roles, in comparison to men (Davies and Holloway, 1995). There are however, a higher proportion of women to men in senior academic roles in the "new" universities compared to the "old" universities (Hasly, 1995). The general picture is one in which women are poorly represented in senior academic roles in higher education (Lie and Malik, 1994). It is estimated that only approximately 10% of professors in the UK are women, for example (Finch, 2003). Research has also shown that women in higher education suffer more stress compared to their male colleagues (Davies and Holloway, 1995).

Given the difficulties that women seem to have had in reaching senior positions, it is surprising that very little research has been conducted to investigate the reasons for success, and little is known about the characteristics that women have to adopt to achieve success. It does not necessarily follow that women are frustrated in their quest for the top. The research that has been carried out has tended to focus on the most senior academic staff. Suzanne Lie and Lynda Malik (1994) considered the reasons for the gender gap in higher education. Their book provided a strong conceptual model to underpin research in this area focusing on categories of influence. They concluded that the lack of

women in academia could be attributed to the historical context of the country, based on their up bringing and background.

Further research in the UK had shown that women feel uncomfortable with the new managerial order of higher education (Clark *et al,* 1997). Rosemary Deem suggested that an emphasis on the local setting of universities was becoming increasingly important for academic leaders (Deem, 2001). The research carried out by Sharon McDade, mentioned earlier, found that it was personal characteristics, and socialisation into the higher education setting that was likely to bring the most success. It was also important for women to have mentoring support and a network of contacts to nurture their development (McDade and Lewis, 1994, McDade and Green, 1991, 1994, McDade, 2001).

One piece of work was carried out in the Further Education sector to investigate the role of female leaders in this setting (Shain, 1999). This research suggested that on the surface there did appear to be a shift to feminised styles of management. Closer analysis however revealed that the masculine competitive values still underpinned both the policy and practice in the Further Education sector. Women were found to be performing the difficult middle management roles, and although some women had been seduced by managerial positions, others were not willing to make the sacrifices in their personal lives that were required. This included spending many hours at work and neglecting their motherly and home making duties (Shain, 1999).

O'Connor published an interesting article in 2000 in which she tried to summarise published research, and her own experiences that were not based on empirical research on the subject of resistance of academe to women. She referred heavily to the organisational culture in this article and made reference to the idea that gender was firmly embedded in organisations (Acker, 1990, 1998). She also recognised truth in the idea that women have been 'chilled out' of academic life by the organisational culture of academic institutions. Lisa Husu (2000) and Rosemary Deem (2001) have also developed these ideas in their research and writing about academic life. The idea that it is organisational culture that militates against the development of academic careers by women is one that arises powerfully in the literature. It is interesting to note that much of this research is now dated, and relies on interviews with senior academic staff.

Again, there appears to have been little research carried out at middle management level.

2:3:3 The glass ceiling phenomenon

I propose in this section to explore the concept of the glass ceiling metaphor in general, and consider the application of this in the higher education setting. The metaphor appears on the surface to have been used in a number of different contexts and for different purposes. These include a simple presentation of numbers of women in senior positions in different professions to illustrate that there is a problem with under representation of women. This has been a statistical approach that attempts to be objective.

The phenomenon has also been used in a much more conceptual and subjective way when researchers have used the metaphor to explore the factors affecting progression. Management and organisational theorists have tried to use the phenomenon to try and suggest practical management techniques that could be adopted to encourage the progression of women. This has included research into the deeper psychological state to attempt to provide a more detailed analysis into the reasons that there are small numbers of women at the top in certain professions. Commentators have also tried to suggest ways of encouraging and supporting women into senior roles on the basis of this analysis.

The problem with the metaphor therefore is that it is confusing and has become a catch all term that has been adopted by various researchers and management theorists to explore a complex set of issues. I think that it is important at this stage to review the phenomenon in general and consider the research that has been carried out in the higher education setting to enable a full and detailed review of the metaphor for the contemporary female academic.

The research that has been carried out at middle management level has focused on the glass ceiling phenomenon that explores the barriers that women have had to overcome to reach senior management roles (Shackleton 1995, Bass and Alvolio 1992, Morrison *et al*, 1987 and Alimo-Metcalfe, 1993).

The lack of women in senior management roles is an issue in many professions and the term the glass ceiling phenomenon has been derived to try and

describe this situation. The term has been used to graphically illustrate the barriers that women have met in their quest to become leaders in senior management roles. It has been suggested that these barriers are subtle and do not constitute discrimination, but they are just as effective (Shackleton, 1995, Bass and Alvolio, 1992).

Early research into this phenomenon showed that women may be held back from senior management because of an inherent bias towards views that men make better managers (Schein, 1973, 1975). Research during the late 1980s suggested that women often faced direct discrimination in the way in which the organisation practices are devised. A major milestone in the glass ceiling debate occurred when Morrison *et al* (1987) published their book *Breaking the Glass Ceiling*. This book suggested that there were factors for success, failure and career progression that were particularly relevant for women in their quest to become senior managers. They were also one of the first commentators to suggest the importance of mentoring as a positive factor for women in management roles. Later research suggested that women often face bias even before they enter organisations as an employee. The assessment centre activities that organisations use in their recruitment and selection processes are designed with reference to male management characteristics and are therefore gender biased (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1993).

Recent research in the US has suggested that the glass ceiling phenomenon does still exist, despite idealised views. Research in a cross-section of non-profit organisations found that there were disproportionately fewer women than men in senior management roles (Gibelman, 2000). This research was confirmed by Oakley (2000) who found that female middle-managers in US corporations faced inadequate career opportunities. This was attributed to gender differences in linguistic styles which made it difficult for women to communicate, gender based stereotyping, the old boy network which made it difficult to get on, and tokenism. Questions must be asked, however, about the relevance of this research to a higher education setting in the UK because of the fact that they are different cultural settings both at an organisational and country setting.

One of the only major piece of research that has been carried out to investigate this phenomenon in a higher education setting was that carried out in America in 1997 by Caffarella, Clark and Ingram. The women interviewed in the research were in middle management roles in educational institutions, corporate organisations and the religious ministry. The women in the study reported considerable frustrations at work, particularly in relation to the balancing act they had to do between their personal and private lives. The women did not put these experiences down to gender bias and did not feel that it was necessary to challenge the status quo. The authors suggest that it may well be these benign attitudes that these women possess that means that they are chosen for promotion by their male colleagues so that the gender bias remains embedded in the organisation. It is interesting to see if this is the case for respondents in my research programme by assessing their comments regarding their personal and private life in relation to their feelings on gender.

A recent piece of research was commissioned by Cambridge University to look at the results of their equal opportunities policy (Hunt 2001). The research found that the glass ceiling phenomenon was still apparent in the University, despite the fact that others had judged the University as being excellent. The 'tough macho culture' that existed in the University, was intimidating to many of the staff, who said it was a stumbling block to progression. Male Readers and male Professors were the most satisfied amongst the staff, and did not identify a problem with the equal opportunities agenda. Two thirds of female academics felt that they had been excluded at some time and suggested that the male dominated culture, where research was important, but teaching was not, discriminated against women.

My research investigates whether the findings that had been published to date are mirrored in an UK based "new university" setting, and whether a deeper analysis of the perceptions of the respondents in the research would allow the development of a perceptual map of the phenomenon.

Recent research indicates that the situation for women in higher education has not got any easier. The numbers of women in academic positions in higher education institutions is still reported as one quarter and women are found much more at junior academic level than senior academic level. The proportion

of women professors is still very small at about 10%, although the position is slightly better in the post 1992 Universities (Finch, 2003). Recent pay tables have indicated that there is a continuing pay differential for female academics. The reasons for the gender pay discrimination have been explained by the lecturers union Natfhe as being due to career breaks, outdated promotion procedures, and the existence of the glass ceiling phenomenon (Guardian, 2003). Many women are employed in part-time positions and if all full time and part time staff are taken into consideration there is an 18% gender based pay gap. Women find it difficult to get into senior positions in academic life, but also earn less if they ever reach these positions (Guardian, 2003).

A similar position is also found in other countries of the world. A four-year research programme at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that there was still very little awareness of the gendered nature of academic rules. Many of the junior women in the faculty were opting out of academic life because of the personal consequences of pursuing an academic career (Bailyn, 2003). Similarly, research in Sweden found that the Swedish academic world was very male dominated, particularly at the top and found that many of the organisational characteristics influenced the progression of women in the academy (Elg and Jonnergård, 2003).

Research in Norway at the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration where there has been a deliberate strategy of reducing discrimination, has shown that this has resulted in a decrease in the number of women at the higher levels of the organisation. This research programme interviewed women in the faculty to explore the perceptions of their situation. The researchers suggested that this was due to low level of organisational commitment for women compared to men, and that individual identity played a significant role in career progression. This is a very important paper in the literature because it suggests that it is an individual's identity that has the most important influence on their success. This is a particular focus in my research design. It is not enough just to interview respondents about factors, but to consider their views on their background and current state. The research was also important because it concluded that the culture of the business school where the research was carried out was more suited to men than women (Falkenberg, 2003).

We are therefore left with questions of how this situation has arisen, and how we should cope with the situation to reverse the trend. Knights and Richards (2003) suggested that academic life is highly gendered and the academic career path in the UK that has relied on the Research Assessment Exercise. This means that career development is very much about an individual's long term influence on their peer group in their local institution but more importantly in their peer group in the discipline area on an international basis. An uninterrupted career history is almost a pre-requisite for this influence to develop within the scholarly or discipline group at a local, national or international level. It could be argued that this has made the situation in terms of career development far worse for women in recent years. It has also been suggested that masculine practices abound in the higher education setting which makes it an uncomfortable place for women (Knights and Richards, 2003). A research programme across 16 universities in the UK found that the management of UK higher education institutions was gendered, and the status attached to teaching, research and management, where research was given more status, has had an effect on women in these institutions (Deem, 2003). Recent researchers have started to focus on the organisational setting as a key factor in the discrimination of women. Benschop and Brown (2003) have suggested that the structural, cultural and procedural arrangements of academic institutions have been organised in the old Olympus tradition – that is the lonely hero at the top. They suggested that the adoption of the Agora model, which entails greater public accountability, social responsibility, and transparency would be a much more appropriate culture to adopt if women are to be encouraged in the academy. This still leaves us with the question of why certain women have been successful in academic life. What makes a successful female Professor able to overcome the obvious hurdles that exist to achieve this position? Are they simply token women who have been placed there to try and influence an impossible position or have they got particular characteristics that make them able to cope with the new pressures and challenges? These are all questions that the research programme seeks to address. But before turning my attention to the research methodology I feel that it is important to critically appraise the glass ceiling phenomenon and dissect the components of the metaphor in more detail.

2:3:4 Critically reviewing the glass ceiling phenomenon

The literature review up to now has revealed some interesting problems and contradictions in relation to the glass ceiling phenomenon as an explanation for the lack of senior women in the academic field. It is important at this stage to critically appraise the metaphor and dissect the component parts with a return to the general literature on women at work.

There is no doubt that research has shown that there are still few women in senior academic roles in higher education. It is also clear that the context of higher education is becoming characterised by a period of rapid change brought about by economic constraints and changing demands. These changes have meant that higher education institutions have had to increasingly concentrate on a subtle combination of global and local factors. Researchers such as Ramsden, 1998, Pritchard, 2001, and Deem, 2002, have shown that higher education institutions have had to cope with this changing environment with an increased emphasis on hierarchical cultures and a patriarchal management style. There appears to be a limited literature on the requirements of an academic leader in this new environment, although it is clear that new skills and qualities are required and demands are greater. There are also questions about how women cope in this rapidly evolving set of conditions and whether the glass ceiling metaphor helps with this analysis.

The disappointment with the literature is the lack of detailed research about the identity of female academics despite transparent equal opportunities policies. The glass ceiling phenomenon is one that has been taken from the main stream management literature and could be viewed as being inadequate in so many ways because of the coverage of so many inter-related factors. Research has largely been carried out amongst senior women and has concentrated on the barriers to progression. Research has only just begun to move away from an emphasis on the barriers to progression and into a more detailed consideration on individual identity and psychological states, and it could be argued that this is a more progressive approach. To investigate the phenomenon in detail research should focus on the complex world of individuals and should not try to establish 'quick fixes' that it is hoped will encourage women to succeed. If women are to succeed in the future they need positive female role models at the top of the organisation to identify with. One of the important aspects of the

research should therefore be the psychological state of the successful female academic in terms of how she feels and how she can encourage other women to succeed. All of this is sadly lacking in the literature.

I feel that it is important to critically review the different components of the glass ceiling phenomenon before I can move on further. I intend to do this in three distinct parts – **women at work, women's identity and personal career development,** and **discrimination and coping strategies.**

2:3:5 Critically reviewing the glass ceiling phenomenon - women at work

Higher education institutions employ both women and men in academic roles and questions must be asked about the different attitudes that they both adopt in a general work situation. Researchers have found that despite all the efforts of the liberal feminists, women and men still have gendered behaviours that are developed as part of their socialisation process and this results in emotional segregation of them when they enter the work place (Archer, 1986, Chodorow, 1978, Sayers, 1982). This results in masculinity being about independence and autonomy and femininity being about co-operative behaviour, nurturance and dependence (Broverman et al, 1970).

One of the important issues in relation to women at work is the sex-role spill over and the stress that results in the work / home balance in terms of the expectations that are put on them. For a woman the fact that she is a mother and has children is often viewed as a burden, whereas for men marriage and family are often viewed as an asset that offers the man a certain advantage and stability. Women have to place a much heavier emphasis therefore on the work life balance and the apparent conflicts between expectation of individuals at home and at work (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). Research that was carried out in an academic setting illustrated that female academics have particular expectations of themselves. This means that they often try and support other colleagues in a mothering role and take on duties with a lower status such as student support because they feel that they are able to contribute the most in this type of role (Woollett et al, 1995, Wagner, 1995). This suggests that women have a particular issue with their identity that needs to be built into the research.

Women who experience working and managing in a patriarchal organisation often find their femininity a difficult thing to cope with. This often results in women adopting an inappropriate role that resembles stereotypical female traits which in turn leads to other problems (Flanders, 1994). Some of these roles include the 'mother confessor' when the woman offers men a shoulder to cry on; 'departmental mascot' who is put forward as a token woman; 'departmental tea lady' who picks up the mundane tasks; 'brides maid' who acts as a personnel assistant for other men; 'seductress' who uses her sexuality to get on; or 'feminist' who is strident and anti-male (Cassel and Walsh, 1992, Davidson and Cooper, 1992).

Women and men also lead in different ways and left to their own devices will use different approaches to achieve a successful outcome in a particular project. Rosenar (1990) found that women were much more likely to use transformational leadership. The research was confirmed by Bass, Alvolio and Atwater, (1996) who found that women are perceived as being much more transformational in leadership style that men who are more likely to adopt a transactional style of leadership.

When a woman makes the break through to a successful position she finds herself confronted with a new set of circumstances that largely derive from the emotional segregation that results from being surrounded by and competed with by men. It has been suggested that a woman who makes it to the top often for a variety of reasons neglects her previously held feminist attitudes and is not willing to call herself a feminist (Kitch, 1994). This research was however conducted outside the academic world. It has also been reported in the general management literature that a successful woman finds herself in an isolated position with men of a similar grade that are suspicious of her. Women in a junior position look to her for direction and vision but she often finds it easier to ignore them or neglect this role (Taunton, 1994). These issues of isolation and abandonment for the successful woman have not been fully reported in relation to the glass ceiling phenomenon but could provide a critical explanation for the lack of apparent success amongst women.

It has been suggested that women at the top tend to adopt different strategies to cope with increased feelings of isolation. These have been summarised as:

Traitor 'other women criticise my differentness (through promotion) from them'

Martyr 'I have to go on and on or I'll let my women colleagues down'

One of the boys 'I don't have any problems. I feel just like a man'

Conformist 'conformity and the abandonment of critical consciousness are the price of successful performance in the bureaucratic world'

Unrecognised explorer 'I have to go where no other women have been but there's little recognition when I get there'

(Taunton, 1994: 19-20)

If this research is found to be mirrored in higher education institutions then it suggests that new pressures and organisational configurations could be viewed to be simply side shows to the more important reasons for a lack of senior academic women. It suggests that a successful female academic may not be in a fit psychological state to help other more junior women to break through the glass ceiling because she is too busy protecting her own position in this isolated world.

2:3:6 Critically reviewing the glass ceiling phenomenon - women's identity and personal career development

The previous section has shown that it is a woman's personal identity that is likely to contribute to her success. There are particular issues linked to a woman's identity in relation to her personal career development. It is also important to consider the meaning of career development in more general terms. It has been recognised that women have particular issues in relation to identity that will have a direct effect on the trajectory of their career progression. Career development can be viewed from a psychological perspective as being a pattern that emerges as a result of choices and transitions. Some of these choices and transitions can be planned, but it is likely than many happen as a result of a chance occurrence or meeting (Kidd (2002). Arnold (1997) has defined career as 'the sequence of employment-related positions, roles, activities, and experiences encountered by a person'. An important aspect here is the emphasis on the way in which the career unfolds over time and the way in which an individual's aspirations, ambitions and attitudes change over that time.

It is clear that the patterns of career development have changed over time and the increased need for flexibility and change has meant that individuals often

have to be increasingly flexible and willing to change direction (Arthur, 1994). This has even happened in the academic world where academics have been recruited from the 'business world', and increased challenges have meant that academics have had to become multi-talented. The literature on career theory fits into two main fields – firstly the field of occupational psychology which focuses on occupational choice, and secondly the field of organisational careers which considers organisational psychology, and management studies (Kidd, 2002).

The field of occupational psychology suggests that it is the individual attributes such as abilities, interests and values that have an important effect on early decisions about careers particularly in relation to vocational choice. There are also important aspects of the person-environment fit (Tinsley, 2000). The person-environment theories of career development have been criticised because they have not considered the fact that individuals go through various developmental stages as their career progresses and they get older. These stages have been described as *growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline* (Super, Thompson and Lindeman, 1985). Another view of career development is that it is purely a result of the interaction between organisations and individuals (Nicholson, 1987). Individuals also form a 'psychological contract' between themselves and an organisation or other individuals in terms of what they expect from the relationship and their career development (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994).

The second field of literature focuses on organisational careers and includes topics such as career management and development by organisations. It includes the introduction of deliberate policies (Arnold, 1997) including the use of mentoring systems where a more experienced individual helps a more junior member of staff to develop (Kram, 1985). It also includes the use of recruitment and career counselling schemes operated by organisations where individuals are encouraged to meet certain goals and attain certain standards (Kidd, 1996). Research into the effectiveness of career management and counselling in general is very limited but there is some evidence of the benefits of some interventions (Kidd, 2002).

The concept of career development in the higher education setting involves a complex set of issues, which have not been well elucidated. A 'successful' academic can be awarded a particular title linked to status as a result of their research, teaching, management skills, or income generation activities. The Professorial title was traditionally associated with individual expertise and research publication record, although there has been a move in the 'new' University sector in the UK to award Professorial titles to individuals who demonstrate the ability to generate money on the basis of their national or international reputation. The role of Principal Lecturer in the 'new' University sector has tended to be associated with a clearly defined administrative function that can range from responsibility for academic staff, to subject development, or programme management. This redefinition of the roles, coupled with a recent emphasis on research rather than teaching and student support which has been asserted rather than widened, could have acted as a new barrier to the career progression of women because of the qualities that women possess that have already been outlined.

2:4 Coping strategies

2:4:1 Discrimination and coping strategies

The final section of the literature review investigates the role of discrimination in relation to the glass ceiling phenomenon. One of the explanations for the lack of women in senior positions has been that women have experienced some form of discrimination at some stage in their life that has held back their development. This is a particular worry for organisations that have implemented equal opportunities policies and practices but have still not managed to increase the numbers of women in senior positions to acceptable levels which seems to be a global problem that has already been discussed earlier. Could it be that overt discrimination is responsible for this situation?

Overt discrimination has been well documented in the literature and it is suggested that it is responsible for keeping the patriarchal structures in place. It has been suggested by Nicholson (1996) that these discriminatory barriers fall into three categories as follows:

Overt structural barriers – these barriers are seen as being established and visible. This includes the role of motherhood which women have to perform

coupled with a lack of child-care facilities or child friendly policies. It is a common practice that no allowances are made for women who have child-care responsibilities. Timetables and meetings are set without any consideration for their child-care responsibilities and seen almost as a test of performance (Kagan and Lewis, 1990). The lack of female role models and mentors is also identified in the literature as an overt structural barrier. This has already been discussed in the previous section. Sexist attitudes (Benokraitis and Feagn, 1995) and sexual harassment (Nicolson and Welsh, 1992) can also be · practised.

Covert structural barriers – these barriers are much less obvious and tend to be based on attitudes and beliefs that have been defined by powerful males in the organisation ((Nicholson, 1996). The patriarchal culture that appears in organisations including higher education institutions is an example of one covert structural barrier. Covert barriers to women's career progression represent the 'backlash' to the perceived threat of women reaching senior positions in the organisation. Old boy networks (Davidson and Cooper, 1992) and patronage (Savage 1986) can reinforce these attitudes. It is ironic however that once a woman is successful she seems prone to abandon expressing her disapproval of the status quo because of the isolation she feels at this stage and the approval she seeks from her male colleagues.

Unconscious psychological impacts – these are the effects that the organisation has on the women who work there. The implementation of an equal opportunities policy and a growing number of females in junior and senior positions may result in men defending themselves against increased feelings of anxiety (Crawford, 1989). The men may then produce barriers to women which largely go unnoticed because they maintain the status quo (Halton, 1994). Women who are early in their career may see sexist behaviour and sexist attitudes as a challenge but may come to accommodate these feelings later as they struggle to be accepted within a patriarchal culture (Halton, 1994).

Organisations have tried to increase the numbers of women in senior roles by adopting certain strategies that have already been discussed such as recruitment and selection procedures, career review, and support and mentoring systems. The literature review seems to suggest that it is the

lifeworld of the woman, her views on her identity, and the barriers that she meets in relation to the measures of success and the patriarchal culture of higher education institutions that provide the subtle barriers to progression. The compliance of senior women to the status quo could also be a serious barrier to progression.

The glass ceiling phenomenon is therefore only useful to illustrate the general issues related to the successful development of academic women. A head count of women in senior positions in higher education has provided the evidence for the phenomenon to exist. The problem with the term is that it incorporates a large number of interrelated and complex issues that derive from a number of academic disciplines. A fuller review of this literature has allowed me to understand that it appears to be a whole series of factors that allow a woman to break through the glass ceiling. These are linked to the particular cultural setting of the organisation where she works, but most importantly to the personal identity and psychological state of the woman in question. Research to date in the higher education setting has been very limited indeed.

The literature review has also pointed out the importance of the behaviour and psychological state of successful women to encourage junior women to progress. The glass ceiling phenomenon suggests that breaking through the barrier is enough but this is clearly not the case. It could be argued that the behaviour of successful women is a critical part of the phenomenon and again one that has not been well researched. The reasons for the apparent inaction by successful women is explored in the general literature, but has never been researched in depth in a higher education setting.

The glass ceiling phenomenon was a useful tool in the past to illustrate the problem that existed but I think that it is now time, in my opinion, to replace the metaphor with a new term. The dissection of the glass ceiling phenomenon has allowed some interesting ideas to emerge that will form a focus for the development of the research methodology. It appears to be very important to assess why particular women are successful, and investigate how they feel once they have to work in their new elevated role. Perhaps my research will lead to a new term to illustrate this continuing problem.

3. METHODOLOGY

3:1 Approach

An important part of the research design is the consideration of the methodological literature to underpin my thinking and planning processes. This is a critical part of the early stages of the research because it determined how I would investigate the issues that had been identified in the literature review. An important aspect that came from the literature review was that it appeared to be important to investigate the 'perceptions of individuals' on their views about their career development. It is not sufficiently rigorous to simply consider the obvious events that had affected the respondents during their careers.

I intend to explain the thinking behind this design process in three distinct phases. To begin with I will discuss the different *paradigms* that are adopted, secondly I will outline the proposed *strategies* that are adopted, and thirdly I will discuss the *methods* that are used in the research programme.

3:2 The research paradigms

Commentators have stated that there are two major paradigms that can be used by researchers who want to undertake qualitative research. These are referred to as *naturalism* and *progressivism.* Naturalism is characterised by many of the features of positivism and tries to minimise researcher participation (Guba and Lincoln, in Denzin and Lincoln 1999). This is not a suitable approach for my research programme because I wanted to participate in the research programme, and present my own ideas and views in the presentation of the results (Miller et al, 1998). This subjectivism is constrained during the research because I apply the same techniques and methods of analysis to myself as I do with other respondents. This approach means that I adopt the progressive research paradigm in my design process.

> Progressive qualitative researchers portray people as constructing the social world and researchers as themselves constructing the social world through their interpretations of it.
> (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993:11)

The progressive paradigm allows me to present the research findings in a more creative way and with more personal openness that I feel is more appropriate for my research programme. The research design also incorporates elements of

feminist research thinking in that a feminist standpoint means that the observer cannot be disentangled from the observed in the research of inquiring about constructions that are resident in the minds of the individuals. Feminist research thinking also favours progressivism and researchers are very interested in the constructions that are made at the end of the research process. I see this as being an important approach for my research programme.

> They do not exist outside of the persons who create and hold them; they are not part of some 'objective' world that exists apart from their constructions.
> (Guba and Lincoln, in Denzin and Lincoln 1999: 143)

Feminist researchers adopt varied qualitative styles of enquiry but they share the assumptions made by qualitative researchers that research can be focused on interpretations of human actions such as women's reports (Denzin and Lincoln, 1999). It has been argued for example that women often bring with them a different voice and a distinctive form. Their words often have less concern with their own achievements, focus more on the private and the personal and less on the public, and have more embeddedness and connectedness to others (Stanley, 1992). This is the reason that I consider the accounts of the women as individual entities, rather than making assumptions early on about commonalities.

The study of the views of the respondents in the research programme is therefore an example of an *interpretivist* approach. This can be characterised as being about the individual in a small-scale research process. It also focuses on the fact that human actions continuously re-create social life and this necessitates the collection of subjective thoughts in a non-statistical way. The researcher should become personally involved in the research process and seek to gain an understanding of actions and meanings rather than causes. The important aspects of the research are the micro-concepts such as individual perspective, constructs, negotiated meanings and definitions of situation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). The methods used in the research investigate socially available discourses and individual constructs of feelings.

The research is also based on the premise that reality and science are socially constructed and that the researchers are part of research settings. Investigation must be reflective, self-critical, and produce creative dialogue that aims to

problematize, reveal hidden realities, and initiate discussions (Holliday, 2002).

The approach to the research incorporates the theoretical paradigm of interpretivism outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (1999). The ontology is relativist which means that the realities that emerge from the research are in the form of multiple, intangible social constructions. The epistemology is transactional and subjectivist and the findings are created as the research process proceeds. This progressive approach to the research means that the picture of each respondent grows and develops as the research proceeds. Findings emerge over a period of time when respondents have more time to develop their own ideas and thoughts in relation to those of the other respondents. The respondents are also sensitised to the issues raised at the early stages of the research and are able to reflect on their own development during the latter stages of the research. This is particularly powerful when a major life event such as retirement or resignation has occurred in the respondent's life.

The final aim of the research is to distil a consensus that provides a more informed and sophisticated view compared to previous constructions. The research is designed to collect honest and authentic thoughts, although the passionate and subjectivist approach does result in hidden meanings that have to be interpreted by listening to the respondents discourse. This approach allows me to address the broad aim of identifying the complexity of the perceptions of the participants about the factors that influence females in higher education, to produce a new shared perceptual map. I act as a facilitator in this process, and am involved as a 'passionate participator' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1999).

Ideas and theories that emerge from the research are related using the interpretivist approach. This means that I have embarked on a voyage of discovery and the emphasis of the research has been on the credibility, and trustworthiness of the information that is collected during the research. The literature review reveals a number of opposing theories to explain the factors that influence the numbers of women in higher education. It also shows that the academic world has become a much more challenging arena in recent times (Ramsden, 1998, Horner, 2002, Deem, 2003, Knights and Richards, 2003, Elg

and Jonnergård, 2003). The interpretivist approach suggests that it is not appropriate to test a hypothesis in the nomothetic tradition, but it is better to explore the complex issues so that emerging constructions are formed as the results of the research and patterns and paradoxes are explored.

3:3 Strategy of enquiry

The research programme is carried out in a 'new' University that I work in and am therefore very familiar with. This enables me to participate in and understand the research setting, as stated earlier. The literature review reveals that 'new' Universities have promoted more women into senior academic posts. The reasons for this have not been fully researched but one cynical view could be that because these institutions have a lower status, then the competition for promotion is not as strong and therefore affords more opportunity to women.

A *multiple case study* of individual respondents at Sheffield Hallam University who are judged to be successful academic women is therefore carried out as a specific bounded system. A case study is characterised as an empirical inquiry method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1981).

Each of the respondents in the research is treated as a case and these are combined to create a multiple case study. Analysis of the preliminary research findings allows ideas to be developed that inform the design of later stages of the research. Construct validity is built up by using multiple sources of evidence. Respondents also have the opportunity to listen to a review of the preliminary findings of the research to act as a framework for the follow up interview. Testing of internal validity is also completed using explanation building from research findings. The use of multiple case studies adds validity to this analysis but it must be made clear that care has to be taken in generalisation to other institutions given the nature of the study.

The design of the research strategy is based on the lifeworld concept (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, Asworth, 2001, 2003), because the literature review suggests that academics become successful because of long term factors and influences (McDade, 2001, Hunt, 2001). I return to the lifeworld concept when the research

methods are discussed in more detail later on in this section. The lifeworld concept is characterised as a focus on the way that the lifeworld, that is the experiential world every person takes for granted, is produced and experienced by members.

The use of interview and oral account is used to provide descriptions of concrete experiences of the research participants. The transcription of these accounts is subjected to 'meaning unit analysis' where overlapping sections indicate a distinguishable meaning related to the phenomenon under study. Aspects 'revelatory' of the phenomenon are drawn up. This keeps close to the specific instance described by each research participant. A 'general description' of this is abstracted, and shorn of the specifics that may be peculiar to the instance. The essential features of their perceptions are then applied to the glass ceiling phenomenon and suggestions made for future empirical study. The approach to the research means that all thoughts and perceptions that are collected are open to contest and critique and it is important to observe the evidence that counters the glass ceiling image.

3:4 Design and Techniques

The literature review reveals that previous research that had been carried out had tended to use the interview technique (Hunt, 2001, McDade, 2001). The reasons for this choice had not been fully articulated in the published papers, but it can be surmised that this technique had allowed the researchers to obtain an emerging and rich picture of a complex set of issues. It also allows the researcher to develop an ongoing relationship with the subjects in the ethnographic tradition (Caffarella, Clark and Ingram, 2001).

This research programme expands the techniques used to date to include a number of methods that allows a deeper understanding of the patterns and paradoxes that emerge from the study. These patterns and paradoxes include issues such as the effect of the changing cultures of academic institutions (Benschop and Brown, 2003), and the male orientated culture that has been adopted (Falkenberg, 2003) which appear from the literature review to be a particular issue for women. These techniques are discussed after the detail of the sample of respondents is outlined.

The sample for the research is drawn from the senior female academic staff at a "new" University. These female academics are judged as being successful and in a minority. Preliminary research with the human resource department reveals that there are small percentages of women, compared to men, in the middle management roles within the University (Horner, 2002). This confirms the findings of other researchers that found that the percentage of women decreases as seniority increases. The research identifies two groups of female academics that are deemed to be in the middle management role in the University, have considerable academic responsibility, and are viewed by others as being successful. These are as follows:

Group 1	Female Professors (not senior managers)	100% sample
Group 2	Female Principal Lecturers	A random sample taken from across the University (including myself)

I decided to use a small sample of respondents for all the reasons that have been explored earlier and so that a variety of qualitative techniques could be used in more depth and a richer picture of the issue is derived in the interpretivist tradition. It is inappropriate, in my view to use a questionnaire to try and discover personal details (Berg, 1998).

The research adopts the following techniques to try and obtain a rich picture of the problem, and to add to the trustworthiness of the final recommendations that result from the research programme. I decided to include myself in the sample of Principal Lecturers because I wanted to think of myself as a 'passionate participant' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1999). By this, I mean that I am personally involved in the research and by becoming a respondent I am able to become intimately involved in the research process. I am able to actively involve myself in the development of the research. I also have to be aware however that direct involvement in the research may have biased the research results and may have a direct effect on the complex interpretation of the results that is required. The possibility of bias is mitigated by the positive benefits that are gained by my personal involvement as a respondent. My involvement also allows me to gain a personal insight into my own perceptions of the glass-ceiling phenomenon, which helps to illuminate the perceptions of other respondents. The research methods that are used are as follows:

Job description	what are the responsibilities of the job?
Autobiographical reflection	how has the respondent arrived in their current role?
Semi-structured interview	what is their view on their current role and the emerging themes from the first part of the research?

Each of these techniques will now be discussed in more depth.

3.4.1 Job description

The aim of the collection of a job description for all the respondents is to give me a clear view of the responsibilities associated with their job. The respondent is requested to give their current formal job description or if a formal job description is not available they are asked about the main duties involved in their particular job. This part of the research allows a detailed view on the tasks that are required in a middle management role, and the sorts of responsibilities that are associated with the grade.

It is seen later that the respondents give some detailed comments at this stage of the research that indicate the breadth and responsibility associated with a middle management role in the changing scene of higher education. This mirrored much of the contextual setting of higher education that emerges in the literature review and the preliminary research in the UK and Hong Kong. This stage of the research provides some clues to the reasons that many women are not promoted to these grades because of their perceptions of the responsibility and time commitment that is necessary to succeed at this level.

3.4.2 Autobiographical reflection

One of the important aspects that emerges from the literature review is the apparent need to reflect on past experiences in relation to current role (McDade, 2001). It is suggested that a lack of focus on this will mean that key events that have taken place in the respondents past which have had a fundamental effect on the respondent's career can be ignored. It is for this reason that I decide to use the autobiographical reflection to explore some of these complex issues. The respondents are asked to complete an autobiographical account of their careers to date, and reflect on the relationship

of these to their personal lives. This type of approach was used by sociologists in the Chicago School during the early part of the twentieth century. The use of autobiography comes from the qualitative research tradition and relies on a focus on a person's individual experiences, portraying these in a written or oral format (Creswell, 1998). I have already discussed the value of listening to women's voices in the feminist tradition which is said to provide unique insights into particular phenomenon (Stanley, 1992).

The use of autobiography is used to good effect in the book edited by Miriam David and Diana Woodward in 1998 - Negotiating the Glass Ceiling. This book has an interesting middle section titled 'Reflections on Past Careers', where senior academic women are asked to reflect at length on their past careers and the reasons for their success. These six accounts provide the reader with a powerful vision of the importance of background and support which is a feature of the stories told. In the early part of the book, there is a powerful account by Dr Chryssi Inglessi – entitled a Malady of Leisure and Travel: The Autobiography of a Scholar that gives a powerful account of the ups and downs of her painful journey to academic success, portrayed in an autobiographical style. The stories rely on accounts of women holding senior posts, rather than women in middle management positions. Despite this, this book provides me with a powerful rationale for using the autobiographical tradition in my research.

The research therefore uses the autobiographical tradition (Collin and Young, 1987) to explore the respondent's views on their career progression in the wider context of historical, economic, cultural, historical and ideological factors. This allows the individual and the researcher to view their career as part of a wider life plan (Hopfl, 1987, Alsop, 2001). I provide the respondent with a tape and ask them to complete an autobiographical review of their background and career progression.

This part of the research draws on the concept of the lifeworld through the lived-through experience of the respondents (Ashworth, 2001, 2003). This also draws on the theoretical underpinning of Merleau-Ponty, (1962) and the writings of lifeworld by Husserl (1970). This philosophical approach suggests that a particular experience – such as breaking through the glass ceiling, lies within the respondent's whole life-world and therefore cannot be divorced from it. I

structure the taped interviews around the fractions of the lifeworld approach. These fractions are *temporality, selfhood, sociality, embodiment, spaciality, project and discourse* (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, Ashworth, 2001, 2003). The research design means that there is an analysis of the words of the respondents in relation to their reflections of their lifeworld.

The structuring of the autobiographical script around the fractions of the lifeworld approach allows the respondents to give detailed individual reflections of complex psychological issues. The fractions are translated into words that would be meaningful for the respondents and which can be explained easily at the first meeting. The finished prompt sheet for the autobiographical reflections is shown in Appendix 2.

The first fraction *temporality* is translated into two key questions in the prompt sheet. The first question relates to time and asks the respondent to give their views on their career development. The respondent is asked to particularly reflect on their past career development and think about how this has affected their current role. Emotions such as hope, regrets, pride, guilt and other emotions are also temporal. This allows a sense of time to develop in the autobiographical reflections and makes links between the present and the future aspirations of the respondent.

> The present is not shut up within itself but transcends
> itself towards a future and past
>
> Merleau-Ponty, (1962: 420)

The second question asks the respondent to reflect on key events in relation to their career development, and this relates again to the first essence. It is hoped here that the respondents will reflect on their perception of events, rather than just the events themselves, and explore their experiences of juggling different roles at home and at work.

The second fraction *selfhood* is translated into one key question regarding the respondent's views on their personal identity. This question contains a number of clauses that required the respondent to think about their identity at the different stages in their career development. A key feature here is agency - that is whether she feels in personal control and whether she has presence and a voice. I expected that this would be the most challenging question for the

respondents and that they may have difficulty with answering it. A number of respondents did ask me to explain what this meant at the initial interview but they were all able to give a very detailed and insightful review of their individual identity in relation to career development. It is important to analyse the reflections for the strength of voice and presence which the respondents portray throughout the tape.

The third fraction *sociality* is explored in a question about significant others at both home and at study or work. The prompt asks the respondent to reflect on these in depth and consider their relationship to each of these in turn. Respondents often find themselves referring back to earlier references made to key individuals for them in the tape, but a detailed analysis of the whole reflection allows overlapping themes to be analysed.

The fourth fraction *embodiment* requires the respondent to think about the fact that she is a woman and to reflect on the effect that this has had on their personal career development. This allows me to consider how the situations that the respondent has experienced, relates to their body and what emotions this has generated at particular stages in their career development. Other feelings of discrimination, illness and fatigue are also explored here.

The fractions of *spatiality* and *project* are explored in a question about the effect that the higher education institution has on their career development. It is important in the research to identify the feelings that the respondents have about the particular cultural environment of the higher education institution in which they work. This allows me to identify issues for them in relation to organisational design and culture and the effects that these have on them in the past or at the current time. *Project* is also about the major personal interests that a woman has and the conflicts that arise as a result of these.

The essence of *discourse* analyses the language that is used in the autobiographical reflections for each of the respondents to discover the type of terms that are used to describe and thence to live their situation (Ashworth, 2003). This form of analysis gives some possible hints regarding the respondents' feelings at the time of the research and therefore, it is hoped gives some insights into the glass ceiling phenomenon.

The autobiographical reflections were completed over a three- month period. A pilot was carried out with one of the Professors and the results from this were of a high quality, so the research programme with other respondents continued. One of the Professors – Agate had to be removed from the sample at this stage because she did not feel able to complete the tape on her own for personal reasons. The other respondents took a varying amount of time to complete the tape.

The taped autobiographies are transcribed and coded and analysis is carried out using the Ethnograph 5 package to explore key themes that emerge from these individual accounts. The use of this analysis of the unstructured text from the autobiographies allows some development of an understanding of the documentary evidence. A key part of this analysis is being able to identify the factors that have contributed to the development of the careers of the respondents in the research. Detailed analysis allows the development of a perceptual map and enables the cross-referencing of emerging patterns and paradoxes. It is only then that the design of the interview is carried out. It is important that the design of the interviews is based on the patterns and paradoxes that emerge from the autobiographies. The delay in the design of the interviews, allows me to reflect on the findings from the first part of the research, and to design the semi-structured interview around the results that emerge from the autobiographical studies.

This approach is interpretivist in nature, and allows a development of ideas in a non-threatening environment. It is interesting to note that for most of the respondents the completion of the autobiographical reflections is a positive experience and yields a wealth of ideas related to the phenomenon under investigation. One of the respondents refused to complete the reflections in private and wanted me to be present because of her doubts about completing a tape on her on. This meant that she had to be discounted from the research programme because the results from this interview resulted in a list of events rather than a series of reflections. This illustrates the positive aspect of the collection of the research findings by using the autobiographical reflections.

3.4.3 Semi-structured interview

The autobiographical research is followed by a semi-structured interview with each respondent. This allows me to gain a further insight into the respondent's feelings and emotions. This approach has both positive and negative outcomes. A positive outcome is the fact that the follow up interview allows the respondents to think in some depth about their perceptions of the results from the first stage of the research and suggests further personal insights as a response to these. A negative aspect is that not all the respondents were able to complete an interview because they had moved on to other jobs or were away from the University for a sabbatical.

The reasons for using an interview at this stage of the research, is the fact that interviewing emerged as a major technique that has been used in past research on the glass ceiling. It has been used to provide the researcher with a powerful technique to explore complex issues, particularly in certain research programmes (McDade, 2001). It also allows me to probe particular issues with the respondents in a more detailed way on the basis of the results from the autobiographical reflections.

> That the qualitative interview is being focused on today, may in part be due to the correspondence of themes central to current philosophy and to the qualitative interview, such as experience, meaning, life world, conversation, dialogue, narrative, and language.
>
> (Kvale, 1996: 11)

This method is chosen because the research is concerned with complex perceptions of lifeworld interactions that it is important for me to capture as the essence of these encounters. The design of the interviews is critical to the research process because complex issues are explored. Oakley (1981) explores this in her writings about the interview process when she suggests that hidden meanings and nuances are often hidden beneath the surface during an interview between two individuals.

> Interviewing is rather like a marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind closed doors there is a world of secrets.
>
> (Oakley, 1981: 41)

Current interest in the literature is the fact that the research interview is like a journey travelled by the researcher and the respondent to gain information

about complex issues. It is important for me to develop an understanding of the respondents during the research process. The use of empathetic interviewing in the first and last stages of he research programme allows me to become an active participant in the research and influence the outcome, although this is not without risk (Lawless, 1999). I wonder how much of my own feelings are reflected later in the interpretation of the results.

The use of this approach in this part of the research allows a deeper relationship to develop between the respondents and myself. It is suggested that it will provide a more detailed and meaningful set of results (Denzin and Lincoln, 1999). The use of semi-structured interviews means that a broad outline of the questions is worked out before the interview, but that I am able to deviate from these questions if there is an interesting line of enquiry to pursue. Open- ended questions allow a richer picture to be gained, but means that standard questions are not asked (Fowler and Mangione, 1990).

The design of the interviews avoids the use of structured and scripted questions so that deeper feelings of the respondents as individuals are explored. The completion of the interviews is fascinating because the interviews provide me with an insight into the respondents' life and views so that the objectives of the research are achieved. This means that I exert an influence over the interview (Riley, 1999).

> The interviewing stage includes building awareness and support for having an external focus, for expecting and embracing surprises, for realizing that qualitative research is indirect conversation, not direct interrogation, and accepting that if we are to learn what interviewees find meaningful about our topic, they must exert influence over the drift of the conversation.
>
> (Riley, 1999: 19)

I am careful not to influence the respondents too much and to balance the positive effects of this with the avoidance of excessive interviewer bias. It is a fallacy to assume that bias in interviews can be totally avoided because both participants are human beings who have feelings and emotions. Borg in 1981 focused on the factors that should be avoided in the design of research interviews and I considered these aspects during the design and conduct of the interviews.

Eagerness of the respondent to please the interviewer, a vague antagonism that sometimes arises between interviewer and respondent, or the tendency of the interviewer to seek out the answers that support his preconceived notions are but few of the factors that contribute to biasing of data obtained from the interview. These factors are all called response by survey researchers.

(Borg, 1981: 19).

The interviews are analysed following transcription and the results of this are used to assess the consistency between respondents. It is important to judge plausibility, credibility and evidence to establish the trustworthiness of the research.

The analysis of the results from the three research methods allows comparisons to be drawn between individuals, which allows the development of an informed picture of successful women in academia and helps to develop a picture of the respondents' view of their career progression.

3:5 Ethical issues

The use of autobiography and interview in the research process raises interesting ethical issues that have to be considered during the design and implementation stages of the research programme. The basic ethical principle is that no harm should come to the respondents as a result of their participation (Oppenheim, 1992). In my view this is a naïve assumption because these processes will change every respondent to some degree, but it is hoped that participation would not harm individuals but provide positive outcomes.

I have a duty as a social scientist to maintain ethical standards due to the fact that I was delving into respondent's lives (Berg, 1998). The research paradigm that is chosen has a fundamental effect on the type of information that is collected. I proposed a code of ethics that was fully elucidated before the research process started. This code is based on ethical guidelines that reflected informed consent, confidentiality and consequences Eisner and Peshkin, 1990, and Kimmer, 1998, (in Denzin and Lincoln, 1999).

Kvale (1996) outlines the ethical issues that I use before the research process commenced and suggests that this analysis should be divided into five main areas for attention. The first of the ethical issues is for the researcher to

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consider the *beneficial consequences* of the research and assess the likely contribution that the research will make to human knowledge. The research does bring a positive effect to the respondents. It does allow them to reflect on past career development and the barriers to their future progression. This is largely a positive and enlightening experience for the respondents.

> It is not unreasonable for the interviewee to get something from you.
>
> (Robson, 1993: 230)

I think that it is naïve to suppose that all the effect of the research process is always positive for the respondents. I do seek to minimise the negative effects by steering the respondents away from a negative emotional state by moving away from these during the interview process.

A feminist approach to the research is adopted because I encouraged a positive outcome for all the respondents in the research process.

> Indeed the gender and ethnic solidarity between the researcher and researched welds that relationship into one of co-operation and collaboration that represents a personal commitment and also a contribution to the interests of women in general.
>
> (Punch, 1998, in Denzin and Lincoln, 1999: 89)

It is also an important feature of the research design that respondents could withdraw from the research at any time if they wanted to without damaging the results from the research since the research method does not rely on a particular sample size.

The second of the ethical issues outlined by Kvale (1996) is that of *informed consent.* This is very important part of the ethical review and means that I do obtain written consent from the participants to the research process at the start of the research. I also allow participants to exit from the research programme if they wish to do this. It is interesting to note that it is not possible for me to predict the likely outcome of the research process on the respondents, so this raises questions about the level of detail that I am able to give the proposed respondents at the preliminary interview (Kvale, 1996). This lack of detailed information about psychological outcomes is probably the reason that one of the respondents dropped out of the research in the early stages.

The third of the ethical issues is that of *confidentiality* (Kvale, 1996). The confidentiality of the respondents should be protected and if the information from the research is to be published then their permission should be obtained. I embed this as part of the research, but it must be noted that the small-scale nature of the research made anonymity hard to achieve. I seek permission from all respondents before their ideas are published in any format, and all quotes included in this work are not attributed to individuals. Views are left out if issues arise in relation to privacy, harm, and future career development of the respondents.

The fourth ethical issue is the *consequence* of the study for the participants (Kvale, 1996). This means that I have to assess the potential harm to the respondents against the possible benefits and judge whether the publication of the research findings would have a positive or negative effect on the respondents. The research is designed to try and produce positive recognition and support changes in policy, if appropriate. It is likely that the research does bring about changes in conscious awareness of the respondents to career development in higher education. In fact some of the respondents comment on the effects that the research has on them.

The final ethical issue that is explored by Kvale (1996) is the *role of the researcher* in the research process. The use of autobiography and semi-structured interviews does reveal vital insights into the research topic, but does lead me at times into uncharted waters in terms of information of a sensitive and personal nature. The respondents sometimes say that they are telling me things off the record that they do not want repeating anywhere else. I considered that the benefits and insights that are provided by the research have outweighed the possible ethical issues, and that careful management of the research project ensures that adequate consideration is given to issues of consent, confidentiality, and appropriate consequences. I can only thank the women that were prepared to spend the time with me to provide me with the fascinating results that follow.

Final thoughts

The design of this research programme is in itself a fascinating process that reveals to me the nuances of research design and the complexity of research

methods. I feel enlightened by the fascinating journey that I have travelled to produce this finished account. The results that appear in the thesis belong to all the individual participants but read as a whole giving, I hope a new insight into the glass ceiling metaphor. The use of the lifeworld approach allows me to go beyond the meaning of what is said to see the unspoken perceptions which are taken for granted. Examples of assumptions are things such as career meaning a temporal movement of a planned or non-random event, or that the glass ceiling presupposes hierarchy.

Table 3 Summary of the chosen research design

Research Paradigm	Research Strategy	Method of data Collection	Methods of Analysis
Progressive Qualitative (Holliday, 2002)	Case study (Yin, 1984, Stake 1994)	Collection of job description documents and preliminary reflections	Manual analysis of key issues/ themes
Interpretivism (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, Denzin and Lincoln, 1999)	Lifeworld approach (Merlau-Ponty, 1962, Ashworth, 2001, 2003)	Autobiographical reflection based on life-world concept and narrative	Ethnograph 5 package and manual analysis
Feminist (Denzin and Lincoln, 1999, Stanley,1990)		Follow up semi-structured interview	Manual analysis of transcripts to discover key themes and ideas Representation of findings in creative ways Sharing of findings with respondents

4. RESULTS

4:1 Results - Job Descriptions – what the respondents actually do

The first part of the research was carried out at a preliminary meeting with all the potential respondents who had responded positively to my first preliminary e-mail. The potential respondents had been identified from the list of staff and included all the female Professors at the time who were not senior managers (6). A sample of Principal Lecturers (8) was also selected at random from the University telephone book and potential respondents were drawn from across the diverse University schools. One of the Principal Lecturers withdrew from the research at this stage prior to the interview for personal reasons so this meant that the sample of Principal Lecturers was 7. A preliminary meeting was arranged in the respondent's office in order to collect preliminary information and complete research agreement forms.

The first stage of the research project was carried out when I visited the group of Professors and Principal Lecturers who had been drawn from the sample and had agreed to participate in the research. This included six Professors and seven Principal Lecturers. A preliminary meeting was arranged between the respondent and myself. This meeting had three main objectives. The research proposal had already been sent to the proposed participants so that they could read the details and familiarise themselves with the research design. The preliminary meeting was scheduled and this was a very important part of the research because it was the first time that I was to talk to the respondents who were going to become very well known to myself over the next year.

A series of meetings were set up in July to August 2002. I propose here to discuss the results from this stage of the research and to discuss the implications of the research findings in relation to the literature. The respondents will be referred to as – Professors **Diamond, Sapphire, Topaz, Agate, Ruby** and **Garnet** and the Principal Lecturers as **Amber, Pearl, Jade, Turquoise, Aquamarine, Jet** and **Emerald.**

The first stage of the preliminary meeting was time spent in getting to know each other. It was very important that the respondent could trust me, and that they felt that the research was going to contribute something positive to both the

respondents and female academics in general. The ethical framework for the research was then explained and respondents were then asked to sign the agreement form that outlined my approach to the research and included a statement about the confidentiality of the material that it was anticipated would come out of the research project and the way in which this would be treated during analysis and writing up. The form is shown in Appendix 1.

The respondents were then provided with a tape machine, a tape, and the details for the autobiographical reflections, which is shown in Appendix 2. The respondents were asked to reflect on the way in which they would complete their tape. The respondents did have some questions and comments at this stage, and these were answered. The results of these discussions will be outlined in the next section.

The respondents were asked to outline their roles and responsibilities in their job at the current time. They were asked to provide their job description if they had one or if not they were asked to provide me with an outline of their job as they saw it. It was predicted that there would be a difference between their actual duties and their official job descriptions. The results of this part of the research are as follows:

4:1:1 The Professors

Diamond was contacted at the beginning because she acted as the pilot for the first part of the research. This Professor thought that she had a job description at home, which was given to her during her interview but failed to produce it after searching. She described the roles and responsibilities that were associated with her job which were largely focused on the strategic development of the research agenda in association with her peers and juniors. Research supervision played a major part of the job, and the leadership and development of junior researchers was a major part of the role, particularly with the objectives that had been set for her under the RAE agenda and targets. This called for a distinct leadership style that was pioneering in spirit, and had been highlighted in previous research (Kidd, 2002). She also talked about the extensive committee work that was necessary to underpin the professorial role. This included attendance at various research committees in the University.

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She talked about her real love of research and the way in which this had involved her with exciting collaborations outside the University with other individual academics and groups of academics from other institutions. This shows the importance of the concept of a career outside the University working with other peers from locations and the important concept of developing influence rather than simply success. Research is becoming more exciting and global in nature. The Professorial role also meant that she had to bid for research grants when this was necessary or desirable. She talked about her frustration with the administrative work that was necessary as a Professor (Ramsden, 1998, Simkins, 1999), which she said seemed to be growing, although there was secretarial support available if she required it.

My observation here was that the professorial role is a complex role, which requires great academic and political skills. The Professor has to provide leadership to individuals and groups, as well as playing a major political role both inside and outside the University.

The RAE agenda has obviously provided the Professor with a personal and team target and it is easy to measure whether this target is met. This puts the Professor under a great deal of pressure to produce results within an identified time framework and means that the pressure is relentless. She suggested that this had resulted in an organisational culture which is performance oriented (Hofstede, 1991), and this perhaps excused the adoption of the patriarchal and hierarchical culture that she suggested was apparent at the University. The achievement of the RAE target also meant that a continuous research record was required. Diamond mentioned that it was only possible for her to succeed with her role as a Professor because her child was now grown up and she did not need to take a career break at this stage in her career. This respondent had been very lucky to be able to have a career break and still continue to develop a research profile that was necessary for her success, as a result of supportive mentors and individuals at home. She realised that this was not always possible for all women as has been found in previous research programmes (Deem, 2003).

Sapphire mirrored some of the thoughts about her job that Diamond had explored with me. She did not have a formal job description. She said that it

was not made very clear at her appointment as a Professor what was expected of her in her new role. She knew that the Professorial title had been awarded as a result of her contribution to her academic field. In fact she thought that she could have continued much as she had been doing in her previous job but with a new title if she had wanted to. She said that she had now taken a major role in the leadership of research in her area (Weil, 1994) and this involved the supervision of research students and seeking research grants whenever possible.

This work involved her in extensive collaborative work outside the UK, so she regularly spent some of the year overseas so that she could complete important research projects. It seemed that the international dimension of the Professorial agenda had grown and this finding has been found in relation to a more general academic leadership role in other institutions (Van der Wende, 1997). Unlike Diamond, she did have some responsibility for course management and was particularly involved with the post graduate students. It would be interesting to note whether this was the case for her male colleagues, since this has been recognised as being a role that is particularly chosen for women, but at an undergraduate level (Woollett *et al*, 1995, Wagner, 1995). She also saw her role as having an important public relations effect particularly in the region. She reported that she did have to get involved with a growing amount of internal meetings and expressed some disquiet about the bureaucratic nature of the systems that had been set up in the University. This growth in the importance of administration and bureaucratic systems is something that had emerged in the literature review (Ramsden, 1998, Simkins, 1999).

Topaz told me that she had been appointed as a Professor from outside the University. She had not been given a formal job description in writing, although she was fairly clear in her mind what the Professorial role entailed. She repeated many of the responsibilities that Diamond and Sapphire had reported in earlier interviews. She felt that she was responsible for setting the research agenda in her academic area and that she felt a passionate involvement in the subject area. There was a requirement to bid for research money as part of her role.

She felt that it was her responsibility to lead the academic staff in her area to achieve her research agenda that again was tied up to RAE objectives and external funding requirements. This meant that she had encouraged academic staff to be more research active and had encouraged potential research stars to develop and publish where appropriate. This was the first reference that was made to the role of mentoring that had been a feature in the literature (McDade, 2001). A key part of her role was the external contacts that she had with other individual academics and academic teams in other institutions. This allowed her to collaborate on research programmes and bid for research money. Many of these contacts were from the UK and some were international (Van der Wende, 1997). Again this highlighted the importance of the concept of the career outside the institution that is a feature of academic life. She did reflect on what role it was possible to move on to after being a Professor and what responsibilities this move would bring.

Agate reported that her job was very involved and complicated. She saw the primary function of the role as being involved in the regional agenda for her subject area, and had made sure that she was a member of major influential bodies at regional and national level to ensure that this agenda was pursued. She was also responsible for setting the internal research agenda, and for leading academic staff and research students in their own research projects and publications. She did report that at one stage she had had responsibility for the leadership of the subject group, but had found this role too difficult and burdensome and diverted her attention from the research agenda, so this had been dropped. This echoes the findings in the literature where it had been suggested that the adoption of a managerialist culture has required more administrative systems that have diverted attention away from other agendas such as research (Simkins, 1999).

Agate did not want to complete the autobiographical reflections on her own. A tape was completed in my presence. Analysis of this tape only revealed a summary of Agate's previous appointments and did not give any insights into her feelings. This was very interesting because it supported the decision to encourage the women to complete the autobiographical reflections in private. This meant that she had to be discounted from the research programme. I learnt at a later date that Agate had left the University to take up another post. I

will never discover whether it was her frustrations with the system or another reason that caused her to leave.

Ruby was a very interesting respondent because she was coming up for retirement at the beginning of my research programme, and actually retired before the final follow up interview. This meant that she had gone through the final stages of career progression *maintenance and decline* (Super, Thompson and Lindeman, 1985), and that she had particular insights to offer about the University and the role of Professor within it.

She reported that she herself had changed her role towards the end of her career. Her career had been very much based on her pioneering spirit to develop the knowledge and research in her discipline in an area that had not had a traditional research base. This meant that she had been the first to achieve many things such as her doctorate, and the Professorial role in her discipline.

Her current job involved her in mentoring the researchers that she considered would take over from her in her retirement (McDade, 2001, Kram, 1985). She admitted that she had not always carried out this role in the past, perhaps being more interested in her own personal research agenda. This had meant that in the last year she had slowly handed over the funding bid side, and the internal management function of the Professorial role to her younger colleagues. She had continued with the supervision of her research students and had continued to meet with post-graduate students on a regular basis. She had also continued with her external work to develop the subject discipline for the future. I will return to many of these thoughts in the analysis of the autobiographical reflections and particularly in the follow up interview.

Garnet talked at length about her responsibilities in her current role. She echoed some of the comments that had been made by previous respondents. Her appointment as Professor was very important to her because it allowed her to develop the research and knowledge in her subject discipline in which she had a passionate involvement. She said that a primary responsibility of her role was to develop the research agenda for the subject team and get external funding to support the work of the team. This often required external

collaboration on a national or international basis and would often mean that she had to network outside the University (Weil, 1994). She stated that research was becoming much more political and required more internal committee work at an organisational level. This meant that there were increasing pressures from both inside and outside the institution.

A primary responsibility of her job was to encourage potential researchers to develop their research profile and publish to a RAE agenda. There were targets set in relation to the RAE agenda that made the job more stressful (Storey, 2002).

The results from this stage of the research did show that the female professors did have some things in common regarding the responsibilities of their jobs. The initial discussions did show some interesting similarities between the respondents. None of the respondents had a formal written job description although one of the respondents did report seeing one at her interview. The Professors had interpreted their job to include some responsibilities that were common. It was important that the woman felt that she had a belief in the importance of discovering further knowledge about her discipline in a research agenda. The professorial role was shown to be a complex role which requires great academic and political skills. The person has to provide leadership to individuals and groups, as well as playing a major political role both inside and outside the university.

The professorial role also involved all the respondents in setting the research strategy and direction for the subject area. This often involved the women in negotiation at a local, national and international level in the development of collaborative arrangements. This echoes the suggestions in the literature that the agenda for academic leaders is becoming more global in nature. (Ramsden, 1998). The Professors also thought that it was important to develop a presence in the local area (Deem, 2001), although this was more important for certain respondents. The requirement for obtaining research funding by the RAE submission and other means had become an important part of their role and this meant that the research agenda had become more market driven (Hall, 1993), and much more stressful for themselves (Deem, 2003). It was also clear that the Professors interviewed in the research were not clear about the future

career progression open to them. The adoption of a managerialist culture has required more administrative systems that they felt had diverted attention away from the research agenda (Simpkins, 1999).

The Professors stated that the leadership of academic staff and researchers was an important part of their role (Hall, 1993). It was interesting that only one of the Professors who was about to retire mentioned the role of mentoring colleagues to take over as a major part of their role (McDade, 2001). It is also interesting to note that none of the Professors mentioned that their role included the embedding of research findings in the teaching programmes.

It is interesting to note that since the early stage of the research, the human resource department at the University has written a job description for the Senior Academic role (including Professorial role) at the University, shown in Appendix 3. It can be seen from this job description that the role of Professor is not well defined from the range of duties that are identified. The role of academic leadership does incorporate some of the factors that the respondents identified as being critical in their role. The other interesting point is the emphasis on business planning and line management rather than academic development and mentoring.

4:1:2 The Principal Lecturers

It is important to note that while the research was progressing it was becoming common knowledge in the University that the Principal Lecturer scale, to which there was no automatic progression, was increasingly being linked to a "managerial" role (Hall, 1993). This could vary from subject leader to programme leader, but the role would have to have measurable outcomes in the future. Academic staff who applied for a Principal Lecturer grade would increasingly be asked to state how they were suited to a particular managerial role at the middle management grade.

Amber was the only respondent in the research who volunteered a job description at the initial meeting. This job description is shown in Appendix 4. This had been created because the role was seen as being different from the normal Principal Lecturers in the School because it had discrete funding and particular objectives. It can be seen from this job description that Amber had

particular roles under the general heading of discipline leader that included the management of staff and the liaison with the senior managers in the School. There was also a requirement for Amber to lead the updating of the subject discipline and get involved in important networks at a local and national level. The embedding of this in the teaching programmes in the School was also an important part of the role.

Amber talked about her frustration at our first meeting about the lack of time to complete research in the light of other far reaching responsibilities and reflected on the organisational culture that had brought this about (Husu, 2000, Deem, 2001).

Pearl reported to me at our preliminary meeting that since the original design of the research she had been promoted to a senior academic post (SAP) from her previous Principal Lecturer post. I decided to continue with the research with her because I thought that this would provide me with an interesting dimension to the research findings. Pearl could reflect on her recent experience as a Principal Lecturer and give some interesting insights as a SAP post holder. She had found that being an SAP had increasingly isolated her from her fellow colleagues.

Her current role included the management responsibility for her academic division and the staff that worked in it. This involved her in regular meetings at School and University level. She said that she had always been keen to contribute to University level meetings as well as those in her own School, and so she had found herself on a number of key cross university committees such as the University validation panel.

Her role also involved responsibility for the development and management of the School's post-graduate Programme that involved high levels of income. This meant that she was responsible for the allocation and quality of all the teaching team to this Programme that was a considerable management function. She said that she had never had the time to seriously research and publish, and she thought that this situation had become worse more recently since her promotion. This echoes the literature that suggested that a focus on the

managerial issues meant that time available for serious research is reduced (Simkins, 1999).

Jade had been a Principal Lecturer for some time and had had a variety of roles during this time. She had been a subject leader for her discipline area but had given this up very recently. She reported that she had had some frustration with this role in the past because it had taken away from her real desire to research and to publish. She reported that these days she had gone back to developing the programmes and looking after the students particularly at postgraduate level and this was a welcome change from her previous duties and suited her personality more. This result echoed the research in the literature review that suggested that women often find it better suited to their personalities to support students at an undergraduate level, but feel undermined since this role has been deemed to have a lower status in comparison to research and publication (Woolett et al, 1995, Wagner, 1998). Her situation was under review at the time of the preliminary interview so she was not fully clear as to what her responsibilities would be in the future.

Turquoise did not have a formally agreed job description, but her duties had been well negotiated and understood. She had been promoted from Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer on the strength of her leadership potential and her management capability. She had started her career at the new grade by taking over the management responsibility for one of the large undergraduate programmes in the School. This had involved her in the chairing of a recent major validation exercise, and had meant that she had a major contribution to make to the subject review exercise in 1999. This account illustrates the way in which promotion has been linked to management responsibility in recent years (Simkins, 1999).

This role had meant that she had had to establish and lead a group of academic and administrative teams in the creation of new systems for student support and guidance in an era of rising numbers, increased demands from students, and falling financial resources from the government. These factors, coupled with the demands of the subject review exercise and the rising desire by the school management to raise income from non HEFCE income had made the job very stressful for her.

She reported that one of the lessons that had come from this time was the requirement to put more emphasis on recruitment rather than admissions in the School because of a falling number of applications of potential students to certain courses in her discipline area. She had recently, therefore, moved away from the Programme Leader role, and taken on a new role responsible for recruitment of students to the Programmes. She was in the process of trying to develop the team and the systems to develop this idea at the time of the interview. She reported that this was a new challenge and she expected that it would be equally as stressful as her previous role because there were defined targets that she would have to meet which she did not envisage would be an easy task. She did feel, however, that this was one of the consequences of becoming a Principal Lecturer.

She also reported that she felt that it was important within her job to carry out some research and scholarship to keep her abreast of the sector. She was busy at the time researching and writing two books and preparing teaching materials for her teaching sessions. She reported that this work was often done in her own time and that did put strains on her private life. Not only was she working full time, she often had to spend time doing this extra work or travelling overseas to either teach or recruit students. The demands of the job often seemed like a mission impossible to her and seemed to mirror similar findings in the literature where it had been found that women had to make sacrifices in their personal lives to become successful (Shain, 1999). It must be questioned here, however, whether this is a situation that is peculiar to women.

Aquamarine reported that she did not have a formal job description, but she knew what the requirements of her job were. She had been promoted to a Principal Lecturer role on the basis of her management expertise and her research. Her current role involved three main responsibilities. She had a clearly defined course management role that involved her in the development of the course content, and the ongoing development of the student support and guidance systems. She was also a member of the central University validation panel that was responsible for the validation of all proposed undergraduate courses.

A second part of her role involved her in the development and delivery of classes in her academic discipline. This involved her in the scholarship activity that was necessary to underpin this teaching. The final part of her role that she was trying to develop was her research. She said that this was very important to her, but that she had to fit this in with all the other responsibilities that she had and this was often difficult. This finding mirrored the feelings of the previous respondent, Turquoise.

Jet had been a Principal Lecturer for some time and had had a variety of tasks associated with this role. A bit like Turquoise she had given up her course management responsibilities more recently and was currently involved in the strategic development of courses. She was continuing with a wide range of research projects that she used to underpin her teaching.

She reported that she had always had a personal interest in the development of her students and their careers and this was something that she was returning to more recently towards the later stages of her career (Super, Thompson and Linderman, 1985). She felt that she was now operating in more of a leadership capacity, rather than a management and administrative capacity that had been a feature of her earlier career. This was an interesting comment because it was the first time that a difference between leadership and management had been mentioned by any of the respondents. She defined leadership as a way of developing individuals, whereas management and administration were seen as being about putting in place the appropriate system to support leadership activities.

Emerald was the only Reader that was questioned in the research programme. The human resource department has recently produced a job description for the Reader position in the University and this is shown in Appendix 3. This respondent reported that she had not got any formal job description but was able to outline the responsibilities of her job in some detail.

She had been given some remission from teaching to enable her to conduct her own research. This involved her in setting the research agenda in her discipline area, and setting up a clearly defined research strategy to take this forward. She had recruited and led a group of research students in this discipline area.

She saw her role as being a mentor for these students and often arranged workshops on particular research methodologies to underpin their development (McDade, 2001). She even invited me to participate in one of these pre-arranged sessions on the Ethnograph 5 package that I then proceeded to use in the second stage of the research to analyse the autobiographical reflections.

The final part of her role involved her in teaching at postgraduate and undergraduate level and this work involved her in the planning, preparation and delivery of particular modules to a variety of students in her School.

The results from this stage of the research was that there were some similarities between the roles and responsibilities of the Principal Lecturers in the research programme. All of the Principal Lecturers had some level of management responsibility involved with their job, and these responsibilities appeared to be becoming more complex and difficult to handle as time went on because of the changing agenda in the higher education setting. This change in the roles at the University mirrored the findings from previous pieces of research that have found similar patterns of development (Gibbons, 1995, Ramsden, 1998, Pritchard, 2001).

There did appear to be a fundamental difference in the roles that Principal Lecturer played at different stages in their career development. The respondents who had more recently been promoted appeared to be allocated much more management and administration tasks associated with growing student numbers, and the changing higher education scene. This included programme or course management responsibilities, recruitment roles, and subject leadership roles. They often also took part in University wide committees that could be viewed as development experiences for them. They reported that these onerous tasks often meant that any research and publication that they did had to be in short gaps in their week, or in their own time.

The older Principal Lecturers on the other hand had often give up these more onerous administrative roles and had taken on a more strategic and leadership role for staff and students. This often placed a heavier emphasis on their role as a mentor, rather than that of a manager or administrator.

The respondents who agreed to take part in the research were all considered to be successful by their colleagues. This success had been signalled by the organisation by the award of a title such as Professor, Reader, Principal Lecturer, or Senior Academic (SAP). The promotion from Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer in the University had been recently linked to the increase in managerial and administrative roles that were required in the increasingly complex world of higher education. This increasing complexity included the growth in student numbers as a result of the widening participation agenda and funding pressures. This had meant the University had had to adopt a more 'managerialist' culture to deal with these increased pressures (Simkins, 1999). The Principal Lecturer role had been used to promote individuals to carry out this new range of tasks in a new cultural setting that reflected the market (Hall, 1999). The younger respondents had a different and it could be argued more demanding role from those that were at the end of their careers.

The growing importance of the research agenda and the desire for a growth in non-HEFCE income in the 'new' Universities had meant that appointments of Readers and Professors had been an important part of the University strategy. The only Reader in the research had taken a strategic role in the development of a research agenda, and a research culture. It was not clear whether this approach was one that has been adopted by all Readers because of the small sample size.

The Research Professors seemed to have some similarities in their role. They had all tried to develop a clear research agenda that required strategic skills coupled with a real passion for the discipline area. They had also had to demonstrate considerable leadership skills so that they could develop their research team to meet their research objectives. A clear part of their role was the development of recognition for their research agenda both inside and outside the University, and this involved them in the development of skills at public relations. The idea of a career outside the University was also a concept that emerged from the interviews with the Professors.

The preliminary stage of the research revealed much more than simply what the research participants did in their day to day work. All of the respondents seemed to have a good view as to what their job entailed, although this was

usually not committed to paper. Success at the middle management level of the University seemed to require a subtle mixture of managerial and leadership skills to cope with the new environment of higher education that had been observed. The increased emphasis on the research agenda at the University appeared to have reduced the pastoral and guidance roles of those academics that are lower down the hierarchy which had been found by researchers in other settings (Davies and Holloway, 1995). The initial discussions with respondents showed that they thought that the middle management jobs in the University had become much more challenging and that there had been a noticeable change in the organisational culture (Benschop and Brown, 2002).

The initial meetings were short but they did allow me to start to develop a relationship with the women in an ethnographic tradition (Caffarella, Clark and Ingram, 2001). This would be important at later stages of the research when I contacted them and spoke to them again on a number of occasions. The findings to date seemed to mirror the first part of the literature review on the environmental setting of higher education, and the leadership changes that had occurred to create a new market driven culture. What was important at the next stage of the research was to establish why the respondents thought that they had achieved their success from their own personal perspective and whether their gender had had a fundamental effect on their own development.

4:2 Results from the autobiographical reflections

4:2:1 The Professors

Diamond *discovers the meaning of home and work*

Diamond had explored her role as a research professor in the first stage of the research programme and had discussed the strong leadership focus that this entailed (Kidd, 2002). She gave a full review of her feelings in relation to her past career, her present situation, and her future dreams and fears. There was a discussion right at the start of the tape about the decision she had made about where to actually do the tape. She said that she had first of all thought about taking the tape home to do it in her living room in comfy surroundings. In the end, she had completed the tape at work and found that this was a very pleasurable experience. This was a very interesting observation because it raised the important issue of the meanings of the home and work place for the

respondents. The fact that I did not specify the location for the respondents to do the tape meant that they had to think about a suitable location to do their private reflections. This also raised the interesting debate about the impact of environment on an individual and the role of work in home life (Shain, 1999).

Diamond started the tape by discussing the way in which her career had unfolded and how she had realised as time progressed that it was possible for her to do things with her life.

> When I think of career development it would be something that as opportunities and possibilities have arisen, - it's only then that you can in fact do certain things.

This suggested that much of career development is about chance happenings or meetings that have to be taken advantage of (Kidd, 2002). Self-doubt emerged late in the tape when she discussed the fact that nobody in her family had ever been to University before. This had caused her to be in a certain frame of mind for a number of years and had given her a strong reason for being successful. It had also meant that every successful move she had made had been viewed as a major achievement.

> Getting the lectureship itself, felt really like, yes, a sort of major achievement, it was certainly something that nobody in my family had done before.

Diamond had had to cope with a number of significant crises early in life that had spurred her on to do greater things. This included a major illness in the family of one of her very close family members which had added to her determination to do well at school, complete her A levels, and go one to University. Her description of her past career development was mainly concerned with her relationships with other people who were very significant to her. This is discussed in the later section on sociality. She talked about her certainty to be successful and her dogged determination to concentrate on the things that she thought that she was good at – that was research rather than administrative and managerial tasks. She identified some of the key events in her career development such as achieving her A levels, getting a good degree, and going on to study at postgraduate level and discovering her love for the research process and her quest for knowledge.

She was very uncertain at the time of the tape about her future career and how this would develop. She said she tended to be more certain about this when she started a new job earlier in her career and she appeared to be in a more positive frame of mind. The current pressures in her role that related to RAE expectations, meant that she had recently been uncertain about the future and what it held. She did express her worries about the possible avenues open to Professors and future career possibilities. This could possibly mean that she would have to move into a more 'managerial' post associated with higher education rather than a more senior research post.

> I mean, my sense of future career is not in a sense of moving into more managerial posts, and I guess that from where I am, that would be the major, sort of formal career move, and that's not what I want to do.

This demonstrated a sort of doubt about the possible promotional opportunities that were open to Professors in this higher education setting and could indicate one of the issues associated with the balance between the career inside the University and the one outside the University that has already been discussed. It also indicates that there is a lack of signals that the organisation gives to women about future career opportunities.

Diamond expressed many feelings related to her identity in the tape. There was a noticeable number of times that she had felt very certain about the situation she found herself in, and a number of times when she felt very uncertain about what the right course of action should be. Her state of mind seemed to be particularly related to the other people who surrounded her at a particular moment in time. This demonstrated the important aspect of her personal requirement for support at particularly critical times during her career.

> Incorporation and moving into an University, and I think at this stage I took a very very clear decision that I wanted to put more into work, and I wanted to be more involved with the development of research training for the University's research students because my area of teaching had been research methodology.

There was a strong reference made in the tape to her views on the shaping of her identity over time. She made reference to the importance of growing up when there was a lot of political debate going on in society about the role of

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women. Her involvement in political movements that was also fashionable in her youth was also a strong influence of her own identity.

> So I guess my own identity is very much shaped by those issues of class and gender that are not just abstractions for me, but feel very much part of my lived experience, and I remember just the sort of ways in which these public school boys, I mean clearly still sort of saw women as being sexual objects. So that I guess my identity in a sense, is a very political and politicized one, and certainly gender politics were really extraordinarily important.

In the end Diamond stated that it was her personal belief in her own wisdom and skills that had shaped her identity and that her personal confidence in her own ability had never really faltered. It seemed that to be successful a woman must have a strong and well-developed identity from the early days in her life. It is only this self-belief that enables her to overcome periods of uncertainty when they arise with understanding and conviction. She had had a number of significant crises in her life that she had been able to contend with because of her strong sense of identity.

Diamond considered that other people had had the most significant effect on her career development and sometimes this was positive, and sometimes this was negative. These significant others included her father who had had a particular influence in her early days and made her very determined to succeed in the academic world. Her partner and her child had continued to have a considerable influence on her and this was particularly marked at specific life stages. As her child had grown older for example, this had allowed her to take her career more seriously and spend more time developing her research record.

Her early research career had been substantially influenced by a group of like-minded women who had taken a strategic decision to support themselves. She felt that this was at a stage when she considered herself to be the most politically active. Others had supported her when she had suffered what she considered to be significant and often discriminatory setbacks in her working life. This included both female and male supervisors and colleagues who she respected for their contributions. This had encouraged her, for example to apply for a post as a Chair even though there were very few examples of women in research posts at the time. She mentioned in the tape that the individuals who

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had helped her the most had been those that had respected her enough to support her but given her the space to make her own decisions and had interestingly been male.

> Working with X has been absolutely fantastic in term of just that sense of learning, of having opportunities, of just getting on with someone and actually clicking, and really finding that this is an incredibly exciting post that I've found myself in.

The fact that Diamond is a woman had had a considerable affect on her career development in a number of significant ways and at particular times. She had suffered from discriminatory practices in work at particular stages in her career, and one of these represented what in her eyes constituted a serious event. This was at a stage when she first applied for a research post and was not appointed. In her heart she did not feel that she was ready to take on this role, and needed further development so at one level it was not a problem to her. She did feel, however that the man that was appointed to the post was not worthy of the post and had been appointed for political reasons rather than his research capability. This made her even more determined to be successful in the future.

> At this stage I sort of decided that rather than thinking that I might go for the Chair/ Professorship, yes as a sort of yes-this is what you should do, to actually thinking, yes, why not? - I really think I could be quite serious about this.

Support offered by women at the early stages of her career and the way in which the group had interacted for mutual support had also been an important aspect of her gender relationships. She reported that she found great strength from her attendance at women only meetings when they had discussed all issues openly and in a supportive way. She thought that being a woman at her time in history had been extremely positive and contributed to her career development in many ways. On the other hand, she felt that many of the skills that women have are seriously undervalued by higher education institutions.

> I think that a lot of creativity that women bring into higher education is systematically undervalued and indeed renders them invisible, and so I think that in terms of women in higher education, we have just got a huge, huge, way to go.

This suggested that the 'psychological contract' between organisations and employees that was suggested by Robinson and Rousseau (1994) has been undermined in the case of the University in relation to female employees.

Diamond considered that the relationship between women and higher education institutions was not a constructive one at that time. She considered that the psychological contract that develops between employee and employer was not a happy one with regards to women because their inherent qualities were being seriously undervalued by the institution. She suggested that this was a recent phenomenon because her female colleagues from the past had felt valued by the organisations in which they worked at that time.

She finished by recognising the important role that she had as a role model for other women in the University, but interestingly did not mention any practical ways that she saw of raising the aspirations of other women in the University. She suggested that one issue was the fact that it was not well understood what makes a woman successful and wondered about whether it was necessary for women to do things differently from men to succeed.

> There are actually women who are Professors, who might do it differently, who might do it slightly irreverently, and also are very keen on encouraging other women, but I don't have a model that says in order to succeed, you've got to do it like a man, or that you've got to do it in typically managerial ways, and typically masculine managerial ways.

This suggests that female Professors may lead in a different way in comparison to men if left to their own devices and given their own freedom and adopt leadership styles that challenge the status quo and encourage more junior colleagues in a direct way (Rosenar, 1990).

Sapphire *discovers how to overcome problems to achieve artistic success*
Sapphire had outlined her considerable research and course management responsibilities in the initial interview. She gave a very detailed review of her career development on the tape that had been based on her real love of her discipline and the exciting things that had happened to her subject in the 1960s onwards across the world. It was clear that she was extremely talented in her

field and had been one of a small cohort who had pioneered her subject as an academic discipline in the early days.

> I was part of the first cohort to gain the new Dip AD which was first credited because of the Coldstream Report as being the equivalent of a University course. It was a significant year in art education, and in art generally, in that a significant change took place from a more traditional role of the artist into a more professional role of the artist.

This pioneering spirit that came through at the beginning of her career continued throughout the tape. There was always the feeling that she was the first to have done many things in her career and that this led to many difficulties in both her private and public life (Shain, 1999). She was awarded the Professorial title by the University, and this had led her to take on a much more strategic role in relation to the direction of the research agenda in her discipline area. Her original move to Sheffield had been a major step in her career because she had moved to the city to take up her new academic job, but had found the place very alien and different from what she had experienced before.

> Sheffield was a new experience for me in that it was also moving me away, back in time. But not only was it back in time in terms of the city. The city is hardly recognisable now but it was also in terms of the attitude of the men who taught there towards myself and towards my positioning in the world.

Sapphire reported that she had had to cope with a number of significant crises during her career that had included major illness and having to cope with the reactions of others at particular times. Her research had often taken her overseas and involved her in collaborative research programmes and individual research in other countries. She viewed her discipline as being very multi-national.

Sapphire gave a very detailed review on her ideas about her own identity. She reported that she had always been very determined about pursuing the discipline in which she worked because of her considerable talent in the area. Her core identity had not changed over time, although various important people in her life had changed her perspective on certain issues in relation to her career. She talked about the importance of being recognised in her discipline area and the satisfaction that this has brought her in relation to her own

personal development. There were issues for her, however in terms of where the recognition comes from.

> I have never, never found anything but absolute respect and I think there's a huge difference in moving up this kind of academic ladder, that the higher you are, then the more likely it is that you are going to be taken notice of.

This showed the importance of the status associated with the particular roles that are awarded to particular individuals and the position of an individual in the hierarchy. It was her relationship to others and the development of her eminence in the field that had had the most significant effect on her career development.

Sapphire recognised that there had been a number of key people who had had an effect on her career development in both a positive and negative way. She talked at length about her childhood and about her relationship with significant others at home including her partner, and her child, and at work including her work colleagues, and her students. The impression from the tape was that many of these relationships had brought sadness rather than joy, although there were a few occasions that she referred to as being happy and joyful.

There were two major events that emerged from the tape that had been as a direct result of her relationships with significant others. The first of these was the fact that she had felt envied and resented by her juniors as she herself had risen up the career ladder. This was particularly related to her elevated salary and she talked on the tape about how she felt about this and strategies that she had had to adopt to deal with these feelings.

> I'm aware of a lot of people resenting me, I think, not because of being female, but perhaps also because of being in my position and seeing me as someone who is probably in a very fortunate position. I don't feel that I am, but I think that younger staff often think, well, you know, she's alright, she's on a Principal Lecturer's salary, and got her own practice, and well set up, all that kind of stuff. It's been a great fight, and so I don't see it as a breeze, which I'm sure many younger staff see it.

This supported the work by Taunton (1994) who classified one group of successful women as being *unrecognised explorers* who have to go where no

other women have gone and when they get there they feel lonely and unrecognised. One of the explanations for these feelings could be attributed to the negative feelings that were directed at her because of the extreme feelings of envy by more junior staff.

The second series of events that emerged from the tape for Sapphire was the extreme feelings that were directed at her because of her relationship with her partner and children in relation to her job. She had decided to carry on working while her partner would actually stay at home and look after the children. This meant that she often brought issues related to her job home with her and resentment grew from her partner and children as time went on. In the end this led to her divorce and she talked about her relief about being able to go home and talk to friends about the issues once things were resolved. This relates to the research of Bailyn (2003) who found that women recognised the personal consequences of pursuing a career in academic life. The difference here is that Sapphire had decided to pursue her career and deal with the consequences of this.

Sapphire had found that being a woman had produced significant challenges to her in her field to become successful. She had found personally, however, that being a woman had been very important to her because it had given her the will to succeed in a challenging situation. It was almost as if being a woman had given her the determination to succeed but she had found success difficult to cope with once it had been achieved (Taunton, 1994).

> One had to be tough, and one had to be resilient, and one had to be man like in order to survive and indeed, in order to do relevant work. So this was the beginning of my kind of condition. It was indeed male condition from the word go. So has the fact that I'm female had a positive or negative effect on my career development? I think strangely enough, considering everything that I'd said, a very positive effect on my career development, because I think it actually has given me something to fight for in terms of a female sensibility in relation to my discipline.

This showed the importance of the woman having a pioneering spirit in order to succeed.

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Sapphire talked at length in her tape about the importance of valuing and mentoring academics in her own setting (Kram, 1985). She talked about the poor situation with regards to mentoring in the past when she judged the support to be very poor.

> In those days there was absolutely no one to turn to for support and I would hope that it would be very different here at the moment. At one point when I was doing a project with students I had an invasion of four male members of staff and they really rubbished what I was doing. This was a crass approach to mentoring, to actually look after a new member of staff, but also towards the integrity of dealing with ones subject.

Her tape revealed that she thought that the present issue was about the way in which the skills and qualities of the academic staff were being undervalued by the organisation. She also made reference to the problem that she had had with the workloads that were required to complete the research, course administration and teaching roles that were part of her job. This meant that she had had to make sacrifices in her personal life. Work was a total commitment.

> So there is a sense of being constantly torn. I work in my own hours for the University, usually with no acknowledgement of this, and certainly with no reward. The production time within my own research is most certainly precious, and it pervades the rest of my life, because basically that's what I want to do, and that is my own sort of fulfilment. But this also means that ones life is most certainly almost 100% work.

Topaz *discovers herself in Marrakech and dreams about running a bread shop*

Topaz gave a very full review of her career progression over time, and it was very clear that she had moved her direction on a number of occasions. She had had an interest in the subject discipline in which she was involved from her early days and had gradually moved into this after a series of chance events early on in her career. She had come from a working class background, and had found it very difficult in the early days to get any advice about what to do about her future. Topaz judged that a lot of the decisions she had made had been nothing more than a chance event or due to someone she had met at a particular time.

> One of the people at Council left me a leaflet about a course which it was possible to take, an MA course, which it was possible to take on a part time basis at Birmingham University

and he just pushed this through my door one day when he was passing in Marrakech, where I was living, and I read it and decided that, yes I needed some form of qualification of some sort.

Topaz did discuss the fact that she needed to be very assertive about getting promotion and moved to Sheffield Hallam University to get her Professorial Chair. This was on the basis of a long period of research and publication. The most interesting part of the tape was where she discussed on a number of occasions her thoughts about the future. She had had a very successful career in research, and this was what she really wanted to continue with. That future career progression however would probably take her away from this love into a more managerial role associated with academic management at a senior level. She said that she did not relish this idea, but interestingly felt that it was almost a duty to her working class background to take on a role like this so that she could help people in the future from a similar background to achieve their potential.

> It is generally this sort of level within institutions, is generally still very middle class, and I feel that it's very important that people from working class backgrounds, also see that it's possible to do this, there's no restrictions. I can see that I might get, I might end up going into that train of promotion which goes through Dean, Pro-Vice Chancellor, that sort of thing. So it's not something which interests me really, at all, but it's something that I feel is part of our job, and all I'm concerned is, that this will limit my time for research.

This showed the difficulty that young Professors have in knowing how to develop their career further without neglecting their love of inquiry and research.

Topaz talked a great deal on the tape about her understanding with regards to her identity and how this had influenced the particular moves that she had made. She had had to make a lot of personal sacrifices in her life to get to her current position (Shain, 1999). This included having to live apart from her partner and children in the week because it had been impossible for herself and her partner to pursue their careers in the same place. She talked a lot about her temperament and how this had affected the way in which she had approached her career. She talked about her ambition and her willingness to take risks to achieve major things in her life.

> And I suppose I am quite ambitious person. I mean if I do it as well as I can, and you know my particular temperament, my particular ambitiousness, maybe the fact that I do work tremendously hard on things, and tend to do them in an all or nothing sort of way, means that within an academic context that is likely to lead you to advance up a particular career ladder.

> I think another one is the question of risk taking. I'm quite comfortable with risk taking. I actually quite like risk taking. But I do find that risk taking is the thing that keeps me on the ball, on my toes, and I do quite like taking certain risks at least. I have applied for jobs which maybe were not wise to apply for, and have thought I could do things which in fact probably I couldn't but you know, I've taken those risks, and that has led me to the career that I have.

She talked about the wild fantasies that she had had that were a vital part of her identity. She reported that she often thought that perhaps she should give everything up and do something really different with her life particularly if things were not going well at work.

> I often have wild fantasies on bad days at work of starting a wonderful bread shop and baking bread, but I recognise that this is a fantasy, although I enjoy baking bread, I certainly can't see that that would be a valid career option. But it is something that sustains me when things seem to be not enjoyable, or where I'm having to get up at 5 in the morning, to get to a particular meeting, or I'm up until 1am to finish marking. At those times, the notion of a bread shop feels, yes wonderfully self contained and something I could leave behind when I've finished for the day.

This statement portrayed the reality of the situation of working in a senior academic role that is something that a person never escapes from, even when she is at home. It is a total commitment (Bailyn, 2003).

Topaz explored the large numbers of individuals who have influenced her career in different ways. She talked about the fact that it was one individual who gave her information about a particular course that had influenced her whole direction. Other colleagues had given her the intellectual stimulation that she felt she needed to continue with her research agenda, although she felt that this was lacking at the time of the tape.

The key theme that came through the tape in relation to significant others, was the fact that she felt that she had deliberately chosen people to be close to who she thought had the same vision of herself in relation to the pursuit of her ambitions.

> If I had a relationship with someone who thought I should stay at home and look after the children, it may have had an effect on the way I structured my career, but that is so unthinkable that, yes, it just wouldn't happen.

She had never wanted to be the dutiful wife or the stay at home woman so she had chosen people to be close to whom had supported this view. The decision to have her children later in life had also helped her to develop her career as a first priority.

> I think the fact that I had children later in my career – my children are now quite small, has meant that my career once I started in academia has been relatively smooth. I didn't take any time out to have the children, and I think if I had had, any time out to look after the children, my career would have suffered enormously.

It is interesting that she viewed her children as being totally divorced from her career. She finished by saying that it had been very important that the people at home in her life had liked what she was doing, and had supported her in her career development. This again showed the importance of the balance between home and work life.

Topaz considered that the fact that she was a woman had had both a positive and negative affect on her career development because of her own perceptions and the perceptions of others. She had found that the fact that she was a woman had given her the opportunity to become the 'token' in the department. She did report, however, a number of times that she had felt that she had been discriminated against in both overt and covert ways (Nicholson, 1996).

> I am a feminist, and I haven't had very much in the way of overt sexism toward me, but I have seen quite a lot of very implicit, very undercover sort of sexism in relation to my career development. And I have also experienced quite a lot of good things because I'm female. Not exactly positive discrimination, but people realising that things have to change, and realising that perhaps promoting females to

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> particular positions, is actually good for departments that need shaking up a bit.

> The Head of the Panel just simply said.... 'right now sell yourself'... and I was so taken aback because of the stereotypes of prostitution *etc.* which this has, that I was momentarily dumbstruck. I was really quite shocked that this statement had been made to me.

On the other hand, she did report that her ability to behave in both an assertive and caring way had been a particular benefit to her, although men were often threatened by this approach in combination with her feminist attitudes that were deeply embedded within her psyche (Nicholson, 1996). There is an obvious contradiction here in relation to her leadership style and her perceived values.

> Whereas I think that some people are quite uncomfortable with assertiveness. And I suppose that has led to me developing a sort of style of interaction which is, I think I am very concerned about people like postgraduates and things like that, so developing style which is sort of very caring, and at the same time, assertive and, I think I manage it OK, but I think some people might find that confusing really.

Topaz stated that the fact that she is a female had not had an effect on her career development. She did wonder, however, why it was that in a female dominated profession that the people at the top of the career ladder were mostly men. The issue of gender and career development was reiterated at the later follow up interview.

Topaz had found that her research in the feminist area had been a particular problem in certain institutions, and had led to a great deal of animosity particularly when there were also feelings of envy and resentment because her research was progressing well compared to the research record of others. This had been a particular issue for men who had explained away her success by the fact that they considered the feminist research tradition as something that was not desirable (Nicholson, 1996).

> I do a lot of research and my research is fairly well known. But because it's on feminism, it also sometimes rubs people up the wrong way. Sometimes it creates difficulties, and sometimes these difficulties are not articulated in academic terms, they sort of get translated into personal animosity as well.

She also talked about the high number of hours and commitment and hard work that was required to achieve and maintain her position. The lack of senior opportunities in the research area was a particular issue it seemed for the younger Professors who wanted to continue with their research agenda. She did finish by saying that she did want to be a role model type of figure. She wanted to be visible everywhere including television *etc*, so that the presence of a female Professor in everybody's eyes became the norm rather than the exception. This, she felt would be her best contribution to society in general.

Ruby *discovers her mother and political events and becomes the first woman in her field to achieve Doctoral and Professorial status*

Ruby was just about to retire when she completed the autobiographical reflections so she was able to give a very full account of her long and distinguished career. She had been a pioneer in her subject area, being the first woman to achieve a doctorate and the first woman to become a Professor. I considered it very important for the research, therefore, to understand what had made her believe in herself and become successful in her area. One of the first things was the fact that she was in a subject discipline where most of the junior staff were women, but most of the senior staff were men. This at least meant that it was not considered unusual for a woman to have a job in the discipline area, which had made it easier for her in some respects to progress.

Ruby thought that her career development had been a result of a mixture of planned and chance events. Her real interest and love of the subject had come as a result of her VSO work and she had pursued this research interest at Sheffield City Polytechnic when a new department was formed.

> So there is a mixture of an active choice about things and then within that sort of thing, that sort of having, in some way, made some luck of being in the right place at the right time.

She talked about two significant events that occurred when she was at school, and that she had considered to have had a significant psychological effect on her in later life. The first was the hanging of Ruth Ellis, and the second the Sharpeville event. She talked about how these two events made her think differently about things in the world from then on. The fact that she was a child

in the war and therefore had been surrounded by women had also had a significant effect on her later development.

Ruby looked forward to the time when she was going to retire which was imminent. This had affected her in a number of ways. Firstly, she planned her escape from administrative tasks and looked forward to the opportunity to do all the things that she had previously neglected. Secondly, she looked forward to taking on a more active mentoring role for the junior staff whom she felt for one reason or another she had not done in the past during her last days at the University. It is interesting to note that she felt that this was not something she had done very much of earlier in her career when she had left junior staff to do very much their own thing.

> I'm going to do some more painting, I'm going to write more because I still manage to get myself bogged down in administrative and managerial things, more than I have done, despite trying to carve things out differently.

> My attitude towards the junior staff has always been that you should not manage them too closely, but well, it's a bit like sort of organised anarchy. So for the coming year until I retire, there's some junior staff that I want to get on, I want to really help them develop their careers a bit more, and see what I can do to get them on firmer footings.

It was interesting to note here that Ruby thought that mentoring was something that she should do at the end of her career, despite the fact that the literature suggested that being mentored is a critical activity for women to experience (McDade, 2001).

Ruby talked a great deal about the development of her identity over her long career. She mentioned her identity in relation to her background, and commented that because she was a child during the war, that this had made her very independent and self reliant. She mentioned that she felt very confident up to recently, but that at the time of the tape she was beginning to have doubt and a crisis of identity in some respects.

> My identity has changed in some ways. I think I am, I probably am less sure now than I was earlier, and probably as I remarked, I suppose about 18 months ago, about having a crisis so late in my career, whereas I can't remember

having a real career crisis earlier when, I knew where I was going, although perhaps not when I was going.

This comment showed the importance of stability and certainty in terms of feeling confident about one's own career development, and being in a fit state of mind to help others to progress and develop.

Ruby talked a great deal about the importance of her being seen as an ordinary woman who had succeeded in breaking through the glass ceiling, for all the women who were going to continue after her to improve the overall situation. The importance of providing women with a confidence and determination to succeed by developing a good person-environment fit was something that she thought was very important (Tinsley, 2003).

> You can say well...... you know, if I can do it, for God's sake take no notice of these (the resident experts, the pundits *etc.*) because it's like taking notice of me, and then if there's a recurrence of that when I became a Professor of them being able to say to people, look anybody can do it. There may be a glass ceiling but it's getting higher all the time, and if you want to do something, then go out and do it. You can get places.

This removal of the myth that it is impossible to get on as a woman by the example of others who have a strong identity is something that emerged from this autobiographical reflection.

Ruby reported that there had been a number of significant people who had affected her own development. The most influential of these was her own mother who had nurtured her through the war, and most importantly helped her to develop her strong identity that had contributed to her confidence and need to get things done. She suggested in the tape that her mother was a sort of proto-feminist and gave her the idea that there was nothing that she or other women could not achieve. This shows the importance of a woman's identity in relation to others.

She reported that the death of her mother had been a period of considerable sadness for her because she suddenly started to question why she was doing certain things and began to doubt the importance of things such as career in the context of this new situation. It seemed that having someone to tell about her personal achievements was a fundamental human need.

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I got my doctorate and one of the things I missed was not being able to tell her I'd got it, and I even thought about that how much she would have enjoyed it, and I regretted not being able to give her that pleasure.

There had been other people in her life that had had a considerable effect on her life, but these were not mentioned in the tape in any depth. She said that her mother's support had often felt oppressive compared to others who had just encouraged her to 'go for it'.

Ruby finished by saying that one of her most significant roles at the end of her career had been to encourage others to take her place. She referred to career development as a 'sort of relay race through time', which for me was a very appropriate metaphor.

Ruby referred to issues related to spatiality in great depth during her autobiographical reflections. There were a number of related issues regarding her views on the emerging focus on management and administration that had emerged in the literature review (Ramsden, 1998, Simkins, 1999). She regretted that this change of emphasis had meant that research had come lower down the agenda, and that good leadership had been overtaken by managerialism.

> These managerial jobs on the whole certainly the ones I've seen within the Polytechnic and the University appear to prevent people from really engaging in scholarship and research.

She also talked about the importance of avoiding these managerial jobs if you were serious about research and how she had done this in her own career to enable her to focus more effectively.

> You have to determinedly do your own thing, I think, to avoid being pushed down some sort of route that takes, that gives you some managerial responsibility and certainly takes a great deal of time, and with the assumption that people might want you to become managers or senior academic post holders in a School.

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Garnet *discovers the support offered by the men in her life and develops her strong identity as a result*

Garnet gave a long review on the tape of her career development. She had been very interested in her subject discipline at school and had pursued this through the examinations that she had taken at different stages of her school life. She did not explore her reasons for her choice of subjects but stated that she had a real personal interest in the subjects that she had chosen. Her decision on which University and subject she chose had been based on the fact that she wanted to have a work experience chance, and she wanted to get as far away from home as possible. In the end she did not complete a placement year and met her future husband while she was at University which was to be a key event.

The decision to continue with a PhD after completing her degree was made on the basis of the desire to research and enquire about her subject. A personal desire for enquiry underpinned this decision. There had been a number of key events that had shaped her career from then on. The first was shaped by the desire to be with her husband that had at times meant that she had followed him and his job and this had dictated her direction. The other key events were the birth of her three children which had caused her problems in the first instance at work, but had also meant that she had had to seek out people in the organisation that she was working who were supportive of her particular position. She finished her review of her career by stating that very little of what she had achieved had been planned but it had occurred as a result of chance happenings.

> The majority of changes in jobs *etc.* that I've gone through have really been a matter of chance rather than any planned out career and have also been dependent, certainly for quite a number of years on where my husband was working at the time, and it's only in the later stages of my career, where a choice was made based on my career rather than my husband's.

Garnet appeared in her autobiographical reflections to have a very strong identity despite the fact that she did not focus on it particularly at one point in the tape. The fact that she was very interested in research and she has a personal desire for enquiry came across very strongly on the tape.

I don't really feel that any expectations have been placed on me by anybody. I think it's purely self-driven development, and so I took on responsibilities through my own choice. I don't think they were given to me, and told I had to do them because there are other people in the School who seem to have fewer responsibilities, and really managed to do that, so I think it's something that you take upon yourself, to develop your own career, rather than the University helping you in that direction.

I think that my career has developed based on my interest in research, and because I was successful in research, really that's led to my career development in the School. If I'd chosen to move into a more educational side of things, I'm not sure, it would have to be myself that drives that, rather than somebody encouraging me to do particular things.

These quotes showed the importance of having a strong identity, a well-developed sense of self, and a personal belief in the importance of taking a particular career development pathway. Despite this strong identity, the pathway that was travelled occurred largely as a result of chance occurrences rather than as a result of planned activities (Kidd, 2002). There does appear to be something of a discrepancy here between these two themes, and it does suggest that the actions taken by organisations will not influence strong women to take on particular roles unless they have a personal belief in the role. This suggests that the selection of the right woman with the right identity is critical, rather than the exclusive use of staff development programmes to encourage the woman to move in a particular direction.

Garnet made reference to a number of significant others during her autobiographical reflections. In fact, it can be observed that the references made to others were the most significant feature of her tape. She stated that other people had affected her throughout her career and had a real influence on the decisions that she had made at particular times. These significant people had been both in her personal life and in the workplace and at times the two had clashed in relation to their particular objectives that had led to stress. Her desire to be with her family members came across strongly on the tape.

I wanted to get back to the UK where my family were, and my husband had applied for a job with a large pharmaceutical company near London, and he was successful in obtaining this job, so again, I was in a position of moving back to

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England and trying to find a job that fitted in also, with his, my husband's career move.

The birth of her children and her desire to continue with her career had been one of the key events in her life. She had had difficulty with contracts during this time and had found one woman who was very supportive and helped her to work part-time during this period.

> There was another internal post working for somebody else, luckily there was another post within the same Institute, with a woman Head of Laboratory and I obtained this post. So for this period which was probably about 8 years I worked part time, and during this time I was working for the same female boss who was also made a Professor during this period. I would say that she was very supportive of my working part-time, she also had children and worked part-time.

> However, when I began working for a woman boss, she certainly was extremely understanding. She'd been through the same processes that I had. She'd negotiated part time work with her employer, and she was very supportive and we got on very well together.

This showed the importance for Garnet of finding a supportive person during the period when it became necessary for her to go part-time to care for her young children.

Garnet had also relied on her husband throughout her career and interestingly he had taken different roles at different times during both their careers. When their children were young he had been able to support the family so that she could continue developing her research record and going overseas to present papers at conferences. This had really helped her to continue with her career, even though she had worked part-time for part of the period.

> My husband took a leading role as well, at home in terms of dropping children off, and picking them up from childminders, taking holidays to look after the children, and also in terms of generally keeping the household going in terms of cooking, washing *etc*. It's been completely equal, or probably I'd say that he does more than I do at home, so obviously without that I wouldn't have managed to go to overseas conferences where he's looked after the children full-time, so I've never let the children interfere with my career, or as little as possible, let's put it that way.

This quote showed the importance of supporting partners or families if a woman is to combine a research career with having children and reinforces the importance of a continuous research profile that emerged in the literature review (Knights and Richards, 2003).

Garnet suggested that she had never felt that she could not get on because she was a woman. The fact that she had attended an all girl's school had meant that the idea that women should do anything other than go to University if they had the ability was one that was held by all the girls who attended the school.

> I also think going to an all girls school really helped in terms of motivating me to be successful. We were all encouraged to go to University. There was no consideration that in any way, were we in any way different from boys of the same age. We were not expected to do anything other than to go to University.

There had been one occasion in her career that the role of women at work had been questioned by one male manager and this had forced her to move into another role.

> I would say that the episode with my young male boss, when I first became pregnant influenced me, because he gave me the impression that I would feel my career was secondary to my being a mother, and that I could do both equally well, and so I think perhaps to some extent I've always been trying to prove this that I can do everything, and didn't want him to get the better of me to some extent.

This showed that women can be encouraged by certain events or people to attempt to be 'perfect' in all their roles and if this is the case one view is that this is a difficult thing to achieve and can lead to a great deal of stress. It also supported the view that women have to work a lot harder at achieving a work life balance and the fact that there are often conflicts between the expectation of individuals at home and at work (Davidson and Cooper, 1992).

Garnet reflected at length on the role of herself as a Professor and the meaning of this for herself and the institution. She had been encouraged to apply for and achieved her Professorial status but now questioned the amount of leadership potential this gave her in her new role.

> I was encouraged by my Head of School to apply to become
> a Professor, and last year, I was successful at this. However,
> in terms of responsibilities within the School, this title has
> really not advanced me in any sort of leadership role, other
> than as a leader within my group, my research team, but
> informally I'm considered a leader, but I have no official
> leadership role.

Garnet also reflected on the way in which research should feed into the teaching, although the teaching role often brought a level of administration which was time consuming and took away from the time that could be dedicated to research.

> What I do want to be involved in is leading the research within
> the School, within my area, and providing a basis for all the
> other people within the School to try and build up their own
> research. I think, although I enjoy the teaching aspect, the
> administration that goes with it is rather time consuming, so I
> think all staff would benefit from having their own research
> area, and the teaching would gain from it as well.

This suggested that the link between research and teaching was poorly identified and that this was something that should be worked on to benefit the academic community. It also supported the commentators who had suggested that aspects of the academic role required a heavier emphasis on administrative functions (Pritchard, 2001).

4:2:2 Principal Lecturers

Amber *discovers that home life and work cannot be balanced*

Amber thought that her career had been very much about taking opportunities when they had arisen. She said that her progression had been very much as a result of being interested in her subject discipline, rather than any planning on her part to progress up a career ladder (Kidd and Warr, 2000). This approach meant that she was working hard in her current role but did not have any strong view about where she wanted to go in the future.

> My views on my career development so far, are that it's very
> much been opportunistic – I always moved to something that
> I thought was more interesting, and wasn't really interested
> that much in furthering my career, or in earning lots more
> money. I'm doing what I'm doing, I'll be doing it for the next
> three years and then hopefully other opportunities will come

up, and I don't really know what way I want to go, or how I see my career going.

This quote gave a strong feeling of her being reactive, rather than proactive, and relying a great deal on the things that came along rather than actively creating opportunities in terms of career development.

She commented on the fact that learning had been an important part of her changing identity. She said that she had generally stayed in a job for three years and then had felt that she had then learned enough and felt that she had to move on to a new job not to gain more money or progress but to learn more for herself personally. The fact that she had remained in her current role for seven years was a reflection on the fact that the University was large and therefore offered her more opportunity for new roles and challenges. Her identity was very much about taking opportunities when they arose, rather than planning anything strategically.

She did comment on her identity throughout the tape, but it was interesting that to the specific question about identity she did make reference to the fact that she was a mother as being the most important thing that came to her mind first during her reflections. She also thought that even though she had pursued things to learn about them, she felt that her identity had fundamentally changed during her development. Her strong determination and spirit to succeed also came through strongly in the reflections and it was obvious that this had contributed a great deal to the success that she had achieved. She also reflected on another interesting point that she thought that although she thought that her identity had changed a great deal over time, she thought that other people probably thought about her differently from her own perceptions. This is an important comment because the perceptions of others could be a significant contribution to success, and it could suggest that success can be attributed to women acting in a certain role for others.

> It took a lot of courage and determination to actually turn situations around and move on from that, and I think the ability to think in spite of the odds, and in spite of adverse, people's reactions you can actually take something on and get something positive out at the end of it. So there's a bit of kind of liking the challenge. I suppose my identity is all tied up with being a mother, and that sometimes gets in the way of

career progression, and certainly has got in the way in some respects within Sheffield Hallam University too, in that people organise breakfast meetings, or meetings that go on until in some cases half past six, seven o'clock at night, that are not compatible with having a family life, not compatible with having children.. In terms of other aspects about my identity, I'm sure that I feel that I've changed an awful lot, but I think maybe other people perceive me differently.

Amber was the respondent who had a clearly agreed job description and a clearly defined subject leader role with commercial targets. She made reference to her mother, partner and child as being the most significant others in her reflections. Her mother had given her the idea that she should go to University because she had proved herself to be clever. Her mother also had had the view that a woman who was bright should work and should not give up her career once she had children.

> I was brought up in an environment where it was expected that because I was quite bright, I'd go to University, and I would get employment and I would work. There was not an idea round when you got married and settled down, you gave up your career. That was never the way that I was brought up, and my mother always encouraged us to take whatever opportunities, and encourage us to do whatever we wanted to do really.

Amber also had a considerable conflict between her work demands and the demands of her young son and her partner who thought that she should at most work part-time so that she could devote more of her time to her son. This was against a backdrop of a partner who had a very high profile and demanding job and it was impossible for him to reduce his responsibilities and workload. Despite the fact that she claimed to have been brought up not to give up her career as a result of her family, she found being a mother her most important project. She announced during the follow up interview that she had recently resigned from her job because of these pressures and I will return to this later. For the moment it is important to dwell on the pressures that she was facing at the time of the tape.

> I think my career went on hold when I had my little boy, because that was obviously was a priority and I wanted to spend time with him. At home, my significant other is someone who we have ongoing battles about the effect on home life of me doing this job really. It's not a job you can do

> 9 till 5. It's not a job that you cannot take home with you as well, and I think that can be quite frustrating. And I think he has on other occasions said, that what he liked was when I was part time and there, and organising the home and looking after my son, and looking after him really, and I think that's part and parcel of being woman, and working, and being a mother, and having a family, and trying to keep relationships going that you have to do that.

These conflicts reflected the literature which suggested that female academics find the balancing act between home and work an impossible task and often avoid taking on more responsibilities as a result of this dilemma (Bailyn, 2003).

She did not think that the fact that she was a woman had had a fundamental effect on her early development because she was in a field that had a high proportion of women working in it. She did think that when she had become a mother, it was then that conflict developed with regards to her working life.

> I certainly haven't felt that being a woman has in any way made a difference one way or the other at Sheffield Hallam. However, I do feel that it has an effect on the other things that impact on me working, and I think that's about being a parent, and having clear priorities that put my child first, that can come into conflict with working.

This shows that it was the conflict of interests that becoming a mother provided that had caused the conflict at work. The psychological state that she had entered when she became a mother meant that her child became the number one priority to her at the expense of other demands placed on her.

She did reflect on the time when she had gone part-time so that she was able to combine being a mother with an academic career. She did think that when she had returned to being full-time was the time when she had been able to pursue her academic career more seriously again.

> I very much felt that as a part timer that I came and did my job, and it was extremely busy and there was lots of teaching and lots of contact with students and lots of admin, but then when I came back full time, there was a lot more opportunities within the School to get involved in some of the more political things that were going on, and I think through that I felt I was much more part of the School again.

She reflected on the tape about how she felt sad that a great deal of academic work seemed to be tied to administrative work that could easily be handled by competent administrative staff. This often meant that academics that she thought had a particular future in research had left the institution to pursue a career elsewhere where this was not the case. She also reflected on the fact that there was no time and no place to meet to discuss academic issues, and little self managed time available to staff to pursue their research agenda. She thought that these were all retrograde steps in her institution.

Pearl *discovers her managerial skills provide her with opportunities*

Pearl on the other hand, seemed to have planned her career moves much more strongly and talked about the way in which she had planned to get out of industry once she felt that there were going to be no well developed opportunities for her. She felt that it was her career, rather than one into which she had to fit. She seemed to fall into the 'managerial' responsibilities once she arrived at the University from industry because this is where her skill was well developed. She felt that this managerial role had been an important skill for her to bring to the University because the increasing complexity of the higher education scene (Ramsden, 1998), had meant that the University hierarchy were looking for good managers and leaders rather than just researchers. This managerial expertise had allowed her to develop programme leadership expertise and later on the opportunity to be promoted to a senior academic post which had lately involved her in senior management duties that have been outlined earlier.

> Prior to joining the University, I had been in industry for 5 years in a very male dominated environment, and that was one of my motivations for leaving, because I couldn't see my career progressing there. I'd always had a view that if you want a promotion, you do the job and eventually they'll have to give it to you, and I guess on that basis, it's worked, I've always taken responsibility, and always done things.

Pearl also questioned the direction she could go in the future now that she has reached the senior academic post. This seemed to mirror some of the responses from the Professors in the research. She stated that her quality of life was very important to her and she valued that she lived close to work, and that she had been able to continue with her career in Sheffield because this was

where her husband lived and worked. She also reflected on the fact that it was likely to be her management expertise that would open up opportunities to her in the future.

> So at the moment I don't have any career plans particularly. I think I'm enjoying the new challenges that I have. It's an exciting job and it's a fun job. I'm not particularly ambitious; I never really have been, so I think I might settle down for the moment at least, with what I've got. I think I wouldn't compromise my quality of life in order to gain another promotion, so the chances of getting promotion within the University are relatively small, but you never know. There might be something come up that grabs my attention at some stage, and I might decide to go for it, but nothing right now, and I've certainly no plans.

This suggested almost a fatalistic approach to career planning which emerged in the autobiographical reflections. It is interesting to note here that it was her management expertise that had meant that she had been promoted to a senior academic post and this emphasised the value that this has on the promotion prospects for academic women at this institution. It is very interesting that she also reflected on the fact that although she did not think that promotion had not altered her identity in a fundamental way, she did think that other people perceived her as being different since the promotion. She was working hard to convince them otherwise. She felt that her integrity was of great importance in her new role. There were suggestions in the reflections, however that she had had to accommodate to the new situation and change her perceived identity for others.

> I've always tried hard to be an honest individual. I often see myself as someone who tries to see all sides of a situation, and do what I call pouring oil, seems to be in an environment like the School I'm in which is pretty male dominated and always has been, sometimes egos get in the way of solving problems. People call it politics but I think a lot of it is egos. I think personally I'm relatively ego-less, and that sometimes I can find ways to solve problems by not having too much of a vested interest in my own face, or what you have. I think, in some quarters it probably leads to me being seen as a pushover perhaps someone who doesn't have her own opinions. None of this is true, I don't think, but I think that's the impression I sometimes leave with people... So I don't think my identity has changed as my career's developed, I'm trying very hard not to let it. I'm still relatively new as a senior academic, and I'm still learning the ropes, I think, in a lot of

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> ways, and I think the perception people have of me has changed, as I've been promoted this time. I now have quite responsible jobs in terms of heading things up, but I don't think I've fundamentally changed and I'm working hard on people who perceive me differently to persuade them I'm not. And nothing dramatic in that but just trying to behave the same way as I always have, although inevitably it's different because I do have a different role now, and because I'm privy to things I can't necessarily share with other people.

This was a very important passage because it suggests that women may manage in a different way and this was suggested in the literature (Rosenar, 1990). Once a woman reaches a particular level in an organisation, where she has more responsibility he finds herself dealing with issues that are confidential and cannot be shared with others. This means that she cannot remain everybody's friend and confidante, because she will have to keep certain things confidential and not discuss everything in an open forum.

Pearl also reflected on the powerful early influence that her family had had on her to pursue an academic career. This was despite the fact that none of her family had ever been to University before. Another powerful positive individual had been her husband who had on the one hand given her considerable freedom, but on the other had given her significant levels of support.

> My mother was bright but chose to get married and have children rather than pursue a career or an education, and I know my grandfather was very ambitious for both myself and my sister, who were the two grandchildren who showed any academic promise. So despite coming from a family with no track record of education, I've been extremely well supported by my family, and I know my parents used to get a certain amount of incredulousness from their friends and work colleagues as to why they were bothering to educate two girls who would simply go off and get married and have children, and that would be the end of that.

> I think in my home life I've been very fortunate to find my husband very very supportive. He's always insisted that I stand on my own two feet and make my own decisions, and he would even when I was hitting low points, won't make decisions for me, and I think that's no bad thing, because I could easily fall back on letting him make all the decisions. He runs his own business and has his own set of worries and problems, but he's always been incredibly supportive of me doing my thing.

This shows the importance of the woman being in a harmonious relationship with her significant others at home supporting her success. It is interesting to note that Pearl had successfully been promoted to a senior academic post before she completed the autobiographical reflections.

Pearl had experienced a great deal of discrimination in her early days in industry, and this had caused her to change direction and enter the higher education world. She did claim that she had experienced much less discrimination at the University, since she had joined it. She did wonder, however why it was that it did appear to be easier for men to become senior managers rather than women. She did wonder whether it was due to the fact that she had observed that women were much more likely to lead staff in a team approach rather than 'leading from the front' that men seemed to prefer. She wondered whether this approach made women less visible and easy to be forgotten when there was a possibility of promotion. She stated on the tape that she did like leading as a team member and this had meant more recently that she was tending to work with the younger females in the department because they preferred this style of leadership.

> I think that being a female, particularly if you're a female who is a team player, then it's easy to get subsumed in a team, and because as a team player you don't like claiming all the credit for yourself, but tend to want to claim the credit for the team, I think you're sometimes perceived as not a good leader, or not a good manager. I always contend that you don't have to lead from the front, that sometimes leading from behind can be an extremely effective strategy, but it's not one that gets you particularly valued in the eyes of the managers who are looking for what they call leadership skills.

This quote shows that there may be an issue with the way in which women lead in a higher education setting and supports previous research findings (Rosenar, 1990, Bass, Alvolio and Atwater, 1996). The tight leadership and management skills that are now perhaps required in a higher education setting better displayed by men who like to take control in a leadership situation and rely more on an autocratic style. Women who demonstrate team spirit and transformational leadership style are much less likely to be recognised for promotion, perhaps.

Pearl had no children herself but like Amber she did recognise that the demands of being a parent and a major child carer put a tremendous burden on the academic. She stated that she thought it was easy for demands to grow to an intolerable level, even though she thought that the University was trying to be more sympathetic to child carers.

> I think that for someone who's got a family, it's nigh on impossible for them to manage to excel in even two strands, let alone three. It seems to me that something like looking after the student experience, the commonest role for an academic admin role is frequently involved in managing the student experience, is a job that will expand to fill the time that's available to it. Similarly research is a job that will expand to fill the time that is available to it. And I think a family is probably another of the same. Now if you've got three things that are competing for your attention then I think life must get very difficult.

Pearl felt that the University needed good managers as well as researchers because of the changing and more demanding scene of higher education. It was difficult she thought for academics to be good at teaching, student support, and research, and the University needed to encourage academics to pursue two of these she thought. She did mention a very important issue at the end of the tape when she reflected on the long term undervaluing of academics and the erosion of their salaries.

> Since I joined almost 20 years ago, the value of academic salaries has dropped considerably, and we've seen an increasing numbers of women coming into the profession. So I don't think the increasing numbers of women in higher education as academics, necessarily has anything to do with any better attitudes on the part of higher education, I think it may be a simple well observed economic effect.

Jade *discovers that men and management tasks stifle her development*

Jade thought that her career as she saw it had not been planned and even questioned the term career development from her own perspective. She stated that any planning that she had attempted to do had often been cast aside by other responsibilities. She blamed her lack of publications on the amount of bureaucracy that she had been faced with at the University.

> I think my career has been a bit chaotic really, and I don't - you know - career development - I'm just not sure about it as a term, that it applies to me. I seem to have gone from one thing to another, and I certainly haven't had much of a plan of action, and when I have had plans, like, oh I must get another publication, they've rarely come to fruition, because something has got in the way. So anyway, I must get on with some bureaucracy now....

She did explore the reasons for her entering the academic world as an undergraduate at a late age of twenty four. She did explain that this was because she had recognised that to get on and avoid menial jobs such as being a secretary, she would have to get a degree in her field. This was something that men did and she felt that she would have to do the same. This meant that she had had to get 'A' levels at a very late stage in her life before she was able to pursue her desire to enrol on an undergraduate course. This did show that she had planned for the future at an early stage in her life.

Jade was a respondent who had been a Principal Lecturer for a number of years and had therefore grown into the role. She talked about how the discovery that she could actually be clever had surprised her and changed her outlook on life.

> I guess coming out with a first class degree threw me a bit really, I think, because suddenly I was defined as a clever person, and being offered research money, and things like that, and so I went to Oxford and started a PhD at Oxford, and actually if you do sociology, Oxford is a lousy place to go because back in the 60s they didn't know what sociology was really, and certainly didn't do my sort of sociology.

She talked a great deal on the tape about her intellectual interest in her discipline and her rebellious identity that emerged at a number of times in her past. It seemed that her belief in her subject, and her objection to obstacles as she saw them was of primary importance to her development.

> I sort of shifted orientation really, but not as a result of a career plan. Certainly partly as a result of intellectual interest, but I don't do career plans. I look for jobs, I guess. And I suppose in a sense, found you know, there was a space to occupy, and it really is as a result of having taken responsibility for all that, that I eventually got promoted to be a PL. It has to be said that that was, there was a lot of conflict

and struggle during a lot of my time at Sheffield. I caused a lot of ruction.

Jade talked a lot about her identity in relation to her political beliefs and her determination to be self-sufficient and independent in life. She thought that these two features of her identity had had a major effect on her career development.

> Coming on to my identity in a way now, the bit of me which is always a political animal, and someone that I suppose, oh I don't know, this sounds pompous. I certainly don't just tow the line. I'm not sort of an out and out rebel, but I certainly don't just tow the line, and certainly am not prepared to just sit back and say nothing and do nothing, when things don't seem right. And I'm also someone who doesn't like to see things being done badly, and I think one of the reasons I am where I am, wherever that is, is because, it's not because I suppose I must think I can do things better, but I don't tend to think I can do things better than other people. ... I suppose a key part of my identity has been the desire to be an independent, self-supporting woman. For me it's significant in a sense that I come from quite a large family and all the boys were put into University education, and none of the girls were put into University education. And I think it was important for me that actually of all the children, I'm the only one who in the end went to University, and I think it's being that need to sort of prove my intelligence and competence has been actually quite an important thing.

This showed the importance of her having to prove herself in an unfamiliar situation and again showed the importance of this pioneering spirit.

Jade commented on the effect that her husband and children had had on her early career. She felt that she had followed her husband around in a number of temporary jobs early on in her career, but that her husband and one of his colleagues had given her the necessary intellectual stimulation to allow her to develop her academic career in her discipline area.

> I suppose one of the things that this story is telling you is that my early academic career is fairly typical, I guess of a lot of women, perhaps of my age. It's trying to fit it around my husband. Where my husband was working was the deciding feature. He was prepared to help, but never to do more than 50% as he said, the assumption was, obviously being that he would do less than 50% even if we were both working, and that did become an issue for us, and I was the one that tended to commute, and there wasn't any assumption that we

would ever move for my work, it was always that we move for his work. So really from 1970 up to 1983, I was in a series of temporary jobs.

There have been a few important people. One was a colleague of my husband, and it's down to him that I wrote my first article that I gave my first paper at a conference. He gave me enormous moral, intellectual support and encouragement. In some ways also my ex husband – part of my attraction to him was that he was intellectually very bright, and I think I learnt a lot from him. I think he learnt a lot from me. And we certainly had an intellectually stimulating relationship and that was very important to both of us. Ultimately it's what, it's part of what divided us, in so far as we were also quite different, but for many years it was stimulating.

This demonstrates the bitter-sweet relationship that can exist between a woman and the significant others in her life. It also underlines the importance of intellectual support at an early stage of a woman's career.

Jade reflected on the fact that she had been forced to work as a mother in order to pay for the child care bills because she had never felt that she was suited psychologically to being a full-time mother. She did reflect on the fact that she had found it very important that her juniors had wanted her to get a promotion that she had applied for. She also stated that she had found that senior men often just wanted her to be their acolyte that she had always resisted. She had not applied for promotion above her grade because she had not wanted to join a group of senior staff who she considered to be very male dominated. She said that she had found that the culture in her department at senior level was very male dominated and she did not like this.

I have had the opportunity to apply for more senior roles, *i.e.* for an executive position, and I haven't taken them, because the thought of sitting on the executive with that particular group of men fills me with such complete horror, that it's a step I'm not prepared to take for women. It's a step too far. I couldn't see how I could survive that. So undoubtedly, it stopped me wanting to get any higher up than I am at the moment, and I think I have quite a gendered way of dealing with things.

This shows the way in which a woman may avoid promotion if she feels that the situation that she would find herself in would not be a comfortable one. It also

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underlines the previous observation that women lead in different ways than men (Rosenar, 1990).

Jade reflected on the fact that it had been because she had taken on management tasks such as course leadership, that she had been promoted to a Principal Lecturer grade. She thought that the increased levels of bureaucracy in the University had made it more difficult to get promoted and less reliant on the staff team view to the suitable candidate. This had meant that in her view, it was now more important to impress the senior managers in the University, rather than the staff teams. This raised the issue of who the important 'others' were in the university setting. She did mention the unacceptable levels of administration that she thought had recently become a major part of the academic role. This had meant that she felt that academics that were caring were reluctant to engage in research because it put an unbearable burden on the other academic staff to complete these administrative tasks (Ramsden, 1998).

> I think, you do realise that if you take time off to research, you actually put a strain on the rest of the group, and I think in so far a lot of what one's trying to do, is to make the group into a collective, generous, sort of mutually supporting group, then quite often research contradicts that. So I actually feel quite difficult that I've put in for research money. I feel quite guilty because it's something that I want to do, you know, but, there's going to have to be temporary teacher doing my job, and who's going to do my admin. Well, I guess, I'll do my admin, but it's going to be hard.

Jade also reflected on the fact that large student numbers has meant that more of an emphasis had been placed on teaching large numbers, rather than teaching in a more selective way and having the time to do research.

Turquoise *discovers that being a mother stifles her research opportunities*

Turquoise talked about the way in which she had decided very early on to pursue a career in her field because she had a personal interest in it. She had had to battle with her school to allow her to do the subjects that she wanted to do and finished going to a Polytechnic rather than a University to study a vocational subject that she liked. She was the first of her family to go to University and this had had a considerable effect on her determination to

succeed. Her first job after graduation had been very successful and had led to an opportunity to go and work in a multi-national team in Holland. The decision to go and work in Holland had been a major step because it was very unusual for women to go and work abroad in their own right at this time. She wondered on the tape about why she had taken this major risk to go and the general issue of risk taking emerged again in the research findings.

> In the end I was invited to go and work in the central research labs in Holland which I accepted. At this time, it was unusual for women to move to Europe and I had to guarantee that I would come back to the UK- seems funny now! I worked with a multi-national team which was an amazing experience – and travelled all around Europe. At this time it was certainly a wonderful opportunity. I got to know loads of interesting people and was offered lots of jobs in different countries. Many of my friends and colleagues thought I was mad to go - I often wonder why I did it.

It was important here to think about the basis of the resistance to her going. It could have been work colleagues who were simply jealous of her progress or it could have been a reflection of her gender. The move from industry to the University was another major step that Turquoise took. She found that the culture of the University was very alien to what she had been used to but offered her opportunities because her excellent managerial and organisational skills were required for certain management tasks and this allowed her to get promotion to the Principal Lecturer grade. Her career at the University had also allowed her to take a masters degree, publish widely and develop in areas that she would not have done in industry. She did not have any strong views on where she wanted to go next, but thought that any promotion would probably be on the basis of her leadership skills rather than her research and publication record because she had started on this late in her career.

Turquoise reflected on the way in which her early interest in her discipline had led her direction, but like other respondents it had been her willingness to accept risks that had had a major effect on her development. These developments had led her into conflict with others both at school and in her private life and this seemed to have made her even more determined to succeed and go ahead when there had been opposition to her proposed actions.

It was about this time that my interest in food really started to grow. I decided I wanted to continue with this and do A levels in science and more controversially Home Economics. The school was very much against this and tried to make me do other more respectable subjects - so I had my first battle in life ..... One of the most important aspects of this has been my assertive nature. After all this led me in to the food area. As an only child I have always been independent and this has meant two things - firstly that I want to do my best in terms of career development - and secondly that I am prepared to take risks to achieve it - after all going to Holland on my own was a very significant step. Later on me becoming a mother has changed my identity substantially. Before this my career was really all about me – selfish I suppose - perhaps this is another characteristic of being an only child.

This was not the first time that a respondent had commented on the significant effect becoming a mother had had on their identity and as a result their career development.

Turquoise finished the section on her identity by discussing her lack of desire to become a Professor because of the negative effect she perceived that this would have on her private life. She stated that she could 'do without' the hassle and time commitment that this would take, and it was clear that the fact that she was a mother had affected her responses to possible career opportunities and had probably made her more risk averse.

She reported that there had been a number of significant others who had inspired her to progress. Her father had given her particular emotional support as a child and had encouraged her to go to University, even though there was no history of this in her family. One of her tutors at University had also had a significant effect and it had been devastating to her personally when he had died in her final year because this meant that she had not carried on with a masters course with him after graduation. A number of managers that she had worked with in industry had also been influential in her career development. The most significant individuals had been her son and her second husband who had both helped to shape her later academic career in many ways. She also noted that all of these significant others were male and she wondered why this was.

Moving on to my second husband who has inspired me in everything, convinced me I could write and publish and pushed me on sometimes to extremes! And of course the

> most important person in my life my son. The birth of my son
> has changed my life because it has shaped my beliefs and
> my attitudes to my career and my future. Before this my
> career was really all about me.

This again shows the powerful influence a supportive partner and a child has had on the career development of this respondent. Could it be that it is better for the 'wizard' McDade (2001) to be the woman's partner rather than someone necessarily at work? And is the birth of a child the major determinant of future career progression?

Turquoise commented that the fact that she was a woman and a mother had meant that she had not fitted in well at the University even though all the significant others that she mentioned were men. She did not explore the reasons for her feeling uncomfortable but it is a theme that she returned to on a number of occasions.

> Having the responsibility of a child as a mother has also had
> a considerable effect on me. My gender has meant that I do
> not fit in well to University life – perhaps OK in the admin and
> teaching side – but badly in the research side.

This suggested that women are perhaps more suited to certain aspects of academic life and if they become a mother the expectation that they carry out student support, teaching and research becomes too much for them. This could be explained by the psychological state that they find themselves in.

Turquoise reflected on the fact that academic life was very different culturally from what she had been used to in industry. She said that it had been her management expertise that had allowed her to be recognised and promoted in this new setting, rather than any expertise in the research arena where she felt quite vulnerable. She did consider that there was quite a weak culture at the University that allowed her to assert herself and gain promotion.

Aquamarine *discovers that there is no clear promotion path for her to follow*
Aquamarine gave a very detailed review of her career development. She had also had an early interest in the subject discipline that she carried on at University and in her research in later years. Like the previous respondent she had had the opportunity to go and work in America for a short period early in her

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career, and she felt that this had had a major effect on her on her development and outlook on life.

> I suppose my career development started when I decided to do GCSE Science and Biology in particular and then took that forward to study A levels. I was lucky enough to go to America for 3 months, and work at a large institute in Dallas, and again I think that helped with my career, it broadened my horizons, and made me realise that I never wanted to work in America because of the work ethos there.

She recognised that a great deal of her career development had been due to her management skill, although she did recognise that she also had been inspired by the desire to research her academic topic. She did feel, however, that it was her early determination to pursue her interest in her academic discipline that had been the most important feature of her career.

> I then got my promotion to Principal Lecturer on the basis of my ability to run courses and to the experience I've had with validation, and I got that in 2000, I think, and have been on that grade ever since. I suppose I've driven my own career development but then perhaps I've been lucky in that from the age of 16 onwards, I've sort of known what I've wanted to do.

She wondered about the opportunities that existed in the future given her young age. She did not appear to have a clear view about what she wanted to do but knew she wanted to change direction at some stage to allow her to develop further. She did recognise however that she would have her own destiny in her hands and would have to make decisions about her future direction.

> There doesn't seem to be much of a logical progression through a career setting within higher education. Well that is my experience – I suppose the positive and negative effects of realising my dreams are whether I'm given the opportunities to do other things, to enable my career to develop, but I very much feel that you need to drive your own opportunities, and perhaps if they're not forthcoming within the job at the moment, then you have to try looking for them elsewhere.

This quote showed the importance of the development of clear opportunities for younger Principal Lecturers, and the lack of any real clear direction for women in this category. The feeling was that opportunities were things that you made for yourself.

Aquamarine was the respondent who wondered the most about the meaning of identity. She gave the shortest account of this on the tape but came across as being very self assured about where she wanted to go and how she wanted to achieve it. She expanded on this later in the follow up interview. She did state that her career development had been shaped by the fact that she had an early interest in her discipline and this had given her the will to progress.

> I suppose I've driven my own career development, but then perhaps I've been lucky, in that from the age of 16 onwards, I've sort of known what I wanted to do, I always knew what I wanted to go to University to do. There have been times when I've looked at jobs in other directions such as in industry, or in various things. I've thought I had the credentials and applied for them, but I suppose in the end my personality suits me being in education, and I have always been turned on by the research side of things and have enjoyed that.

This shows the importance of the correct fit between the personality of the academic and the culture of the higher education institution (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994).

She reported that it had been her parents and husband who had had the most influence on her career in her private life. Her PhD supervisor had also been influential because he had made her question all things and had made her think about issues and had given her intellectual stimulation. Her husband appeared to have been the most influential because he had been prepared to move with her job during their life together. This again showed the importance of balance and equilibrium for a woman in her personal life to enable her to achieve success.

Aquamarine had been discriminated against when she had been interviewed for her current job, but because she had got the job she felt that it did not affect the outcome. She thought that the fact that she was a woman had not had an effect on her development at the University although times had gradually changed at the University over a number of years.

> I mean people always think that females are discriminated against, but I'm not sure that I've ever had any overt discrimination by the fact that I am female. Certainly not since I was appointed at Sheffield Hallam University. I think earlier

on perhaps, when you are younger, and I think things have changed over the years, that it might have been a factor, and indeed I remember when I was interviewed for the position at Sheffield, they asked me what my husband was going to do if I got the job, and I had a feeling that they would not have asked a similar question to any of the males that happened to be married and applied for the job.

Aquamarine thought that the things that she had achieved had been as a result of her making her own way due to her assertiveness. She felt that there was little in the way of planned or obvious career progression that was visible at the University.

> Although I have been successful obviously in higher education, I'm not sure that there is a lot of actual career development. I very much feel that my own career development has been developed by myself and not by other people around. I think it is a problem and that people are difficult to manage because, I suppose there is not the structure there, the hierarchical structure there. At the same time there's no career development either. I think you need to link the two if you want to get a better management system, you've also got to have a kind of career development system there as well.

This showed that she had gained no real sense of direction and career development, as a result of actions by people in the organisation and it was difficult for her to see where to go as a result of this.

Jet *discovers that it is better to separate her home and work life*

Jet gave a long review on the tape of her personal career development. She started the tape by suggesting that a career is something that happens to individuals rather than as a result of any deliberate planning.

> I suppose the first observation is careers are family things. If you think they're planned, I think that's probably a mistake. I think they happen, because they happen.

This again shows the fatalistic tendency that a number of respondents adopted in relation to their career development.

She gave a very detailed review of her identity. She stated that she thought that it was generally at an early age when a person's identity is formed and that it is

important that the confidence in one's own ability is built up in these early years if the person is to be successful.

> I think on the whole, that self identity is formed at a quite young age. Who you are, how you perceive yourself is fairly fixed. It takes a while to realise you're not stupid, for many people. Certainly it did for me. I think I always knew I wasn't stupid, but I didn't know I was clever. Perhaps there's a lesson in that and all that self concept stuff has quite a lot of resonance there. Trying to be life affirming. Trying to be positive is probably very very important in the way I think about career.

This quote showed the importance that she placed on her own personal belief in her own abilities and potential. The need for security and support at an early age so that the woman has a strong belief in herself is obviously a key issue. Jet did talk about the importance for her of being able to be confident enough to talk about her strengths. She reflected on the fact that she had been generally bad at doing this, except when she had had to do it in order for her to get the promotion to the Principal Lecturer grade. She also made two very important observations that I considered were critical issues for the research. The first of these was the fact that she thought that women needed to be confident that they are good at what they do before they can be successful.

> Well okay, one of the things about being a woman, I like the comfort zone of being very good at what I do. It is true, I think that is a true thing about women, all women. Probably all people who are good at their jobs. I like taking risks. They're intellectual risks of course, I like being a good teacher. I like being a good writer. I like being good at what I do, and they all take effort.

Jet also reflected on the fact that she thought it was important for her to separate out her identity at home and at work and not mix the two together. This level of separation is an important point and goes back to the comment by the first Professor who questioned whether her tape should be completed in a work or home environment. It seemed that the ability to separate the two states of mind that are required at home and at work is an important issue.

> Identity comes, for me, from what I do, so I like to be, I like my life to be discreet. I don't particularly like having friends from work as friends at home. Now that doesn't mean I haven't got people who are friends from work, who are friends from

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home, but on the whole my home life is quite separate from my work life. I don't know whether that is an important point. Might be, might not be.

She also made reference to the fact that it had taken her some time to feel successful as well as being successful and also felt in the end that she thought of herself as being influential rather than successful. This may suggest that an academic needs to exert influence on situations and people rather than being successful *per se.*

> Certainly being subject to systematic bullying by a more senior colleague it's not a pleasant experience. It tends to be a bit of a show stopper. Maybe one of the reasons it's taken me a while to get my head round feeling successful as well as being successful. I've done enormous numbers of management jobs whilst I've been at the University. Although it looks as though I've stayed in the same place and done may of the same sort of jobs, in fact I've had an extremely varied career, and that's one of the reasons I feel as though I've been more influential than successful.

Jet talked about the significant others whom she thought had influenced her early on in her life. She referred to two women, one who lived near her home, and one that she had worked for that she thought had been role models for her early in life and had shown that women could have careers.

> I worked in the summer holidays at a stockbrokers. My job was to carry files from one place to another. I worked for a woman who, I think she may have been significant person in my life, because she was very successful, and that went on to be the first woman member of the stock exchange..... There was a pair of maiden ladies who lived very close to us, and one of them ran a small advertising company, and she went off to work every day, and she was clearly successful, and I suspect she was someone who I looked up to, and thought of as being .. oh I could do that. But I don't remember being conscious of this at the time.

This showed the importance for Jet, and for other women, to have successful female role models early on in their lives to associate with and aspire to.

Jet did not dwell on the subject of gender on the tape, choosing to spend much more time on her own identity. She did state, however that she considered that academic life was very gendered because she considered that men were much less risk averse and were much more 'in your face'. She also reflected on the

fact that she thought that men must be more prepared to make mistakes although she did wonder about this and promised to return to it, but never did.

Jet felt that it was important for the institution to develop good leaders to cope with the changing scene of higher education (Weil, 1994). She felt that too much emphasis had been placed on individuals who always thought that they were right rather than relying on people who are prepared to accept that they may sometimes be wrong. She felt that this had been encouraged by the 'blame culture' that had been developed at the University as a result of the changing demands of the higher education scene. This had often undermined academic development. It was important for people, she thought, to have bruising experiences as well as feelings of success if you were to be truly successful.

Emerald *discovers that there is conflict between her work and her home life*

Emerald also echoed the feeling of not being able to plan her career development in a particularly systematic way. She did comment that although she felt that she has been successful she did feel that she had not planned her personal development enough. She did mention that she had changed direction on a number of occasions, but like other respondents the personal belief in enquiry and research had been central to her career development.

> In many ways it isn't something that I have approached particularly systematically. A lot of things really just happened, and I don't think I planned, probably haven't planned enough. There have been benefits from that, but there probably have been some difficulties as well.

She did explore her view on the difference between a job and career. She did suggest that she had often taken a job either because she had a personal interest in the area, or occasionally because she needed to earn the money that went with the job because of her personal circumstances due to divorce and her need to financially support her children.

> I wasn't thinking about career development, it was just, it was an interesting job and it fitted in terribly well with the other responsibilities that I had. ...I came back to work thinking I might be the breadwinner - that was the first time that I really, really thought in any kind of focused way, but then it was just about having a job, I don't think it was about planning strategically. Maybe I'm not particularly ambitious but I'm

more interested in ... well there are some things I want to do.. but I'm not interested in just single mindedly pursuing success or whatever.

Emerald reflected on her views about her identity in relation to her career in higher education. She did reflect on the new managerial role that she had been forced to take as a Principal Lecturer, and considered how this fitted in with her identity at home as a mother.

> My identity has certainly changed. At points in my career I've been on a quite sharp learning curve, because I think the thing about academia, you end up a manager, and you're not trained to be a manager, you have no real wish to be a manager, it sort of gets thrust upon you, and I think the thing about my identity which is probably quite difficult, which has made it more difficult for me than it needed to be, is the fact that I don't think I'm terribly terribly good at political games. I'm not that interested in them. And I think I have a strong...well I know I have a strong feeling that the world of work should be a meritocracy and however irrational that is, I do feel very strongly. I wouldn't want a job that I didn't feel I had earned or a promotion that I didn't think I was worthy of. So in some ways my identity probably has developed, because of the priorities in my life. I think my role as a mother has been quite an important one.

This showed the importance influence that the woman's identity as a whole has on their development at work. Home life and work life are inextricably linked, although they may be at odds at certain times in the woman's career. Significant others influence a woman at both home and work.

The respondents talked at length about the significant others both in their home life and work life that had affected their career development in either a positive or negative way. There often appeared to be conflict between the desires placed on the respondent from these different settings and this had been reported in the literature as being one of the reasons that women were not successful and avoided taking extra responsibility (Davidson and Cooper, 1992).

Emerald highlighted the importance of two key mentors that had had an effect on her career development at the University. One of these had worked inside the University and one at another institution. This showed the importance of mentoring that had emerged in the literature (Kram, 1985).

> There's a colleague in Psychology, he's been a mentor in some ways, especially in my earlier years here, and whose advice I've always valued, and I know I could get advice from, and that's been very helpful to have that sort of advice. Not someone I see very often, but I know if there's any issues, someone I could turn to and get advice. There's another external examiner who's now a Pro Vice Chancellor – although I don't see him very often once a year or so, he's someone else I can sometimes make contact with by e mail, and also gives me very useful advice and has made me think much more strategically about what I want.

Emerald dwelled a great deal on the topic of her children on her tape. It became clear that the fact that she had children rather than the fact that she was a woman had influenced her greatly in her work. She did state that she felt that she had not been discriminated in overtly in the last promotion that she had gone through. It was only more recently that she had been able to give the job 'her whole' because her children were growing up and becoming less dependant so that had given her more time to dedicate to her job and particularly her research.

> For a lot of the time when I've been working here, the children have really been my first priority. I've done my work very conscientiously, but if it came to doing something with them, or doing some research in the evening, I would prioritise the children, and I don't regret doing that, because I think in some ways that was a much more creative thing to do. But what's really nice now, my children are now ....well much more independent, and I now have time again to focus on, really focus on academic issues, and now I feel that I am picking up the threads of my career again if you like, in terms of being able to do the sort of research I want to do.

It was clear from this section that the fact that she had children was the most important factor in her career development. The psychological attachment to a child particularly in the early years, meant that it was difficult to focus on the growing demands of the academic career. Research seemed to be a particular issue because it seemed to require traits that were not naturally associated with being a woman.

Emerald felt that the management roles that she had been given as a result of her Principal Lecturer grade had taken away from her research agenda.

> I felt very frustrated as Subject Leader because there really was no time to do research. I'd managed to do bits of

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research, but was always a bit unhappy with the quality of it, because I never had enough time to do the big studies that I would have liked to do, so it was mostly collaborations with other people where kind of guilt of letting them down, kept me to do things.

We see here again the feelings of guilt with regards to other members of the team that has emerged from other respondents in the research and her feelings of responsibility to other colleagues as a type of mothering action.

Emerald also mirrored some of the feelings that were expressed by other respondents in relation to the fact that academic life had become more demanding due to growing student numbers (Ramsden, 1998). She felt that female academics had often been pigeon holed into caring student support roles that had then been viewed as being less important than the growing research agenda (Davies and Holloway, 1995). She also said that she thought that academic life had become more difficult for women in recent years because of the increased demands of the job. She also worried about the lack of commitment in higher education to career breaks for women.

> I think that must be much harder for women with families, than it was when I was doing it. Because it wasn't easy then. I think that must make it much harder, and I don't think there's enough recognition of a need for some more flexibility, or even a recognition of the nature of the job that we do. And also I think that there's not always enough allowance for career breaks.

The analysis of the autobiographical reflections did suggest that there were some general themes that were emerging. I decided to analyse the transcripts in more detail using the Ethnograph 5 package to investigate the nature of this and to help with the design of the follow up interview. The package proved quite useful to give a preliminary view on the things that the respondents were mentioning throughout their reflections. A family tree of items was created for each question or group of questions and the transcripts were analysed for the number of counts for these items occurring in each transcript. These were then counted and presented on charts that are shown in Appendix 5.

The Ethnograph 5 package was useful to give an overall impression of the transcripts but the major flaw was the fact that the package relied on counts of items that appeared in the words. The results of this analysis are shown in

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Appendix 5. Just because a respondent only mentioned one item once did not mean that it was less important than a respondent who mentioned an item many times. The manual analysis of the transcripts and the reading and re-reading of the words was a much more useful method for analysis.

4:3 Design of the follow-up interview

The analysis of the autobiographical reflections had provided a detailed view of the thoughts of the respondents in relation to the fractions of the lifeworld. The idea of the follow up interview was to return to the respondents for a short interview to probe these findings in more depth. It had been decided to use a semi-structured interview at this stage of the research so that these specific findings could be probed in more depth. It was possible to go away from the script if an interesting line of enquiry emerged during the interview.

The follow up interview focused on the fraction of *temporality* by asking the respondent to reflect again on the finding that chance had been a major determinant of career development, but that sometimes the respondents had taken specific steps to plan their individual development. It was hoped that the respondents would return to the theme of crisis that had emerged from the first stage of the research.

The fraction of *selfhood* had been the most interesting fraction in the first stage of the research, but it was also the most personal. For this reason, the follow up interview finished with the questions about identity. The questions asked the respondent to reflect on the dilemmas that the respondents had reported on. It asked them to reflect on the fact that many of the respondents had features of pioneering spirit and risk taking, but that negative factors such as crisis and uncertainty had also emerged as a strong theme. It was hoped that during this discussion the respondents would return to the issue related to the home – work balance and the apparent conflicts that had emerged in relation to this in the autobiographical reflections.

The fraction of *sociality* was returned to in the follow up interview by asking the respondent to reflect on the findings that had emerged from the autobiographical reflections. These factors include those related to having children, and the significant influence that others such as the mother and father

had had on the career development of many of the respondents. It was hoped that the respondents would also return to the theme of intellectual stimulation that had emerged as an important factor in the first stage of the research.

The fraction of *embodiment* was returned to in the follow up interview when the respondent was asked to reflect towards the end of the interview on the findings that had emerged from the first stage of the research. This included the fact that the respondents had nearly all felt discriminated against at some stage in their career, but that this had given them the reason to forge forwards and often seek the help of other women. It was hoped that the respondents would return to importance of women being role models. The fact that some of the respondents had suggested that women lead in a different way in the first stage of the research was also something to be aware of during the follow up interview.

The fraction of *spatiality* was important in the follow up interview because it was important to investigate the respondent's perceptions of where they considered themselves to be a Professor or a Principal Lecturer. This could be at home, at work or in some other context.

The fraction of *project* was returned to in the follow up interview when the respondent was asked about their personal project, linked to selfhood. Questions about their main interest were important here.

The fraction of *discourse* was important in relation to the line of thought that they respondents would draw on . This included ideas about career, leadership and management and discourses related to the family and their femininity.

A copy of the outline for the follow up interview is show in Appendix 5. It was not possible to return to all of the respondents who had responded in the first stage of the research because some were away on a sabbatical or were away from the University for another reason. Three of the Professors were interviewed during this stage of the research – **Diamond, Ruby** and **Garnet.** Five of the Principal Lecturers were interviewed during the second stage of the research programme – **Amber, Pearl, Jade, Aquamarine** and **Jet.** It was felt that this would provide a further valuable insight into the feelings of the respondents that would illuminate the glass-ceiling phenomenon with further clarity. It would also

provide further supportive or contradictory evidence in relation to the findings from the first stage of the research.

The follow up interviews were all manually transcribed and then analysed manually for content in relation to the fraction of the lifeworld.

4:4 Results of the follow-up interviews

4:4:1 The Professors

I interviewed Diamond in her own office. She talked at length about her views in relation to the preliminary findings of the research during her interview. She did report that she did think that chance had played a major role in her career development (Kidd, 2002). She also reported that there had been other crises that had occurred in her life that she suddenly thought about when this was prompted in the interview. She did think that her working class background and the fact that she had been the first member of her family to have a serious career in a higher education setting had been a major influence on her career development. She did stress that she thought that timing of career development at particular times in psychological development was a key issue for her. The psychological make up depended on the state of mind of the individual and the particular life stage that they were at.

> That's very interesting in terms of key events and generation stuff. I think that, certainly that doesn't surprise me in a sense, because I think certainly if you're talking about women of my sort of age, we were the first generation through that expansion of women's higher education, and I think that's probably incredibly important, and I don't know if you've looked at people's sense of their own class background but my guess is that there are quite interesting class gender relations there, in terms of those opportunities opening up for women, I think at that particular point in time.

Diamond did reflect on the fact that the first stage of the research had demonstrated a pioneering spirit amongst the respondents in terms of their own development. She thought long and hard about this and suggested that she thought that this was the case and that in her case it was more than just a pioneering spirit. It also involved a real passion for the subject and a delight in research. She said that she still felt this every time she talked to someone about their research topic or supervised a researcher. This passion for research had

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enabled her to overcome hurdles that had been put in her way as she had developed her research career.

> I still have a passion for research. So I suspect the positive things that sort of sheer delight about the intrinsic satisfaction of the job. I mean I'm willing to fight...the all sorts of obstacle about the negative bits, that it is that sort of intrinsic pleasure. Now whether that's cause or effect, because I think being a Professor is different, and I think....I mean in a sense I chose to sort of say... only create my career around those bits that I value, and I have to sacrifice career and say, well stuff it, and go down the managerial route, and to actually lose the intrinsic satisfaction, that's not a trade I'm willing to make.

This passage shows the determination of the respondent to pursue her research career despite the obvious pull to take on more administrative and managerial tasks.

A strong theme developed throughout the follow up interview in terms of her relationship with her child and partners. Separation and divorce had been a strong feature of her personal life, but her relationship with her child had been the most important influence on her personal development and still continued to be so even though her child was now grown up. A very important part of this discussion was the reference she made to the fact that she thought that an equal opportunity policy had not been well developed during her period at work when she had a young child. She felt, however that times had been much easier and work colleagues were much more sympathetic and helpful during this time. This increased level of freedom had allowed her to enjoy her child and combine the demands of both her home life and work very successfully. She did think that times were much harder now and that it was difficult for women to combine children with work because of new demands and decreased flexibility.

She also talked about the fact that although she wanted to return to work soon after the birth of her son, she felt that it was extremely important and valuable to be able to have the mental space to enjoy her child as he grew up. The benefits of having a child had also meant that she had had to switch off from work when she went home and focus on him. She thought that this was a very good thing because it meant that she had had to be very focussed on work when she was there and she had had to finish all her tasks efficiently and effectively.

So you can't actually go on having a conversation about how so and so wound you up at work, or actually how you've got this committee to go to, because if you go home, they're not interested in you taking your work home with you. They expect you to be fantastically more interested in them, which is quite right. And in a funny way that's a great advantage because it gives you a healthy switch off point. I think it makes you incredibly more efficient. I think it's a very personal thing about ... making positive choices, and so I probably would have had a more serious career earlier, yes, had I wanted, but I really didn't want to.

This showed the value of contrasting roles for Diamond. These feelings added another dimension to the work home balance findings that had been revealed in the first stage of the research and builds on the research by Davidson and Cooper, (1992). The idea that the presence of a child meant that the woman had had to switch off at home and not dedicate her home life to work had meant that she had not been able to pursue her career in the way that would have been the most beneficial. This had resulted in a delay to her progression but an intense feeling of psychological freedom and separation from work. Work and home were separate entities and this was not conducive to career development. The fact that the requirement to work at home was now expected in academic life presumably means that the woman has to sacrifice this new found freedom or leave.

Diamond had already commented earlier about the discrimination that she had faced and the way in which she had used a group of like-minded women as a support group early on in her research career. She talked about her worry that even though there had been a small increase in the female Professors at the University, she was worried that this was not progressing at a fast enough rate, and there was obviously still an issue with women becoming Professors. She commented that she thought that not enough positive steps had been taken to encourage women by them being mentored by a female professor (McDade, 2001) and she thought that too much had been left to chance. She finished by telling me that the female Professors in the University had decided to invite women to be mentored by female Professors to try and improve this situation (Kram, 1985). I will never know whether this scheme had been partly prompted by my research and only time will tell how many women join the scheme and what the long- term effects are. The mentoring relationship will obviously be a

key part of this scheme. Whether this scheme will be effective given the other findings in this research programme is an interesting question to ponder on. Will women even be prepared to come forward given the apparent doubts and uncertainties about individual potential?

Ruby was a very interesting respondent because she had had a long research career and had retired just before the follow up interview. She kindly offered to meet up with me to complete the follow up interview in her old office and we talked for just under an hour about the findings from the autobiographical reflections. In this hour she reflected back again over her long and distinguished career in relation to the findings from the first stage of the research.

She did think that the position of chance in her career development had been very important, but interestingly discussed the fact that it was the ability to take a chance and face the risk associated with it, that made a successful woman in her view. The meaning of the idea that there is a chance element in career, however, does depend on whether career is a main element of her identity and project. She said that she had always worried about whether she had made the right decisions in life. She had often looked back with some regret as to where she could have gone, but that generally she felt very positive about the risks she had taken and the results that she had achieved.

> So I think, I agree with you, that there's a great deal to do with chance, but I also think that chances are there for most people. The difference perhaps is, taking the opportunity, and.... I remember reading the American baseball player, Yogi Bari, apparently said... when you come to a fork in the road, take it.
>
> I think, there is a risk. When I did VSO, at the end I was ambivalent about what I wanted to do...but there was this opportunity to do this course in London so I took that opportunity, but I was still ambivalent because I really wanted to stay there, and when I've been back since, I've sometimes had this feeling particularly walking down a particular stretch of beach that I would not be surprised to see an alternative version of me who'd actually stayed walking toward me. It's about time warps and the idea of parallel things going on. And then....once you've taken the first opportunity, I think you start looking for others.

The most important theme to emerge from the follow up interview with Ruby was the fact that she felt that she had had personal ambition earlier on in her career that had forced her on to seek further opportunities in the University. It was only towards the end of her career that she had lost her personal ambition and had turned her attention to helping other people to take over from her in the future as her successors. This had meant that she had much more emphasis on particular individuals who she had felt worthy of being her successor. This had also involved her much more in mentoring and had meant that her approaches to her junior staff had become much more structured and thought out. It was also interesting to note that she felt much more doubtful about her own abilities towards the end of her career and this had led her not to apply for a senior research post in her School. She rationalised this by saying that this had given an opportunity to a younger candidate who could be in the role for a longer period but this was not fully convincing. The feeling of freedom from personal ambition that she had felt came through very strongly in the interview. This was almost like the personal freedom that Diamond had felt when she had become a mother. It is interesting here to reflect on whether the achievement of this sense of freedom is an important part of self-development at particular stages in life.

> That was the point at which I suddenly felt free of personal ambition. I think it also related to this sort of crisis.. am I good enough or not? What's my past history... have I performed well enough? Do I want to risk being turned down? Had I reached the point where, in fact, I didn't want to take that risk?

Ruby talked at great length about the significant others who had effected her. She had not had any children so could not reflect on that experience. She did consider that one teacher had had an incredible affect on a group of girls at her infant school and inspired them all to be inquisitive. It was this inquisitive nature that had inspired her to be interested in research at a much later date.

> I think it comes from the curious child, and .... do you remember a cooking fat called Trex? Well, Trex used to contain coupons, and with these coupons you could send away and get all sorts of things, and I had this little plastic microscope. And so this curiosity, even though I can date what might be called more systematic research from about the late 60s early 70s, this curiosity that had gone on right from the start.

She reflected on the fact that her mother had been the most influential person in her life because she had survived the war on her own and managed to bring up and inspire her children through a very difficult period. She felt that her mother had been a sort of 'proto-feminist' because of the way she had supported her. This showed that it can often be somebody outside the work environment who acts a 'wizard' in terms of encouraging and supporting woman to succeed (McDade, 2001).

She did consider that being a woman had not seriously affected her career development although she did recount some events when she had felt that she had been discriminated against. She thought that there was still discrimination around in the institution and thought that this was particularly the case when the person in charge was a woman. She felt that many women were in junior positions and often helped out many work colleagues by their selfless actions.

> I think that women are much less sympathetic towards other women. In a school like ours, in actual fact. And if you look around you can see that there are women who are at the top of the SL scale, who have been... who pick up the pieces, who do the work, make sure everything gets done. Do it efficiently. There are men, who are being paid on PL scale who are worse than useless and the attitude is actually... nobody tackles them.

A large proportion of the follow up interview with Ruby was about her past life and the influences that role models and events had had on her. It was very interesting that towards the end of her career her pioneering spirit appeared to have waned and in its place a desire had grown for her to help more junior staff to develop so that they could take over from her. This suggested that an individual's sense of altruism to others grows as they reach the period of maturity and decline (Super, Thompson and Lindeman, 1985). It appears that this desire is not present earlier in the woman's career because it is difficult in academia to be both successful and help others. This could be simply because it takes all a woman's effort to succeed, or it could be explained by the fact that junior women are envious and suspicious of the women who have achieved success. This is obviously a gender issue that warrants further investigation.

Ruby also had some very interesting things to say about her views on the culture of the higher education institution. She had reported in her autobiographical reflections that she had avoided administrative work so that she could get on with her research. She reflected on this again in the follow up interview and said that she thought that this had got worse in recent years. She felt that this was particularly damaging for Readers who should be developing a research culture rather than filling in of forms.

> I have determinedly pursued a course that has taken me away from as far as possible ... administrative responsibilities ... and so the ones that I have taken on have actually been to do with research. So they've been as postgraduate research tutor, and dealing with... which is as much pastoral as it is administrative, or administering our first research centre, that sort of thing, as far as possible.... We've got a new Reader's post or some new Reader's posts in the school, but all of the people have to take on other administrative duties. Now this is ridiculous. It's reverting back again. I thought I'd established a precedent about Reader's posts being about research, but clearly not. I'd only established a precedent for me.

She reflected on the findings of the first stage of the research where discrimination had been an issue. She finished by saying that she thought that one of the issues now was the fact that women who got to the top often surrounded themselves with men who proceeded to bully people beneath them. She also thought that women at the top were generally less sympathetic to women than men would be.

> I don't think in terms of discrimination that it is necessarily discrimination of men against women, but that you often see in some organisations where women are less sympathetic towards other women.

This could suggest that the position of women in senior positions has made the advancement of women more difficult because the conditions for advancement become more demanding and the junior women have to suffer the same or more levels of deprivation to succeed compared the their more senior colleagues. Almost a feeling of 'I had to suffer to get here, so they will too.'

Garnet was the final Professor who was interviewed at the follow up stage. It was an interesting interview because during the analysis I found that I had gone

away from the script more times compared to the other Professors. This was because she had said some very interesting things that offered a deeper view on some of the fractions that had emerged during the autobiographical reflections.

The first of these was the fact that she thought that going to an all girls school had provided her with opportunities because there were no boys to divert the girls or the teachers' attention away from the girls. It had also been the expectation of the teachers that they would achieve things and go to University in their own right. Her parents had also encouraged her to go to University. She also reported that there was a type of group support at her all girls' school who had developed particular expectations of themselves. Ruby had reported a similar female support group but at primary school level, rather than at senior school level. Could this be an example of a feminist support group at an early stage in life?

> And I think, I do believe that because it was an all girls school, we were quite... we had... I wouldn't say we were particularly work focused, but we all thought we were going to do well. We never thought that we weren't going to go to university. It was something that we were all going to do. So I think you had a secure feeling in an all girls school. Very comfortable and confident in your environment. I'm sure kids probably feel the same in a mixed school. I just feel there's less distractions ... and more work.

In terms of her identity, Garnet did report that she felt differently from other women because she knew that although she had worked part-time at some stages in her career, she had never taken time out of work to look after her children full-time. She had never felt that she played 'second fiddle' to her husband as he pursued his own career. She suggested that this was a feature of her younger age, although she also suggested that although she felt younger than some of the women she knew, in reality she was probably the same age but just felt younger. This could suggest that the feeling of youthfulness is an important frame of mind to be in.

> I was thinking about that the other day – my age. I must have been somewhere where there were women who were 4 or 5 years older me, and I think that it made quite a difference really, because I think that difference in women going out to

work and everything, you know just those few years... those women were all teaching fellows, their husbands had better teaching jobs, and they had taken second fiddle. Now, I did but I never stopped working, whereas these women had taken time off and.... they.. in fact.. one or two of them were the same age as me, but they gave the impression of being older. They probably had their children younger than I did.

The issue of home / work balance (Shain, 1999) did come out again in the follow up interview when Garnet reported that although she did feel positive about the fact that she was now able to spend more time on her work since her children were now teenagers. She worried, however, that they could feel that she neglected them, particularly when they were facing the stress of examinations.

So, and now, I mean it's sort of still difficult, even though they're teenagers, because you've got the stresses and strains of GCSEs and A levels but I'm sure they will tell you that I put my work first, not them first, so I do try and sort of share time, but I do sort of, but I do feel that I ought to spend more time with them than I do. I mean, yes, I'm happy with what I've achieved, and I would hope that they don't feel that they've been aggrieved in any way or neglected in any way.

This did illustrate that a great deal of her identity was tied up with her relationships with other individuals. Another important feature was that she mentioned that although her partner did consider that she worked too hard, she had chosen him because he did do equal amounts of the household chores which meant that she did have time to pursue her career. This again reiterated the need for the successful woman to choose her partner with care.

I think that I obviously sort of chose reasonably well, because not many men I think, would have perhaps, you know, contributed as much as he does, so you know he does everything at home, you know, even now he does all the cooking and all the shopping. Doesn't do the ironing. I do that. So you know, I think that if he didn't do these things at home, then I wouldn't have been able to do what I do, so whether he does that just 'cos I wouldn't do it, or whether he does it.. I don't think it's a positive actual support, I think it's just a sharing of tasks really.

She did reflect on the findings of discrimination in the first stage of the research. She did say that her department was very male dominated at the time of the

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research and that this meant that she thought that generally women worked harder and took on more administrative tasks compared to men. She felt that for her the fact that she had the belief that she had just as good a brain as men, and that she had achieved a research record despite working part time was a very important state of mind. She also made a very important comment in relation to decision making because she stated that one very important factor in her success, she felt, had been the fact that she had wanted to become involved in decision making to influence events. This trait in relation to leadership was something that did not appear in the literature related to the glass ceiling.

> I like to know what's going on. I want to sort of... I want to be involved in decision making and that sort of thing, so...I don't like people telling me what to do, that's... so I want to get to a position so I can say what I want to do. But having said that, I would be a bit nervous about sort of taking too much control. It's always easy to blame somebody else.

She finished her interview by stating that she had been spurred to try for a Professorial role because she had observed men that she knew outside the University who had done this even though she did not consider them superior to herself in intellectual capacity. She felt that you needed this determination to succeed because the route to a Professorial grade was not an easy one. She also repeated the view that her juniors viewed her as quite tough even though she did not see herself in this light. This repeated the message that it was important for successful women to appear quite tough and uncompromising to their juniors.

> I mean it was interesting when I went to that women's Professors meeting, you know.... There were only 4 of us there, but they're all very strong... I mean I don't think I'm, particularly outspoken and particularly.. I don't think of myself as being particularly strong, but if you talk to other people you'll hear that I'm really bossy or you know... and I never felt as though... I've got this... people think ... you know... say things, and I don't think.. I feel as if I'm a bit of a softy really, but I don't think people see me like that. So I think... you know... that you have to have this ... be a particular type of person, to push and keep pushing, and taking rejection and keep going forward.

4:4:2 The Principal Lecturers

It was interesting to observe that five out of the seven Principal Lecturers agreed to participate in the follow up interview. The two respondents who did not participate had personal issues at the time of the research. The follow up interviews were designed to take about 30 minutes, but generally they took about 40 minutes to complete because an interesting conversation developed. I felt personally closer to the Principal Lecturers because of my job role, so I was able to empathise with their reflections.

Amber was the first Principal Lecturer to be interviewed. She was the respondent who had reported that she had a detailed job description at our first meeting, and who had reported difficulties with the balance of home and work life at our second meeting. She had also reported that the levels of administrative work that were required in her job, and the lack of help in this area, made her job very difficult. I telephoned her to arrange the follow up interview and she told me that major things had happened to her since our last meeting that she would tell me about when we met. I imagined that she would tell me about her promotion or advancement because I viewed her as being very able, so I was astounded to learn at the beginning of the interview that she had resigned. I spent the whole interview trying to explore the reasons for her resignation.

One of the most interesting observations that I made during the interview was the fact that she looked different from the last time I had seen her. She seemed happier and looked younger since she had made the decision to leave.

> I should come back and see you in a year. Yes sit in my garden. Do a paper on your year's experience, 'cos I've seen you a year ago, and I've seen you today...and I don't know if I'm different. You said I look different... yes you do ... very different. Liberated... you seem to be much more assertive, liberated.... happier. well I've gone blonde yes. We have much more fun.

She reflected on her career and the way in which her very intelligent and strong mother had encouraged her to progress to the best of her abilities. The reasons for her resignation had come from a series on inter-related factors that had to do with her identity, her relationship to significant others, and the demands that were placed on her at work. These had all been precipitated by the fact that one

of her colleagues had given birth to a son who had developed terminal cancer, and this had meant that she had reassessed her own position in relation to her own son who was six years old.

Amber reflected on her decision to resign in relation to her identity and the fact that she had had to reassess her own situation in relation to her work life balance. She had come to feel that she had tried to do everything perfectly and was not succeeding in doing any role very well.

> And maybe what it boiled down to for me was, I wasn't being a good enough Mum, a good enough wife and housekeeper and good enough at work. And I don't believe all the stuff in magazines, that you can have it all and do it all, and be happy and successful, 'cos I was just knackered!

She wondered if she had not taken account of the fact that it was necessary to sacrifice some things in life if you were going to be successful. She remembered that she had heard Diana Green talk about how the fact that she had been to an all girls school which she considered was fundamental in her success, and the fact that she had deliberately not had children so that she could pursue her career. This had been quite startling for herself and other people in the audience at the time, but it was interesting that she had thought again about this in relation to her own situation.

It was clear from her account that other people in her life had been central to her decision. She felt that her son was not getting enough of her attention because of her work and she said that she constantly felt guilty about this. This had come through during our first meeting when she had said that she felt really guilty that her son had gone on a school trip. Looking out of the window she had seen it to be very hot and sunny. She said that she was sorry that she had forgotten to give him a sun hat in the morning and wondered if he would be all right.

Her partner had also had a fundamental effect on her decision. He had his own successful career and it was not possible for him to work part-time or do more around the house. He also resented the fact that her work often intruded on their personal life together and that sometimes this was to an unacceptable extreme. An example of this was when her boss had telephoned her on her mobile phone when she had been on the beach during their holiday. Her

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husband had been furious about this and this had affected their relationship for the worse. She also thought that this event had demonstrated the business orientated culture that had developed at the University. It was interesting that she stressed that she thought that it was a culture of business rather than a male dominated culture.

> I'm not sure it it's a male culture, or if it's a business culture which has.... I suppose male connotations, but there is a culture that you come to 8 o'clock morning meetings, and you know... we work now till 9 at night, and it's all right to phone people when they're sick, it's all right to phone people when they're on holiday. Somebody did actually, my mobile rang when I was on the beach, and my husband couldn't believe that somebody high up within the institution would actually apologise knowing that I was on leave, and still phone me. And it was nothing I could do anything about until Monday morning when I was back.

> One thing about the University it has been very flexible with me. It has actually allowed me space to feel like I have been able to be a Mum and be able to work and develop my career, and I think it's probably the internal conflict, and the extra dimension of having a relationship with a man who's successful in his own sphere, but I do think there are conflicts, and I think it is quite hard for...men to adapt... well, to... and I think in my relationship it was about the intrusion into my home life that he found.. you should leave it at home, you should have a job that just gets left at home.

This shows how she had decided that the balance of her work and home life had become intolerable particularly for her partner. She also stated that she thought that it was her willingness to take risks that had both made her successful, and was now making her take the risk to give up her career with no concrete future plans for her direction. This again showed the risk taking personality that had appeared to bring success to the women respondents in general.

It was very interesting that she thought that the University had tried to be flexible, and that her boss had offered her a part-time job. She felt, however, that the administrative requirements of the job, and the fact that many of the responsibilities could not be fitted into term times but included long periods in the school holidays meant that even a part-time role would not overcome the problems that she faced in relation to her work life balance.

Well certainly within our school, the PL roles all carry a responsibility that's quite specific – either leader or specific responsibility for an area of development within the school. That comes with getting to that position really. But what's interesting is, that I do think that part of my decision not to stay on here part-time was that I know there's a lot of change, I know there's a lot of work to be done over the next couple of year, and I know if I was here, part of me would feel morally obliged and guilty if I didn't take it on board, and it's easier if I'm not here.

It was very interesting to reflect on this finding because it meant that the fact that the role of Principal Lecturer has become more demanding and carried high levels of moral obligation meant that the balance of work and home life had become more difficult and problematical. If the woman has got no support at home and other caring responsibilities, then it is more likely that she will opt out of academic life either in the short-term or permanently. The progression of women to senior academic posts may well decline further in the future as a result.

It was interesting at this stage to make comparisons with my own reflections because this interview made me both very happy and very sad. The interview with Amber had a profound effect on me because her feelings mirrored so many of my own thoughts that I had never felt able to voice. I reflected on her interview over and over again in relation to my own experiences and more junior women around me who seemed to be opting out of all the demands of academic life and 'giving up' mentally. Research seemed to be a particular issue for them in this respect. Could it be that the march to 'managerialism' (Simkins, 1999) that I had often applauded had been partly responsible for the reduction in the promotion of women to senior posts because of this deep psychological effect and the influx of University life into the home? I hoped that further interviews would reveal other insights into these worrying thoughts. Pearl could be viewed as being very successful in terms of the University agenda, and yet she was the only respondent who had openly admitted that she had not been able to engage in the research agenda of he University in an active way. Her concentration on the managerial and leadership tasks that were required in her school and brought her success in the fact that she had been promoted from Principal Lecturer to Senior Academic Post in the few weeks

before the research had been conducted. It is interesting to note that she had no children.

She reported that she had taken chances in life, and thought that she came across as having the most planned approach to her career at the University in relation to other respondents.

It was interesting that like some of the other respondents she had attended a girls only grammar school, which she felt had given her particular advantages in relation to encouragement to study science and to go on to study science at University.

> Yes, I went to grammar school an all girls grammar school which I think was important. I think going to an all girls grammar school was good. It was a small school. It meant that you could study sciences without the interference of the peer pressure from the boys, or what have you which I think is important. Although it did mean science teaching was pretty crap. They couldn't attract good teachers, so it was a very mixed sort of education, but you could at least pursue sciences... which is what I did.

She did feel that having the quality of a pioneering spirit was a particularly important feature if the individual wanted to pursue a research career.

> Yes, I suppose if you're a researcher, that being a pioneer in your subject area is important. If you're going to be a Professor, that's what you're going to have to be. You have to have that I suppose. I guess if you're someone who is managing then that's not necessarily quite so important.

She did report that there had been significant others who had contributed to her success. She had found that her school teachers had had a fundamental effect on her development. Her partner had also had a major effect on her career development because he had stood by her, but encouraged her at all times to make her own decisions. This had made her very independent and able to take risks if the situation arose. Her academic tutor had also played a major role in encouraging her to take risks and become successful as a result. She did consider the findings that had emerged from the first stage of the research in relation to the importance of children for the career development of women. She

thought that the fact that women have children shifts their emphasis away from having a career.

> I do see a number of women who's career has been held up by having children, because even if they don't take a lot of time out of work, their focus shifts,.... yes priority shifts.... yes priority shifts. I think that's absolutely right. If you've got kids then they probably do need to be a high priority in your life. So you do see people shift their focus and I think that can make them... I think it makes it hard for them to develop their career in two ways. One is it means they're not necessarily paying attention to doing the right things, paying attention to doing as much at work as they could do. I guess the other way is that it sometimes changes other peoples' perception of them.

She did report that the culture at the university had undergone some major changes in relation to market focus, but that she felt that this had exacerbated a male dominated approach. She did feel, however that the discrimination that was still there was covert and difficult to pin point. In many respects the overt discrimination that she had to cope with at her previous employer had been much easier to deal with because it had been up front and honest.

> So yes, the discrimination at my previous employer was quite overt, and quite unpleasant at times, but it was also in some ways, quite fun because you could deal with it as an individual. I think here it's much more subtle, the discrimination that happens, and it's very much harder to pinpoint exactly what it is that's going on, but I think if you look at the figures they speak for themselves, and that means there's something going on it is then, harder, to tackle as an individual.

She did state in the interview that she considered that development in academic life was becoming harder to tie down because of conflicting demands. She did consider, therefore, that it was important that women were mentored to encourage their development. She was one of the only respondents who reported that she had established a mentoring system for junior staff in the school. She felt that this was a particular priority for female staff. She thought that this support was more important than being a feminist who simply shouted loudly about schemes that supported women at the expense of men.

Jade had been a Principal Lecturer for some time and had had course and subject group responsibilities during her period in this role. She reflected on the findings from the first stage of the research and gave some interesting further insights into the general situation as she saw it. Her most interesting observations were about the culture of the institution that she viewed very negatively.

She reviewed her career development again in the light of the findings and thought again about how she had not been prepared for University entrance. The males in her family had been prepared because at that time you had to study Latin to be considered for entrance, but only her brothers were encouraged to do this. She had also had to cope with a major illness throughout her life that had meant that she had missed a large part of her schooling. It was only later that her drama teacher had encouraged her to go to University as a mature student that she had considered the options open to her and taken his advice to go.

She talked a lot during the interview about her strong belief in feminism that she had used throughout her life to try and get equal opportunities for women. She had had a difficult early time in her career when she had had to abandon her plans to complete a PhD twice because she had given birth to two children during the period when she was studying for the degree. Her husband had given her intense intellectual stimulation at the time, but had not really been prepared to help her with any domestic chores, so she had found life interesting but difficult. Her decision to apply for a teaching job had been because she had been divorced from her husband and she really needed the money to support herself and her two young children. It was at this stage that she had joined the Polytechnic as a junior lecturer. She found that she had needed to adopt a feminist stance in this new situation because of the culture that pervaded the institution at the time. It was as if the culture awakened her feminist sensibility.

> I mean I define myself as a feminist since the early seventies, and don't see that necessarily involving aggression. Assertion certainly. And it's tactical. You need to know what to do at what moment, but it will no surprise to anybody in the school that I was a feminist. Everybody would know it. I see discrimination as systematic, not just as bad luck. So therefore it needs something.... In order to deal with it, you've

got to deal with it, you've got to deal with it as a level of the system and to understand the structures and processes that reproduce it.

She said that she had found the male culture that permeated the senior levels of the school very difficult to deal with, and said that she thought that things had got much worse recently. People had assumed that things had got better, relaxed a little, and therefore things had gone back to where they were previously. She described the culture in her school as a 'macho' culture and said that she had never felt any desire to be promoted further because it would mean working with a group of men that she did not want to do.

> The culture is very much a pub culture, drinking with the boys, so if you are in a position of power, it's actually very difficult. You're quite excluded from those informal networks, and probably, I never wanted to go to drinks with the boys in order to network. I really resented that. And that's one of the difficult decisions you have to take, because obviously one of the ways some women work is to do that. But I didn't. It was partly because I had children, but partly I didn't actually want to do it. But there's a lot of work gets done there... but you don't have a voice. You come back and find courses have been set up.

These comments support the previous research that has shown that the dominant culture in higher education is patriarchal (Husu, 2000, Deem, 2001 Hunt, 2001) and that covert discrimination occurs due to the hidden ways that the business gets done (Nicholson, 1996). It is interesting to note that these type of comments had not come through so strongly from other respondents, although some references had been made to male dominance at work. This suggests that there could be variations in culture across the University.

The final interesting comments that Jade made during the interview were about her views on the reasons that women appeared to be pioneering and the reasons for them having problems once they had achieved an elevated position. She suggested that women are pioneering because if they have children, then they have to fight very hard to achieve any senior position. She thought that once a woman had achieved her new position she immediately found herself in conflict with the junior women around her. She also thought that women were more likely to be doubtful about their own abilities and have doubts about their worthiness for the role.

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> I think the pioneering spirit is what gets you through masses and masses of barriers, but I think when you get through that, you're faced with contradictions on a number of levels, and I think... I mean I think one of these contradictions is about hierarchies, whereas I think a lot of women find that... because in a sense if you're pioneering you're doing things on behalf of women, or you see yourself doing that, then actually you find yourself above them in the hierarchy... and equal. You are not any longer, they see you as... and you inevitably acquire responsibilities, which put you in some sort of position of authority and leadership. I think that then sort of... brings you into conflict. I suspect women perhaps feel it more strongly is that you don't deserve to be where you are, when are they going to find me out? Being what I am, what I truly am... and I think women find that quite difficult. Women who apparently succeed find it quite difficult.

Aquamarine was the youngest respondent at 44 and the follow up interview was interesting in that although she had been visibly very successful, she did express doubts about her own abilities particularly in relation to research. This had not been helped by the fact that she thought that the staff appraisal scheme concentrated too much on teaching, and there was not enough going on in the mentoring of research active academics. This was despite the fact that she had a real love for the research process that she thought had been fostered by her childhood experiences, and she wanted to focus her thoughts on developing her research skills. She was also another respondent who thought that her attendance at an all girls school had helped her to develop her interest and career in a positive way.

> I suppose I'm more confident in my ability to succeed in that line, than I am in the research professorial line, but that's probably just me being a little bit nervous, and lacking confidence, possibly. But it's... because ... the external funding and things, that you need to do to be successful in research, which I suppose is very hard. But I'm very confident that I can do the things that I'm doing well. But perhaps a bit more uncertain.. my uncertainty is whether I go down the research route, or whether I go down the other route, or whether I continue trying to do both, which is what I've done up until now... and which I'll probably continue to do, because it's what I enjoy...so and I think your job satisfaction is so important.

Jet was the final Principal Lecturer to be interviewed and she gave some more interesting insights as she reflected on the findings from the first stage of the research. One of these interesting insights was the fact that she considered that it was very important that a person be able to take account of individuals who would enable them to develop, rather than people who would stop them developing to their fullest potential.

> I suspect in order to succeed, you need to meet more people who are enabling, than stoppers. So when I reflect through my career, I've met people who've been enablers, may have been different if they'd been stoppers. And the stoppers are the ones who are really hard to work out, 'cos if you on the whole are an optimist, and on the whole someone who thinks well everybody's going to move forward, when you come to a stopper it takes you a while to realise that person is a stopper. And then it takes an awful time to work out how to move on.

She also discussed the fact that she thought it was very important for a woman to be able to challenge and she wondered if the education system was letting down women generally by not encouraging them to challenge the status quo. She did reflect on the fact that at times she found herself adopting a strident feminist approach, but that she had also learned to adopt a more pragmatic approach under certain circumstances. This suggested that she had perhaps adopted a different approach to suit her more senior position. She finished the interview by suggesting that she thought that it was very important for women to be able to go outside their comfort zone if they were going to achieve anything positive in their lives.

> So we're always looking for opportunities to build up our self esteem. To keep up, to be on the edge of our comfort zone, to expand perhaps. So there's negative self esteem as well as positive self esteem. There are always going to be occasions when I've ducked that I think. I think I've ducked it. On reflection I think I missed a few opportunities along the way.

She finished by suggesting that the very successful woman would be one who had the self confidence to take a long view and be prepared to go outside their comfort zone and take a risk. It was interesting that she thought she could have achieved more if she had been able to do this.

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4:5 Strengths and weaknesses of the research method

It is important at this stage of the thesis to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the research method that has been used to conduct the research. This can be summarised as follows:

Strengths

The strengths of the research method are as follows:

1. The research technique has incorporated a series of three steps- firstly the collection of the job description and a preliminary discussion, secondly the collection of the autobiographical reflections, and thirdly the follow up semi-structured interview. This has been a particular strength of the research because it has allowed me to build up a relationship with the respondents, and has allowed the respondents to reflect on the research findings at different stages and give responses.

2. The first interview with the respondents was useful because it allowed me to gain an initial idea of the perceptions that were emerging. This allowed me to focus on issues in the subsequent stages of the research.

3. The collection of the autobiographical reflections in private was very powerful because it allowed the respondents to give a much more honest and open review of their perceptions in relation to their personal career development. The focus on the essences of the lifeworld allowed the respondents to concentrate on the psychological issues rather than the factors and particular stages in their career history. This approach is something that I would recommend to future researchers who are investigating an issue that involves personal perceptions.

4. The fact that the follow up interview was only designed after the analysis of the autobiographical reflections meant that a clearer focus on the issues that had emerged from the preliminary stages of the research was achieved. This was very useful because it allowed the respondents in the final stage of the research to return to their own perceptions and experiences but also to reflect on the more general findings from the respondents as a whole.

5. The sample of respondents was drawn from across the University and did not include any person that I knew well. This allowed me to get to know the

respondents on an equal footing and meant that the sample was representative of the range of disciplines that are studied at the University. The inclusion of a Senior Academic Post holder and a Reader in the research was not planned but was a useful outcome because it gave a clear picture of the views on respondents in various different roles at the same grade.

6. The fact that I was a respondent in the research was both a strength and a weakness. The strength of me being a respondent was the fact that I was able to reflect on my own experiences and career development and this allowed me to focus my attention in much more detail and with far more insights when the time came to conclude the thesis and give practical recommendations.

7. The research methodology allowed me to blend the academic focus with the creation of practical recommendations for future practices at the University. This is a key requirement of study for a Doctorate in Education.

Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the research method are as follows:

1. The number of respondents that were included in the research meant that a detailed cross section of views and perceptions were gathered. The work involved in the collection of these views and the subsequent preparation of the transcripts and the analysis required meant that the research was very time consuming. I would suggest that if a student adopted this type of research methodology in the future, then they should reduce the number of respondents to make it more of a manageable task.

2. The use of the Ethnograph 5 package was useful to derive a focus for the second stage of the research, but the manual analysis provided a much more meaningful set of results. Listening to the tapes was also much more useful than this analysis.

3. The fact that I was a respondent did give valuable insights into the research questions. It could also be suggested that this biased the results of the research programme, although steps were taken to try and minimize this effect.

4. The three stage research programme had many strengths that have been explored above, but it also meant that a number of the respondents were not able to take part in the research at the final stage. I still consider that the final stage of the research however, provided some valuable insights.

To conclude, the research method that was carefully selected for the development of the thesis allowed a very detailed view to be built up of the respondents perceptions in relation to their career development. The results allowed the typologies to be developed and practical recommendations to be made about steps that could be taken at the University to improve the position of academic women. This process was, however very time consuming.

I had planned at the beginning of the research to get all the respondents together at the end of the research programme to get them to discuss the research findings and to help to develop the ideas further. It was always my hope that the group could become a mutual support group because all of the respondents had supported me a great deal as the research had proceeded. Sadly, time did not allow me to do this. If a research programme had a longer time frame it would still be a very useful exercise to do at the end of the research process. It would mean that a self supporting group could be established and a longitudinal research programme could be established to monitor changes over time.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE GLASS CEILING PHENOMENON

5:1 A discussion of the results from the respondents in relation to the lifeworld concept

The results that have been presented so far have been focussed on the individual respondents and their perceptions of their current role and career development expressed in the discussion about their job, their autobiographical reflections, and the follow up interview. It is important at this stage of the thesis to consider these responses as a whole in the light of the literature and within the context of the fractions of the lifeworld. This enables me to focus on the findings that offer new insights into the glass ceiling phenomenon in this higher education setting.

Temporality
Juggling the work / home balance

The respondents were asked to complete a review of their career development during their autobiographical reflections and the analysis of the transcripts provides some interesting insights into this fraction. The first important aspect of this section is the temporal aspects associated with the balance between the work and home life. The respondents who are mothers - Diamond, Sapphire, Topaz, Garnet, Amber, Jade, Turquoise, and Emerald talk about this issue much more than the other respondents who do not have children. The juggling act is particularly difficult when the child or children are young, but it gets easier as the children get older and become more independent when the woman often turns her attention back to her job in a much more focussed way. This is an issue that even the respondents who do not have children recognise as being a crucial element in the development of academic women. Pearl, who has recently been promoted to a senior academic is particularly sensitive to this issue and states that she thinks that it is impossible for women with children to have too many projects in their life because of the juggling act that is required. She states that she thinks that it is not helpful that the University does not encourage women to focus on two of the three roles of an academic – teaching, research and administration because it is impossible for a mother to do all three and carry out her duties as a mother.

The all girls school

The autobiographical reflections do provide some interesting insights that have not been reported in the literature. One of these findings is related to the school that the respondents have attended. A large proportion of the respondents have attended a girls only school and report that this gives them a psychological advantage because there was not an issue about them doing certain subjects such as science that are considered in some circles to be 'boys subjects'. Attendance at an all girls school also means that the spotlight on girls and their success had not been diverted to boys so they felt that they were in a strong position to succeed and go to University. One of the respondents comments on the fact that the Vice Chancellor of the University – Diana Green had also attended an all girls school and this could not just be a coincidence.

Facing a crisis

Many of the respondents report that they have faced a major crisis of some sort early in their lives. This can be a range of things including the death of a relative, a world event such as the war, or an illness experienced by them or a close relative or friend. A number of the respondents also seem to be particularly sensitive to injustices or world events that have had a major effect on the way they think in relation to their own development. The crisis that they have experienced seems to provide then with a degree of inner strength that allows them to succeed in later life and gives them the determination to progress.

The first in the family

The fact that many of the respondents are the first in their family to succeed in academic fields does give them some difficulties, but does provide them with the most powerful incentive to achieve things in their lives. One of the respondents reports how upset she is that her mother died before she had become a Professor and that this had almost removed her joy in her new role. It appears that the fact that the respondents feel that their success is important for their families who did not have the opportunity is a powerful motivator to progression.

Taking the chances

The first stages of the research offered some vital insights into the idea that the woman had to take chances in her life when they arose. The follow up interviews supported these findings again in terms of the balance between chance and planned events in relation to career development (Kidd and Warr, 2002). Ruby, for example, mentions the fact that she thinks that it is important for women to take the opportunities when they arise even if it means taking a risk. Sapphire talks about how she had applied for jobs even if she thought she could not do them that well at that particular time. The follow up interviews do offer further interesting insights into this issue because it becomes clear that the women emphasise again that they have the ability to take chance opportunities when they occur and there is a strong element of fatalism in a number of the transcripts. The fact that these events are not always planned is of less importance compared to the reaction of the respondent who are often in a position to take a risk and seize opportunities as they came along. The younger Principal Lecturers – Turquoise and Aquamarine, talk more about planning their career at particular times. This could reflect the fact that when a woman is younger, she thinks that she has planned things such as her choice of direction and University, and that chance occurrences tend to occur later in life and be uppermost in the mind.

Changes through life

There also seems to be strong evidence that the psychological state of the individual changes as their life has progressed and that particular life stages such as attendance at school, university, motherhood or retirement bring about a particular frame of mind that encourages certain actions. This observation is considered again in the section about selfhood.

The pioneering spirit

Many of the respondents do talk about their pioneering spirit in the first stage of the research. This idea is developed further in the follow up interviews because many of the respondents clarify this by stating that they think that the quest for knowledge and research has contributed greatly to their apparent pioneering spirit. This quest for knowledge seems to be an almost inborn frame of mind, but particular events and people do help this trait to be developed further. Members of the respondent's family, early school teachers, supervisors or role

models are particularly powerful in having an effect on the respondent's quest for knowledge.

The enablers and blockers

One of the respondents, Ruby, introduces the concept of enablers and blockers and states that it is important for individuals to be able to recognise and work with or against these two groups of individuals. The enablers are the individuals who can help the person achieve great things and are willing to help the person move forwards. This could include individuals both at home and at work and it is important for the individual to be able to spot these and work with them in a positive relationship. The blockers are harder to spot and work against the individual making positive steps forward. This could be in very covert ways that are harder to recognise. The dangerous blockers are those who do not appear to be negative at the start of the respondent's relationship with them. This could be in the form of covert discrimination for example. The successful woman, she thinks, would be the ones who could therefore recognise the two groups of people and use them to their advantage. This obviously requires the woman to develop a deep understanding of individuals around them. I find this an interesting concept because it goes some way to explaining why the successful respondents have taken particular decisions in life to do things that has taken them forwards.

Selfhood

Conflicts at home and work

The findings of the autobiographical reflections in relation to this fraction do support previous research findings to some degree. Previous research has found that one of the issues for women at work is the fact that they have to place a greater emphasis on work life balance because of the apparent conflicts that they face because of the demands put on them for family members (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). This factor does emerge from the reflections, and many of the respondents report that they have had considerable conflicts to face based on the expectations of people at work and people at home. This is a particular issue for the women who are mothers. This forces the woman to take evasive actions of different forms to try and avoid conflict. It is very likely that this ability to take evasive action if conflict between home and work life does occur is a feature of successful women. The women in the research have often

been seduced by the management of the University to take middle management positions and have had to make a number of sacrifices in their personal lives according to their own particular situation. This supports the research findings of Shain (1999) who found that this situation existed in the further education sector at the time of the research. It also suggests that the women who have opted out of seeking promotion to middle management roles have done so to avoid these personal consequences that the respondents appear to overcome. This finding supports the recent research findings conducted at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Bailyn, 2003).

Person environment fit

Previous research has shown that a very important part of career progression is the ability of successful people to form a good person-environment fit (Tinsley, 2003). The respondents do talk a great deal about the steps they have had to take in order for them to fit in with academic life. This seems to be a particular issue for the women who have joined the University from the business world rather than from another academic institution.

The erosion of home life

A number of factors that the respondents mention have not been reported in the literature. The concept of home life and work life has often become eroded in the minds of the women and it seems that there is a need to focus on both with equal attention. The respondents who have children say that they do not want to become dutiful mothers, but there is a strong feeling of them taking on dutiful roles in their work situation to substitute for these feelings. This could be in the form of student support and guidance roles, or the encouragement of junior staff.

The ruthless pursuit for a voice

There appears to be strong features of both fatalism and risk in the psychological make up of the respondents and this appears to be particularly marked amongst the Professors. The willingness to take risks to move forwards is a strong message that develops in the reflections. The acceptance of events as they happen to them is also a strong feature of the respondents. This is often coupled with a strong feeling of doubt about where the respondents want to move to in the future. The most striking feature of the respondents, however, is

the apparent ruthlessness that they adopt to overcome the dilemmas that they face in relation to their career and home life. This ranges from the decision to live apart from their family to take up a particular role, to divorcing their partner if they do not go along with their plans. I can only speculate whether the respondents who did not have children had made the ultimate conscious decision not to have children so that they could pursue their careers without interruption.

The perfect woman

The issue of work life balance was something that previous researchers had focussed on (Davidson and Cooper, 1992, Shain, 1999, Bailyn, 2003). The follow up interviews reveal that this issue is of vital importance for many of the respondents. Work and home life is increasingly becoming blurred because of the increased pressures and the changed academic culture (Simkins, 1999). Work is increasingly encroaching on the respondents' home lives and this is upsetting the person-environment fit (Tinsley, 2003) between the respondents and the institution. In some cases, this change in emphasis has proved intolerable. The respondents often refer to the fact that the media such as television programmes and magazines portray a vision of the perfect woman who can become perfect at being a mother, wife and employee. They think that given the new challenges this is becoming an impossible dream, but this recognition does not prevent the woman having feelings of guilt. It means that the woman often feels that she has not achieved anything very well and this has led to her losing her self-esteem. The idea that the dutiful mother has become the dutiful academic emerges in the first part of the research. This is not sufficient for some of the respondents who think that they are failing on all fronts. In the extreme case of Amber she decides to resign as a result of this type of pressure.

The quest for knowledge

The pioneering spirit that is seen in the first stage of the research appears again in the follow up interviews. A number of the respondents do explore this finding in more depth. They suggest that it is a quest for knowledge that has been nurtured at an early stage that has helped them to pioneer and more importantly given them the strength to overcome substantial barriers that are put in their way. This is a particular feature of the respondents who are more heavily

involved with research. The idea that the respondent thinks of themselves as being influential rather than successful also emerges as an important issue.

Feelings of self doubt

The most important finding in the follow up interviews is the amount of self-doubt that exists amongst the respondents. One of the respondents suggests that this is a trait that is particularly associated with women which is an interesting observation. I am amazed to find the amount of self- doubt that exists amongst the respondents particularly as the respondents are viewed to be successful. This self doubt seems to be coupled with feelings of whether they have made the right decisions earlier in life, and a lack of insight that they have about their opportunities for the future. A lack of confidence about their abilities and questions such as 'am I good enough for this role?' seem to be particularly common for the younger respondents and the respondents who are coming up for retirement. The Principal Lecturer who has recently been promoted to the senior academic post on the basis of her leadership skills, rather than her research record seems to be the most confident and focused of all the respondents. The younger respondents are confused about whether to pursue teaching, research or administrative routes to progression and are generally overburdened because they are trying to do all three.

Feelings of freedom

The final observation from the follow up interview is the reference made to the importance of a feeling of freedom at particular times in a woman's career. It seems that these feelings are an important part of self development. They seem to emerge at particular times in a woman's life such as when she becomes a mother or when she comes up to retirement. This sense of freedom often allows her to change her focus and concentrate on other issues at work or change direction. Risk and freedom seem to be bound up together in a powerful melange of feelings that have a fundamental effect. The woman that resigns for example, even looks happier, in my opinion, because of the risk she is taking to give up work, and the new found freedom that she finds. It is also important to mention that many of the respondents think that the institution does not value the feelings of freedom and the change in focus that becoming a mother brings. Rather, they see it as a problem for the institution.

Feelings of success

One of the most important findings for this fraction is the fact that some of the respondents do not consider themselves to be successful despite the obvious recognition in their official role. Most of the respondents demonstrate high levels of uncertainty about their contribution and this is a particular issue for the older respondents who question their contribution at the end of their career

Sociality

Support of others

The literature is disappointing on this fragment. The research programme does show that the relationship of the respondent to significant others is one of the most important factors that influences career development. It is just as likely that the significant other is located in the respondent's private life rather than in the work environment. Previous research has shown that mentoring of junior staff is a very important feature of the career development of women (Kram, 1985). The respondents did report that there are informal systems of mentoring in the University, but none of them report that they are actively involved in any mentoring schemes. Ruby, for example reports that she has suddenly felt the desire to mentor and develop staff in the last year of her career at the University. This apparent lack of interest in formal schemes could be explained by the fact that the respondents often find themselves in uncomfortable positions once they have been promoted akin to the unrecognised explorer category proposed by Taunton (1999).

Powerful influencers

A number of the respondents report that they have avoided responsibility particularly if it involved any level of administrative work (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). An interesting point here is the fact that although the respondents often recognise the value of an individual who has helped their own development akin to the 'wizard' that McDade suggested (2001), many of them do not actively see themselves in a mentoring role. This could be explained by the fact that their leadership role and job description is not well articulated so they are not fully clear about their particular position.

The respondents have been influenced by powerful others at certain times of their development. Sometimes this has been in the form of a supervisor, but it is

much more common for them to get her intellectual stimulation from someone in their private life. Many of the respondents feel that their success has brought resentment and envy from junior staff, and they constantly have to reassure others that they have not fundamentally changed. Promotion has often therefore resulted in an uncomfortable situation for the respondent in relation to others at work. For the respondents who are mothers, their relationship with their child or children is the most fundamental and often changes their attitude to risk, making them much more risk averse. In the previous section, we saw that taking risk was an important feature of career development. It can be suggested here that the fact that a woman becomes a mother with all the psychological effects that brings, may make her less likely to succeed because of her desire to avoid risk and therefore she misses out on opportunities. The importance of other people in the career development of women should not be underestimated. The respondents explore how important other people have been in their development and talk at length about members of their family, teachers, supervisors and partners. Insights that emerge from the interview stage of the research are related to the fact that female support groups are often useful in helping the respondents with their career development. The respondents give examples of these at school, University or at work and talk about how significant they are for them.

The selection of a suitable partner is also stressed by a number of the respondents. This is a particular issue for the respondents who have children and need support at particular times. The partner is also fundamental, however, for the respondents who do not have children because they often support them or provide intellectual stimulation. The follow up interviews also reveal that it is important for the women that they do not become 'second fiddle' to their partners.

Feelings of guilt and sacrifice

The respondents who have children often demonstrate feelings of guilt about their treatment of them and the lack of time they felt that they could spare them. They also report that they have guilt feelings about their partners and the fact that they cannot provide a perfect home life for them because of the demands of work. This has obviously become more of an issue as working life has become more demanding of time and effort. There are some strong indications

of feelings of sacrifice that emerge from the follow up interviews. The respondents often make reference to the fact that to become successful often means that the woman has to give up some other aspect of her life in an almost sacrificial act. They notice this particularly amongst senior women who they consider to be figure heads and people they should perhaps emulate. This feeling of sacrifice is perhaps the reason that one of the respondents resigns, and the reason why many women do not pursue promotion (Shain, 1999, Bailyn, 2003).

Female figure heads

There are indications in the follow up interviews that figure- heads are important for many of the respondents. These range from one respondent who views her mother to be a 'proto-feminist', to another respondent who looks up to the small number of senior women in the University. What is clear that many of the respondents have real issues with their relationships with more junior women. They are faced with strong feelings of envy and often think that the more junior women did not really understand them at all. They often think of themselves as being soft and malleable, but think that their juniors view them as being pushy and assertive leaders. This obviously adds to the insecurity of the situation and could explain why mentoring systems have not been universally talked about or developed.

Embodiment
Overcoming discrimination

The respondents have some interesting observations to make about the fact that they are women and the influence that this has had on their career development. Interestingly, many of the respondents have suffered some form of discrimination during their career development. This ranges from overt discrimination where the actions and effects are not hidden but generally accepted (Nicholson, 1996) to the more covert forms of discrimination that often result as an effect of a patriarchal culture. A number of the respondents do report that they have used what they referred to as feminist approaches and they have used female support groups to overcome these difficulties earlier on in their careers.

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The token woman

It was interesting to note that the respondents feel that being a woman is not now a serious barrier to career development. In fact, a few of the respondents report that it has actually helped them to develop because it is easy to become the 'token' woman and get on because of this. It is interesting to question here whether the respondents could not see any discriminatory practices because they have taken on the characteristics of the senior management to achieve their own personal goals. The sexist attitudes which they encounter have to be largely ignored because it is easier to preserve the status quo (Halton, 1994).

The female role model

The respondents often see themselves as important role models for other women. This is particularly important for the Professors and also seems to be important when the woman is from a working class background. They also reflect on the fact that they lead in different ways to men adopting a transformational rather than transactional style (Rosenar, 1990). This is often viewed with some suspicion by their junior colleagues presumably because their motives are questioned and their style and approach is not always suited to the culture.

Feelings of reducing freedom

The respondents talk at length about their experiences of discrimination at certain stages in their careers. The follow up interviews reveal some other interesting insights into their views of being a woman in the institution. Some of the respondents reflect on the way in which the new management orientated culture of the institution that has replaced the old collegial model, has made things more difficult for women. The fact that there is less time to do things and increasing pressures means that the women feel that they are not given the freedom they need at particular times. This seems ironic because times had been much better, they thought, when there was less equal opportunity legislation, but more academic freedom.

The need to suffer to succeed

Some of the respondents comment that they think that women make more demanding and less flexible academic leaders than men. It is a case of 'I had to go through hardship to get where I am so you should have to suffer in an equal

way'. This means that there are more incidences of covert discrimination it is suggested (Nicholson, 1996). Some of the respondents do talk about feminist attitudes that they have adopted in the past to overcome discrimination. It is interesting in the follow up interview that many of the respondents talk about how they have abandoned this type of approach and become much more pragmatic in their leadership of others at the University. This suggests that the women have begun to preserve the status quo because it is easier for them to behave in this way (Halton, 1994).

Spatiality
Where is the Professor / Principal Lecturer now?
Managerial culture

It is in this fraction that the respondents reflect much of what has been written in the literature. The fact that the organisational culture of higher education institutions has changed to become more thrusting, more international, and more managerially based (Hall, 1993, Ramsden, 1995, Gibbons, 1995, van der Wende, 1997, Simkins, 1999), is reported to be the case at the University where the respondents work. It has been reported previously that academics in the middle management roles are experiencing heavier managerial roles and administrative responsibility. This is reflected by the respondents but particularly for the younger Principal Lecturers. The leadership style at the institution has moved from being collegial to more managerial which matches previous research findings (Simkins, 1999).

Increasing pressures

The respondents report that their level of responsibility has increased (Woolett, *et al,* 1995, Wagener, 1998). They are also finding their new role is more stressful and target driven (Storey, 2002). The increased emphasis on research which has been reported as a feature of the new post-Dearing universities (Deem, 2003) has meant that there had been increased pressures on the Professors to publish, and for the Principal Lecturers to increase their research and publication outputs. This is really all about income generation caused by falling resources. Some of the respondents suggest that this has resulted in the psychological contract between themselves and the University breaking down (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994). The respondents report that this change in environment has obviously required different leadership styles, and some of the

respondents report that they have tried to lead in a more democratic and supportive way. This has not always been well received by their colleagues and senior managers. They do agree with the research that has suggested that the organisational culture of higher education institutions has become more linked to research, and has become more challenging (Husu, 2000, Deem, 2001, Benschop and Brown, 2002).

Avoidance of administrative tasks

Some of the respondents report that one of the most important aspects of their success at the University has been the avoidance of administrative tasks by whatever method. Sometimes this has been by the woman arranging sponsorship or it could simply be as a result of the woman saying no to a particular job when asked to do it. This seems to be a particular feature of the Professors. The Principal Lecturers often have a well-defined administrative role and so find it more difficult to shed these responsibilities. Some of the respondents report that they feel guilty about putting pressures on their colleagues by their selfish desire to research rather than administer, although these feelings often appear to be buried or rationalised.

The relay race in time

One of the respondents talks about the importance of being influential rather than successful which is an interesting observation. The most important metaphor that emerges from this stage of the research is that of 'the relay race in time' that one of the respondents says illustrates academic life. This is an important metaphor because unlike the glass ceiling metaphor it stresses the importance of previous academic input and the idea of handing over in a confident and assured way rather than an emphasis on the individual battling against hidden barriers. Was this the secret that would unlock the glass ceiling phenomenon in the higher education setting? If so, the move away from the old collegial model of higher education to a more managerially driven culture would only serve to damage the metaphorical transfer of the baton from academic to academic.

The faster and more difficult race

The results of the autobiographical reflections shows that the institution has become a more demanding place to work and has had to focus more on

growing student numbers and increased generation of money (Hall, 1993, Ramsden, 1995, Gibbons, 1995, van der Wende, 1997, Simkins, 1999).

The follow up interviews show that there are increasing problems with the levels of administrative work that academics are expected to do and the lack of support systems to help them with this work. This coupled with the inflexibility of the academic calendar is making the University a difficult and less flexible place to work. The culture has become very business focused to cope with this and this new style has not helped the development of women, it is thought. Many of the respondents commented on the fact that they think that that the staff development systems are poorly developed and do not help women to focus on future opportunities in any structured way and this leads to uncertainty.

The mentoring systems seem to be very ad hoc and often depend on somebody the person likes rather than anything more formal. The recent announcements about the reorganisation of the University seem to have exacerbated this position.

Project
Passion and conflict

All of the respondents are able to identify with their situation in relation to their ability to carry out the activities that they consider to be central to their lives. One issue is the fact that a number of the respondents find it difficult to assess the relative importance of the particular projects in which they are engaged and this leads to personal difficulties if this cannot be resolved. Work is definitely one important project for all the respondents. The amount of time that is required to spend at work has gradually increased to a level where it is rapidly overtaking the second important project – the home life. For women who have children or demanding partners this is a real issue of personal conflict that seems difficult to resolve.

Research as a project

For those respondents who are committed to research their work project can be viewed as being in different spheres. One of these that they consider to be less influential is the internal project of coping with the research agenda within the University and mentoring staff to achieve research success. The most important

project however is that of their influence outside the University where recognition from publishing and networking is critical. For those respondents who are committed to a managerial career within the University then their project is much more focused on the internal environment and the internal management workings of the University. An interesting observation is that it appears to be impossible to pursue both the internal and the external career for women, particularly if they have great commitment to the project of home life. This could suggest why women find it difficult to succeed in the research arena.

Discourse

A tale of sadness rather than joy

It is very interesting to analyse the terms that the respondents use and the language they speak to explain their particular position. On reading through the transcripts I find at times that the overall tone tends to be one of sadness and regret rather than joy about celebrating their success and influence. It reads, at times, as a sad tale rather than one that is uplifting. The autobiographical reflections come across rather poignantly but extremely powerfully. The general impression is that there are different persons within the individuals who are trying to break out from a sort of oppression. The scientists in the research seem to talk in language that is far more straight-forward and pragmatic, whereas those from an art or social science background tend to use more emotional terms and give a more honest view of their inner feelings in the language they use.

Disappointment with managerialism

The terms of managerialism and administration pervade the transcripts and are obviously a powerful influence on all the respondents. All of the respondents are able to reflect on their experiences in some depth but it is obvious from the language they use that they are not used to doing this particularly in relation to their own personal feelings. Writing their story provides them with a cathartic experience that has spurred them on to new initiatives. The use of this type of technique and the expression of feelings in language could provide a powerful mechanism for academic women to realise their potential and develop in the future.

5:2 Conclusions, implications and recommendations for future research

So is it possible to draw conclusions from such a wide ranging piece of research? And what does all this mean for future human resources strategies if women are to be encouraged to senior positions?

Let me start by outlining a series of typologies of women that have emerged from the research, and use these to make recommendations for individual women, research and organisational policy. It is important to stress that at times one respondent could fit more than one typology, and that some of the typologies appear to be more beneficial for the advancement of women than others. The more typologies that a woman fits into, the more angst she seems to suffer, especially if she had conflicting projects in her lifeworld. The typologies fit into two distinct categories – those that are influenced by significant others and those that are internal to the woman. They are as follows:

Those influenced by significant others

The mother

> *Mother he said, said he*
> *You must never go down to the end of town,*
> *You don't go down without me!*

> *When You Were Very Young (1924) by A. A. Milne*

The research has shown that being a mother rather than a woman has a considerable influence on academic women. Mothers feel less able to take risks, and motherhood often restricts their actions outside the University, and can give them problems particularly when home life and work life collide. The situation is made very difficult when their partner does not support the work that is necessary both inside and outside the University to bring academic success. The change in culture in the University and the increasing focus on the international agenda has made this situation worse for women. The successful participants who had children had overcome this and had often had to make some element of sacrifice. The concentration on 'motherly' academic duties had not brought success. Rather, they had often had to focus on the career outside the University with certain consequences. The existing culture of higher education and the reliance on the RAE means that it is very difficult for the mother to achieve success and influence. The 'management' route is perhaps easier because of the internal focus.

Women should be encouraged to think about the various projects that they are involved in, and try to balance their work and home life in more creative ways, particularly when they have children. They should be encouraged to choose the route in which they are to develop - teaching, research or administration, and be encouraged to focus on this, rather than trying to do all three which is happening at the moment. If the woman wants to pursue the research route, it is important for her to identify a mentor who will be sympathetic to her situation.

Human resource managers in higher education must increasingly look at the positive benefits that motherhood brings to the job and begin to value it. They should take positive steps to eliminate organisational practices such as breakfast meetings, and long teaching days that cause insurmountable problems for mothers. They should also work hard to reduce the effect of the 'blockers' to women whether they be men, or as was found in the research, other women. Research leaders should also devise other ways of gaining research success other than working twenty-four hours a day to build up publication lists. It seems that the research culture as it is currently devised does not encourage women. The research has shown that this is because it is based on a patriarchal culture and women feel excluded. There is also a need for further research on the link between motherhood and academic achievement.

The feminist

Feminism means valuing parenthood as much as valuing banking

Polly Toynbee 1946 - The Guardian 19 Jan 1987

This makes an interesting link to the previous section. Many of the respondents report that they have used feminist strategies early on in their career to tackle what they thought of as discrimination. Interestingly, only two respondents said they now felt that they are feminists and they both report that this has led to difficulties for them at work because men view them with suspicion particularly if they are writing in a feminist tradition. There is no evidence from the research of female support groups being in place. The female Professors did, however, announce a scheme of support towards the end of the research programme. It seems that female support groups and mentoring schemes are seriously lacking at the University and that the 'successful' participants have some reluctance to

setting these up. One reason for this seems to be the negative feelings that the participants encounter from junior women once they have gained positions of authority. Research needs to be carried out to investigate this issue further. Practical human resource strategies need to be adopted to overcome the apparent difficulties. Women need to return to their feminist ideals. Support groups should be established at middle management level in the University for women to attend and share their experiences This can be for both women who are focussing on research careers and management careers because they can learn from each other. The current female senior academics need to become more visible and become figure heads for junior staff to emulate.

The Leader

> *And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,*
> *And I'll lead you all in the dance said he'*

> *The Lord of the Dance (1967)   Sydney Carter 1915-*

One of the key issues in the new environment of higher education is the leadership skills that are required. This is a particular issue given the rapidly changing environment of higher education. The overall impression from the research is that the respondents are not well led and many do not know how to develop in the future. All of the respondents seem to have a view of what this leadership requires, but interestingly only one had a job description, and many of the respondents are not engaged in any form of active mentoring for junior staff. This is against the backdrop of the 'dance' becoming more complex and faster moving. The younger Principal Lecturers do not know what is required of them to progress further and as a result are trying to engage in teaching, research and administrative responsibilities simultaneously. They are being poorly led. The Professors and Reader seem to have some notion of leadership but it has been undermined by the dance to managerialism. As a result there seems to be a picture of confusion. There is obviously a need for substantial work to be carried out to select potential leaders and nurture leadership skills in individuals, to lead women (and probably men) into a brighter future. There is also the question of whether the move to managerialism from the old collegial model when the dancers are the same has been a positive move for women. The research indicates the opposite.

The Influencer

You take the torch of knowledge and behold the palace of the future

Marie Curie   Speech given in Paris   1943

Some of the respondents talk about themselves as being influencers rather than successful. In fact, there is often a lot of doubt expressed about how successful particular individuals have been in their view. One of the most striking findings from the research is the fact that the researchers feel that external influence amongst peers is far more important than any internal contact and that this requires time and effort to develop. This means that the researcher has to develop a continuous research record and influence in their international peer group. This is obviously more problematical for women who have the family as a major project, particularly if they do not have supportive partners or husbands. Success at student support and teaching is valued for promotion to 'managerial' type jobs in the University. There is evidence from the research that this seems to be an attractive prospect for younger Principal Lecturers, although it limits their research activity and therefore their career outside. There is obviously much to do here in terms of signalling career pathways, developing skills of influence in academics, and balancing managerial, teaching and research responsibilities. The women who are in influential posts in the University obviously have a lot to offer in these types of initiative. The research does indicate, however, that the respondents often feel that they are not in a position to carry out this role due to their personal psychological state or set of circumstances, such as their relationship with more junior women. I did, however, receive a lot of personal support from the respondents in the research, many of whom I would never have met under normal circumstances, so there are opportunities for formal or informal support groups. This issue warrants positive action but also further research.

Those internal to the individual

The Discoverer

Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought

The Scientist Speculates 1962 Albert von Szentorgyi-Gyo 1893-1986

One of the most important characteristics that emerges from the research is the fact that many of the respondents have a real mission to discover things for

themselves. This seems to have been developed in their childhood for a variety of reasons and continues in their quest for knowledge in their research agenda. This is particularly marked in the group of Professors, although a number of the Principal Lecturers also feel like this. This quest for knowledge helps them to overcome obstacles such as people who stand in their way, and organisational factors that act as an obstacle. It can be argued that all academics should have this in-built quest for knowledge and discovery and this characteristic should be screened during the recruitment procedures. The old collegial system encouraged this quest for knowledge amongst the peer group. New 'manageralism', it could be argued, has tried to control and manage this quest for knowledge, which is understandable given the economic situation of higher education. The respondents all commented in different ways on how dysfunctional they think it is, however. Some of the practices in the University require a new emphasis on 'managerialism', but some require the old collegial model of development. The separation of these different approaches is obviously something that should be researched further. The organisation needs to find a way of harnessing this in-built quest for knowledge by individuals while working within budgets.

The Pragmatist

> *You can't learn too soon that the most useful thing about a principle is that it can always be sacrificed to expediency*

Circle 1921 Act 3 W Somerset Maughan 1874-1965

There is evidence from the research that a number of respondents who have gained success have adopted pragmatic approaches, despite the fact that they admit that there are serious flaws with the systems and approaches that are in place to help the development of female academics. It is obviously more comfortable for the respondents to adopt *laissez-faire* attitudes in the particular organisational culture, than it is to challenge the *status-quo*. There are feelings in the transcripts of the respondents being overwhelmed by administrative and managerial tasks at the expense of simply thinking and developing others. The pragmatist is probably the most dangerous for junior women since they bury any feelings of rebellion which could be argued is healthy for any organisation in a period of change. The 'blame culture' which some of the respondents comment on could explain this move to pragmatism. There is work to be done

here on the organisational culture and the way in which change is handled without burying the creative and challenging ideas of all women. Women in senior positions need to be more rebellious and challenge the *status quo* but of course this needs courage and comes with the danger of not being popular. The research suggests that this is too uncomfortable a position to be in for many women at the present time.

The Frightened One

> *And how am I to face the odds*
> *Of man's bedevilment and God's?*
> *I, a stranger and afraid,*
> *In a world I never made*

Last Poems (1922) Laurence Hope (Adela Ia Florence Nicolson) 1865-1904

There is evidence of fear from many of the respondents who participated in the research. This is by no means just amongst the more junior respondents. There seems to be a lot of doubt expressed by the respondents about whether they have in fact been successful. Fear is also expressed about their relationship with their juniors. Should they just leave them alone or should they attempt to lead them into progression, and if so how? There is also fear expressed by many of the respondents about the effect that their career is having on individuals in their personal life. This is particularly marked for the respondents who have children and who often feel extreme guilt about their non-completion of their duties and frightened about the consequences. Fear is an individual thing but appropriate human resource strategies such as mentoring schemes could reduce this and improve the situation. The women, however, need to feel valued by the organisation for their contribution to help them to build up their own self-confidence so they can then help others. This is generally not happening at the present time.

The Risk Taker

> *In America any boy may become President and I suppose it's just.*
> *Life is a gamble at terrible odds – if it was a bet you wouldn't take it!*

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (1967) Tom Stoppard 1937-

The most important characteristic for the participants is the ability to take risks. This ability has often been developed in early childhood. It seems that the willingness to take risks is particularly well developed in certain individuals, and

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at particular times. It seems to be a characteristic that is associated with younger individuals, as one would expect. The participants have often taken risks earlier in their careers and find that this often leads to new opportunities in their later life. It is interesting, for example, that two of the respondents had taken the risk to go to work abroad on their own. A number of the respondents had taken the risk of moving jobs without prior knowledge of how things would progress. A number of the respondents had also taken risks in their personal lives on the way to their current role. It is interesting to note that respondents appear to be more likely to take risks early in their career, or towards the end. One respondent even took the risk of resigning so that she could become a fulltime mother to her young child.

It is interesting to note that the respondents report that they have become more risk averse at certain time in their lives. The most important time is when they need the money because they are the major bread-winner or when they become a mother because the psychological bond is so strong and demands more stability. The only exceptions to this are the respondents who have supportive partners that would follow them in their career moves and look after the children.

Many of the respondents comment on the negative blame culture that has developed at the University. They think that this puts academics off taking any risks and trying new things. The quality procedures also work against academics taking even small risks, which many of the respondents think is a bad thing. If taking risks is a positive feature of academic life and personal development, then the University must find new ways of encouraging this in individuals without the fear for them of punishment if the risks do not pay off. They must also find a way of encouraging new and valuable staff to take the risk of joining the University and then fostering a culture that will encourage them to take opportunities when they arise.

Let me finish the thesis by summarising the major ideas that have come from the research:

- the implementation of the equal opportunities legislation has been good for women because new opportunities have arisen. Women are now in a good

position to develop their careers particularly if they can be viewed as a 'token' woman in a particular academic setting. The new tougher environment of higher education, however appears to have overtaken these changes and has made it a much more difficult place for women. The successful academic has to cope with rising student numbers. This has made it easier for women to take on caring roles such as student support and guidance that are not as valued by the institution compared to research and publication.

- a successful research career now demands the development of external influence in an international setting which is difficult for a woman to achieve, particularly if she has being a mother as a project. The creation of the Principal Lecturer role as one with an administrative focus has meant that younger academic women are trying to focus on teaching, research and administration. This means that they do not do any of these very successfully and develop feelings of self doubt.

- the move to managerialism by the University has brought gains but it has meant that many advantages of the old collegial model of higher education have been lost. The organisational culture seems to favour pragmatists and not discoverers and risk takers. Pragmatists are dangerous for young women because they tend to go along with the status quo and do not challenge the existing practices and culture even though they know that there are problems.

- women who are successful in academic life have particular characteristics but generally have had to make a number of sacrifices to get where they are. This often leads to a situation where a successful woman who has gone up the hierarchy thinks that young women should suffer in equal amounts and therefore supports practices that make it difficult for women to achieve. This brings favour from her peers who view her as a tough character suited to the new culture of academic life.

- women who are successful in academic life must have a strong and determined identity and be prepared to take risks at the appropriate time in their career. Their past life experiences are fundamental to their success.

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This is very important for the recruitment of the right women so that they have the inherent qualities to succeed.

- one of the most important issues for academic women is the concept of conflicting projects and the balance of home and work life. She has to accept that work will invade home life. Women need to organise their personal life and significant others to support this view or else they will not be successful because of conflicting pressures.

- the presence of significant others is critical and it is often just as important to have a mentor and friend to help at home, as it is at work. Women must also learn to encourage people who help them develop and rid themselves of people who block their development, however ruthless this appears.

- successful academic women have a quest for knowledge and discovery and should reject things or people who get in their way. In fact, they need to be a bit of a rebel at times to succeed and challenge policies and procedures.

- women should return to their feminist ideals and support one another in a positive way. They should sort out where junior women want to go and encourage them to make the right moves to get there. To enable them to do this, decisions must be taken about the relative values given by the organisation to the teaching, research and administrative roles so that women can make informed decisions about their future progression. It is not good enough to be a pragmatist and go along with policies and procedures that are flawed, for whatever reason.

- the past determines the future and women should always review their past development in relation to their current situation so they can use this reflection to their advantage for future progression.

- successful women are role models who should use everything in their power to encourage others to follow them but they are often not in a suitable psychological state to carry out this role. Further research should try and identify the underlying reasons for this. It seems that their relationship with junior women is not a happy one but this should be researched in more detail.

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- the University could make a significant contribution to women if they implemented some of the ideas that have been discussed above.

5:3 The relay race in time

We should think of the glass ceiling phenomenon in academic life as **a relay race in time** (a term that originated from one of the interviews). I will now explore this term in some more depth and consider the meaning of the term in relation to the career development of academic women.

The glass ceiling phenomenon relies on the idea that women have to break through a ceiling in order to get to the top of an organisation. I have explored earlier on in the thesis the special nature of academic life. Success in this setting relies on the recognition of academics as individual experts amongst their peers in an international setting, particularly if the career trajectory is linked to research as is the case with the Professorial role. This type of career development relies heavily on the role of senior academics as role models and mentors and is linked very heavily to the old collegial model of organisation design where there is a mutual support group that encourages development.

The term – **the relay race in time** is a much more appropriate metaphor to be applied to the progression of academic women for the following reasons:

- The development of academic women can be likened to the establishment of a team of individuals through time. The more senior academics whether they are men or women can be compared to a team leader in the sporting world. It is their task to lead academics into the right race at a particular time. This race is of course becoming more international and requires greater skills of leadership just like the sporting world where international competition has become critical at the top of the profession.

- Research and academic development requires reflection back in time on what has been done previously so that the subject can be developed. This requires an academic to reflect on past research and the methods and approaches that have been used previously by other academics. The senior academic will hand on the subject knowledge and experience

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to more junior individuals in the team. This can be likened to the handing over of the baton in a relay race. The hand over time is a delicate process that requires that the new member of the team has to continue with all the good work that the rest of the team have done up to this stage. The person that drops out of the race at this stage has finished their task and has to rely on the new member of the team to win. This is very similar to academic life.

- The young female academic therefore relies on the more senior academic to hand over just like the new member of the race team. But she does not just rely on her expertise and skill at that particular time. She relies on all the past experience and skills that she has developed over a long period, just like the member of the sports team. The sportswoman relies on all the training and guidance that she has received during her training period. Similarly, the young female academic relies on her background, her innate expertise and skill, and the guidance that she has received along the path of her development. We have seen the special nature of this in the research findings contained in the thesis.

- We have seen in the thesis that the woman requires particular personal characteristics to become successful and that these are often psychologically based. She needs to feel confident, be able to take risks at particular times, and be able to spot people who will help her both in her public and private life. This can be compared to the sportswoman who will have to be at the peak of her physical and psychological state in order to win the race. The team leader will have also have had to pick the best people for the team in order to win. This can be compared to the necessity for academic leaders to pick the correct team and promote the right individuals to positions of authority to nurture success.

- The nurturing of raw talent in both the sporting and academic world particularly through challenging and difficult times is part of the **relay race in time.** We have seen in the thesis that women respond particularly well when they are encouraged and nurtured and that this is sadly lacking in the University setting. So can this metaphor only be applied to female academics or is it more generally applicable to all

academic settings? I suspect the latter, but of course we are really concerned with how to encourage young women to progress further in the academic world in this thesis.

- We have learned in the thesis that there are particular periods in the young woman's life when she feels more vulnerable and less able to take risk because of her psychological state and the culture of the institution. Her relationship with her juniors once she has become successful is also problematical. The good team leader will recognise these weaknesses in the sportswoman and work on strengthening these imperfections. This is also important for the academic team leader who will have to implement practices that will encourage a more positive state of mind and knowledge base amongst more junior women.

The metaphor **the relay race in time** therefore suggests that unlike the glass ceiling metaphor the development of young academic women is a process that happens over a long period and does not simply involve the woman breaking through the barrier to reach the top. The process of development relies very heavily on the woman getting the right team support during her life and the necessary intellectual stimulation to awaken her quest for knowledge and learning that academic success requires. The more senior people around her have to develop her to be able to take the baton. They also have to be able to judge when she is ready to do this. This requires great skills of leadership. It also suggests that mentoring is a key part of her development. So as Ruby suggests, the glass ceiling is shattered. Young academic women have the opportunity to develop further than ever before as long as they take the opportunities as they come along and learn to manage the new setting of higher education.

The glass ceiling has become the **relay race in time.** Until women reflect on how they have come to where they are, and have the confidence developed in them to be able to accept the baton when the time is right for them so that they can race further forwards, then there will be no further increase in the small number of academic women in senior posts. The women need to look inside themselves to achieve this, but they also need well-developed organisational policies to help them. I hope that this thesis helps to speed up the relay race in time for academic women of the future.

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APPENDIX 1

Sheffield Hallam University

Susan Horner
Principal Lecturer, School of Leisure and Food Management
Telephone 0114 225 3977   Email s.horner@shu.ac.uk

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Project The development of a successful female academic leader in a higher education setting.

Aim To construct a perceptual map of the lifeworld of successful female academics in middle management roles in higher education.

I agree to participate in the research programme to be carried out by Susan Horner in order to provide information relevant to the research topic of academic leadership. I understand that I will be requested to provide information about my current job, and my perceptions of my career development to date. This will be collected by interview and taped autobiography.

I understand that all information that I provide will be considered confidential and reported in the research documentation only in aggregate form or disguised with all attributes masked. The typist who will assist with the transcriptions will see the transcripts stripped of all personal names and references and identified by code only. In this stripped and anonymous form, I understand that some or part of my responses may by quoted in my final report, only with my full written consent. Susan Horner will share a copy of my interviews and autobiography with me for my approval before analysis and coding begins.

Signed...Date..

Name..Title..

Institution...

Address..

....

....

APPENDIX 2

Autobiographical Script

In this part of the research, I would like to explore your perceptions of your own career development, and your current role at the University. I would like you to record your thoughts on the dictaphone tape, and complete the autobiography at your own pace within the next week. I would like to remind you that your autobiographical thoughts will be transcribed and sent back to you for your approval. All thoughts will be treated confidentially.

Consider the following questions to help you structure your autobiographical thoughts:

Time Give a review of your views on your career development.

Key events Has there been any significant events that in your view have shaped your career development? Remember to go back as far as you think to explore these significant events

Identity Do you view your individual identity as having been a contributor to your career development. Explore the ways in which your identity has affected your own development. Do you think that your own identity has changed as your career has developed?

Significant others It is well known that other people can have a significant effect on career development. Have there been other people who have had an effect on your career development? Try and separate the people who have had an effect at work, and those who have had an effect at home. Give a brief review of these individuals in turn, and give a brief view of your relationship to them, and the influence that you think that they have had.

Gender Has the fact that you are female had a positive or negative effect on your career development? Has this effect been due to your own perceptions, or the perceptions of others?

Career development in higher education What are you views on career development in a higher education setting. Explore the factors that have a positive and negative effect in relation the expectations that are placed on you by others.

The future What are your dreams for your future career development? What will have a positive and negative effect on you realising your dreams?

Any other comments Are there any other comments about your career development that you would like to make at this stage.

Thank you very much for your time. This autobiographical reflection will be followed up with a semi-structured interview at a later date.

Susan Horner 2002

APPENDIX 3

Job Descriptions of Senior Academic Post Holders at Sheffield Hallam University

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

POST OUTLINE

Post Title: Principal Lecturer

Responsible to: Director of School/Department (may be delegated to another senior member of the Exec./Management Team)

Reports to: (appropriate line manager according to School/Department structure)

Purpose:

To provide professional and academic leadership in a number of areas including learning, teaching and assessment, curriculum development, research and other forms of scholarly activity. To actively contribute to the strategic development and management of the School including quality management and enhancement.

Main Duties:

The postholder performs a range of duties and responsibilities from those listed below. The balance of these will vary between postholders. Academic leadership Promotes the School/Department's strategic vision and supports creativity and drive to maximise learning and teaching potential. Performs a professional and academic leadership role in relation to curriculum development and/or research. Participates in appropriate academic and professional activities and networks, which contribute to local and national recognition.

Management
Contributes to the School/Department's business planning process and the development and achievement of the School/Department and University's strategic objectives.
Undertakes cross-School/Department managerial responsibilities as allocated by the Head of Division/Business Unit/Professional Area/ Director.
Participates in relevant committees or working parties as appropriate.
Manages staff and sets and agrees clear and relevant objectives for academic staff in the group through the University's appraisal scheme and identifies staff development needs.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Engages in critical reflection on practice as a basis for improving performance. Identifies innovation in learning, teaching, assessment and curriculum development with the aim of meeting the needs of learners.
Engages in staff development activities relating to teaching, learning and assessment.

Research and Scholarly activity
Promotes and enhances the furtherance of knowledge and/or the pedagogic development of the subject area through scholarship, research, consultancy or professional practice. Leads research activity as appropriate to the School/Department and University objectives.
Maximises opportunities for income generation and entrepreneurialism.

Teamwork and Communication
Establishes and maintains effective relationships with colleagues at all levels. Develops collaborative relationships across teams and between Schools/Departments. Actively contributes to the achievement of team objectives and draws on the expertise and ideas of team members. Contributes to the development of skills and knowledge of others in the team. Maintains dialogue with colleagues and managers in the performance of post responsibilities. Creates networks of useful contacts both within and outside the University.

Personal effectiveness
Seeks ways to improve efficiency and quality and motivates and encourages others.
Contributes to achievement of organisational goals.

Business effectiveness

Promotes income generation and develops a strategic understanding of marketing and business needs. Creates and develops relationships and partnerships with business and the community. Contributes to and identifies opportunities for business enhancement and maintenance of customer-focus.

Quality management and enhancement
Develops academic provision to enhance quality and standards. Initiates improvements to quality of educational provision and access to higher education.

These duties may evolve in line with the changing strategic objectives of the School/Department and University. Specific objectives will be agreed through the University's appraisal process.

April 2002
Lorna Byrne
HRD

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

POST OUTLINE

Post Title: Head of Division/Business Unit/Professional Area (or equivalent)

Grade: Senior Academic (SSG)

Responsible to: Director of School/ Director of Research Institute

Reports to: Director of School/ Director of Research Institute

Purpose:

To undertake a key role in the collective development and implementation of School/RI strategies and contribute to the overall management of the School/RI. To take lead responsibility for delivering the business of the School/RI in a defined area as agreed. To develop, maintain and enhance the School/RI's provision of educational services to meet business needs.

Specifically this post will have responsibility for the following:

- line management of relevant academic staff

- representing the Director of School/RI and the Executive group as appropriate

- achievement of academic standards and the enhancement of quality

- teaching and learning developments

- development of links with other areas within the School/RI/University and relevant external bodies

- marketing and raising the profile of the Division/Business Unit/Professional Area

Main Duties:

The postholder performs a range of duties and responsibilities from those listed below. The balance of these will vary between postholders.

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Academic leadership Promotes the School RI and University's strategic vision, and encourages creativity and drive to maximise learning, teaching, assessment and research potential.

Represents the division/business unit/professional area within the School/RI, the University and externally. Participates in appropriate academic and professional activities and networks, which contribute to national and international recognition.

Contributes to curriculum development and innovation.

Facilitates multi-professional working and integration.

Management

Provides managerial leadership to enhance the performance of the Division/Business Unit/Professional Area and its constituent subject groups. Makes a significant contribution to business planning and focuses School/RI activities towards the achievement of strategic objectives.

Manages staff and financial resources. Sets and agrees clear and relevant objectives for relevant academic staff through the University's appraisal scheme and identifies staff development needs. Makes decisions on complex operational and policy issues. Establishes long term goals and identifies how present strategies may be affected by future trends.

Teamwork and Communications

Leads the development of an effective team and collaborates with team members drawing on their skills and expertise to produce results.

Liaises with other relevant groups within the School/RI, in the wider University context and externally as appropriate. Facilitates communication between teams and management, including chairing of regular team meetings.

Reports on a regular basis to the Executive and other bodies (e.g. Board of Studies) on the Division/Business Unit/Professional Area's performance and other matters.

Personal effectiveness

Seeks ways to improve efficiency and quality and motivates and encourages others.

Contributes to achievement of organisational goals.

Business effectiveness

Identifies opportunities for income generation and develops a strategic understanding of marketing and business needs. Creates and develops relationships and partnerships with business and the community and maintains a strong customer focus.

Reviews performance in the light of business objectives. Identifies opportunities for development and manages change in relation to future requirements.

Quality management and enhancement

Leads the development of academic provision to enhance quality and standards.

Encourages excellence in service delivery. Ensures that reports are produced in accordance with published schedules and takes appropriate action in the light of quality judgements. These duties may evolve in line with the changing strategic objectives of the School/RI and University. Specific objectives will be agreed through the University's appraisal process.

April 2002
Lorna Byrne
HRD

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

POST OUTLINE

Post title: Reader

Grade: PL

Responsible to: Director of School (may be delegated to another senior member of the School Exec/Management Team)

Reports to: (appropriate line manager according to School structure)

Purpose

To lead and make a significant contribution to the achievement of the University's/School's strategic research objectives. To promote excellence in research and to undertake a role as research leader with a developing national scholarly reputation.

Main Duties

The postholder performs a range of duties and responsibilities from those listed below. The balance of these will vary between postholders.

Academic leadership

Promotes the School and University's strategic vision, and encourages creativity and drive to maximise research potential. Performs a professional and academic leadership role, which makes a contribution to the development of the subject area. Development of the subject area may take a number of forms, including creative and innovative thinking and various types of research work. Participates in appropriate academic and professional activities and networks, which contribute to national and possibly international recognition.

Supports the research activity of colleagues. Encourages higher research degree registrations and participates in research degree supervision.

Research and scholarly activity

Demonstrates outstanding achievement as a scholar with an excellent record of research output through publications, exhibitions etc.

Produces publications for high quality, refereed journals. Takes a lead role in joint publication with colleagues.

Participates in conferences, seminars and guest lectures, editorial and review activity and external examining.

Promotes research training at undergraduate or postgraduate levels and continuous professional development for research active staff. Exploits the creative use of technology and ICT developments.

Research funding

Maintains knowledge and contacts relevant to generation of external funds, research grants and consultancy. Leads and contributes to bids for research funding.

Manages funded projects.

Communication and Networking

Disseminates research information in an appropriate manner, including the production of major reports, presenting at conferences. Liaises with relevant colleagues and develops networking opportunities for self and others. Encourages collaboration within and between Schools and across the sector as appropriate. Participates as a member of national or international committees relevant to the subject area as appropriate.

Personal effectiveness

Seeks ways to improve efficiency and quality and motivates and encourages others. Contributes to achievement of organisational goals.

Quality management and enhancement

Seeks opportunities to improve the quality of research activity and output for the School and the University. Ensures the continued development of a reputation for excellence.

These duties may evolve in line with the changing strategic objectives of the School and University. Specific objectives will be agreed through the University's appraisal process.

April 2002
Lorna Byrne
HRD

APPENDIX 4

Amber's job description

Sheffield Hallam University

ROLE OUTLINE

Role : Discipline Leader

Grade : PL

This role outline should be read in conjunction with the relevant generic job outline for the specific staff grade.

Role Purpose

The person appointed on Principal Lecturer will also be required to act as Discipline Leader for a minimum of three years. They will be required to provide academic and management leadership to the discipline group ensuring that delivery of units allocated to the group is effective and customer focussed and in line with the School and University's strategic priorities.

To encourage innovation, entrepreneurialism, and continuous quality enhancement.

Specifically, this role will have responsibility for the following :

- line management of relevant academic staff in the discipline group
- liaison with the relevant Head of Division / Business Unit / Professional Area
- achievement of academic standards and the enhancement of quality
- teaching and learning developments
- taking forward the modernisation agenda for Health and Social Care
- development of links with other relevant subject groups and with relevant external bodies
- marketing and raising the profile of the subject area

Key role requirements

Academic leadership

Demonstrates vision, creativity and drive to maximise learning and teaching potential. Provides academic leadership to staff within the discipline group. Enhances the discipline group's profile and reputation. Establishes a clear focus for the discipline group ensuring that staff understand their contribution. Generates ideas for increased innovation and flexibility.

Management

Proactively contributes to the School's business planning processes and the development and achievement of the School / University's strategic objectives. Plans and monitors effective utilisation of financial resources and undertakes day to day management of staff including responsibility for recruitment, selection and deployment. Sets and agrees clear and relevant objectives for academic staff in the group, through the University's appraisal scheme and identifies staff development needs. Undertakes work planning within the group including the allocation of teaching, administrative duties and the oversight of research and scholarly activity.

Communications

Represents the subject group and Division in the wider School / University context and creates networks of useful contacts. Ensures effective two-way communication within the subject

group, including arranging regular team meetings. Communicates effectively through appropriate channels / media. Delivers effective presentations and compiles repor5ts for a range of audiences.

Teamwork

Ensures the effective development of the subject group as a team and maximises the diverse skills of team members to produce results.

Personal effectiveness

Displays a high standard of personal integrity and fairness. Seeks ways to improve efficiency and quality and motivates and encourages others. Displays commitment to organisational roles and the pursuit of excellence.

Business awareness

Demonstrates an awareness of customers and an understanding of marketing and business needs. Reviews performance of the subject group in the light of business objectives. Contributes to the development of a portfolio of courses to reflect market needs and identifies opportunities for future development.

Quality management and enhancement

Develops, maintains and enhances research and academic capability and capacity to meet academic standards and to enhance quality. Encourages excellence in service delivery. Ensures that reports are produced in accordance with published schedules and takes appropriate action in the light of quality judgement.

The role will evolve in line with the changing strategic objectives of the School and University. Specific objectives will be agreed through the University's appraisal process.

APPENDIX 5

Results – Ethnograph 5 analysis

The manual analysis of the transcripts reveals that there did appear to be some common themes that were emerging at this stage. I decided to use the Ethnograph 5 package for qualitative analysis to allow a more detailed and measured analysis of the factors that were emerging for each question or series of questions. This package allows qualitative data such as transcripts of interviews to be loaded into the package and then coded up so that code words can be built up to from a tree of ideas. Individual transcripts that have been coded can then be compared and counts made of each word. The autobiographical reflections were loaded into the package and each transcript was coded up with words that were associated with each of the fractions of the lifeworld. A series of words emerged from this analysis on *temporality* (under the headings of time and key events), on *selfhood* (identity), on *sociality* (significant others), on *embodiment* (gender) and on *spatiality and project* (higher education). It should be noted that the words that were used in this analysis were derived in as an objective way as possible, although some of the words such as discrimination obviously required some level of subjective judgement. It should also be noted that mention of an issue only once could have been just as important as multiple mentions, so the counting of occurrences should be treated with some caution.

The numerical results for each respondent could then be derived so that it was possible to look at the pattern of words that emerged for each respondent on each essence. The results for each of the categories are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1 *Temporality* – Time / Key events

Professor	Number of counts	Principal Lecturer	Number of counts
Diamond	Major steps (4) Institutions (3) Politics (3)	Amber	Planned (1)
Sapphire	Institutions (3) Major steps (2) Chance (1)	Pearl	Chance (3) Planned (1)
Topaz	Institutions (3) Chance (3) Major steps (2) Politics (1)	Jade	Chance (3) Retirement (3) Institutions (2) Major steps (1) Politics (1) Planned (1)
Ruby	Chance (4) Letting go (3) Retirement (2) Major steps (2) Institutions (1) Politics (1) Injustices (1)	Turquoise	Institutions (3) Major steps (2) Letting go (1) Chance (1)
Garnet	Institutions (3) Planned (3) Chance (2) Major steps (1)	Aquamarine	Planned (3) Major steps (1) Institutions (1)
		Jet	Major steps (4) Chance (3) Institutions (1) Politics (1) Retirement (1) Planned (1)
		Emerald	Chance (1)
Observations	Institutions and major steps are critical to the Professors. An interest in politics is common. Retirement and letting go are critical for older respondents. The Professors seem to rely on chance to provide opportunities.	Observations	Major steps were critical for four respondents. Retirement is important for older respondents. The Principal Lecturers place a heavier emphasis on career planning.

It appeared from this analysis that a feature of many of the respondents was the ability to take major steps. Chance events seemed to be very important to both

sets of respondents, although the Principal Lecturers also planned their career moves. Politics has also affected a number of the respondents. A respondent who was older had thought of retirement as very much uppermost in their minds.

Table 2 *Selfhood* - (Identity)

Professor	Number of counts	Principal Lecturer	Number of counts
Diamond	Certainty (3) Pioneering (3) Uncertain (3) Crisis (1)	Amber	-
Sapphire	Crisis(4) Pioneering (1)	Pearl	Certainty (1) Crisis (1)
Topaz	Certainty (1) Pioneering (1)	Jade	Crisis (3) Certainty (2) Pioneering (2) Uncertain (2)
Ruby	Crisis (3) Pioneering (1) Certainty (1) Uncertain (1)	Turquoise	Certainty (1)
Garnet	Certainty (1) Crisis (1) Pioneering (1)	Aquamarine	Certainty (2) Pioneering (2)
		Jet	Uncertain (1) Pioneering (1)
		Emerald	Certainty (1) Uncertain (1)
Observations	The Professors had strong features of a pioneering spirit but also had faced a lot of uncertainty and four of the respondents had had to face a crisis at some stage in their lives.	Observations	Two of the Principal Lecturers had faced crisis but generally there was less crisis mentioned here and more certainty expressed.

These results do suggested that Professors had a particular pioneering spirit but often faced a personal crisis. Principal Lecturers did seem to have had more certainty about their position in general. It could be suggested that this had been due to the fact that they had a well defined management role.

Table 3 *Sociality* – **Significant others**

Professors	Number of counts	Principal Lecturers	Number of counts
Diamond	Father (3) Children (2) Partner (1) Supervisor (1)	Amber	Children (4) Supervisor (2) Partner (1) Mother (1) Father (1)
Sapphire	Children (2) Partner (2)	Pearl	Supervisor (3) Partner (2) Children (2) Mother (2)
Topaz	Partner (9) Children (4) Supervisor (3)	Jade	Children (4) Partner (3) Father (1)
Ruby	Mother (4)	Turquoise	Children (3) Partner (2) Mother (1) Father (1) Supervisor (1)
Garnet	Partner (7) Children (4) Supervisor (4)	Aquamarine	Supervisor (3) Mother (1) Partner (1) Father (1)
		Jet	Supervisor (1)
		Emerald	Children (7) Partner (5) Mother (4) Supervisor (2)
Observations	There was no observed pattern emerging here except that others were very significant.	Observations	There was no observed overall pattern here, although when a respondent had a child or children this was very significant.

The fact that a respondent had a child or children had a significant effect on the individual's career path. The respondents also thought that their partner had had a powerful influence on their career development. Supervisors, mothers and fathers were also highlighted as being significant.

Table 4 *Embodiment* – Gender

Professor	Number of counts	Principal Lecturer	Number of counts
Diamond	Discrimination (8) Feminism (8) Male domination (2) Male culture (2)	Amber	Male culture (1
Sapphire	Male domination (4) Male culture (4) Discrimination (3) Feminism (2)	Pearl	Male domination (5) Male culture (3)
Topaz	Male culture (3) Feminism (3) Male domination (2) Discrimination (1)	Jade	Male domination (9) Male culture (2) Discrimination (2) Feminism (1)
Ruby	Male domination (2)	Turquoise	Male culture (2) Male domination (1)
Garnet	Male domination (2) Male culture (1) Discrimination (1)	Aquamarine	Discrimination (1)
		Jet	Male domination (2) Male culture (1)
		Emerald	Male domination (4) Male culture (3) Discrimination (1)
Observations	Male domination and male culture in organisations was a real issue for the Professors. Three of the Professors mentioned feminism as a strategy to cope with this. Discrimination was also a common issue.	Observations	Make culture and male domination was an issue for all respondents except one. Discrimination was also an issue but feminism was mentioned less.

It is interesting to note that feminism was a strategy that had been adopted by the Professors to overcome issues related to male culture and domination. This

was mentioned less by the Principal Lecturers although the issues were still very critical for the respondents.

Table 5 *Spatiality/ Project* – **Higher Education**

Professors	Number of counts	Principal Lecturers	Number of counts
Diamond	Research (5) Admin (2) Culture (1)	Amber	Culture (3) Admin (2) Management (1)
Sapphire	Research (4) Admin (3)	Pearl	Admin (4) Research (3) Management (3) Culture (1)
Topaz	Research (5) Admin (2)	Jade	Management (7) Research (6) Culture (5) Admin (1)
Ruby	Management (4) Culture (2) Research (2)	Turquoise	Culture (3) Research (1)
Garnet	Research (8) Admin (2) Management (1)	Aquamarine	Research (8) Management (2) Admin (1) Culture (1)
		Jet	Research (3) Admin (2) Management (1) Culture (1)
		Emerald	Research (8) Admin (3) Culture (1)
Observations	Research was a strong focus for the Professors. Administration was nearly always mentioned in a negative light i.e. stopped research progress.	Observations	This was more of a mixed picture with research mentioned more by some respondents particularly the Reader. More commentary here on culture and administration.

The Professors made more reference to research, although this was a major issue for two of the Principal Lecturers. Administration and management were mentioned by many of the respondents often in a negative light as providing

barriers to progression. The culture of the institution also warranted some debate by a number of the respondents.

The analysis using the Ethnograph 5 package was useful in that it highlighted the themes that had emerged in the autobiographical reflections. I did find, however that it was very limited because it relied on a count of times when reference had been made to a particular word or theme. It was also not possible to carry out analysis of the discourse of the respondents using the package. The manual reading and listening to the tapes, the words that were spoken and the hidden meanings could only be identified by repeated listening to the tapes and reading of the transcripts.

The follow up interview was designed on the basis of this analysis coupled with the findings that had emerged from the manual analysis of the transcripts.

APPENDIX 6

Autobiographical script - follow up interview

In this part of the research I would like to follow up some of the themes that came out from the analysis of the autobiographical scripts. It should only take about 30 minutes to one hour and I would like to tape your responses if that is all right with you. Your responses will again be treated confidentially.

Time / Key events

I have joined these two categories together because there was so much overlap in the first part of the research. Many of the autobiographies refer to the importance of major steps that they have taken in terms of their career development. These have sometimes been a chance occurrence or sometimes a planned event.

'Like yes a sort of major achievement or step - certainly something that nobody in my family had done before'

Can I ask you to reflect on this finding in respect of your own experience?

Institutions have also appeared as a major influencer on career development. These range from schools, universities, and commercial companies, and entry was sometimes planned or happened by chance. Could you comment on this finding in relation to your own experience?

Significant others

Respondents in the first half of the research mentioned children as being by far the most important influencer on their career development. Sometimes having children and caring for them was very positive and sometimes very negative and held them back.

'my partner spoiled the children, so there has always been friction'

'the birth of my son has probably been the most important thing in my life'

Can I ask you to reflect on this finding?

The other person who was mentioned most regularly was the respondent's partner and often their father or mother have also been of importance.

'my mother and father were very influential to me - but in particular my father'

Can you comment on this finding

Higher education

The analysis of the autobiographies shows that research, administration and academic culture are the most important issues that were mentioned. Professors talked much more about research, and generally principal lecturers talked about administration. Can you comment on this finding from your viewpoint?

The most interesting findings from the first stage of the research has been in terms of **gender and identity**

Gender

Many of the respondents have mentioned discrimination as being a key issue, and issues of male culture and dominance are also important issues. Some respondents have dealt with this by adopting feminist attitudes and / or supporting other females in an active way. Sometimes, being a women offers positive benefits.

'there was a whole group of us young women who talked'

'we must have been in retrospect as quite a scary bunch of wild feminists'

'being a woman has given me reason to have a strong voice and something to fight for'

Can I ask you what you think about this?

Identity

Initial analysis of the autobiographies suggests that this is a very relevant and interesting area in relation to individual career development. There appears to be a dilemma, sometimes in the same person, and sometimes between individuals, and there appears to be the most difference between professors and principal lecturers.

Positive features are a **pioneering spirit** and **certainty** which is a particular feature of professors. Can I ask you to comment on this?

Negative features are **crisis, uncertainty,** and sometimes **marital status.** Can I ask you to comment on this finding?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Can I ask you two further questions   your age, number of children you have. Thanks