‘To perform, or not to perform: that is the question’

A survey of how secondary school headteachers perceive their enactment status in leadership.

by

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ABSTRACT

In recent years there has been a significant increase in interest around career development in Educational Leadership. Through my own personal drive and leadership qualities, I began to question the idea of performance for successful leadership. Following observations of a particular leader I was even more intrigued about how one ought to perform as a leader and whether it is a conscious act dependent upon the message being delivered and the audience in which it is being enacted to. As I began to explore this concept further it became apparent that there was little research existing on how leaders perform and learn to perform. This study is set out to investigate the perception of headteachers' from the West Midlands who are in practice to demonstrate the concept of performance 'as' and performance 'is' leadership. Semi-structured interviews were used between July 2012 and January 2013 to secure their perceptions of their own relatable understanding of performance in leaderships, including their professional development to equip them with such enactment skills, and the emotional cost that this has on their professional identity. This study captures ways in which you need to perform as a leader to be successful in delivering your messages to your followers. However, during such acts of performance there is a need to stay true to ones self and honest to the performance, resulting in an emotional cost to ensure that a professional identity is maintained. Leaders learn most of their skills through experiences, which takes time and opportunities to fine tune. This raises the questions that in todays' current school led system do we have the experience to role model and develop such skills?

This piece of research is set out to inform the future research agenda for professional development of school leaders developing strategies and opportunities for leaders to grow.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this piece of work to my family; I could not have done it without their love and support. During the time of writing this piece of work, my fiancé became my husband, and our daughter and son were both born into the world. Together we have achieved so much.

I would also like to dedicate it to my parents for instilling a work ethic that enables you to achieve even your highest goals.

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List of ABREVIATIONS

NCSL – National College of School Leadership

NCTL – National College of Teaching and Leadership

DfE – Department of Education

HEADLAMP – Headteachers Leadership and Management Programme

LPSH – Leadership Programme for Serving Heads

NPQH – National Professional Qualification for Headship

BERA – British Educational Research Association

OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

"I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanised or dehumanised."

Haim G. Ginott (1975)

Introduction

In 1975, Haim G.Ginott published his famous 'weather' quote; directly linking the influence a teacher can have on pupils' outcomes and the 'mood' of the learning environment, dependent upon their enactment and performance on a particular day. There may be a viewpoint that this quote doesn't just relate to the case of the context of teacher and pupil, but could also have a direct link to the leader and their followers. A positive social climate needs to be established in order for learning to take place (Shapiro, 1993).

The journey into leadership has been well researched and documented, in relation to professional development, equality of opportunity, work environment and personal characteristics (Rhodes, 2012a). However, despite the fact that the concept of leadership in terms of performance is not new, there is very little research that has occurred which links the theory of performance to the theory of leadership. This has had a limitation on the research into performance and leadership development

practice (Peck *et al*, 2009). A theme through this research is taken from Rhodes’ (2012a) analysis of the relationship between the management of self-belief and the goals of talent management. There is a strong relationship between the two, providing the facilitation of identity transformation and the enactment of leadership.

This introduction shapes a research project that looks to investigate the perception of leaders’ ability to perform as leaders in order to be successful in their role. Headteachers in their third phase, in accordance with Gronn’s (1999) career model for leadership of headship, from secondary educational establishments were specifically targeted from the Midlands region of England. The incumbency phase allows individuals to experience leadership and mature as a leader by learning from experience and taking their repertoire forward. Respondents were chosen from this phase of career development rather than the earlier phases, formation and accession, as leaders in the earlier phases may not have had sufficient experiences to draw upon. It was also decided not to use individuals from the final stage: divestiture, as those within this stage may see ‘performance’ as something that comes naturally due to the length of service to the profession and therefore would not be able to relate to the research point of whether ‘performance as leadership’ is a skill needed to be developed within succession planning.

The introduction to this thesis firstly sets out the context and justification for the research. This leads directly onto the discussion of the antecedents of the study, enabling an illustration of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and previous research to occur. Following this, the research questions were presented with a finale

of the research design that has been deployed, including the analysis of methodology and ethical consideration.

The introduction chapter to this thesis highlights the main aims of the research study undertaken, with the consideration of previous literature within the review. It firstly sets out the context and justification for the research and how my own personal development and professional judgment may have made an impact on the research design, implementation and findings. The research questions and design are summarised with any methodological issues raised, and the process in which data was obtained, processed and analysed.

Setting the context

A focus upon the initiation of strategies for school leadership and management training began to take maturation in the 1980s and 1990s. Margaret Thatcher’s educational reform policies had the aims to remove the power of the education system from local authorities to central government. Sexton (1977) would ensure that a government-defined ‘minimum curriculum’ and ‘minimum standards’ would be established. Chitty and Dunford (1999) report that the subtle policy initiatives would aim to establish a wider variety of secondary schools and provide a wider parental choice. In 1986, the Education Act provided the outline that for the first time the Head would take a pivotal role, where they would be responsible for the ‘determination and organisation of the secular curriculum’ with Governors having a ‘greater responsibility for curriculum, discipline and staffing’. In 1988, Kenneth Baker presented the

Education Reform Act, to give power to the schools, opening up strategies for “local markets” and ‘selection to occur by the back door’ (Chitty and Dunford, 1999).

> “It is crucial for parents to understand where power in the education system lies. Our Education Bill radically changes the composition of school governing bodies. It gives these bodies new powers and responsibilities. We will end the dominance of the local authority and its political appointees.” (Kenneth Baker, October 1986; Gillard, 2011)

The introduction of Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) in the 1992 Education (Schools) Act led to the morale of teachers and educational leaders suffering from the ‘naming and shaming’ of ‘failing’ schools. Under ‘New Labour’ schools with Local Authorities with ‘serious weaknesses’ were put out to tender, and privatisation began to occur. In March 2000, David Blunkett announced the creation of ‘city academies’, enabling sponsors to take control of the governing and curriculum of a school. The introduction of programs such as the Headteachers Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP) and the subsequent National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) took the lead to enable a consistent approach towards developing newly appointed heads in following a formal training process, elevating the profile for school leadership and leadership preparation. In November 2000, this profile was heightened further with the establishment of the National College for School Leadership and Leadership Preparation (NCSL), who took on the manifesto to ensure that ‘current and future school leaders develop skills, the capability and the capacity to lead and transform the school education system into the best in the world’ (NCSL, 2001).

The independence of school leadership took another step following the 2001 White Paper for Schools and again in the Education Act 2002.

> “I believe in the comprehensive ideal. We have to encourage every single one of our secondary schools to develop their own sense of mission and play to their strengths. That’s why we will invest in specialist schools and training schools, beacon schools and city academies, each school choosing its own identity within the comprehensive family.” (Estelle Morris, June 2002; Gillard, 2011)

Despite criticisms the concept of the ‘academies programme’ began to take shape and in the Education and Inspections Act in 2006, it was proposed that: ‘all primary and secondary schools would be encouraged to become independent state schools (‘trust schools’) backed by private sponsors – businesses, charities, faith groups, universities or parent and community organisations. Like the academies, they would determine their own curriculum and ethos, would appoint the governing body, own their own assets, employ their own staff and set their own admissions policy. They would be required to have parents’ councils which would have a say in the day to day running of the school and on issues such as school meals, uniform and discipline; a school deemed to be failing would be given a year to improve before a ‘competition for new providers’ was held. It would then be reopened as an academy or a trust school with a private sponsor; good schools would be encouraged to expand or link up with neighboring schools in federations, and successful schools would be able to apply for new responsibilities such as teacher training’.

The importance of leadership was now situated on a world stage, with the General Teaching Council reporting in September 2006, that England was facing a leadership crisis with only 4 percent of teachers aspiring to become headteachers, with over one third of headteachers in a position to retire by 2011. But as we move into 2018, the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) is to be dismantled and integrated back into the Department for Education highlighting that perhaps the

school led system is already starting to recant as the leadership crisis continues. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) stated that the retention rate among secondary heads had fallen from 91% in 2012 to 87% in 2015.

> “The leadership pipeline is vital to the success of our education system. Given the challenges facing the system it’s more important than ever to understand how head teacher retention rates are changing, and why.” (Carol Lewis April 2017; Lynch, 2017)

The autonomy of school-led provision seemed to be going from strength to strength with the Conservative Government stating ‘more academies and trust schools’ in The White Paper in 2008 (Gillard, 2011). This was reaffirmed in 2010 where the white paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’ outlined that system schools would be autonomous and accountable for their own improvement, whilst Teaching Schools, Academy sponsors and National and Local Leaders of Education would take a systemic lead in school-to-school support. To date there has been no independent research analysing local or national responses to this policy agenda or consideration of the implications for quality and equity. Hopkins describes the implication of transition from an era of prescription to an era of professionalism, with the need of balance to enable schools leading reform, to be significantly changed. Fullan (2003) recognised these implications early stating the importance of leadership in system reform, commenting that it takes capacity to build capacity:

> “… a new kind of leadership is necessary to break through the status quo. Systematic forces, sometimes called inertia have the upper hand in presenting system shifts. Therefore it will take powerful, proactive forces to change the existing system (to change context). This can be done directly and indirectly through systems thinking in action. Theses new theoreticians are leaders who work intensely in their own schools, or national agencies, and at the same time connect with and participate in the bigger picture. To change organisations and systems will require leaders to get experience in linking other parts of the system. These leaders in turn must help develop other leaders with similar characteristics.” (Fullan, 2003. p7)

Hopkins (2009 p6) identified emerging roles of system leadership:

1. develop and lead a successful educational improvement partnership across local community to support welfare and potential
2. choose to lead and improve a school or centre in extremely challenging circumstances and then sustain them as high valued added institutions over a significant period of time
3. partner another school facing difficulties and improve it
4. act as a curriculum or pedagogic innovator who with their staff develop exemplary and increasingly precise curriculum, teaching and assessment practices and systematically share them with others
5. work as change agents or expert leaders

Hopkins (2009) goes on to suggest an improvement for future system leadership – ‘to use school independence collaboratively to tackle underperformance’. The underlying assumption here is that inner city schools without local control can work collaboratively to rapidly transform systems of standards and support. Schools accept the responsibility for the education of all the students within their geographic area. The collective sharing of skills, expertise and experience creates much richer and more sustainable opportunities for rigorous transformation.

I therefore find myself directly appointed to a position amidst a resilient and long-term political educational agenda. My current role is the Director of a large Teaching School. The Teaching School is an additional aspect to the Multi Academy Trust of which I am appointed. Both of these entities are located in Birmingham, where the

responsibilities of the Local Authority have been completely dissolved and handed over to a privatised organisation. With this vast autonomy it is suggested that the school-led system ought to therefore take central stage on the focus to tackle the leadership crisis, developing opportunities and programmes to embrace the next generation of leaders. But in reality, on a daily basis I witness a pretense of collaboration and instead an unnatural competitive landscape for the purpose of particular individual leaders to build their ‘empires’. This has led to the demise of some high quality schools with capacity stretched and ultimately has impacted upon and led to the detriment of pupils’ outcomes. There is no evidence to date that the school led system is having the desired impact on pupil outcomes and staff professional development in the City of Birmingham.

Examination of literature from a variety of sectors will confirm the importance attached to leadership in the political, military, social and educational services. The link between effective or purposeful leadership and securing and sustaining school improvements is well documented, stating that effective leaders have a valuable but indirect influence on schools (Muijs and Harris, 2003). The quality of school leadership can have a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning within an establishment. This in turn provides an opportunity for overall school improvement (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2009). Leithwood and Beatty (2008) identify that there are no or very few cases of schools successfully turning around pupil achievement in the absence of talented leadership (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

The professional development of school leaders and staff holds great importance to

student outcomes. ‘Learning-centered’ schools demonstrate a positive link between the growth and improvement of school expectations (Rhodes, 2012a and Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009). Internationally, the importance of school performance and school improvement are each framed by social, economic and political factors (Rhodes, 2012a). For example, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) often has influence over the priorities for school improvement for the assessment of the school’s performance. Good school leadership is a moral activity where school improvement teams engage in the social and personal lives of learners inside and outside of school (Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009).

Despite the publicised importance of effective leadership against school improvement, there is an overall declining trend of applicants wishing to move into senior leadership posts (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2006). The aspiration of a deputy-head to move into a headship position no longer seems to be the natural career progression. This could possibly be because their perceptions of the Headteacher role is poor with factors such as: too many responsibilities; too much bureaucracy; too much loss of control over life; accountability pressures; work stresses, meaning that the role is no longer seen as the pivotal point of an educational leader.

A possible solution to this national ‘leadership crisis’ is to adopt a proactive approach towards the identification, development, succession and retention of leadership talent. The NCTL, research and development on succession planning has reached a point of critical importance and suggests strategies that will enable local authorities and schools to promote the ‘growth’ of their own leaders (Anon a, 2008). The

identification, development and succession of actual or potential leadership talent within an educational establishment can allow a talent pool to grow where future internal appointments can be made. Schools can develop valuable learning strategies behind mentoring, coaching, school-based learning, job rotation, shadowing internship, peer support, networking and formal leadership learning programs. The planning of succession will allow a longer-term vision relating to leadership requirements and whole school development (Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009).

The context of leadership within a school community will be greatly influenced by what the school highlights as its priorities to bring about overall school improvement. Government initiatives to ‘fast track’ aspirant individuals within the profession have meant that they are measured against a number of qualities, competencies and values (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2006). A wide range of literature sources project their views upon exactly what skills and competencies are entailed in being a ‘good leader’. A generic list of skills can comprise of leadership qualities such as: integrity, vision, communication, relationships, persuasion, adaptability, teamwork, coaching, decision-making and planning. Each of these qualities lend themselves to the practicalities of leadership, initiating such questions as ‘How do leaders communicate effectively to establish purposeful relationships?’ and ‘How do leaders persuade people to adopt their vision?’ (Peck *et al*, 2009).

The development of school leadership and the relationship to school improvement is now well documented (Bush, 2009). However, 'What skills are required to be a good school leader?’ and ‘How are these skills best developed?’. The Government and

local stakeholders have highlighted the importance and essential need to develop the support and training available for head teachers, before they take their post and after their first appointment has been made. The structured development for training can be seen through the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the previous leadership programme: the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads (LPSH) (Briggs *et al*, 2006). School leaders have to consider ‘How they are going to make an impact on their ‘audience’?’, and ‘How are they going to influence and secure the following of others according to their authority and vision?’ (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010).

‘People skills’ are integral to effective leadership, relying upon the ability to socially interact to enable them to inspire and engage others to secure their following (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010). In 2000, Grint described leadership to be a world of ‘performing arts, the theatre of rhetorical skill, of negotiating skills, and of inducing the audience to believe in the world you paint with words and props’. On occasions leaders need to demonstrate a form of deliberate performance, meaning that the leader takes the time to prepare and rehearse ensuring that they can deliver the particular message successfully. Whereas sometimes there is not the time for the leader to rehearse a performance, meaning that a much broader range of messages have to be delivered during everyday interactions with others (Peck *et al*, 2009). These two types of performance lend themselves to distinguish the difference between ‘Leadership IS Performance’ to ‘Leadership AS Performance’ made by Peck *et al* (2009).

Peck *et al* (2009) also categorised leadership performance as 'transitive' and 'intransitive' looking at how leaders achieve particular outcomes according to their performance. A transitive performance would enable the leader to direct their performance in order to obtain a precise outcome from their audience. If a leader spontaneously reacts according to the numerous interactions and relationships of others they are said to perform intransitively.

Whether or not a performance is prepared ('is' / 'transitive') or impulsive ('as' / 'intransitive), performance is seen to be a combination of enactment, narration and audience. The enactment highlights the way in which leaders communicate and interact with others creating the legitimacy to act. Narration refers to the myths, stories and anecdotes which leaders will tell and link to guide their audience through the processes of sense making. A performance isn't a performance without an audience, who witness these attributions of leadership (Peck and Dickinson, 2009)

In schools a leader is inevitably required to face various addressees and be confronted with the constant demand of being authentic within their performance. Headteachers need to enact and lead on particular messages to a variety of audiences at particular times during particular school settings. These messages often are individual performances not needing to be repeated, meaning that they often have an element of improvisation. Individuals who are able to effectively deliver their message are seen to be fully engaging and inspiring, achieving their goal. However, some leaders are not as successful and instead find the 'performance' element of the role a taxing and uncomfortable part to play (Peck *et el*, 2009).

Butler (1993) highlights that any sort of human behaviour can be interpreted ‘as’ performance, this is because all behaviours despite their frequency are ‘performed’. However, it is said that to ‘perform’, the behaviour individuals draw upon is ‘constructed from behaviours previously behaved … everyday life also involves years of training and practice, of learning appropriate culturally specific bits of behaviour’ (Schechner, 2003). Intransitive leadership requires singular performances that may need to be repeated with similar messages. Followers in turn then need to view an element of ‘alterity’ meaning performances need to be seen to be different from prior performances (Peck *et al*, 2009).

Given the importance of leadership succession to develop aspirant leaders to fulfil Headteacher positions within schools, it is surprising that performance has not been the centre of more research and developmental investigation. Performance is one of the many complexities of becoming a Head: a skill that needs focused development to enable the individual to successfully lead and deliver messages. However, there have been very few links made between the theory of performance and the theories of leadership (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010). It focuses our attention on whether there is a point in development where leaders learn how to enact?

This piece of research is intended to contribute towards an understanding of how leadership skills are developed, focusing primarily upon enactment and the ability to perform, in order to lead successfully.

The Research Questions

The key research questions based on this literature and the research aims are:

- How is leadership as performance conceptualised by headteachers in secondary education?
- How was the ability to provide a repertoire of performances learned during the journey to headship and within headship itself?
- To what extent is leadership as performance a contribution to the professional identity of heads in secondary education?
- To what extent does performance within headship lead to an emotional cost to the head teacher and how is this accommodated?
- What are the implications of leadership as performance for the training and development of heads?

These questions were not intended to restrict the research study but instead have been used to define it and enable a range of answers to be provided through the data collection. It is possible that each headteacher within the interview process could have presented a different conception of leadership as performance and in turn this could have altered the perceptions of how leadership performance can be developed in leaders.

The first question was necessary in order to baseline individuals’ understanding of the term ‘performance’ in terms of their leadership. The second enabled the heads to reflect upon their experiences in order for the first question to be put into a real

context scenario for them. The third question was designed in order for the respondent to consider the personal implications of enactment with question four supporting this with the significance of the impact that their professional identity may play on emotions. Question five, targeted specific development strategies in order to establish the required learning journey individuals need to go on to become effective leaders. Together this allowed for a better understanding of the extent that leaders use performance to effectively deliver to their followers to ensure that they are successful in their goals.

Research Design

The aim of this study is to investigate and answer the research questions. The method used as the basis to conduct the research will be seventeen-recorded semi-structured interviews. During the research it will be important to justify the methodology whilst considering the ethical matters and social contexts. The informants to be selected will be seventeen headteachers with a similar length of experience in leadership and from the same regional locality. The headteachers have been chosen from the West Midlands (Birmingham, Dudley and Worcestershire Local Authorities). The West Midlands is rich in mixed state secondary schools with a number of headteachers who are in the early stage of their incumbency phase. A list of all the schools within the locality and the serving time of each head was made, and from this list seventeen headteachers were interviewed. The first interview was taken as a pilot interview to allow the semi-structured interview to be trialed, evaluated and reviewed to ensure that the data gathered was rich.

To begin to understand and answer the research questions, the rest of the thesis initially reports on a focused literature review that I undertook consisting of a summary of existing material outlining the current ideas present in research. The relevant publications were selected through a library search using an electronic database. The main themes of the literature review were then written to enable the concomitant sub questions to be answered.

The design of the research will follow the nature of a constructivist, interpretivist and phenomenological survey lending itself to the method of semi structured tape-recorded interviews (Denscombe, 2008 and Pring, 2000). Interviews provide an easy humanistic angle rather than looking at and manipulating masses of data. The interviews gave a shape and direction by using an initial framework of questions although flexibility allowed the interviews to develop, if a response required additional inquiry (Cohen *et al*, 2000). The transcript of the interview is outlined and the findings interpreted using the method of qualitative data analysis, suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The findings of the research provided a discussion with reference to the literature review. A conclusion of this discussion was then made to answer the key research question. (Denscombe, 2008).

This piece of research sets out to establish whether leadership as performance exists and to what extent leaders need to develop such an enactment skill. Finally, viewing what emotional costs for the individual that this can result in. It is hoped that it will further develop the understanding of the necessary 'enactment' and 'performance' skills behind becoming and developing as a successful senior leader in secondary

schools. In undertaking this research I am sought to provide information that could inform future senior leaders, those planning for succession within their establishment and bodies who participate in developing leadership programmes. The aims are to build upon existing published research to further inform the stages and skills underpinning leadership development.

Ethical issues entailed in the Research

The ethical guidelines outlined in the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2004) provided appropriate direction throughout to ensure that ethical practice was adhered to. Before the date of the interviews, the participants were each informed of the nature of the piece of the research and with whom it would be shared. Participation was voluntary and took place under no duress knowing that they could have withdrawn at any time. The privacy of the research is ensured, highlighting confidentiality and anonymity (BERA, 2004). Gaining access to informants may have potentially been an issue and therefore the correct routes in gaining permission to interview were followed within each educational institution with individual consents given.

As BERA (2004) outlines: confidentiality and anonymity of informant’s data ought to be considered as the norm when executing research. Ethical issues that may arise between the informant and researcher need to be considered. As I am a current practitioner within a multi academy secondary setting, I had advantages and a degree of empathy whilst conducting the interviews. However, in contrast it was relevant to consider the impact that this may have had on the depth of information

shared by some respondents. My direct, or even indirect, professional relationships may have had an effect on the degree of insight provided by some. The reliability of the research then ought to be questioned …

> “The impact of the interviewer and of the context means that consistency and objectivity are hard to achieve. The data collected are, to an extent, unique owing to the specific context and the specific individuals involves. This has an adverse effect on reliability” (Denscombe, 2003. p190).

However, as the research is qualitative, taking upon the unique insight into individuals’ perspectives of performance leadership, the need for essential reliability was questioned.

Reporting the Findings

The purpose of the findings is to provide understanding of how a selected group of leaders believe the extent to which they have to ‘perform’ in order to be successful in their leadership delivery and to share their perspectives on how they have developed such enactment skills on their leadership journey. The findings are broken down into themes, which are directly related to the research questions and written in a discursive style with supportive tables and quotations from the seventeen informants. The discussion of the findings link together the key findings, with the research questions and the key literature reviewed. The intention of this piece is to further inform the research agenda, along with highlighting implications for leadership development programmes. This thesis may question further the strategies used within the vast array of leadership development programmes and the skill development on which they focus, to ensure that they are meeting the needs of

leaders in education

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided under a number of headings. The first part, introduces the research area, summarising the literature that has driven the initial outlook of the piece. It also allows for a brief background to the methodology and analysis of the interviews. The second part, identifies the main literature underpinning the research and is discussed. Part three, explains and justifies the research design. This includes how the sample was formed, the method of data analysis and the ethical issues, which arose from the research. The fourth part, presents and discusses the findings from the research data collected. The final part, the fifth part, concludes the research and draws a summary of its outcomes following the findings and links to key literature. It also suggests further research, which could be done following the outcomes and themes.

PART TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

With a vast amount of literature on educational leadership available an extensive and diverse landscape of research could be presented. In this chapter a selection of pertinent studies were drawn together from various sources to provide a wider field of the study of leadership. From this a more select choice of reading was taken to enable the main aims of this study to be reached: investigating the perceived existence of leadership as performance and to what extent leaders need to develop such an enactment skill. Within the literature a view of the emotional costs of the individuals were sought further to assist in the overall position of enactment, before looking at the wider literature of leadership formation. These studies will have contributed significantly to provide theoretical concepts and research approaches to draw out key themes used to underpin the proposed research questions. Due to an under representation of ‘performance’ within leadership, literature has been drawn from other social science sectors.

A range of different types of literature drawn from various sources, both empirical and scholarship academic research publications was reviewed to structure the framework for evaluation. The literature available on leadership in generic terms is vast. Throughout this literature review, current research was put into context by selecting a number of key studies to review leadership in more focused detail. Literature included books, research studies, government reports including literature from relevant agencies, such as the Department for Education (DfE), the National College for Teaching Leadership (NCTL) in addition to leading educationalist practitioners in

the field of school effectiveness and improvement. The critical reading of such research allowed for a consideration of the theoretical concepts and research approaches to be taken into account, allowing a formulation of underpinning key themes to emerge.

To allow for a rich and extensive literature selection a thorough search on available research took place. To begin with, key words surrounding the key themes and subject areas of the research questions were fed into research databases and the online library catalogue to identify the range of literature across these areas. Relevant articles and literature in both journals and publications were then sourced ready for critical review. From these the work done by these authors was then critiqued and their leading references and bibliographies were sourced, providing further information of other relevant work. Alongside these formal searches the use of Internet search engines, such as Google Scholar, were used to identify any articles using both key words and key authors. Supporting this the Internet was used to identify particular websites, for example the Department for Education, which holds specific information on key areas within the key themes. The result of these literature search activities presented key areas to be addressed and used to underpin and provide a framework for this thesis.

The key areas for this investigation were to widen the field of effective school leadership for school improvement, taking the leadership crisis literature to initiate an understanding of context and background for this research to occur. Through the various skills required to be a successful leader, one particular skill was highlighted

and identified within the literature: Leadership as performance. The understanding of enactment was developed to investigate whether or not it is a necessity to become a successful leader and if so, what can be done in order for it to be developed. The literature then led to provide an insight into professional identity, and the emotional cost this may have. Finally, finishing with plans for development strategies of leaders including various proposals in place for the succession of leaders. Hence why each key issue and theme will be addressed one at a time meaning that this literature review will take on a thematic basis.

Leadership being a Performance

Leadership is seen as a performance; it is about learning rituals and understanding the settings in which these should become transformative (Lumby & English, 2009). The position of leadership is one of authority with the ability to have ‘people skills’ which can inspire and engage others. These social interactions, if done successfully, can secure following and together can bring about change and subsequent improvement. The interactions of leaders is often considered within research in terms of emotional intelligence, professional identity, transformation and charisma but not often are references made to the means and mechanisms of leaders

> “putting on a successful show” (Rhodes & Greenway, 2010. p149).

In agreement with Lumby & English (2009) and Peck & Dickinson (2009), if leaders are to be successful in influencing others, they are required to portray their vision through a ritualized performance or a public recital. The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘performance’ as ‘the act or style of performing a work or role before an audience’. Performances involve human behaviour that can be seen (Butler, 1993; Peck and Dickinson, 2009). There seem to be two models in which a performance can be formulated:

> “the real, sincere, or honest performance; and the false one that thorough fabricators assemble for us” (Goffman, 1959. p77)

The concept that leadership involves performance is not a new concept, and in fact Aristotle made the connection stating that there were distinct institutional contexts of political deliberation, ceremonial oration and litigation and the ritual dimensions of

rhetoric. The ability to influence the audience with the use of words and props allows leaders to enter the world of performing arts, the theatre of rhetorical skill and the use of negotiation skills (Grint, 2000). The ability to have successful performances within institutional settings enables a more sustainable leadership approach to occur (Peck et al, 2009).

The theoretical framework for leadership and performance was initially linked and outlined by Peck et al. (2009). By taking literature from performing arts, two foundations were formed. The first engages with the work of Schechner (2003) drawing a distinction between leadership practice that ‘is’ a performance, and leadership practice that is reviewed metaphorically ‘as’ a performance within organisations. Leadership ‘is’ performance is more specifically related to organisational rituals, whereas leadership ‘as’ performance is linked to the more everyday interactions between performer and audience. Leadership performance is comprised and led by the dynamic interaction between the enactment, narrative and audience, and whether it occurs within formal rituals or informal interactions (Peck & Dickinson, 2010).

Heifetz (1994) relates the success of a leader to their ability to motivate followers, effectively engaging individuals to follow them collectively. The ability to lead a community means that followers are persuaded through social interactions, making reference to pre-existing artefacts, to be part of the collective identity (Grint, 2000). To enable them to do this, leaders may draw upon familiar routines, interpreting them for their followers to put it into context for them (Peck et al, 2009).

Leadership ‘is’ Performance

Performance as an academic discipline is underpinned within anthropology rites and ceremonies, which demonstrate the enactment of social relationships (Bell, 1997). Threaded through is the key literature for the ‘physical, verbal or virtual actions that are not-for-the-first-time; that are prepared or rehearsed’ (Schechner, 2003). The deliberate performances, that may even entail a literal performance for example the formal occasions of the organisations institutional contexts, such as board meetings, can be viewed as delivering a performance (Winkler, 1974). Successful leadership relies upon the performer, co-participants and the audience being fully aware and appreciative of the focus of the performance being given. Taking an assumption that a ‘performance’ is sequential, Hajer (2004) places it in four stages: *Scripting*, *Settings*, *Staging* and *Performance*. The performance of leadership is the adoption of a role within the ritual (Peck et al, 2009) and *not* acting. Peck et al (2009) would have characterised such performance as ‘transitive’, enabling the leader to direct their performance in order to obtain a precise outcome from their audience. Such ritual performances have the potential to provide challenge and subsequent change in organisations.

Leadership ‘as’ Performance

The context, reception and the ways in which behaviour could be approached, performed and presented bring about challenge within leadership. The additional challenge to a performance can be brought about by the ability to draw in the routines of ‘everyday life’. The revelation of explicit and implicit factors such as: gender, sexuality, race can highlight the presentation of a routine interaction

(McKenzie, 2001). The conventional performativity is seen as the ability to produce the goods effectively, and through techniques in performance can ensure the correct influential level of control. This form of performance leadership is viewed as leadership 'as' performance. Leaders are required to form a repertoire of performances, which need to be employed to ensure that followers remain committed (Rhodes & Greenway, 2010). The metaphorical nature of such performances allows the more informal, 'one off' contexts to be organised and displayed (Schechner, 2003). Leadership 'as' a performance implies a broader range of everyday interactions, perhaps linked to the other informal occasions of leadership, exemplifying the more improvised performances that necessarily occur in a variety of settings (Peck et al, 2009).

Butler (1993) links behaviour 'as' performance, and even when only performed once, it is said to be still performed. Schechner (2003) highlights that a spontaneous reaction occurs taking into account appropriate learning of culturally specific behaviour; it is the non-identical, no repetition of these performances which bring about the potential of change. The nature of these performances with numerous interactions and relationships of others within the organisational setting is for the leader to perform intransitively. The implication of intransitive, singular performances is that they must contain the potential to be repeated and interpreted. 'Real' performances are those, which have not been purposely put together, and are in fact an unintentional produce of the leaders unselfconscious enactment to the situation (Goffman, 1959).

Leadership Enactment

Whatever the performance and leadership position, it is viewed as a method of upholding existing institutional arrangements along with supporting potential change (Peck *et al*, 2009). An individual will have to confront many different encounters during their career and as a leader it is necessary to process, interpret and act upon these events accordingly to ensure that the individuals adapt and adopt the necessary professional characteristics. They ask that their followers take seriously the impression, and belief the part they play (Goffman, 1959). How the performance is delivered will need to take into account the context and who is present in the audience. These considerations will help to ensure that the audience is fully engaged, controlled, directed and trusting the message being conveyed (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010).

As a leader communicates with others they have to assume their roles and understand their actions to effectively work together. This could then be used to exert and use power, to coerce them, to manipulate or manage them. Power appears to be a resource and it is the leader's hierarchy and their charisma, which will lead their individual performances (Peck and Dickinson, 2009). The knowledge of colleagues is also a powerful tool. The leader has a moral obligation of whose interest it is to act in a particular manner and to establish beforehand the intended outcome of the performance (Busher, 2005). The potential of the leader to be able to be influential to others' beliefs, attitudes and actions can be stated as positional legitimised by the status of the individual or through personal power which is contributed by their individual connections with influential people, expertise, skills or knowledge.

Mintzberg (1983) emphasises that leadership is earned by gaining respect from individuals, whilst with the position of power has the ability to ‘power over’ subordinates when necessary with sanctions.

Peck & Dickinson (2010) use enactment, narrative and audience to frame the factors that a leader must consider when planning a literal or metamorphic performance. The enactment of the performance stems from what the leader will actually do, focusing on the dramaturgy to explore interactions. The enactment is required to take into consideration the place in which the performance will take place, the intention of the performer’s dress, tone of voice, the use of verbal and non-verbal cues to communicate their message, and what they perceive to be the impact of the performance. Upon reflection Peck & Dickinson (2009) found that the appropriate emotional tone was more likely to attract certain sorts of performance where critically the audience gained confidence in the performer. This is supported by a participant in their study who describes them purposefully choosing their dress and voice tone to suit the act they are about to perform which suits the ‘character’ they have adopted for this performance. The metaphor of ‘acting’ is a questionable issue that may arise from leadership being linked to performance. Consideration needs to be given to the status of ‘acting’ or whether it is rather a role in which the individuals become engrossed.

The narrative step refers to the story the leader will be required to relate to and the process which they will need to go through, in order to make sense of it for the audience. The audience witnesses the performance, drawing attention and

responding to the performer (Peck & Dickinson, 2010). With time for preparation performers can take a conscious decision upon the ‘style’ of the performance and the role required; prior to a performance individuals take the opportunity to pay attention to the pitch and speed of delivery, focusing upon the use of eye contact, adjusting performance to enable it response to non-verbal cues from the audience to be involved in the narrative preparation (Peck & Dickinson, 2010). Through Peck & Dickinson’s (2010) study they demonstrated some performance narratives to not be compelling, especially those that strayed from the impersonal and visual aspects of a performance, with a reduction of attention by some of the audience. Those performances that did encourage the audience to engage were those that exhibited traditional features of a narrative structure.

The final stage of this framework is audience: the approach to shaping the expectations of the audience. Peck & Dickinson (2010) recognised the consequence of communicating and interacting with one part of the audience, and how this may not be appropriate to others. The audience’s perseverance over time is linked therefore to the efficacy of the performance. The participants involved in Peck & Dickinson (2010) study found that the leader’s performance had a higher impact on the audience when they took the opportunity to meet with the audience informally prior. Meaning that the interaction with the audience will be interdependent of the literal (‘is’) and the metaphorical (‘as’) performance position.

Improvising Leadership

Schreyogg & Hopfl (2004) observe

> "in work organisations, the actor is constrained by context, role and script, with a limited capacity for … improvisation" (Schreyogg & Hopfl, 2004. p695)

But is this really the case? The ability to improvise is viewed as a semi-instinctive set of skills, allowing the performer to respond to a changing environment and for a leader, improvisation may allow for leadership patterns to be explored further, for theory to be practiced, for 'leading by ear' to occur, and for risk taking to take place. However, like leadership perhaps improvisation may not be learnt, but certainly competency in both can be developed (Newton, 2010). Leadership is not, as Katzenbach & Smith (1993) alluded to many organisations assuming that leadership is something in which you are born with, whereby individuals either have the qualities of leadership or they do not, but you cannot learn them. Newton (2010) places his study upon the basis that leadership is linked to improvisation, leading to the concept that improvisation in leadership is a learned skill, not innate, and therefore can be developed. In relation to Peck & Dickinson's (2010) framework for performance, an improviser will begin with their *enactment*; what it is that is to be performed. The performer chooses their tone and takes into account other external factors and matches the style accordingly (*narrative*). Katzenbach & Smith (1993) relate this enactment and narrative of performance to the 'standards' that the performance will be held against; this is linked with the mission, vision, goals and purpose of any performance with a 'passionate dedication'. Together, connecting the goal and approach, enables the *audience* to follow as a collective (Newton, 2010). School leadership must focus upon school improvement, to enable the pupils' outcomes and

school community are the very best they can be. This quite often begins with a mission statement – a common goal, such statements are only effective if they are constructed by school leaders to give meaning, passion, translating this into the collaboration of team members (Newton, 2010).

A performer who focuses upon the skill of improvisation will have the ability to adjust their performance to their surroundings, circumstances and context. A leader should have the ability to improvise and apply their knowledge to new settings applying intellect, intuition as well as the requirement to undertake comprehensive preparation (Newton, 2010).

Performance and Performativity

Damian Hodgson (2005) discusses the need to put on a professional performance highlighting the importance of procession enactment of professionalism against professional knowledge and expertise. He supports the statement given by Becker (1970) that

> “to be accepted one must have learned to play the part, taking an interactionism position. From this perspective, professionalism through performance is reinforced and gains legitimacy to those in the audience to the enactment. This perspective is through the claim of competence and the conduct of what is expected from a professional” (Becker, 1970. p4)

Butler (1993) explains that

> “performative acts are forms of authoritative speech; most performatives, for instance, are statements that, in the uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a binding power” (Butler, 1993. p171)

This ‘professional conscience’ is a self-disciplinary mechanism that is important for leaders to be inducted into a profession for both knowledge and conduct. The repetition of performances enables the individual to enact as a ‘professional’ and simultaneously enables individuals to conduct themselves as the ‘professional’. Leaders request that their performance is taken seriously, and the audience believes that they posses the professional attributes that their character appears to portray (Goffman, 1959).

Lyotard (1993) sets about explaining the use of language through the work of Wittgenstein, outlining ‘language games’ or ’phrase regimens’ having numerous meaning when being used for performance. An individual taking upon their own perspective and story enables performances to be different, diverse due to the incompatibility of aspirations, beliefs and desires. The concept of an obvious ‘performativity’ will question the ‘real truth’ and therefore the ethics in which it sits. The ‘performativity’ opens up the notion of gaining power and authority over others with the examination on the process of how this is done.

What do we mean by Professional Identity?

Professional identity refers to:

> “the constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role” (Ibarra, 1999. p764).

Professional identity is seen to have a cognition that outlines the perceived behavioural control, perceived social pressure and attitude towards a career change (Svetlana *et al*, 2007). A clear professional identity highlights an individual’s relationship between career, self-efficacy and their attitude towards a career change and development.

A leader’s professional identity

Leaderships’ professional identity has emerged in the last decade as a prominent research area in its own right; drawing upon definitions used in the social sciences and philosophy (Beijaard et al, 2004). Erikson (1968) looked into the identity formation, relating it to social context and the stages of individuals interacting with his or her environment over time. Individual identity develops through the interaction and communication within social settings; this aspect of learning assumes the roles of others within which developmental reflection occurs accordingly. The vast majority of research in this area takes upon a largely epistemological view rather than empirical, taking the perspective of individual’s acceptance to the concept of multiple identities and faces of leadership, leaving behind the belief of monism being an absolute (Lumby & English, 2009).

The concept of self and identity is prevalent to a leader’s position of presenting themselves to followers and potential followers (Lumby & English, 2009). There have been two viewpoints from which educational professional identity has been taken. The first is related to the concept of professional identity being related to teachers’ concepts or images of self (Knowles, 1992; Nias 1989) together they determine the way in which leaders lead, develop and their attitudes towards educational reform (Beijaard et al, 2004). The second takes an emphasis upon the role of the teacher focusing upon the reflection and self-evaluation of the individual to form their professional identity (Kerby, 1991). The position of authority that a teacher holds in social society inevitably influences the professional work they do and their lives based upon experiences and personal background, interweaving the two aspects (Beijaard et al, 2004).

Engaging professional identity into leadership preparation, John Heywood (2005) comments that:

> “the ability to function in social groups of all kinds requires an understanding of self as we move within a plurality of social systems. It is a two-way process, attitudes and values feed into the societal process as well as the other way round, and groups take on their own identity and create their own culture”. (Heywood, 20015. p44)

It is from this that Lumby & English (2009) explore the nature of identity and its relationship with leadership, performance of leadership and the preparation for such development.

To begin with they suggest that:

- Self is neither unitary nor one-dimensional; instead it is multifaceted,

examining the functions of mythology, past and present, in human affairs.

- Performance of leadership is open to the interpretation of individuals, with differentiation occurring through continuous negotiation within culture and context.
- Leadership preparation ought to take initiation in constructing individual identity to enable efficient subsequent performance to follow.

Historically identity stems from mythology;

> “myths enabled the individual to understand his place in the world, to grasp the dimensions of being human, to comprehend limits and purpose and perhaps give meaning to human existence’ (Larue, 1975. p183)

It is from this that social science has refracted identity through the means of anthropology, sociology and psychology (Lumby & English, 2009). Leadership can be linked to mythology as from both direction and justification is provided for action, with leadership arising as the force for such guidance in human affairs. Gardner (1995) proposes that leaders subconsciously make the link between myth and leadership through ‘story telling’ taking into account the embodiment of the story and the reaction of the followers.

> “Identity isn’t given once and for all: it is built up and changes through a person’s lifetime” (Maalouf, 2000. p20).

Creating for the individual a sense of understanding of their self whilst addressing the contentious issue that may rise as they seek a sense of belonging with those that

they interact with (Lumby & English, 2009). Identity forms by being part of a community, focused upon ideas, principles and roles; for a school leader this offers a freer position in which to construct and project identity with less definition embedded in stereotype. It is from this that multiple identities of school leaders may be created and used in their performance, as Bauman (2004) states ‘Identities are for wearing and showing, not for storing and keeping’.

Wenger (1998) placed the argument that identity and practice mirror one another, and developed five dimensions to support and link to understanding the concept of professional identity further: (1) identity as *negotiated experiences* where experiences and participation allow individuals and others to reify oneself. (2) identity as *community* where the individuals place themselves by the familiar and the unfamiliar; (3) identity as *learning trajectory* where individuals establish who they are, where they’ve been and where they will go to. (4) identity as *nexus of multi membership* where consolidation and reconciliation of various forms of identity transfer into one identity; and (5) identity as *a relation between the local and the global* where the individual ascertains their position of belonging to a broader assemblage.

Professional identity for individuals within educational settings is not straightforward; inconsistencies between the individuals themselves against proposed systems and unions would change the contextual and individual factors, demands and pressures. A continuous evaluation, reestablishment and negotiation must occur to enable differentiation of us to act whilst remaining the same person (Melucci, 1996). It is the

professional identity that distinguishes the expertise of individuals and that differentiates between individuals within the school community in the context of educational leadership (Sachs, 2001).

For a school leader to take on their leadership identity strategies are required to counter the feelings of insecurity and doubtful worth; a positive sense of belonging is needed to enable them to feel as if they have a substantial role to play. Leaders are seen to metamorphosise their initial identity by removing any stigmatism as they adopt the mantle of the role of educational leader (Lumby et al, 2007). It is the leader’s identity that binds and links them to their followers in order to carry out social-cultural drama (Lumby & English, 2009).

> “Leadership lives are, for the most part, determined by role expectations. These roles are often not for with the deeper personal needs of a leader. In times of crisis, questions of identity and role are usually heightened and move to the forefront” (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2002. p8).

Adopting a professional identity as a leader

Once the leader has determined their ‘role’ and understood the sense and notion of the ‘script’ that they are delivering to their followers they are in a position to form the performance.

> “A person’s emotional identity influences their personal educational leadership narrative, because personal and social identities are very closely related.” (Crawford, 2009. p121)

Professional identity within performance will be directly linked to leadership preparation and development. This entails a deeper understanding of how aspirant

leaders achieve professional identity, taking on the part of leader, learning the script and delivering the performance. The preparation and development a leader will be required to undertake will be profoundly different according to the way in which they perceive themselves and how others perceive their level of authoritative status;

> “a high status in the organisation may metamorphose a stigmatised identity into a badge of honour’ (Lumby, 2009. p3).

As individuals attempt leadership, their social acceptance and status may be put at risk, seeing themselves as potential leaders and therefore adopting the provisional leadership identity that accompanies the status. The formation of such leadership identities is upheld through increasing experience, associating component skills, which are necessary for successful leadership (Lord and Hall, 2005).

The stages of leadership identity can be directly linked to the active position of leadership. The first is the individual level where one is unique and different from others; the second is relational which places the individual with specific roles or relations and finally, collective, which is a desire to develop with specific qualities, prototypical to the group. As leaders develop they move from individual to collective demonstrated through their own professional identity and that of their followers (Lord, and Hall 2005). The collective identity elicits positive social motivation and behaviour, which benefits the leader’s followers (De Cremer, 2002). Initially, leaders who are inexperienced are focused upon their own learning of leadership and the behaviours related to this that enables them to demonstrate their uniqueness, being different from other potential leaders. Leaders who are gaining their leadership identity are

often sensitive to feedback, and want just to be recognised as a leader (Lord and Hall, 2005). Hogue & Lord (2004) and Ridgeway (2003) speculate that certain stigmatisms may find it more difficult to develop leadership identity, for example women because their leadership attempts may be less accepted.

The ability for the leader to develop the skill of self-monitoring and reflection allows them to develop further giving them the insight into deepening specific knowledge and connectionist networks. Developing positive, differentiated relationships can strengthen the leader’s position and identity. The professional identity of the leader will ultimately influence whether the leader develops dyadic level or group level skills (Lord and Hall, 2005). Together, leaders and followers can make sense of the performance by actively constructing joint identities (Reicher & Hopkins, 2003). The final shift to a collective leadership, focusing upon followers and group-centred leadership is associated with additional experience giving the leader the understanding and development to enact and promote a number of identities. Expert leaders can learn to assimilate these identities to ensure that the performance is sensitive to the audience as well as being authentic, rather than abruptly shifting from one to another in an awkward, unconvincing fashion (Lord and Hall, 2005).

Developing the leader’s professional identity

The professional identity of a leader is a cyclical development process with key questions such as ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Who do I want to become?’ giving the individual the opportunity for constant evaluation and interpretation of experiences (Beijaard et al., 2004). The professional identity of an individual is underpinned through the

individual’s personal life and their own history, the interaction with others in the work-place and the influence of work-related experiences (Busher, 2005). Professional characteristics are adapted and adopted according to these factors and together through the interaction between person and context their Professional Identity is formed. The establishment of an individual’s identity takes into account the type and quality of discourses such as the democratic professionalism, which emerges from the profession, and a managerial professionalism that is reinforced by employing authorities through accountability and effectiveness. It is these experiences, encountered in their own professional school leadership pathway, that shapes the identity and offers the insight into school leadership and management practices (Rhodes, 2006).

Rhodes (2012a) sets out a framework for professional development that is designed to increase self-efficacy. With self-efficacy underpinning the

> “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainment” (Bandura, 2003. p391),

It is apparent that the importance of professional identity is directly linked to self-efficacy and the leader’s ability to perform. Those who believe that an event can be conducted in a particular manner will execute it more effectively. This can therefore demonstrate itself to be an important factor in developing leadership performance. An individual’s self-efficacy is thought to be able to develop through practice, for ongoing learning and performance development (Khapova *et al*, 2007).

> “People acquire self-efficacy information from knowledge of others through social

> comparisons. Those who observe similar peers perform a task are apt to believe that they, too are capable of accomplishing it. To remain credible, however, information acquired vicariously requires validation by actual performance” (Schunk, 1995. p112)

Leaders need peers in order to develop their performance ability but need to action their own sense of self-efficacy in order to implement action. A successful programme for performance development is one therefore where modeling and subsequent enactment occurs.

The emotional cost to performance

Emotion and leadership has played an important role in business management and organisational psychology and it is now demonstrating itself to be of growing importance in educational settings. A wider understanding of the interrelationship between emotion and leadership enables a more coherent understanding to be made of leadership role and development, rather than purely being ‘aware of emotions’ and the prominent interest of ‘emotional difficulties’ (Gerrod, 2001). James describes how leading effective schools are facilitated by the recognition and understanding of the environment created by emotions and the power of often subconscious emotion (James, 2000). Megan Crawford emphasises that the relationships with staff, pupils and parents, are quite literally at the heart of leadership, with the headteacher being at the centre of these emotional relationships (Crawford, 2009). Emotions are interpreted through the understanding of human relationships interlinked into the everyday lives of educational leaders. The defined term ‘emotion’ takes into account feelings (experiences), emotions (demonstrated feelings) and moods (longer term feelings) (Gerrod, 2001). A headteacher needs to be aware of their emotions and how they affect relationships within the educational organisation in which they are deemed leaders (Crawford, 2007).

The emotions demonstrated through the practice of leadership need to be intrinsic (Crawford and James, 2006), meaning that actions are influenced directly by emotion. The leader is required to acknowledge the emotions that are demonstrated throughout the culture of the organisation and make them explicit through their own leadership conduct (Crawford, 2007). Relationships of all varieties are an integral

make up of all schools with leadership being the social process in which schools are built, including the wider community. The headteacher is the leader who is fundamentally accountable for the success or failure of their school with parents and the community widely viewing them as the most important individual responsible for their child’s progress. This therefore demonstrates itself to be a demanding and accountable leadership role (Crawford, 2007).

> “Headteachers that do the job well emphasis ‘care and connection’ with their educational values and are able to nurture that in others. Care and connection can lead to high performance but may not be sustainable in the longer term.” (Crawford, 2009. p102)

The ability to lead requires a distinct level of ability to connect to other individuals, but it also requires the leader to have the ability to connect to their own emotions and longer-term moods within the setting. Oatley and Jenkins (2003) state that different emotions will arise on a daily basis and are regarded to be ‘about’ something. The action of controlling emotions will inevitably impact upon the way in which it is demonstrated to the audience. Performances led by the headteacher will be required to integrate social reality and social encounters to categorise the dramatic interaction necessary, and accumulatively this may strain effective leadership. An individual’s emotional state may be laboured or strained if they are required to simulate or suppress feeling according to their enactment and audience, to ensure that outwardly they appear in order according to their position of power. However, Hochschild (1983) argues that leaders are not put under this emotional strain unless the emotions are conflicting - *‘emotional dissonance’*. It is at this point that Dollard *et al* (2003) state that those leaders suffering from emotional dissonance are unable to regulate their own emotions, and it is then that work-related stress may ensue. The ability of a leader to be able to regulate their emotional influences is key, as is the

way in which they are able to express emotions within the different enactments that they are faced. It is to this that Gronn (2003) contemplates that those within an intense school life may generate their own version of emotional dissonance different to other organisations (Crawford, 2007).

Within the repertoire of performances and enactments which the leader has to undertake, the question is raised, whether through experience individuals are more likely to give the best response, and therefore whether the emotional regulation is more conscious and succinct. This may also be the case for less conscious approaches, without them even being aware of the practice being carried out. The leader's ability to regulate their emotion according to the situation is perceived predominantly by the audience (Crawford, 2007). The leader's decision on how to perform will be based upon past leadership experiences, how they lead themselves and others, life experiences and their personalities (Dillard, 1995). Fineman (2003) adds to this complicated mix, by stating that the leader is required to rationalise their emotions to make them unemotional; it is the leaders which needs to ultimately make the decision, and live with the consequences (Crawford, 2007).

Fundamentally 'emotions are inherent' and 'emotions are socially constructed'; emotions are related to the individual, it is the individual's emotional self that is related to the reaction of specific stimuli or events (Lupton, 1998 and Crawford, 2007). With many leaders avoiding headship as they "have little desire to mortgage their future for a job that is seen as stressful and often thankless" the need to heighten self-efficacy is more apparent. Helms-Lorenz *et al* (2012) suggests that

perceived increases in self-efficacy can greatly reduce emotional stress and provide coping mechanisms; it is these coping mechanisms that may reduce the emotional strain that the range of leadership performances can carry (Rhodes, 2012a).

The impact of self-efficacy on leadership performance

Self-efficacy is described as ‘one’s own beliefs in their capabilities to organise and execute a course of action required to attain a set goal’ it is ‘the belief an individual has in their ability to do the job’ (Bandura, 1977). Leaders self-efficacy has been identified as an important antecedent to effective or transpiring leadership (Leithwood and Beatty, 2007). Those individuals who believe in their actions and are more self-determined, are those who have a higher potential in achieving success in a leadership journey, moving from aspirant to incumbent (Goker, 2006). The perception of having and displaying a positive self-efficacy can reduce stress and provide coping strategies when faced with threatening situations; therefore those with a high self-efficacy are in a more stable position emotionally to tackle a ‘leadership career’ (Helms-Lorenz *et al,* 2012). Therefore, conversely, those with low self-efficacy may avoid or disengage with the next steps into leadership, meaning that subsequent talent is lost from the ‘pool’. Further research into self-efficacy does suggest that there is the potential to nurture individuals and encourage collaboration to enable feelings of self-efficacy to change and grow overtime (Bandura, 1977).

Why is a leadership focus required?

The past decade has given rise to much research into educational leadership drawing together the focus on school performance and school improvement which has taken centre stage of many social, economic and political considerations in education internationally. The relationship between successful school leadership and school improvement has become an integral component and subsequently a shift of focus onto leadership development has occurred. The nature of good leadership can bring about positive change within the school establishment and can act as a precursor to school improvement (Rhodes, 2012a; Rhodes *et al*, 2009; Briggs *et al*, 2006). The importance of leadership development subsequently needs to be focused upon to enable school improvement to occur (Rhodes, 2012a).

Interest in school leadership has been fuelled further by the well documented ‘leadership crisis’ within educational establishments in our society and beyond (Rhodes, 2012a). Leadership within schools is losing its people due to a surge of retirement and through leaders stepping down from their positions due to the demanding nature of the role (Rhodes *et al*, 2009). Education in many countries has brought about a crisis of ‘recruitment and retention’. Leaders are not just leaving due to demographics, or stresses of the job but also because of the role it-self changing (Rhodes *et al*, 2009; Hargreaves, 2009). Many leaders find the role demanding and struggle to achieve a successful work-life balance. It is no longer the next stage of professional development for many incumbent deputy heads and middle leaders (Rhodes *et al*, 2009).

Phases in a life and career of a school leader

As Gunter (2001) describes, the professional pathways have been theorised through identification and abstraction of phases. Throughout each of these phases, a selection of categories within career phases of aspirant Heads are identified: self-belief, effectiveness, ambition, enthusiasm, management style, reaction to external demands, and development of professional expertise (Day and Bakioglu, 1996).

The four phases that are described by Gronn (1999) as a ‘leadership career’ are as follows:

1. *Formation:* socialisation and experiences from childhood to adulthood.
2. *Accession:* preparation and positioning to be a leader.
3. *Incumbancy:* experience and maturity as a leader.
4. *Divestiture:* letting go from the leader role.

(Gunter, 2001)

For the purpose of this literature review only the two initial stages will be explored further, due to the length of tenure of the informants and the focus for the leadership development of aspiring or new-to-post headteachers.

Formation

Gronn (1999) explains that the first phase (formation) is when an individual grows from infancy to adulthood, taking into account the influence that their upbringing, education and peer groups will have on the development of their character. As an individual’s character develops, there are three main influential factors that may

affect the structure: families, schooling and a range of peer influences. Adult and peer figures will all have an influence on standards towards moral values and respect of authorities. Schooling will either have a supportive role with these influences or it will challenge and contradict these beliefs. Mentors, peers and influential media also will play their role in shaping the social identification of an individual (Gronn, 1999).

Accession

The second phase, accession, according to Gronn (1999) is the phase where the leader rehearses and learns by experiences, which prepare them for headship (Gronn, 1999). During this phase, primed candidates for leadership take opportunities to rehearse their potential leadership abilities alongside the skills of existing leaders. The developing leader will use this phase to acknowledge and impress mentors with their aptitude. Individuals will seek potential openings systematically to enhance their preferment (Gronn, 1999).

Day and Bakioglu (1996) explore these initial phases differently, classifying their development into ‘initiation’, ‘development’, ‘autonomy’ and ‘disenchantment’. Again due to the tenure of the informants only ‘initiation’ is suited for further exploration. ‘Initiation’ takes the shape of ‘learning on the job’, involving the addition of new ideas, tasks and aspirations whilst accommodating them around their existing framework.

In 2002, Ribbins and Gunter combines these two models to interpret the lives and careers of headteachers. Formation: making headteachers, the concept of ‘self’ is formed initially by the interaction of family members, school, peer groups and the

community. Accession: achieving headship, firstly becoming a teacher and then looking for advancement within the profession. This involves taking on particular leadership roles gaining experience ready for promotion. A network of mentors and peers forms allowing potential candidates to test their readiness in comparison with existing head teachers (Ribbins & Gunter, 2002).

Ambition on its own will not ensure that an individual has the necessary accompanying talent, but by providing ‘experience of project leadership’ and allowing ‘accessing development course’ an individual can promote leadership talent (Rhodes *et al,* 2008). The identification, development and succession of leadership talent can be dictated by the amount of responsibility which is distributed. An element of succession planning is to ensure that potential leaders have opportunity to enhance their leadership skills (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2009b). This goes on to allow individuals with actual or potential leadership qualities to be developed to provide talent within an establishment (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2009b).

As identified in Rhodes *et* al (2008), Lambert (2003) also identifies the importance of the school developing a leadership-learning environment to encourage teachers to emerge as leaders in early career stages, with Baker (2003) stating that this identification is possible after two or three years of teaching. A positive leadership learning environment can be created by considering several developmental aspects: recognizing and rewarding leadership activity, being open about people’s strengths and weaknesses, valuing emotional intelligence, seeking to understand and identify individuals’ needs and deliberately looking out for appropriate leadership

opportunities to develop them, showing high levels of trust, fostering teamwork and being welcome to new ideas (Anon b, 2009).

Rhodes *et al* (2008) found that 72% of their respondents indicated that it was the responsibility of the individual middle leaders and classroom teachers to decide upon their own necessary steps to develop leadership qualities and career progression. The degree of visibility and self-expression to one or more members of the senior leadership team seemed to be invaluable when it came to internal leadership promotion (Rhodes *et al*, 2008).

> “We learn best when we are committed to taking charge of our own learning. Taking charge of our own learning is part of taking charge of our lives, which is the sine qua non of becoming an integrated person.” (Bennis and Goldsmith, 1997. p9)

Using Boyatzis’ theory of self-directed learning a sequenced model is outlined to direct leadership development. The first and second discovery is ‘self’ – Who am I and who do I want to be? This is followed by the third discovery of ‘my learning agenda’ – How can I build on my strengths while reducing my gaps? The fourth discovery – What actions do I need to take? Finally trusting relationships and support needs to be put into place – Who can help me? (West-Burnham, 2005)

The relationship between school effectiveness, school improvement and school leadership

School effectiveness is summarised by Mortimore (1991) in Stoll and Fink (1996) as a school, which maximises pupils’ progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake. Stoll and Fink (1996) define a school that is effective by:

the way in which it promotes progress for all, ensures that each pupil achieves the highest standards possible, enhances all aspects of pupil achievement and development and finally a school which continues to improve year on year is classed as being effective. Sammons *et al* (1995) lists the top three factors, which have the greatest influence on school effectiveness as: Professional Leadership, Shared Vision and A Learning Environment. These factors provide the framework within which changing capacity in schools can occur enabling vast school improvement (Stoll and Fink, 1996).

School improvement has become a dominant educational discourse (Frost *et al*, 2000). The main aims for school improvement are to enhance pupil progress, achievement and development whilst building in the capacity to manage change (Stoll and Fink, 1996). It is unique to a school's context and must come from within the establishment to ensure that it is led in its chosen direction, whilst taking into account the interconnected external influencing factors (Stoll and Fink, 1996). If schools are to continue upon an improving journey, strong leadership is required to work alongside collegiate working of all practitioners (Frost *et al*, 2000). Michael Fullan promotes that 'every teacher is a change agent' (Fullan, 1993: 39) promoting the altruistic value of why individuals enter the profession, and how leadership does not have to be restricted to middle leaders or subject leaders. The Department for Education introduced guidance of the five-stage self-improvement cycle to schools in 2001, enabling a basis for school analysis and target setting.

1. *The school analyses its current performance*
2. *The school compares its results with those of similar schools*
3. *The school sets itself clear and measurable targets*
4. *The school revises its development plan to highlight action to achieve the targets*
5. *The school takes action, reviews success and starts the cycle again*

The five stages are helpful but do not provide the strategies which leaders need to undertake to embed improvements to allow results of a positive impact on school effectiveness. It is therefore important that school leaders are realistic about educational change and ensure that they foster and support change through the role which they play, in leading others to bring about real and lasting change.

> "Good leadership is one of the key features of successful schools. This has been emphasised time and again … it has always been the case, particularly in Britain where heads have a powerful role, but the major changes which are affecting schools will make even more significant demands" (National Commission on Education, 1993. p229).

Mortimore *et al* (1988) outline school leadership as one of the key factors in school effectiveness:

> "Purposeful leadership occurred where the headteacher understood the needs of the school and was involved actively in these school's work, without exerting total control over the rest of the staff … effective headteachers were sufficiently involved in, and knowledgeable about what went on in classrooms and about the progress of individual pupils" (Mortimore *et al*, 1988. p250).

Leadership in organisations is predominantly about the change in people; focusing the attention upon their perceptions of reality and particularly their sense of self is a key to successful change (Fullan, 1993). Invitational leadership enables leaders to

communicate with people that inform them that they are able, responsible and worthwhile to be ‘change agents’. The interaction and communication of invitational messages from leaders to individuals and groups helps to develop a shared and evolving vision for school improvement (Stoll and Fink, 1996).

Succession planning: A self-improving system for Talent Management

The raised level of expectations for school leaders has led to an international interest in the effectiveness of the journey to leadership (Rhodes, 2002). Succession planning is deemed vital in these times of national leadership crisis. Individuals are ‘voting with their feet’ and not wanting to take on the headship position. Structured succession planning can enable a pool of individuals to supply and flow into headship positions and leadership teams. Governments and schools themselves are investing an enormous amount of time, resources and money to ensure that successive planning can occur. Embedded within the Teaching School agenda it is expected that successful succession planning strategies be used to identify and develop individuals to fill leadership positions. In order to meet this responsibility Teaching Schools must develop future Headteachers; actively seek to support more woman and leaders from minority ethnic backgrounds to become senior leaders; build strategic governance in order to make decisions about developing and placing potential leaders (National College of Teaching and Leadership, 2016). This allows establishments to enhance individuals’ career prospects making them better leaders and professional within their role. In turn this allows school systems to be more effective in providing school improvement (Bush, 2009).

This stepped change focus from the National College of Teaching and Leadership joins its vision for seven identified areas of addressing leadership shortages: retaining talented leaders, attracting talented leaders, identifying talented leaders, recruiting and inducting leaders, developing leaders, accelerating career progression for those with good leadership potential and actions to manage and support the careers of leaders (Rhodes, 2012b). Until recently the concept of leadership talent management in schools has been under-explored, with the NCTL first providing guidance to schools in March 2014 on how to successfully recruit, develop and retain school leaders (Rhodes, 2012b and NCTL, 2014).

Talent management has begun to take centre stage in educational settings, a consequence of the accruing leadership crisis, and the self-improving educational settings. But Rhodes (2012b) questions the uncertain conceptualisation of the essential components of good talent management and exclaims that they “may serve to limit facilitation of the journey to leadership, undermine the transition to leadership of those who could lead well but never had the chance and, limit actions intended to foster the successful enactment of leadership within schools”. A strategic approach for schools in harbouring this journey is to ensure that commitment to the organisation occurs and involves the creation of a high ability talent pool. The level of commitment of an individual is a measure of their affiliation to and identification with an organisation and maintains the psychological contract with those skilled individuals (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Rhodes (2012a) suggests that talent management should instill the confidence and belief that as individuals they can perform and reach their potential leadership ability.

The identification of leaders is perceived to be indicative of leadership talent, highlighting characteristics such as communication skills, vision and the respect of stakeholders, professional values and enthusiasm (Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevell, 2008). Leithwood *et al* (2006) reports that we have insights into these characteristics of leadership, which will benefit the lives of learners. The Hay Group (2008) suggest that the 'potential' opposed to a proven competence is difficult to define and presented the following characteristics of individuals who hold leadership potential: 'thinking beyond the boundaries', 'curiosity and eagerness to learn', 'social understanding and empathy' and 'emotional balance'.

Those responsible for identifying potential talent need to ascertain for themselves how to identify individuals. It is important to align commitment and motivation with organisational goals, and the majority will most likely link these decisions directly to school objectives for improvement and not necessarily highlight talent at all. In some establishments, it may be a mistake for stakeholders to identify individuals who are purely compliant to government policy and the standards of the day. Influential decisions maybe made based upon the notion of 'homophily', relating to someone 'like themselves' meaning that they rank more highly in their thinking than perhaps established in practice (Rhodes, 2012a). However, those individuals in leadership are more successful when a shared identity within a group is created is "leaders are most effective when they induce followers to see the group's interest as their own interest" (Reicher et al, 2007, p. 24) with individuals presenting the desired characteristics expected or required of the group (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). The school's management to ensure accession, incumbency and commitment must be a priority to

realise improvement and making sure those who can bring about such improvement are not constrained. There are many studies that interrelate high quality leadership, school effectiveness and school improvement enabling change to be implemented in their schools (Rhodes, 2012b). The importance of knowing how and when leadership talent is identified and supported is coupled with the importance of confidence and self belief (Rhodes, 2012b) to ensure that the leader is in a position of capability to mobilise the school population’s self-esteem (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002).

Once identified, aspirant leaders need to

> “relish challenge and effort and to use errors as routes to mastery” (Dweck, 1999. p4)

In order to aid individuals to transform their professional identity and enhance an individual’s ‘self-efficacy’ (Rhodes, 2012b). Rhodes (2012b) proposes that coaching and mentoring can have a positive impact on the potential of an individual to lead and deliver high performance in leadership.

Mentoring and coaching have become integral within professional development from initial training to leadership progression but they do not solve all aspects of career transition and they do not necessarily lead to leadership success (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). Mentoring is often believed to focus on ‘getting the job done’ whereas the importance of developing an individual’s self-efficacy is an increasingly more important strand. “The process of acquiring a professional persona can be threatening and damaging to an individual’s sense of self. Mentors need to be aware of this and incorporate that knowledge into their planning” (Brooks and Sikes, 1997).

Rhodes & Beneicke (2002) proposes that the development and mentoring of an individual into headship ought to span the length of the individual’s professional career; this is appreciated by Robertson’s (2008) inquiry approach for coaching educational leadership.

Leadership Development

Joyce *et al* (1999) inform us of their research that in the 19th century, there was no thought to life-long learning for colleagues, collaboratively working together to collegiately renew their school culture. Instead teaching was not a career and therefore the concept of continuing study did not need to be addressed (Joyce *et al*, 1999). As the 20th century progressed, so did teacher education. Teacher training courses of one year, which was later extended to two were established. However, there was no thought or time given to enable staff to develop together and plan collaboratively to enable a renewal of school improvement. Currently times are more propitious, with full awareness and strategic actions in order to establish teaching as a life-long learning profession which in turn will ensure that schools evolve to meet the needs of individuals and the school's improvement objectives (Joyce *et al,* 1999).

Joyce and Showers (1982, 1995) reviewed key components of training:

1. *Presentation of theory*. Providing the rationale and basis to enable the verbal description and verbal technique to be illustrated.
2. *Modelling and demonstrations*. The enactment of a skill or strategy can be modelled.
3. *Practice in the workplace or in simulated conditions*. Enabling the trainee to 'try out' the new skill or strategy.
4. *Structured feedback*. Reflection upon observation, allowing a cyclic practice-feedback-practice sequence to take place.
5. *Coaching for classroom application*. Providing guidance and analysis of the approach chosen by the trainee.

Taking the five components and carefully designing a development programme, there is a high chance of successful implementation to enable school improvement to be demonstrated (Joyce *et al,* 1999).

Leadership Performance Development

To become an educational leader, it is fundamental that performance is created, a fabrication and enactment of a role (Cornelisson, 2004) taking the position of a theatrical performance. The metaphorical comparison of leadership to a theatrical performance means that they must be sufficiently alike; leading a school is not acting but does involve performance and rituals (Lumby & English, 2009). Based on the concept that leadership is about engaging individuals through enactment, they link their professional identity to the ‘role’ in which they wish to achieve, the ‘script’ which needs to be written and learned, and finally the ‘performance’ itself to ensure that it is acceptable for the ‘audience’ (Lumby & English, 2009).

Preparing to be educational leaders must then take place amongst the players, adopting the role prescribed. The detail of the script is constructed by the dominating fashionable values, and practice nature (Lumby & English, 2009. p105). It is thought that improvisation is a ‘spontaneous composition’ with the inclination that a successful performance will flow naturally, however as Steinel (1995) suggests a performance may require aspects of preparation. Improvisers prepare for any eventuality through a variety of contexts and situations. Leaders have the responsibility to prepare, including skill development, experience and failure (DePree, 1992) ‘we must search for a creative fecundity and successes, that will bring about

the changes and improvements we need’. Preparation within leadership skills is imperative, ‘preparation for leadership is a clear debt to followers and the organisation’ (DePree, 1992).

‘Learning to lead’ has never been as predominate and necessary in research as it is now (Rhodes, 2012a). The most appropriate manner, in which the development of leadership behaviour should take place, is under great debate (Bush, 2009). A range of development strategies are currently available: leadership internships, National training course, networking, in school training, job rotation, shadowing, peer support and coaching and mentoring (Rhodes *et al*, 2009; Rhodes, 2012b). All development strategies aim to encourage aspirant headteachers to become involved in their professional growth, transforming their identity. The leaders can become more aware of the role and responsibilities required and can become more socialised into the expected behaviours and the development of skills (Rhodes *et al*, 2009).

To be successful in leadership applications a requirement of a leadership-learning national qualification has up to now been mandatory; the most renowned is the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). A qualification for anyone aspiring to headship to allow the opportunity for relevant knowledge and an appropriate skill set to be put into place (Rhodes *et al*, 2009). The leadership learning programmes are designed to cover core strategic leadership skills such as leadership learning, the management of human and financial resources and the management of external relations (Rhodes *et al*, 2009). However, Bush and Glover (2004) acknowledged the issue arising with leaders not necessarily acquiring relevant skills

for the key attributes or the confidence needed to be successful in the role. The “curriculum” for the development programmes predominantly is all based upon ‘knowledge and understanding’ of the role, however can also be divided into three other modes: knowledge for action, improvement of practice and development of a reflexive mode (Bush, 2009). Those qualified with the NPQH state that the course enables them to develop such development strands as “using data to raise achievement”, “policy creation”, “legal issues” and “working with other agencies” however they did not feel that they developed the aspect of “managing staff”. As the aspirant head moves into their first position of head-ship there is a realisation of the lack of development required to approach the day-to-day challenges that the position of incumbency headship brings (Bush, 2009). The NPQH programme has been criticised for the way in which it is too reliant on a competency structure and can be seen as intellectually and emotionally sterile, lacking real-life situations (Bush, 2009; Rhodes *et al*, 2009). Leadership learning programmes have had to ensure that they follow a ‘systematic’ approach to ensure that they can achieve a standardised qualification with high standard graduates. However, a personalised approach towards skill development can hold more potential of developing individuals’ strengths and highlighting development points (Bush, 2009). Leadership learning programmes such as the NPQH are seen to be valuable in developing the strategic thinking of aspirant heads and is a way in which they can forge a new professional identity; however to what extent they capture and develop skills required for headship is questionable (Rhodes *et al*, 2009).

The structure of work-based learning is important in ensuring that learning is contextualised, meaning leaders use incumbent heads, mentors and coaches as role models (Rhodes, 2012b). The manner of using mentors and coaches provides an element of individualisation to the individual making the transition to headship. The nature of mentoring means that the development becomes more person centred and can lead to the 'emotional transaction" necessary at this stage. It is vital to ensure that a careful mentor and mentee match is made to make this type of development supportive and understanding (Bush, 2009). Leadership and management however are practical activities and so it is thought that systemic preparation is far more effective towards leadership development than inadvertent experience. 'Live learning' carries a strong basis of strong leadership development through clear and purposeful visits during networking and similar context visits (Bush, 2009). The networking contacts made with serving headteachers allows aspirant leaders to view and understand the conception of the role and enables them to form their own identity for that role. Working with incumbent senior leaders can allow an honest insight into the day-to-day realities of the role including an outline of the challenges involved, providing aspirant leaders the chance to have questions answered, and enables an increase in confidence to succeed in the position (Rhodes *et al*, 2009; Rhodes, 2012b). However, bound to observation and discussion, the practicality development raises questions on how and to what extent this transfer of leadership learning is successful (Rhodes, 2012b).

Once aspirant heads have made the transition into headship it is then that the challenging nature of early headship begins (Rhodes *et al*, 2009). The leaders need

to continue with their own learning focusing upon their developmental needs along with ensuring that they have considered the training needs of others. They now have responsibility to make sure that they are in a position to help their staff to learn and improve their practice (Rhodes, 2012b). The issues raised by leaders in early headship and the moral obligation in place to ensure newly positioned heads are supported is well documented and founded not just within the UK but also internationally. The pressures of new challenges and juggling competencies are now seen as a strategic necessity. The leader is now fully immersed into the intensification of the role (Bush, 2009).

To allow the transition into headship to be successful for the individual and the school it is important to ensure that an induction and development programme is put into place. However, it seems that the NPQH misses out the important transitional step of aspirant heads making their headship application, meaning there is only a 43% conversion rate, an issue when education is currently affected with such a large leadership crisis. The stage and mode of the developmental programme put into place therefore opens up a range of timing and structural revision possibilities (Rhodes *et al*, 2009).

Leadership development needs to be at the centre of research to enable a variety of strategies to be considered to overcome the issues behind the leadership crisis and also how we can implement and encourage successful skill development of aspirant headteachers. The procedures need to be deliberate and well designed to provide individuals with the desired outcomes of fulfilling their leadership potential. It needs to

be a purposeful act and not purely a reflex reaction to the leadership crisis (Bush, 2009). Current research highlights the need of this focus, however research covering the development of particular practical skills is not addressed in detail. Recent ‘learning to lead’ qualifications are under review with the current government; however there still lies a gap in ensuring that they are personalised and practically focused rather than standardised curricula.

Conclusion

Northouse (2004) defines leadership as a ‘process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’. However, Peck & Dickinson (2009) view the primary purpose of leadership as the ability to gain acceptance from an audience whereby the leader performs legitimate authority to influence sense making. Key authors have highlighted the notion of performing leadership, but there does not seem to be an exploration of leadership being a performance within leadership development material. With leadership ‘is’ performance being distinguished from leadership ‘as’ performance, it provides a foundation for leaders understanding to build upon, and subsequently enable positive change to occur. Peck et al (2009) theorise the opportunities and constraints and present the idea of leadership research surrounding the ideas of performance to move beyond anecdote to analysis. With leadership performance becoming conceptualised between the theory of performance and leadership, it is becoming a distinct area of focus.

Professional identities within educational settings are rich and complex, where it has to be lived and practised. For some the development of a professional identity will be a challenge. However, if established they can make a potentially high impact upon an individual’s leadership and the work they undertake (Sachs, 2001).

Wenger (1998) summarises professional identity into five dimensions, addressing the social, cultural and political aspect of identity formation:

1. *Negotiated experiences*; associated definition through participation with others

2. *Community membership;* defined self through familiarity and unfamiliarity
3. *Learning trajectory;* experiences of where we have been or are going
4. *Multi membership;* defined by reconciling our identity forms
5. *Relation between the local and the global;* relating to different discourses

> “Teachers don’t just have jobs. They have professional and personal lives as well. Although it seems trite to say this, many failed efforts in in-service training, teacher development and educational change more widely are precisely attributable to this neglect of the teacher as a person.” (Hargreaves, 1994. p8)

Educationalists are often very passionate individuals, experiencing a range of intense emotions “about their pupils, about their professional skills, about their colleagues and the structure of the school, about their dealings with other significant adults such as parents and inspectors, about the actual or likely effect of educational policies upon their pupils and themselves” (Nias, 1996 p.293). Leaders’ performance delivery will take emotional strain as they are rooted in their own emotional involvement and moral judgement. Individuals’ experiences are intimately connected to the view that they have of themselves and others (Kelchtermans, 2005). Kelchtermans (2005) summarises that emotions are the result of the leader embedding experiences and interactions with their own professional and personal environments.

It is apparent throughout this literature review that the key issues and leading edge ideas have been drawn out linking the concepts of ‘leadership’, ‘performance’ and ‘professional development’. There is evidence of an increasing need to address issues surrounding educational leadership succession planning through Talent Management, and ensuring that individuals are ready for the challenges that they may face in the role of Headteacher. The key focus threaded throughout this

literature is that of performance and enactment skills required to become a successful leader in order to deliver such an array of messages to different audiences in order to be respected and followed.

The concept of self-efficacy became apparent throughout the literature review as a secondary aspect of individual leaders’ belief in their ability to conduct themselves in the role and their performances. This has been particularly helpful in contextualising the way in which leadership for performance can be embedded within development programmes. Similarly, this is extended to the nature of an individual’s professional identity, giving a greater understanding into how leaders may conduct and establish themselves as leaders in order to present appropriately to followers and potential followers.

The literature review has shaped the thesis in order to provide an end point, fulfilling the goal of establishing how leadership as performance is perceived by headteachers in secondary education settings. It followed the initial research questions to develop the basis of the literature to enable the study to be put into context.

1. How is leadership as performance conceptualised by headteachers in secondary education?
2. How was the ability to provide a repertoire of performances learned during the journey to headship and within headship itself?

The main way of exploring this key aspect of the research was to look at the literature

behind performance as an enactment leadership skill. The literature is supportive in concluding that performance and enactment skills are required to successfully deliver messages to a variety of audiences in order to gain following and fulfil the role of a leader. The literature suggests that there are ‘types’ of performance in which the leader is required to decide upon the most appropriate mannerisms in order to ensure that they are successful. The literature supports the need for some performances to be planned, others to be devised according to timing and some which may need to be improvised. Whatever the manner in which the performance presents itself, the leader is required to be able to act upon the situation in the best way possible, to present themselves with clear conduct.

The literature was then used to explore the nature of ‘professional identity’. The leader uses their professional identity as the ‘role’ in which they are playing in the performance. This identity can then be used directly to prepare and develop the enactments. It is evident from the reading that professional identity is closely related to the leader’s ability to perform and be followed by others, and therefore the success of their leadership prowess.

3. To what extent does performance with headship lead to an emotional cost to the head teacher and how is this accommodated?
4. What are the implications of leadership as performance for the training and development of headteachers?

Whilst the literature linking performance and professional identity has provided a firm

foundation to the way in which this necessary leadership skill needs to be considered, by also reviewing and taking into account the literature on emotional cost it has enabled the development of an understanding of the aspects required to support leaders, for development within the review, to take on a further dimension.

The theme, which emerges from the literature on professional development of leaders, is very general and lacks clarity around the specific strategies to develop key leadership skills such as enactment performance. The ideas of drawing upon mentors and coaches to facilitate experiences to learn from seem to be the dominant method in learning to lead.

Schools’ accountability and marketing competition has forced schools to find ways to become more effective and ensure that improvements within their performance occurs. As schools continue to move into a period of time where they are asked to become part of a school-led self-improving system, the importance of being outward thinking and working collegiately with other establishments is essential. Those schools demonstrated to be most effective are structurally, symbolically and culturally linked to one another. They operate as a whole rather than sub-systems. However, critics do argue that school effectiveness adheres to view a school failure as the ‘blame’ of the school and predominantly the leadership of that establishment. Therefore, the focus upon school effectiveness and school performance is set to continue to remain a priority for Educational policy and subsequent research fields are very likely to remain influential (Harris and Bennett, 2001).

School improvement has focused upon the strategies necessary to implement and achieve change, with teachers as an integral part of the process. School improvement is a self-renewing system, where the best outcomes are achieved by working on the internal conditions within each school, establishing the capacity for change and growth within the organisation (Harris and Bennett, 2001).

The ongoing need to focus upon school effectiveness reinforces the need to focus research upon the importance of school leadership in securing school improvement and change. A number of ways to develop and implement leadership have been outlined in both formal and informal settings. All of these strategies have the focus to assist leaders in their role. There is a huge importance on leadership succession and development within education, and it is important to embed practical strategies for this at different leadership levels to ensure that there are clear and secure skill development opportunities. The most successful leadership development programmes include a mixture of methods, allowing individuals to experience and learn directly from theory and practical situations. These experiences need to be drawn from ‘in school’ and ‘out of school’ learning, taking advise, support and guidance from experienced leaders. This will allow individuals to be confident to perform and develop their personal identities and consider the practical skills of leadership. Those developing into leaders benefit from taking part in observing and discussing strategies through mentoring and coaching, however in terms of enactment and the delivery of messages ‘as’ performance there is very little research about how individuals develop these specific skills.

PART THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter will highlight the structure of the research design used to answer the research questions guiding and framing the investigation. The detail of the design is outlined critically, justifying the reasoning behind the rationale of the design (Wallace and Poulson, 2003). The first step was to locate the research within a wider framework followed by the proposition of my own philosophical approach, clarifying an ontological and epistemological view. The research strategy taken in this study will be substantiated, by moving onto the importance of the research methodology and the accompanying method chosen.

By using the three major research paradigms set out by Johnson *et al* (2007) the type of study can be indicated for this piece of research as pure qualitative – as illustrated in Figure 3.1. The use of this research paradigm holds the aim to gather an in-depth understanding of the behaviour and reasons behind leadership as a performance. The use of such qualitative methods allowed an insight into the *why* and *how*, not just the *what*, *where* and *when* of the data collected throughout the investigation.

Qualitative research design carries an aspect of flexibility allowing the interpretative nature of seeing what experiences emerge from the research setting. Miles and Huberman (1994. p16-17) highlight that research of this qualitative nature, needed to have a “tighter design to provide clarity and focus” to the investigation.

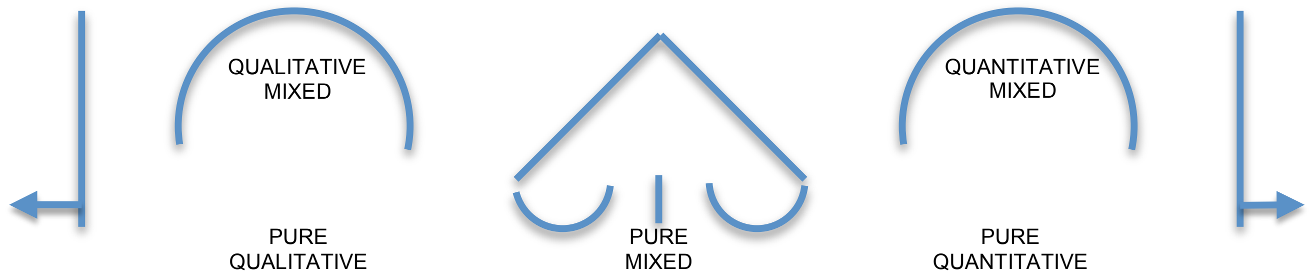

Figure 3.1: Graphic of the Three Major Research Paradigms
(Adapted from Johnson et al., 2007)

Wider Framework

The research takes the form of a humanistic survey allowing the information collected to be hypothesised, drawing out experiences of a leader, providing deeper understanding of particular individuals (Ribbins and Gunter, 2002). This study is a survey because it consists of brief interviews with individuals on a specific topic; enabling the researcher to gather information about the informant themself from a series of questions posed. The nature of the research came about by placing the research into the typology of the ‘five knowledge domains’ conceptualised by Ribbins and Gunter (2002). These typologies are summarised in Table 3.1.

The humanistic approach draws upon perceptions and accounts of the subjects’ learning and experiences allowing them to ‘tell a story’ of their case to represent, and provide the analysis and interpretation of real individuals and situations (Bassey, 1999). The style of writing is easily intelligible and more accessible to a wider audience, capturing the uniqueness of each case (Cohen *et al,* 2000).

Knowledge domain	Meaning
Conceptual	Concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology and with conceptual clarification.
Humanistic	Seeks to gather and theorise from experiences and biographies.
Critical	Concerned to reveal and emancipate practitioners from the various forms of social injustice.
Evaluative	Seeks to abstract and measure at micro, macro and meso levels of social interaction.
Instrumental	Provides effective strategies and tactics to deliver organisational goals

Table 3.1: The Five Knowledge Domains

(Adapted from Ribbins and Gunter, 2002)

Philosophical Approach

Research is an approach to discovering the truth taking into account both experience and reasoning. It is important as the researcher to clarify the philosophical stance in which the research will take place. Ontology is the study of being and sits alongside epistemology, informing the theoretical perspective of research. The ontological stance looks at ‘what is’ whilst epistemology looks at ‘what it means to know’. Both ontological and epistemological issues emerge together during research and it is difficult to keep them apart. Ontology assumes the nature of the investigation whereas the epistemological view is the knowledge of the investigation. Together this presents the philosophical view of ‘whether knowledge is something, which can be acquired on the one hand, or is something which has to be personally experienced

on the other’ (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

The importance of identification and the justification of research is supported by adopting a philosophical stance (Crotty, 1998),

> “epistemology is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate” (Maynard, 1994. p10).

Each epistemology stance questions how meaning and knowledge is found implying profound differences in how research is carried out and presented. Table 3.2 presents a representation of epistemological views alongside their compatible theoretical frameworks, methodology and methods (Crotty, 1998).

EPISTEMOLOGY The theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology	**THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE** The philosophical stance informing the methodology and, through this, providing a context for the process and for grounding its logic and criteria	**METHODOLOGY** The strategy or plan of action, informed carefully by theoretical perspective and epistemology	**METHODS** The procedures or techniques we plan to use, to gather and analyse our data, defined and thought through as specifically as possible
Objectivism Meaning and meaningful reality exists as such, outside or apart from any consciousness.	**Positivism (and post-positivism)**	Experimental research Survey research	Sampling Measurement Questionnaire
Constructivism There is no objective truth or reality or external knowledge waiting for us to discover it. Truth and meaning come into existence in and out of our engagement with the world: they are constructed.	**Interpretivism** • Symbolic interactionism • Phenomenology • Hermeneutics	Ethnography Phenomenological research Grounded theory Heuristic inquiry Action research	Observation • Participant • Non-participant Interview Focus group Case study Life history Visual ethnography

Subjectivism (Structuralism, post-structuralism, postmodernism) Meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject (!!). Class, gender, race and other 'structurally determined' factors affect how the subject (the woman, man, working class, middle class, black person etc)	Critical inquiry Feminism Post-modernism	Action research Discourse analysis 'Standpoint' research	Observation • Participant • Non-participant Interview Focus group Case study Life history Visual ethnography

Table 3.2: Epistemological viewpoints with accompanying theoretical frameworks methodologies and methods.

(Adapted from Crotty, 1998. p1 - 17)

Epistemology: Constructivism

Epistemology is the understanding of knowledge waiting to be discovered but with the stance of constructivism there is no objective truth waiting to be discovered. The meaning comes into reality when it is engaged with the world.

> "It is the view of all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 1998. p42).

The fundamental meaning is that understanding is not discovered but instead is constructed – we construct the meaning. The researchers construct the meanings as they engage or observe engagement with the world, which is being interpreted (Crotty, 1998). All humans engage with their world however they do not make sense of individual encounters one-by-one, but instead are born into a world of meaning,

interpreting findings using their innate and cultural view (Crotty, 1998 and Pring, 2000). The ‘findings’ are created through the interaction of those involved in and out of the research focus. The constructivist view gives dominance to a type of methodological research to allow a specific type of explanation to be drawn out of the findings (Pring, 2000).

Theoretical Position: Interpretivism

The theoretical position takes the philosophical stance, which portrays the methodology, required for successful research to occur. The choice of methodology is intrinsic to the design as there are many ways of viewing the world and therefore many ways of obtaining suitable research. The correct theoretical perspective is therefore empirical to choosing a particular methodology. Interpretivism emerged in an attempt to understand and explain human and social reality, looking for

> “culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the world” (Crotty, 1998. p67).

Interpretivism involves collecting data that is then interpreted and supported by naturalistic methods where the researcher can interact sufficiently in order to collaboratively construct a meaning (Pring, 2000).

Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991. p5) define interpretivism as studies which

> “…assume that people create and associate their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them. Interpretive researchers thus attempt to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings participants assign to them’.

This leads into one of the forms of methodology, which compliments this epistemological theoretical position.

Research Strategy

Phenomenology is taken as the form of research strategy, which covers a range of research styles that do not rely upon specific scientific methods of quantifiable measurements and statistics. Phenomenology emphasises the subjectivity, description and interpretation of data collected during research. A phenomenological approach deals with people’s first hand experiences with their own perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, feelings and emotions (Denscombe, 2008).

The research strategy involves investigating human encounters concentrating on the ‘things’ experienced by people. This perspective allows the researcher to see and understand things the way that the respondent sees and understand things. The ideas and reasoning around people and their lives are the key focus of the research, emphasising the importance of their thoughts meaning that a humanistic approach is imperative (Crotty, 1998).

The nature of social construction, phenomenology brings about two forms of reality; the first is regarding people as creative interpreters of events, who, under their own interpretations, view their worlds and actions. The second is that people do not uniquely interpret meaning behind sights and sounds and therefore share others ideas. If it were not this way it would have been difficult for people to interact with one another. The form of the research therefore needed to take upon a focus of the

experiences providing a description of the situation. It was important to concentrate on how the experiences were constructed without relying on my own beliefs and expectations. By taking a step back from the ordinary beliefs and expectations it is possible to use common sense when interpreting data (Denscombe, 2008).

Phenomenology has its advantages and disadvantages. It offers an in depth opportunity to account for multifaceted phenomena taking on a humanistic approach. Experiences are ‘real life’ and are portrayed with interest to many readers. However, its subjectivity and interpretivism means that its lack of scientific analysis and measurement can hold little or no accreditation by those who have a positivist stance. Due to the methods linked to this form of methodology research is often small scaled, opening it up to generalisation and therefore opens up questions on representativeness (Denscombe, 2008). The manner in which knowledge is uncovered has a direct impact on the methodology, whether it is objective (positivist) or subjective (anti-positivist) (Cohen *et al*, 2000).

Research Methodology

A qualitative approach was taken in order to create a greater understanding of how leaders perceive their ability and requirement to perform, providing answers into questions such as What?, Where?, When? and Why? (Wellington, 2000). The research methodology took the form of an interview survey with the aim to view comprehensively and in detail information finding patterns and comparisons to be analysed (Bell, 1999 and Denscombe, 2008). Surveys work upon the basis of obtaining information from a sample of a population and using the findings from this,

a representation of the whole population can be made. A range of research methodologies are available, but all of them feed into the underlying characteristic of surveys; which is the empirical research pertaining to a given point in time aims to incorporate as wide and as inclusive data as possible (Bell, 1999 and Denscombe, 2008).

The intention to survey current head teachers was to obtain and analyse their individual perspectives. The use of a survey based upon qualitative interviews is widely used and Gunter (2001) argues,

> “We can concentrate far less on the characteristic of leadership and far more on the characters of leaders” (Gunter, 2001. p56).

Using interviews as the medium for a survey approach places it in an ideal situation to have the foundation of experience-based learning. Educational researchers such as Gronn (1999), Johnson (2002) and Ribbins (2003) all use this methodology to collate their evidence. Conclusions from qualitative data, although subjective, are based upon clear evidence emerging from participant interviews (Parker, 2002).

The data was obtained from participating in a face-to-face survey. Although costly, they hold the most potential to be very detailed and rich with the advantage of some immediate validation. Face-to-face surveys meant that the respondents were chosen from those who have the necessary knowledge and understanding to fulfill the specific quota (sampling), with a balance of external factors. With the correct quota,

ensuring that it isn’t too limiting, the whole population of the sample can be incorporated into the research (Denscombe, 2008).

Research Method

The nature of constructivist, interpretivist, phenomenological survey lends itself to the method of semi structured tape-recorded interviews. Interviews were carried out with those people whose experiences are being investigated in order to generalise and seek evidence, which can then be quantified. The members in the group allowed an insight into the reasoning behind their experiences (Denscombe, 2008 and Pring, 2000). The head teachers chosen to participate had all had a similar number of years’ experience and are seen to be in their incumbency stage of headship. All participates were based within secondary education in the West Midlands area of the country. For this initial study there were some variables that had not been controlled; for example both male and female heads are interviewed.

An interview provides a direct humanistic approach rather than looking at and manipulating masses of data. Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind the informant’s experiences, giving the opportunity to explore in-depth the information around the topic (Denscombe, 2008; Cohen *et al*, 2000). The type of research interview used in this survey was a semi-structured interview. The structure of the interview was crucial to achieving sufficient exploration of data. This type of interview not only allows the research objectives to be structured into the main body of the question schedule, but also enabled the interviewer to be flexible in terms of

the order of the questions and giving the informant the opportunity to develop and extend their issues raised by the interviewer (Denscombe, 2008; Cohen *et al*, 2000).

Interview instrument

Interviews present themselves to be a favourable method to collate data, as summarised in Table 3.3. Data collected is detailed in response, with the position of the interviewer to revisit and prompt clarification allowing even richer answers to be taken from this method. Interviews can be used to allow the participants to interpret their own phenomena and perception of the key study focus (Cohen, *et al,* 2000). Cohen *et al* (2000) states that

> “the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddness is inescapable” (Cohen *et al*, 2000. p267).

The semi-structured interview questions were planned to ensure that they adequately reflected the main aim and the subsequent concomitant questions (Cohen *et al*, 2000). The literature and research questions established the outline of the semi-structured interview questions. A copy of the full interview schedule can be found in *Appendix 1b*. The interviews were of a suitable length, providing adequate time to develop issues as they arose. For the sequence of questions planned the length of time required to facilitate this was approximately an hour per interview in total. Interviews were semi-structured to encourage answers to be relevant, whilst allowing enough scope for interviewees, in that unique situation, to raise interests that they regard as being significant in their experience. It was also necessary to record the ‘account’ of the interviewees experience to ensure that once transcribed it was a true

version of their experience. The interviewer needed to listen carefully so that it is not interpreted incorrectly with common-sense presuppositions (Crotty, 1998; Pring, 2000).

During the interview, it was important to consider that it is not just a data collecting exercise but rather an interactive social and interpersonal encounter (Cohen *et al*, 2000). It was therefore important that the informant felt comfortable and secure to talk freely, with the understanding that anonymity would be held as well as the data collected and the analysis of the findings (Bassey, 1999).

Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Enable depth and detail of information collection	Time consuming: transcribing and coding of interview data is expected to be lengthy
Valuable insights gained from depth of information gained	Data analysis from non-standards responses will make it harder to compare data
Informants have the opportunity to expand their ideas and views and identify what they consider as crucial factors (rather than the researcher)	Interviewer effect: responses are based on what interviewees say rather than what they do or did
Flexibility allowing for adjustments to the order and can further develop lines of enquiry	Invasion of privacy, particularly with life history as they could be seen as very personal
Can be a rewarding experience for the informant, especially spending time reflecting about their life stories	Reliability: the impact of myself as the interviewer and the context means that consistency and objectivity may be hard to achieve

Table 3.3: Advantages and Disadvantages of the use of Interviews

(Adapted from Denscombe, 2003. p193)

The common themes found amongst the research added to the understanding of leadership development and the performance skills required for becoming a

successful leader (Cohen *et al*, 2000). The focus of this research was to gather data on each informant's own perspective of Leadership Performance, therefore ensuring the questions were open-ended to secure unique, personalised answers (Cohen *et al*, 2000). Informants were encouraged to speak widely and develop a varying degree of answers. Conversely this could have been classed as a weakness to this method, producing a higher potential for substantial differences in responses, thus making analysis challenging for comparison (Denscombe, 2003).

Conducting the interviews

To enable the logistic of the interviews to be organised and conducted, all interviews were carried out on a one-to-one basis at the informant's place of work. By just having the interviewer and informant present, the informant was able to be open and present a conducive disclosure on one's own view and perceptions around the interview theme. Interviews can sometimes be sensitive exercises and it was important that the informant felt at ease and 'safe' to enable them to relate and understand their professional environment. The focus upon one informant at a time allowed for the interrogation of the interview agenda rather than trying to balance and chair a groups' collection of answers at a time.

Each of the semi-structured interviews were recorded using a Dictaphone and subsequently were transcribed in order to collate the data, to answer the directly linked research questions. Inevitably some of the data or interaction was lost, as memory alone is unreliable and prone to partial recall therefore the process of transcription supported reducing this loss (Denscombe, 2003). The Dictaphone offers

a permanent record of the event, capturing each of the interviews. The recording however did not substitute the interviewer’s concentration; the importance of attentively listening in interviews was heightened by the ability to respond and prompt further from given responses (Cohen *et al*, 2000).

The interviews lasted between thirty and sixty minutes depending upon the informant’s responses. The organisation and logistics of scheduling the interviews was daunting, knowing what busy schedules head teachers need to keep. However, the opportunity for individuals to spend some time to ‘take stock’ and reflect on their own professional development was inviting and allowed for seventeen interviews to be scheduled. Variability between informants naturally occurred, depending upon their own ability to ‘perform’, and how lucid they were in giving thoughtful answers to the questions.

Characteristics of the Sample

The use of a sampling frame provided an objective list of ‘the population’ from which the sample could be chosen (Denscombe, 2008). The sampling frame used within the research contained an up-to-date list of all the secondary education head teachers within the West Midlands area. The list identified in order of experience and stage of incumbency. Head teachers of similar incumbency were identified and from them a selection of individuals was identified and interviewed. The head teachers selected for interview therefore allowed a parameter of comparison to occur.

Written communication to head teachers requesting their consent for participation

was sought. Fifty-six head teachers were originally written to with seventeen responses received. These seventeen were the individuals who took part in the research, and were therefore self selected form the sample frame.

> “Self selection sampling occurs when you allow a case, usually an individual to identify their desire to take part in the research. You therefore: 1) publicise your need for cases, either by advertising through appropriate media or asking them to take part. 2) Collect data from those who respond. Cases that self-select often do so because of their feelings or opinions about the research questions(s) or stated objectives” (Saunders *et al* ,1997. p147)

The interview was piloted with one head teacher initially prior to the main sample to ensure that the sequence of questions and link to the literature were consistent to add validity and accuracy to the data collection. The analysed sample consisted of fourteen males and three females, which indicated perhaps the distribution of gender for leadership in this role. *Appendix 1a* provides an outline of the informants who took part in the interview process.

The interviews were scheduled via email to agree mutually convenient dates and times. A covering letter was then sent to participants, detailing the purpose of the research. This was accompanied by a schedule of the interview questions to enable individuals to familiarise themselves with the questions and a consent form to take part (*Appendix 1d*). The interviews were conducted between September to December 2012.

Access

Access was an issue that arose; it was difficult to gain participants from the number of communications made. It is fundamentally believed that this is because many

potential informants were too busy. Some may not have been interested in the research theme and not seen the importance within the research context. With others considering issues of releasing some of the data collected and feared it may weaken their leadership in some way. However, for the seventeen participants secured, none of these problems were encountered, although difficult to judge if they held back any crucial perspectives.

Ethics

The ethics of the research was an important aspect to consider, with its application beginning at the conception of the research idea and leading throughout and supporting any implications remaining after the research is complete. Informants needed to be confident that their entitled privacy and anonymity was in place. The research theme ought not to have caused any alert to any ethical issues with any data type collected; however, it was still vital to consider as semi-structured interviews may have resulted in sensitive topics being shared.

> “Ethical researchers need to inform those in the study whether the research is anonymous, confidential or neither. Research is anonymous when the researcher is not able to identify the participants in the study. In a confidential study the researcher knows or could know the identity of the participants but does not reveal who they are” (Baliley, 1996. p11).

The ethical guidelines outlined in BERA (2004) provided appropriate direction alongside the approved application through the University institution. The confidentiality and anonymity of participant data was considered the norm when conducting research. Before the dates of the interviews, the participants were informed of the nature of the piece of research and with whom it would be shared.

Participation was then volunteered under no duress knowing they could have withdrawn at any time. It was necessary to obtain a written informed consent from each participant (*Appendix 2*). The prospective interviewees were appropriately informed about the nature of the research and the expectations of their participation. An interview schedule was shared with them prior to the interview (Denscombe, 2008).

The informant’s contextual details were kept to a minimum to ensure that the required confidentiality and anonymity was secured. Those individuals with knowledge may have been able to locate where the source was from as only a small sample of qualitative responses were given, emphasising the importance of hidden context even more.

Role of the researcher

The use of semi structured interviews as the chosen method created a ‘relationship’ between the interviewee and interviewer, far more than alternative data collection methods. The data collected could have been,

> “affected by the personal identity of the researcher” (Denscombe, 2003. p190).

When analysing the findings from the data it was important to disclose this ‘relationship’ to the reader. Due to my personal involvement in education in the local authority, it may have been that one or two of the head teachers did know me. It was therefore vital that I clearly outlined that my involvement in the research was as an independent researcher and confidentiality was of utmost importance. However, for

the majority of the research the head teachers and I had no professional involvement yet independence and confidentiality was still emphasised.

Validity and Reliability

Due to the nature of the research being qualitative there needed to be a judgment on how valid and reliable the collected data would be. Validity is an important term within effective research, and takes into account the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved (Cohen *et al*, 2000). There was an aspect of generalisation when taking themes from all of the seventeen secondary education headteachers while providing judgments on performance itself.

The reliability of the research was dependent upon the nature of the methodology and methods being used neutrally amongst the whole sample of participants. To ensure accuracy within the data collection of a survey the size of the sample needed to be substantial. The number put into the sample needed to take into account the complexity of the data to be collected. The ultimate factors were the resources available with which the research can be conducted, primarily time and money. The interviews themselves were unique and the only way to increase reliability and validity was to pilot the process to make sure that the questions could be refined ensuring that the responses would give suitable data for the small-scale research (Cohen *et al*, 2000; Denscombe, 2008). The piloting procedure took place with a secondary head teacher from a different local authority.

Analysing the responses

The next stage is to outline the analysis of the interview. Due to the nature of the data, it was a more reflexive interpretation rather than an accurate numerical representation (Cohen *et al*, 2000). The qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews was transcribed ready for patterns and themes to be identified. Each informant was given the option on whether or not they wished to receive a copy of their typed transcription to vet before analysis. For the most this was rejected, and those who opted in, did not return any amendments. The preparation time for the questions prior to the interviews enabled individuals plenty of time to consider their answers.

Analysing the data meant that the words would be given meaning and relationship to the research questions. Miles and Huberman (1994) have 'three approaches to qualitative data analysis'; data collection, data reduction and data display, it is this model (figure 3.2) which was used to systematically analyse the interview data.

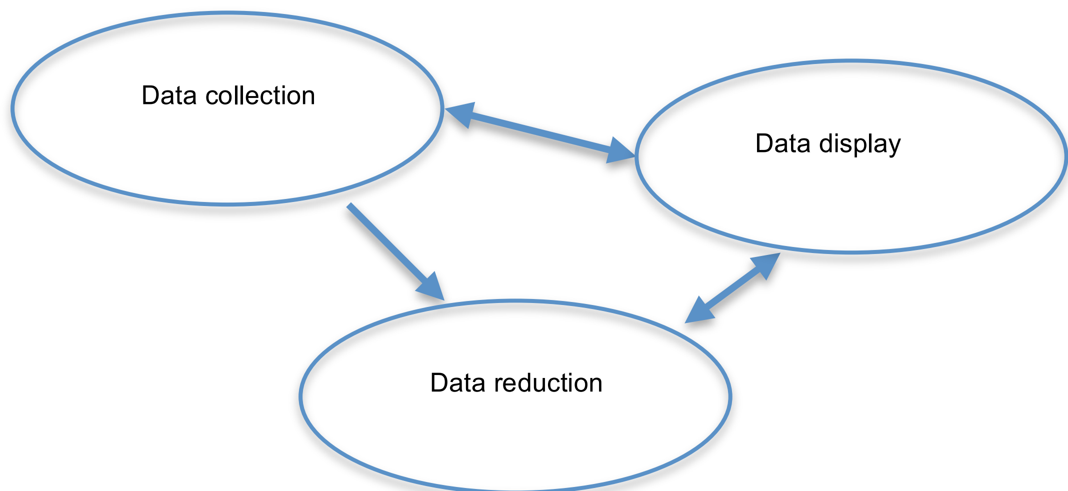

Figure 3.2: Components of Data Analysis

(Adapted from Miles and Huberman, 1994)

To ensure that the analysis of the respondent’s interview data was equally and fairly treated, each question answered was scrutinised. The analysis considered during this transcript had been taken from Miles and Huberman’s (1994) twelve suggestions. The emphasis on coding the data is very apparent to ensure that there wasn’t a ‘data overload’; by systematically going through the data. By listening to the interview recordings, reading transcripts and the interview responses line by line, and word by word the transcripts were highlighted rigorously selecting, focusing and abstracting data where noted with patterns and emerging themes to be identified (*data reduction)* (Cohen *et al,* 2000). Data coding is not a technical activity but is instead an interactive process allowing the literature to be highlighted meaning that the concepts emerging could be compared and deemed to have dimension, giving awareness of subtle nuances (Eraut, 1994).

A key characteristic to a phenomenological approach is to describe its authenticity rather than explaining phenomena, which emerges. The analysis does not edit or give the interviewee’s interpretation, but instead draws upon the process of reflection and identifying themes and relationships. These themes were then drawn out and the theory developed.

Table 3.4 illustrates the key characteristics to consider when analysing qualitative data.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The descriptions and theories are ‘grounded’ in reality, i.e. the analysis has its roots in the conditions of social existence	Difficult to generalise from the data and therefore may be less representative than quantitative research
There is a richness and detail to the data which enable a sound analysis of the subtleties of each individual’s life story	Interpretation is intertwined with the ‘self’ of the researcher. The findings are a creation of the researcher rather than a discovery of fact
There is a tolerance of ambiguity and contradictions which reflects the social reality of what is being investigated	There is the possibility of decontextualising the meaning. Providing quotations in the analysis may well take the spoken word out of context and the meaning becomes lost
There is the possibility of alternative explanations because it draws on the interpretative skills of the researcher rather than the presumption that there is one correct explanation	There is a danger of over simplifying the explanation if anomalies are identified and do not ‘fit’ with the themes constructed.

Table 3.4: Advantages and Disadvantages of Qualitative Analysis

(Adapted from Denscombe, 2003)

Manually arranging the data into a framework such as table 3.3 allowed for the data to be organised facilitating the emergence of patterns and allowing a selection of key pieces of data to be used as an illustration of these patterns.

	Theme One	Theme Two	Theme Three
Interview One			
Interview Two			

Table 3.5: Systematic Data Analysis example matrix.

The collected interview data from the seventeen secondary head teachers was carefully transcribed and word processed with corresponding numbered lines to allow identification of data to be located easily. When transcribing the interviews it was necessary to ensure that the interviews were heard clearly, the correct accents and emphasis on speech was depicted and the correct punctuation and sentence structure put into place (Denscombe, 2008 and Cohen *et al,* 2000). The text from each of these transcripts can be found in the appendices (*Appendix 2*).

Following Miles and Huberman (1994) the data from these transcripts required reduction following a coding process to allow the identification of data and allocation of categories and sub-categories. The codes given emerged naturally from the data during collection, analysis and interpretation. It was necessary to use professional practice and knowledge to ensure that the codes and categories for analysis were valid and meaningful (Eraut, 1994). The categories chosen for analysis were therefore derived from a variety of sources, including interpretation and hypotheses, as well as the emergence of new concepts (Tesch, 1990). The initial colour coding for the main categories were derived from the research questions:

- **How is leadership as performance conceptualised by head teachers in secondary education?**
- **How was the ability to provide a repertoire of performances learned during the journey to headship and within headship itself?**
- **To what extent is leadership as performance a contribution to the professional identity of heads in secondary education?**

- **To what extent does performance with headship lead to an emotional cost to the head teacher and how is this accommodated?**
- **What are the implications of leadership as performance for the training and development of head teachers?**

From here further reading and identification of emergent themes could be given a sub-category code. This was done as explicitly as possible with the understanding that this is based upon interpretative, inexact and subjective processes, with several sub-categories able to be allocated under any one of the main categories. These themes were then given an abbreviated code allowing causes or explanations to be explored further (Cohen *et al,* 2000).

Table 3.6 outlines the categories and sub-categories, underpinned by the research questions, given to allow the coding and data reduction of the series of transcripts taken.

Categories	Sub-categories
The concept of Leadership as Performance	Positive for performance (Pp) Style of performance (Sp) Examples of performance (Ep)
Repertoire of performance	Performance development (Pd) Personal development (Po) Method of preparation (Mp)
Positive use of professional identity for performance	Positive professional Identity (Pi) Use of performance (Up)
Emotional cost to performance	Positive for emotional cost (Pe) Types of emotion (Em) Levels of support (Ls)
Development of performance	Positive skill development (Ps) Methods of development (Md) Issues with development (Id)

Table 3.6 Categories and Sub-categories

Table 3.7 illustrates a clear reference summary to establish a visual frequency of the themes spoken throughout each of the interviews.

Interview	The concept of Leadership as Performance			Positive use of professional identity for performance		Repertoire of performance			Emotional cost to performance			Development of performance		
	Pp	Sp	Ep	Pi	Up	Pd	Po	Mp	Pe	Em	Ls	Ps	Md	Id
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
6														
7														
8														
9														
10														
11														
12														
13														
14														
15														
16														
17														

Table 3.7 Illustration of Category and Sub-category frequency within the 17 interviews

The interviews were structured under three main headings that underpin the sequence of research questions: Leadership as Performance, Professional Identity and Emotional Cost and finally Leadership Development. Particular interview questions naturally fell under each of these headings, however it was evident from the coding; both coloured categories and abbreviated sub-categories, emerged and were divided throughout the interview question sequence. To provide a framework for the Findings Chapter the established interview themes and research questions were used to provide an outline structure for the reader to follow. This then subsequently allowed the emerging categories and sub-categories to be used as a basis of analysis to be drawn upon for findings and discussion later.

The concept of Leadership as Performance	Positive for performance (Pp) Style of performance (Sp) Examples of performance (Ep)
Repertoire of performance	Performance development (Pd) Personal development (Po) Method of preparation (Mp)

There are three key research questions, which focus upon Leadership as Performance. Using these as subheadings, the evidence from the transcripts were drawn upon from the relevant connected coloured themes; yellow and red along with the abbreviated coding; Pp, Sp, Ep and Pd, Po Mp, respectively.

Positive use of professional identity for performance	Positive professional Identity (Pi) Use of performance (Up)
Emotional cost to performance	Positive for emotional cost (Pe) Types of emotion (Em) Levels of support (Ls)

There are two key research questions, which focus upon Professional Identity and Emotional Cost. Using these as subheadings, the evidence from the transcripts were drawn upon from the relevant connected coloured themes; green and turquoise along with the abbreviated coding; Pi, Up and Pe, Em, Ls, respectively.

There is one key research question, which focus upon Leadership Development. Using this as a subheading, the evidence from the transcripts were drawn upon from the relevant connected colour; purple along with the abbreviated coding; Ps, Md, Id.

Once the matrix displayed all of the data and emerging themes it was used as a data display enabling conclusions to be drawn to answer the research questions. To ensure accuracy of the findings they were fed back to the respondents for verification.

Limitations of the Research

The use of only semi-structured interviews occurred as the principal research method to collate data used; although this is a typical sole method used in qualitative surveys such as this, a methodological triangulation would have secured and confirmed the main themes from participants. For example, a questionnaire and a focus group could have been considered if time, logistics and financial circumstances hadn’t restricted access. The findings can be classed as representative of a significant number of secondary head teachers, whose perceptions on the whole are similar and supported by literature.

PART FOUR: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

Part Four presents and forms a discussion of the findings from the seventeen interviews undertaken with secondary school headteachers. The findings have been carefully broken down into themes relating to the research questions and are supported by quotations from informants. The research questions will each be addressed with the consideration of the substantive, theoretical and methodological issues identified in the literature review. A framework will be produced to reflect the new knowledge gained in addressing the research questions outlining how it can contribute effectively to the development of new leaders and the much-needed succession planning for new headteachers.

The themes explored were:

- Leadership being a performance: taking the definitions from Peck and Dickinson (2009) informants considered this theme looking into examples of when the notion of performance had taken place. They explored their understanding of leadership ‘as’ a performance and whether leadership ‘is’ a performance. The theme is then explored further with respondents considering how they developed such enactment skills and how they prepared for such a repertoire of performances, which they assume as leaders.

- Using performance to support ‘Professional Identity’: Mead (1934) expresses identity as the relationship and development of oneself within transactions with

the environment. The informants explored their professional identity, not only to explore the influence of the conceptions and exceptions of others, but also what they, themselves, found important in their provisional work and lives based on both their performance experiences in practice and their personal backgrounds (Tickle, 2000). Informants therefore explored times in which they may had used enactment consciously to separate themselves from the performance, asking the identity question “who am I at this moment?” (Beijaard *et al*, 2004. p108).

- The emotional cost to performance: explores the different types of emotions, and to what extent these emotions played on headteachers’ minds when performing (Huffington *et al,* 2004), considering further the impact that this cost of emotions could have taken. Informants shared who they may seek support from during these times of emotional build up.

- Development of performance within leadership: seeks to identify the extent of formal training and development that the headteachers have experienced pre- and post-appointment and its perceived effectiveness in enabling them to perform effectively.

Leadership being a performance

Research Question One:

How is leadership as performance conceptualised by headteachers in secondary education?

Research Question Two:

How was the ability to provide a repertoire of performances learned during the journey to headship and within headship itself?

All of the interviewees acknowledged that performance is a leadership skill involved in their practice and talked about how they are flexible to change the style of their performance to suit the audience according to the nature of the message being delivered. All but interviewees 5, 6, 8 and 9 were able to relate the idea of performance and the style of delivery to individual examples in their practice and experience.

All informants spoke positively that performance was an aspect of their role as Headteacher, with informant 3 expressing that it is ‘engrained in what we do’ (4). Informant 1 boldly opened their interview with ‘When you’re performing in front of an audience because that is actually what you are doing’ (10), which was then supported strongly by informant 10 who states ‘I am no longer a teacher and have accepted that and that’s why I never call myself headteacher, I am a head that performs to different audiences’ (30-32). Informant 2 goes on to emphasise their

stance by saying ‘you’ve got to be able to deliver it, you can’t put words out there and not deliver’ (informant 2; 556).

The term ‘perform’ comes naturally to informant 10 who doesn’t question its meaning and puts it into a theatrical position, stating ‘I am the head that performs to different audiences (30-32) … and as a head you act on a different stage’ (58). Whereas other participants are less forthcoming with the use of the term ‘perform’ in a theatrical manner ‘Performance to me is associated with acting and I don’t act, what you see is what you get … if you used the term presence opposed to performance I could live with that’ (8-10) exclaims informant 5. Informant 4 agrees, clearly stating ‘it’s not acting because I can say at the outset that my fundamental thing is that I can only be me and trying to be something else would be deeply flawed because I am not sure how anybody could keep that up’ (22-28), to later saying and using the term themselves ‘I don’t think it’s a performance but it is choosing a leadership style of which you then perform’ (108-110). However, once informant 4 was given the time to reflect on their experiences and position, they began to question the use of the term themselves; asking rhetorical questions such as ‘I wouldn’t call it performance really but maybe it is?’ (150) and later saying ‘there are performances aren’t there?’ (180).

Leaders focus upon performance to gain following from their community; authority and people skills through social interaction enables leadership to be successful (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010). Informant 7 states that ‘a part of that was acting in front of people because when you are trying to get things done, trying to get people to do things and make decision you have to put on a careful air of authority’ (166-

168). Schools collaborate to form mission and visionary statements, and it is the leader who needs to articulate these effectively to enthuse passion and following, with informant 16 supporting this literature with ‘there has to be an element of performance’ (102). Despite the fact of some informants pondering and questioning the use of the term ‘performance’, all are in agreement that ‘it’ exists due to the nature of leadership being the interpersonal skills and interaction with others. Previously linked through research connected with professional identity, emotional intelligence and charisma, fundamentally headteachers are required to ‘influence others, secure acceptance of their authority and align followers with their vision or a vision that they feel they are required to portray’ (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010). Informant 3 supports this with simply saying ‘people, people, people and that’s a performance and incredibly tiring all day’ (390). Those leaders who are able to motivate and mobilise others are those that are successful by effectively engaging and discharging their responsibilities (Grint, 2005).

Many of the individual informants are confident to demonstrate their ‘natural charisma’ and some come across as very confident in their own ability to be successful in performance and their subsequent ability to be followed as leaders. This correlates with the literature, which supports the concept that the possession of individual self-belief, is implicated as a factor in transforming aspirational headteachers on their journey to leadership (Rhodes, 2013). Linked by many within their research (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Rhodes and Brundrett, 2006; Rhodes *et al.*, 2008, 2009) claim that the identification of individuals, through the much sought after notion of Talent Management, is directly linked to “self confidence” as a strong

indication of achieving successful leadership. Therefore, perhaps those leaders exhibited here in this study who demonstrate such confidence are those who have the

> “driving force in the journey to effective school headship” (Rhodes, 2013. p48).

Informant 13 links in how they believe they have gained this self-confidence over time through experience in various roles, ‘there aren’t many jobs that I haven’t done within a school and that gives you the empathy to talk to anybody and then I layer the analytical skills on top which gives me confidence’ (230-232).

Throughout the research informants spoke about the idea that performance has to change according to whom the audience is, and subsequently governed by the message that needs to be delivered. Informant 9 ‘I am always conscious of the make up of the audience; I am an English graduate so the whole idea of writing for audiences is one that I have taught and have become very aware of. Yes I do tailor the way I say it and how I say depending on what audience I am speaking to’ (6-8). Informant 4 states, ‘It is extremely multifaceted and so your choice of approach even for one audience, say parents, can be very varied based upon what the situation’ (14-16). Informant 15 also identifies that once the performance for the audience has been chosen the type of message and tone requires further consideration ‘I think the audience I perform most to are the staff here and I would even subdivide that because I think I perform differently at different times to them’ (50-52).

Informants openly reflect upon their performance voice, tone and language required to ensure that they present themselves appropriately in front of various audiences depending on what they are delivering. Improvisation through performance is putting an individual ‘stamp’ on the message being delivered with the key objective to the relative audience. This may mean that the ‘notation’ is the same however, a personalised ‘harmony, rhythm, length of form’ enables the individual leader to perform their delivery (Newton, 2004). Informant’s contemplated their ‘tailoring’ of ‘different things to different audiences and use different techniques’ where ‘performance techniques are very different’ to ensure that the audience context and message is considered prior to the message being delivered, just as Newton (2004. p85) exclaims that a leader ‘selects the tunes’ that best match the capabilities of the audience and sets the tone for the performance. If this isn’t the case, informant 16 relates that if it hasn’t been thought through carefully ‘it is very easy to lose a main message in too many messages (272-274). The development of a specific performance enables the goal and approach to the performance to be made (Newton, 2004).

However, informant 6 is within a minority of participants who state that ‘I perform very much in the same way (8) … I am not a sales person I am an educator (48) … I don’t think I am that different, I try and make sure whether I am a 1 to 1, or 1 to 3, or 1 to 300, that whoever I am speaking to goes away feeling better, when I say better, I don’t necessarily mean more comfortable but they have felt it was of value’ (54-56). Informant 17 supports their position by opening their interview with ‘I think I perform consistently and in the same way to all different audiences I work with’ (14-16), but

later on reflection informs us that they ‘think that performing in ways that you don’t always feel, is a real contributor in making people feel, like you want them to feel’ (248-250).

Informant 7 believed to be successful in the role of ‘headteacher [they need to] use a variety of leadership characteristics to disseminate those messages’ (10-12). Informant 1 begins by saying that ‘effective leaders are able to be flexible in their approach to what they are faced with’ (44) with informant 2 stating that ‘it’s that flexibility of moving in and out of leadership style to suit the audience to suit the nature of the message that is being given’ (96-98). This flexibility involves making decisions regarding their presentation. ‘How I present myself very much depends on the audience and the situation’ (informant 1; 40), ‘there are different times when different messages need to be delivered’ (informant 2; 18), ‘I tailor the way I say it and how I say depending on what audience I am speaking to’ (informant 9; 8-10). ‘I definitely do different things to different audiences and questionably use different techniques to those different audiences and that’s all shameless, I think the fundamental message is the same but the performance techniques are very different’ (informant 11; lines 8-10). Informant 4 concludes that headteachers need to have a ‘range of styles from light hearted fun to very formal and telling off so … its essential to have a wide range of approaches to draw from and to call upon’ (166-168).

The leader needs their observer to take their performance seriously, to ensure that messages are delivered successfully.

> "They are asked to believe that the character they see actually possesses the attributes he appears to possess, that the task he performs will have the consequences that are implicitly claimed for it, and that, in general, matters are what they appear to be." (Goffman, 1959. p28).

The headteachers contemplate other factors that may affect the style of their performance, such as: voice and tone, verbal and body language and personal skills to support the style of delivery, 'my tone of voice, the words I am using, the way I am standing, etc' (informant 2; 20-22). Informant 1 says 'if you've an interesting voice and you can present it and project it, I think it makes a huge difference. I've seen lots of people who are very knowledgeable and intelligent people but they can't deliver it in a colourful and interesting way and they don't project their voices so therefore the audience isn't getting the message' (156-160). 'There is content adjustment and tone adjustment and delivery adjustment as well, some of our parents did not go through an academic route themselves and they need things spelling out in clear simple English and that isn't a patronising comment; they will tell me to talk to them like a business man and tell me what I need to know. I think as long as you know which audience you are dealing with then that's absolutely fine' (Informant 11; 64-72). Informant 2 agrees '… people need to understand it is creating an early rapport and being clear, concise and thinking through very carefully beforehand what I am going to say' (informant 16; 26-28).

Informant 13 and 16 believe that 'the biggest adjustment that you make is language' (informant 13; 8) 'It's couching it in the terminology we use all the time … with terminology that staff can grasp' (informant 16; 86-88). Whereas informant 10 is clear that the choice of tone is important on delivery 'there is obviously a different tone in my voice, a look to the different audience' (68). Informant 17 relates to informant 10

stating that they change their tone significantly to enable them to relate to the audience 'I think with more of a Yorkshire accent than I speak with so I think I am trying to falsely give an impression of, this is me, this is what I am telling you, this is why I am telling you it, this is what we need to do and this is why we need to do it. There is a determined cheerfulness about that … it's a hard battle to overcome this and change that so it's all about this determined cheerfulness' (30 – 40). Informant 9 clarifies the importance of language and tone 'humour, very clear expression, don't be monotonous be as eloquent as you can, I believe try strongly in the power of language and the power of communication' (26-34).

Leadership performance is seen by some informants to be instinctive and linked directly to an individual's natural innate personality. This rang true with Baker (1979)

> "You have either got it or you ain't" (Baker, 1979. p1)

Leithwood and Beatty (2008) refer to the fact that there is no empirical evidence to suggest that individuals can just learn to lead, not without specific preparation. Informant 10 directly supports this literature viewpoint by stating, 'you have either got it or you haven't but if you haven't you need to learn it' (informant 10: 196 – 198). This goes on to support further research, which says that you can at least teach somebody the skill and ability to be a 'competent leader'. In fact

> "any intellectual activity whatever, are a theme to 'true' artistic creativity" (Coker, 1964. p8).

This confidence in ability to perform by some informants is stated as an

> “all too-common assumption pervading many organisations that leadership is a mysterious accident of birth that people either have or do not have and certainly cannot learn” (Katzenbach and Smith, 1993. p133).

However, Newton’s (2004) views on improvisation in leadership is, it is a learned skill, not an innate ability, enabling all aspiring leaders the opportunity to focus on the development of their performance skills to become successful in gaining following.

Many of the informants link the delivery style to the type of message and who is in the audience, ‘I am more empathetic, I tend to find that I rely on my emotional intelligence and my feeling for what messages people want to hear’ (informant 13; 16-18). Informant 15 approaches messages by making sure that they ‘use me, the person, delivering quite a lot, particularly if it is important and if I want the message thought about’ (18-20). Informant 12 explains how it is important to ‘have a warmth but don’t become over friendly or familiar’ (20-22). Informant 14 explains that there needs to be a level of consistency with the way in which you deliver messages ‘(if) you are consistent then people will go with it, its when you are inconsistent and all over the place and you don’t really believe in what you are saying or what you are doing, there is a difference between words and your body language’ (54-56), ‘for me it is the commitment and the passion and the energy no matter what audience you are dealing with’ (10-12).

The delivery of messages to audiences is substantiated throughout the participant interviews with them linking in clear examples taken from their experiences so far as headteachers. Informant 15 compares two different accounts on how messages are

delivered differently to staff ‘if I am doing a briefing I am very off the cuff, I try humour, I am quite relaxed about it now, but say I am doing a presentation at a staff meeting I am much more formal, I am much clearer and I am prepared’ (52-56).

Informant 17 reiterates the importance of formality when delivering particular messages to staff ‘this year I started with a difficult talk to staff but I thought for a long time about it’ (192-194) with informant 16 ‘I highlighted all of the great things by talking about attainment, students and staff, the great things staff, and really built that up so that they were clear that it wasn’t a telling off and actually there are some great things about these things, but they always wait for the but, they know it’s coming and you know it’s coming and it’s about delivering it in the right way.’ (76-82). On occasions formal messages to staff can be very difficult ‘I remember thinking what I actually want to do is go in and say sorry guys but let’s face it that was garbage and you’ve really got to raise your game because this isn’t what they are paying for, but I didn’t, I actually thought it’s the first year, they are all hardworking people and they just got it wrong, I tried to give them the most supportive encouraging talk that I could … That is performing I suppose because although I wanted the same outcome it wasn’t how I felt’ (Informant 11; 168-172).

Informant 4 explains and gives examples of how there are varying degrees of performance with parents, ‘we have parents’ evening and open evening where you are selling the school’ (32) ‘that is different to the interactions you have with them which are more relaxed and one to one’ (38). They go on to say ‘there are other situations with parents that certainly are performances put on for instance

reintegration between around exclusions and also permanent exclusion hearing … reflected to an extent in the formal presentations that I give at open evening because they want you to be the head and they expect you to act in certain ways’ (42-48).

Other informants agree that there are differences in approach to meeting with parents and the importance of making sure that the correct stance is taken, ‘the parents of the children at this school need to have confidence in its leadership and it is hard to have confidence in someone when they are nervous.’ (Informant 16; 98-100). Informant 10 believes that ‘meeting a parent and a student, it’s more relaxed and informal trying to make them feel at home’ (12-14), ‘I suppose with parents you have to create an image’ (Informant 8; 34-36). However, ‘if I have a parent that comes to me and they are angry or upset … the worst thing you can do as a head teacher is say calm down … what I do I reflect their mood with short sharp sentences’ (Informant 3; 62-68), ‘with parents you really need to emphasis the positives, recognise there are areas to improve but you have to make sure you get the balance right’ (informant 16; 278-280).

It is evident from both literature and this study, that performance skills are perceived by headteachers to be required to be successful in leadership. Leaders demonstrate an understanding of leadership ‘as’ performance and, leadership ‘is’ performance with both concepts being supported by all informants. The majority of headteachers accepted the terminology given, but some did not accept the term ‘act’ as they felt that this might be misinterpreted as dishonesty to their followers. Conversely, however, these individuals still recognised the fact that they needed to address

different audiences with different messages with a different tone, use of language et cetera to ensure their enactment was successful for the given situation.

‘The skills to be a good headteacher are wide ranging and sometimes I feel like a barrister when I am arguing a point, there are times when you feel like a politician and there are times when you feel like all sorts of kinds of roles.’ (Informant 9; 420-422), but crucially how do headteachers develop such a repertoire of performances? All of the interviewees were able to suggest some heritage to their performance development with the majority of participants being able to link this to their own personal development and the methods they undertake to perform successfully.

Many of the participants comment about how they have learnt how to perform from the observation of others and their experiences through the role as headteacher but also as their career has progressed, ‘I think a lot of it is learnt on the job’ (Informant 4; 304). Informant 15 is adamant about how they have developed ‘I think I am very good at learning from other people I watch people’ (78) by ‘perhaps trying to remember what things I thought other people did well and I tried to see if I could do the same thing’ (212 -214). Observational development is supported by informant 2 who says ‘it’s learning from other people how do they deal with things taking advice from those people, watching people, how did they cope with that situation’ (410-414) which is in agreement with informant 12 who use the people they observe as ‘role models to see how he or she deals with things; How do they cope? How are they conducting themselves? What does it look like? What is their appearance?’ (352 – 358). Those who aspired to become headteachers early began their observations

along their career path ‘when you think you are going to be a headteacher one day or hope to be, you watch all of the time and you learn from other people and I had learnt a lot’ (Informant 6; 76-80). Although whom participants have observed has varied ‘I have been exposed to a lot of different headteachers that I’ve gained things … both positive and negative’ (Informant 5; 24-26).

It isn’t always fellow colleagues that the participants have gained skills from through observation: ‘Prime minister Tony Blair spoke to us at a conference centre in London, he was brilliant, forget his policies but as somebody who spoke to an audience he was brilliant’ (Informant 3; 116-118) and ‘everybody talks about Obama’s eloquence but he doesn’t use words that are beyond anybody else but is the way he does it’ (Informant 10; 158-160).

Upon observations, informant 6 explains that ‘I think its just watching other people all of the time and reflecting’ (230), therefore making sure ‘you learn which bits you’re ok at and which bits you’re not. Then supporting through leadership team and other colleagues doing talks and seeing what they did that work or what didn’t work’ (Informant 4; 284-288). Informant 4 goes on to strengthen their reasoning behind reflection and seeking support, ‘we will have conversations about whether we did something ok, well or very good and it would be better if. Those sorts of conversations help you to get better and they help raise the bar for each of us’ (168 – 174). Experience and reflection allow the leaders to move forward with their ability to perform ‘I know a number of time that I have just got it wrong and what I thought I said did clearly not come across to other people and sometimes I have known it

when I have gone out by the look on people’s faces or later on when people have come to see me’ (Informant 10; 82 – 84) with informant 5 exclaiming that with this, a development of confidence also builds ‘there is so much that I have faced I’ve done what I thought was right or we have done what we thought was right and has proved to be ok, where you make a mistake you learn by it but I don’t worry anymore’ (50-54).

Informant 3 linked and emphasised the importance of reflection to a course that they had attended ‘a very useful course I went on was run by NCSL called New Visions, it was very useful for me as a headteacher, it really got you to reflect … it was really useful to reflect because you don’t have time within the school day’ (218 – 222). Other informants had actively taken part in skill development courses focused on particular aspects of enactment, which they felt may have had an impact on their ability to perform: informant 4 had attended ‘American type of course working on presentation skills and it was quite useful to how you think about it and how you structure a presentation and it showed a recognition of the need to be able to present and it’s a challenge to anyone particularly your peers’ (162-166). Informant 13 ‘had a voice coach as part of my PGCSE and it seemed like a great idea at the time’ (512) and has consciously engaged with development, ‘a lot of the stuff I do now is underpinned by a couple of books I have read based on what motivates people in the working environment in a way that makes them feel good about themselves and their job’ (194 – 196).

The informants were also able to relate personal experiences to the reasoning behind their ability to stand up and perform in their role; ‘life experiences to a point, nobody is the finished article … there is always something new on the horizon’ (Informant 2; 400 – 402). Some believed it was experiences as a child which had supported their development, ‘my teenage years I worked in a youth club … used to sing in the choir … lots of activities for the younger children. I developed a knack I suppose of getting things to happen’ (Informant 7; 164-166) and others linked it to their academic background ‘I’ve always been very outgoing my best subjects at school were English and languages so this has always been something I am interested, my degree is in English my PGCE joint English and drama … I’ve got a good understanding of what makes a good performance’ (Informant 9; 120-122 … 138-140). Informant 1 believed it is linked to their social skills outside of the workplace, ‘what’s helped me is that I’ve been best man five times, that’s helped, as a young man it has helped enormously and I’ve had the privileged of but sad thing where I’ve presented at some big funerals … I would say I have learnt from those experiences and brought it to the work place’ (62-68). Whereas others knew the areas they needed to focus and develop ‘initially I did lack confidence and was quite introverted then I developed these taking the mickey skills and making fun of myself’ (Informant 8; 198-200).

Leadership performance development stems from the ability to follow a theoretical point and take a chance upon the way in which it is delivered (Newton, 2004).

> “Inspiration is like a seed which cannot come forth until the ground has been prepared and a certain formative period has elapsed” (Coker, 1964. p9).

Individual informants speak about how they prepare for their performance and the way in which overtime they prepare for their repertoire of delivery. Predominantly informants are content with the idea that performance skills are learnt through observation and experience, from others and themselves. With only informant 16 (188-190) claiming that they'd 'made it up as they'd gone along'! De Pree (1992) refers to the fact it is the leader's responsibility for appropriate preparation in the way in which they conduct their leadership qualities and role. Individuals who 'perform' have to practise for a range of possible contexts and situations (Newton, 2004). Leadership preparation is a 'debt' they owe to their followers within an organisation (De Pree, 1992).

The way in which leaders perceive their performance development, is learned through experience and taken from the observation of others as they have embarked upon their journey to headship and within headship. Upon the choice of becoming a leader, individuals use their experiences and observations of others to reflect upon in order to relate to their own circumstances. Therefore, the idea of 'fast tracking' a leadership career does not sound favourable, as how would such experiences be encountered? This alone may have implications upon the successional planning and development of new leaders.

Those who demonstrated a high level of self-confidence corresponded directly to the literature of self-belief and self-efficacy; they seem to address the position of performance naturally.

> “At one extreme, one finds that the performer can be fully taken in by his own act: he can be sincerely convinced that the impression of reality which he stages is the real reality” (Goffman, 1959. p28)

However, what about those leaders who do not possess, or haven’t had the experience to gain a high level of self-efficacy to perform? Alternatively, do these individuals ‘put on their performance’ and use their ‘enactment’ to front their audiences with a level of ‘pretence’, for a higher level of self-belief than actually exists?

> “Individuals often find themselves with the dilemma of expression versus action. Those who have the time and talent to perform a task well may not, because of this, have the time or talent to make it apparent that they are performing well. (Goffman, 1959. p43)

Overall many of the participants claimed that it is part of individuals natural charisma, ‘its instinctive … I think a lot of it is down to people’s personality’ (Informant 6; 74-76). Informant 1 boasts that naturally they are ‘a bit of a showman and the interests I’ve had through life, I’ve often been a captain of a side … sometimes its been in stressful and highly charged situations … but I found it quite easy and I enjoyed that and I put on a bit of a show’ (208-222). Informant 9 is also confident in their ability to naturally perform, ‘I’ve gone through life, always been able to open my mouth and not worry about how something will come out, I just feel confident in standing up and saying or doing what is needed … I don’t think that there are parts of your character or personality that you can train, you can perhaps develop it?’ (402 – 404 … 414). The question of whether or not you can develop this characteristic arises with other informants but its importance is definite, ‘skills for speaking to individuals or small groups of people I think are much harder to learn because they are dependent upon your characteristics and your ability to empathise with a situation or people’

(Informant 7; 42-48) with informant 8 agreeing ‘some people can be charismatic and confident as a natural element and they come into the job with it, others develop it but if you don’t have those qualities you can’t do the job’ (124-128).

> “Performers may even attempt to give the impression that their present poise and proficiency are something they have always had and that they have never had to fumble their way through a learning period.” (Goffman, 1959. p56)

Before participants attempt to embark upon a performance some of them consider methods which they will use to support their delivery. Informant 14 expresses their position on preparation ‘I think preparation is really important and it takes ages’ (236) with informant 12 in agreement, ‘I tend to think to get the message across you have to do a lot of preparation before you actually hold meetings’ (52). However informant 1 takes an opposing stance by stating that there is a ‘danger of over preparing because that can generate anxiety because the problem of performing, … we all suffer some level with evaluation apprehension’ (76 – 78).

Whether or not ‘practice … is the answer’ (Informant 3; 242) some of the participants have trialed and used a range of methods to enable them to perform successfully. ‘I have tried lots of techniques to develop that skill that have ranged from writing out verbatim what I want to say and learning it off by heart, writing out what I want to say and reading it from a script and trying to do it as an auto cue and pray, seeing what I want to say in a bullet point form and having that handy or simple rehearsing in my head and letting it come out in a re-response kind of mode or a combination of using all of those. I also use IT and Powerpoints’ (Informant 7; 26-34) with others taking a simpler line of attack ‘I make my notes but I am not a huge fan of using interactive

communications. … I’ve got in my head what I want to run through with staff. Although I rehearse it I don’t speak from pieces of paper’ (Informant 8; 52-56). Both of these informants claim the importance of their rehearsal and practice methods with others stating the same, ‘I prepare for that by writing it down and repeat it to the wall several times until I am comfortable doing it’ (Informant 4; 128 – 130) and informant 16 confessing that they ‘will practice in front of the mirror a couple of times just so I know I have got it sorted in my mind and I think I have learnt that from them, its practise, deliver, come over as confident’ (106 – 110). This type of rehearsal has evidently been crucial for informant 3 to develop, who has ‘worked very hard at it, to make it sound relaxed and confident’ (108-110).

Using performance to support Professional Identity

Research Question Three:

To what extent is leadership as performance a contribution to the professional identity of heads in secondary education?

All of the informants, with the exception of interview 5, were able to reflect upon whether or not they needed to develop a professional identity, or referred to the use of performance skills in order to separate their professional identify from their individual persona. The viewpoints expressed in these terms were divided amongst informants; some felt it needed to occur, but they needed to stay true to themselves as individuals, with others saying that they needed to be separate but found it difficult to 'divorce' their personas completely, and finally a few individuals stating that it needed to happen and was easy to do so.

Informant 1 sees the idea of having a professional identity as part of the role of headteacher 'I am the headteacher, this is what it's about, this is what I am about and what I believe in, you've got to be natural' (130). 'When I am on the stage talking to year 8 parents who are wanting to bring their children here next year, I never feel like I am trying to be anybody other than myself. I do take on a certain persona that is representative of the school and when the evening is over I remove it and bring it back out the next time it is needed' shares informant 7 (96-102) supporting informant 1 in terms of the role, yet developing the concept of an enactment for the occasion. Informant 4 (204-220) is in agreement saying that; 'There is a time and a place and I

wouldn’t do it all of the time. Have I done it the other way round, well I think in all of your roles you take on a professional persona where certainly you drop your personality, so to turn it on its head there is an act … it has to be done because it goes with the job … Sometimes I have to put my own politics to one side’ responds informant 6 (136).

Giddens (1991) states that the,

> “pursuit and enactment of self-identity by people is a central aspect of their development of agency” (Busher, 2006. p68)

supporting the fact that individual leaders must be required to use their performance in order for them to adopt their professional identity, allowing them to practise their act(s) (Busher, 2005). All informants within this research supported the concept that a ‘role’ or an ‘act’ or a ‘different persona’ is adopted at times within their professional environment to enable them to be successful in their undertakings of leadership ensuring that messages can be delivered effectively. Some informants clearly stated that this is not all of the time, nor is it a complete separation from ‘them’ meaning that they still see themselves and their own personal characteristics, when ‘putting on’ their professional identity. Whereas others were more forthright in stating that they are completely different to their own persona and character that they have at home. It was quite clear from some informants however, that they had not even contemplated this concept before, yet the opportunity to reflect was in agreement with the need to perform in order to separate their professional identity from their own. It is inevitable that the effects of external factors such as

> “thoughts, feelings, values and dispositions’ will directly influence the professional identity adopted” (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008. p126).

The idea of staying true to yourself within the role is reiterated by informant 3, yet they find the concept in practice a challenge; ‘There’s a lovely phrase with being a head teacher, to be a head teacher is relentless and accountable. It’s just never ending, you end up with a tiring day and someone will come to you with problems and they are never easy problems because they would have solved them before they came to you; you have to give them the time, the energy, put on a smile and say come on then let’s have a chat about it and in that sense it is a performance … Weighing up the balance of being yourself in order to run your school in a way that is humanly possible for you, balanced against sometimes putting on an act where you have to be upbeat and positive where you can’t ever be grumpy or down or staff will pick up your mood and that’s a real dilemma that you face as a head teacher. You’ve got to weigh the two up; it’s difficult, and there are no easy answers’ (18-52; 94-102).

The concept of adopting a professional identity enables leaders to position themselves within their community (Busher, 2005). It is seen as a ‘mask’ that allows leaders to ‘play’ their part. Individual informants, although in agreement with the statement, found it difficult to state that they would go beyond their ‘true self’ and do not want to come across as ‘fraudulent’ to their followers. Informant 1 is very clear about their view of their own leadership and others, ‘I think there is a real danger of people in leadership hiding behind the title and performing the title rather than saying this is me. I think it’s more powerful to say I am the Head teacher, this is what it’s about, this is what I am about and what I believe in, you’ve got to be natural and I

think some people find that quite difficult’ (64-67). Informant 2 however talks about the need to have a professional identity away from their own persona, and suggests that the separation of the two is an imperative act, whilst staying true, ‘You’ve got to have, it’s easier said than done but you have got to have a life away from the performance of work but you can’t put on an act because people will see it is an act, it’s a veneer it’s paper thin and people think he’s not really like that. You’ve got to be true to yourself but what’s got to drive it is the vision you have to do well for these children’ (150-153). An element of this may be supported by the literature based within Busher (2005) who indicates that quite often individuals are institutionalised; often they do not differentiate the elements of work-related life and those which are not. Professional identities develop overtime, through the interactions with colleagues across a variety of ‘histories, personalities and work-related scenarios’ shaping the way in which they need to be identified to be successful in their practice (Busher, 2005). ‘I think perhaps you do it more actually when you are not as confident in yourself and you almost have to put on that persona in order to convince yourself as much as anybody else that you can do it and you know what you are doing’ says informant 15 (74-76) linking experience directly to self-efficacy.

Whereas informant 9 disagrees initially with informant 3 in the sense that they do not ‘adopt a different persona when [I am] performing but (I) will change the vocabulary, style and presentation to suit’ (9-12), they go on to require further reflection on whether this is true to themselves as an individual, ‘Whether that is a difference in performance or persona I am not sure, in my own time and in my own recreation I am the opposite of how I am in school. I think I just view it as two different aspects of the

same person. To get the school to where I want it I think there probably is more of an element of performance, when I was head of English I didn’t need to perform as much so I didn’t see the home life as much of a contrast to how I see it now.’ (246-264). Therefore implying that the initial separation isn’t apparent, yet perhaps on reflection it may occur as an innate behaviour through experience and development. A confused informant 16 agrees with the uncertainty of clarity with separating the two (122-128) ‘I wear my heart on my sleeve but I don’t really because I am saying that I wear that smiley face so I suppose I do, I have never thought about it before. I must use that performance to be able to divide that up, at the moment I absolutely knackered to be honest with you but I know the staff are really tired too if I come in moping around negativity breeds negativity so I don’t.’

Other informants see this separation from the outset; ‘people who know me out of school would say I am a private, quiet individual, I don’t act in a terribly social way I am a private person with a small group of friends but within school my persona is different I am not a super head type of character but I do need to be able to perform to people because they take their lead from the head’, states informant 7 (74-78). Upon reflection informant 15 says ‘I do it a lot actually the more I think about it. I think sometimes I have to do it because it doesn’t actually matter what I think … I think perhaps you do it more actually when you are not as confident in yourself and you almost have to put on that persona in order to convince yourself as much as anybody else that you can do it and you know what you are doing (130-152). Informant 10 is adamant that they use their professional identity to support their performance as a headteacher ‘all of the time because it is an act. When I am up on the stage that is

not me and I know when I am outside there are things I cannot do. Heads have to act or cannot act in a series of ways to what is socially acceptable. My personal and my professional life even though one has a massive impact on the other but they are completely divorced.’ (192-204). Yet they also reflect that ‘you have to let some of your own personality come through’ (308) in order for the performance to be believed. In agreement is informant 2, who states ‘it’s easier said than done but you have got to have a life away from the performance of work but you can’t put on an act because people will see it is an act, it’s a veneer it’s paper thin and people think he’s not really like that. You’ve got to be true to yourself but what’s got to drive it is the vision you have to do well for these children’ (300-306).

Informant 8 has no issues with the idea or separation of personas (140-150; 208-210) ‘I find it quite easy to separate the two. … you are not in the job to be liked and you have to be able to do the right thing for the kids in the school … I can still sleep at night and I can separate the role I have at school to the one I have at home and I think humour and being optimistic is key’. Informant 7 believes it is not humour but eccentricity which allows them to separate their personas, ‘I think I cultivate or am perceived as having a cheerful eccentricity because people don’t quite know how to take you but they think that you are harmless and that is fine that is how I want kids to see me. I stand in the corridor with a cheerful voice because it carries better, it’s a useful technique but I haven’t ever sat and thought how can I do this, I know I will adopt this I just find that the cheerful eccentricity is part of who I am and it worked very well with kids and other people because they just don’t know how to take you and they are fine with that’ (48-50). For others it depends upon the emotion to be

separated ‘I can fake anger with a student but I cant fake energy or passion’ says informant 14 (351).

Beijarrd *et al* (2004) expresses that identity is formed as individuals proceed through steps of biological and psychological maturation, with each step making reference to the individual’s interaction with their own environment. Through these steps a learning process is followed, in which the leader communicates and assumes their role, monitoring their actions accordingly (Beijaard *et al,* 2004). Informants are in agreement with Blase and Anderson (1995) where their performance shapes the work of colleagues, and their position of leadership and authority supports this; a level of power can be used to coerce colleagues (Busher, 2005). Informant 15 supports this literature by stating clearly the level of stance and authority that is required from followers ‘you know that the audience are expecting to see a certain type of person, they are not expecting to see someone who mumbles and holds their head down. They are expecting to see somebody who holds their head high and I think I realise that people need to see something and that you are confident in your message even if you are not that confident about it or you are not sure’ (74-76).

To the informant it may be that the ‘world of self’ appears to their audience as subjective, however to the individual it feels nothing other than a reality. Informant 13 supports this reality by associating the difficulty in separating their professional identity and their self persona, claiming that they can easily become confused and overlap with one another, ‘I find it really difficult when it comes to holiday time to put it all to one side and I tend to now go away straight away at the start of the summer for

a couple of weeks because otherwise I end up thinking about school. I think that’s where the performance overhang is. To put it in perspective you are never yourself in front of the kids and you are never quite yourself when you are leader in school, we wouldn’t dream of speaking to friends the way we have to sometimes speak to colleagues in school and that does have an impact’. The development of an individual’s professional identity suggests that it is directly linked to experience and also the perception of themselves and the status in which others perceive them.

In summary, the informant leaders positively demonstrate the extent that they are required to use performance in order to promote their professional identity in their working environment. Sturdy *et al* (2007) highlight the requirement to

> “interweave knowledge, emotion and identity” (Sturdy *et al*, 2007. p846)

and the way in which they need to be explored as separate entities, with Stone and Colella (1996) summarising the need to change identity in order to perform (Lumby and English, 2009).

The emotional cost to performance

Research Question Four:

To what extent does performance with headship lead to an emotional cost to the head teacher and how is this accommodated?

Leadership literature has often referred to emotional intelligence but for the informants in this study it is important to address the emotional capacities and skills, both positive and negative, of leaders' emotional lives. Informants support the literature stating that leadership is an emotional practice, one which carries the passion for the role which motivates and mobilises others, rather than a level of passion which subsumes oneself (Hargreaves, 2008). It is not just a leader's responsibility to consider other individuals' feelings, but they are also required to go beyond emotional intelligence, to anticipate others emotions in order to influence them and lead them successfully (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

'We all suffer with a degree of anxiety' (informant 1; 80), 'It's all about emotions and I can't suppress them sometimes' (informant 5; 282-283), 'I think sometimes when you are genuinely hacked off and someone hasn't done a good job, and it's a first mistake, then you have to bite your tongue' (informant 11; 156) and 'of course I have sleepless nights' reflects informant 4 (280). Leaders are required to be creative in order to react to the pressure of improving practice. Informants relate their emotions to the nature of the message and the climate and audience in which it is to be delivered. Informant 3 says that on occasions it is their responsibility to 'lift the mood'

linking it to the importance of finding the ‘energy to smile’ no matter what. Following this Leithwood and Beatty (2008) support the key foci of this particular research question by stating themselves in the literature,

> “How do leaders sustain themselves in the face of so many demands on their time, attention and energy?” and “How do leaders develop the emotional preparedness they need to lead successfully?”. (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008. p125)

Emotions are driven according to the individual and the message being delivered. If the environment and message is sensitively driven then the amount of emotion is high, ‘I’ve only been emotionally strained delivering messages at things like funerals where the nature of the event is going to be emotionally charged’ (informant 1; 138). Informant 15 also reflects on somber circumstances and states clearly that the enactment has to be in place in order to separate the person from the profession and support the emotional cost, ‘when you have to tell people sad news which you have to do from time to time and you have to do it in a way that gives it the due respect … it is a performance I don’t know but what they do expect from you is the leadership of emotion because it almost gives them permission to appear sad and to show that respect because you have created a space in which they can do it’ (172 -180). Informant 4 supports this difficulty, but disagrees and wishes to remain true to themselves, whilst reflecting upon how to protect oneself from the hurt ‘you can choose to put on a front and perform that as a very formal thing the chosen style for most would be not to show any emotion and to give a professional view and actually I think there is a place just to be human and say it as it is, was I upset, yes am I upset now yes which is a choice because I can do it, I think just about the other way round or would certainly try to but actually I think a choice to show your personal feelings

means for me and I don’t know whether this works or not but for me there is a time to be human, not to act, there is no performance in showing you care but the fact you care so it’s the opposite showing your own feelings within a situation’ (190-202). Informant 10 (210-230) disagrees and believes that this type of emotion needs to be controlled and speaks about the ways in which they may cope with delivering such highly charged emotional messages from the examples of others, ‘he took a paperclip in his pocket and he would drive it into his leg while speaking because that helped him to maintain and control his emotions or else he would have got upset. I have tried but was conscious that I was trying to control my emotions so I got upset … Showing genuine heartfelt sadness can be seen as a sign of weakness and not strength’. These circumstances are fortunately rare, but different occasions nevertheless raise emotions. Informant 2 recalls, ‘I was not very pleased with a colleague because of their unprofessional approach to something. I had to see that colleague and I had to give a very tough message at the same time I’m giving that message I thinking to myself, I’m beating myself up inside thinking am I being too hard on them and the other part of me thinks … Afterwards you reflect on did I get that right because you don’t want to destroy anybody either’ (312-317).

Many of the informants discuss the ‘difficult messages’ that need to be delivered and relate that it is this type of message that is more difficult to convey in the most appropriate manner. Many of the informants openly share that they feel a range of emotions, and often need to consider the level of anxiety that these can cause. With some sharing personal messages that they have had to deliver which have weighed them down emotionally, such as informing colleagues about a sick member of staff

and speaking at funerals of pupils and colleagues. Informant 5 declares that ‘it is all about emotions and I can’t suppress them sometimes’. The leaders are the role models who take the forefront of the emotional discomfort associated with such collaborative working (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008). Informant 7 relates this to their initial demonstration of leadership ability and the emotional cost that this carried ‘When I got the job and first came in … it was quite difficult with the leadership team and to bring a vision into the school that they didn’t necessarily subscribe to and a completely new way of working for them.’ (68-70). In order for the leader to be successful in motivating others with their demonstration of emotions, they are required to understand themselves, before connecting their work with the emotions they then subsequently use to lead (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

It is from this reflection that informants demonstrate how they are emotionally involved in aspects of the message, and take the delivery to be personal; this subsequently and naturally builds up, which in turn must question the effect of emotional strain and cost on the individual. Informant 9 evokes a tale, which presented itself to be an issue, which sat very close to their own personal life and views, therefore highlighting the strains of separating their Professional Identity making the emotional investment extremely high. In the early stages of their appointment their school demonstrated ‘a lot of racial tension, its predominantly white working family background with a small Pakistani ethnic minority and this was the other big issue that I inherited, that there was a gang culture. My wife is English but Punjabi background so it is quite a personal issue for me and obviously my children are half Indian and half English and when I came here I saw fairly quickly overt

racism; there was a lot of tension it was all almost white directed to Asian; it was really quite distasteful, nothing happened there had been two exclusions in the term before I arrived for racially motivated incidents. Six weeks into the spring term there was a huge fight on the playground six white boys had gone after a couple of Asian boys and it almost turned into a riot. I excluded 17 children on that day 6 permanently following an investigation, there must have been twenty staff out there trying to split this fight up it really was unpleasant and quite emotionally challenging' (272 -304). Informant 7 and 6 share accounts of how they have placed themselves in the centre of the emotion and not been able to take a significant step away from the situation they have found themselves in, explaining that ‘I’ve really put my heart and soul into that and my credibility was on the line’ (7; 118-124), with informant 6 revealing that ‘I stayed in school and saw it through to closure and that probably kyboshed my own career and that was in my mind but I was too emotionally attached … personally I still find it hard to talk about it, it was a really painful time because people didn’t know me and therefore judged me’ (164-166; 185–187). Informant 17 summarises their reasoning for not being able to remove themselves from the situation and therefore being emotionally involved by stating ‘I think the biggest thing for me is that I am deeply moral and whatever I do is based on this deeply moral value of is this right’ (70-72).

There are a multitude of emotions felt by informants, which they explain is directly linked and dependent upon the type of message and audience to which the headteachers deliver, ‘it could be to staff, parents or students. I get as nervous in front of any of them … I always worried about that element of performance and I

think in the early days I got incredibly nervous before performing’ (Informant 16; 6, 20-23). The message may need to be approached vigilantly, especially when delivering to individuals in a high stakeholder positions. For example informant 2 shares an experience they had to face with a school governor ‘it is a difficult message but at the same time he is the chair of governors and there may be a time when he needs to pull me aside for some reason but if we can’t have that frank discussion then it’s not good for the school. The messages go with diffusing, with sharing situations, they can be in all directions so family, senior colleagues, chair of governors’ (372 – 380). The informants in these situations clearly refer to the importance of underpinning messages with honesty no matter who may make up the different audiences. Informant 9 recalls their emotions during an ‘unpleasant meeting’ with various stakeholders including ‘the LA … the director of education’ where they need to be honest and open to the interrogation they faced, stating that ‘I got a pretty rough ride … It was really hard, really tense, fractious meeting and I must admit I felt a bit like a politician kind of answering questions without answering them, much of what I was talking about was saying we are putting this in place, this is going to happen and we have this support but I was conscious all the way along that much of what I was saying wasn’t really going to have an impact that was going to make them feel any better until at least September and I just had to absorb it and say that I agreed and I was going to defend the state of the budget it was nothing to do with me but I am putting it right (162-184).

To be successful in their emotional leadership status, individuals need to consider their responsibilities; for example if they do not agree with a new policy initiated by

the government it is expected that they ‘mask’ their own real frustrations and despite their disapproving view of such a policy, they need to ensure they remain professional and transfer this energy to motivate and lead the establishment into success. Informants contemplate when it is necessary and appropriate to demonstrate emotions during their performances. Informant 4 states that leaders have a choice, ‘you can chose to put on a front and perform that as a very formal thing. The chosen style for most would be not show any emotion and to give a professional view’ versus ‘there is a time to be human, not to act, there is no performance in showing you care but the fact you care so it’s the opposite: showing your feelings within a situation’ (99-101). This supports the literature of Hargreaves (1998) who states that it requires a combination of the two options as the emotional labour within leadership is not just ‘acting out’ feelings superficially, for example ‘pretending to be disappointed’ or ‘pretending to be surprised’ but is it’s a conscious act of state where the leader is required to experience the feelings required to perform the leadership delivery.

Being on the ‘stage’ delivering so many different ‘scripts’ to such a variety of ‘audiences’, with the headteacher as the ‘lead’ places others in the position to listen, observe and review their performance. This in turn causes ‘a degree of anxiety because we know that people are going to be evaluating us as individuals and what we are about to say … there is a danger of becoming over anxious about it’ (1; 80-86). It is clearly evident from a number of informants that the range of emotions can be testing and the headteachers can feel a level of emotional strain. It is therefore necessary and important that they understand their own emotional thresholds and

subsequent coping mechanisms. Informant 16 knows this type of emotion will build up and come to a head when they are exhausted ‘it all comes to tiredness with me; I do find that I get exhausted’ (136) and therefore will seek coping mechanisms at this stage. When already placed under pressure and feeling high levels of emotions, headteachers may consequently have to deal with a little bit more. Informant 5 shares that on a particular occasion when close to their individual emotional threshold, they couldn’t restrain their emotions any longer, ‘I had that hanging over me this morning, it’s grossly unfair and I pick up an email this morning from the safe guarding officer and I was already fuming. It’s all about emotions and I can’t suppress them sometimes. The converse to that is that I’m always crying and I don’t get embarrassed, somebody might have done something really well something really out of the ordinary and I can’t help it, it’s just part of my make-up’ (281 – 289).

The way in which all informants discuss how emotions can take their toll, informant 5 sums up the overall justification and reasoning why so many headteachers ‘battle through’ their emotional cost, ‘it’s a lovely job but it’s frustrating; you have highs and lows, you can’t learn how to deal with going to read the lesson for a students of yours who’s just died of cancer, nothing prepares you for that you’ve just got to bite your bottom lip and get on with it, it can be immensely rewarding, upsetting and it’s not everybody’s cup of tea’ (559 – 565). It isn’t just the delivery of messages, which may cause individuals to carry this emotional cost, but also being the confidant for others. ‘If somebody says something to me and they’ve entrusted me with something I am true to my word from my professional point of view, it doesn’t impinge safeguarding or health and safety, it could be something in their personal life that they have

chosen to share with me but importantly I then, as much as it is an emotional issue because I have been supportive to them I cannot then share it with somebody else’ confides informant 2 (388-396).

Headteachers are passionate about what they do, and passion involves intense emotions about ‘cause principles, ideologies and people’. This can be construed as being good or bad, depending upon the purpose of the emotion and passion that is being served; it could be linked to destruction or courage (Hargreaves, 2008). The informants focus on the negative phenomenon, the ‘tough messages’ which are refereed to, that the term ‘emotional cost’ portrays, where leaders trade part of their self for the reward that followers accrue through receiving the message and subsequent mobilisation, in the best possible way, depending upon its context (Hargreaves, 1998). Oatley (1991) demonstrates that leaders will feel happy providing the purpose of the role has been fulfilled. The emotions, which leaders have to choose from, are amongst a great range of contrasting purpose.

> “In real life, a purely logical search through all possibilities is not possible (because of limitations of sources, multiple goals and problems of coordination with others). Nevertheless, we must act … despite our limitations we must take responsibility for our actions and suffer their effects. This is why emotions or something like them are necessary to bridge across the unexpected and the unknown, to guide reason, and to give priorities among multiple goals” (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996. p123).

High achieving leaders are those who are able to prepare for particular emotional states, with the understanding of how to address dangers and dilemmas (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008). If leaders do not achieve or address the role with the correct purpose the leader may become anxious, frustrated, angry, guilty or another negative emotional stance. Leaders literally become de-moralised (Hargreaves, 1998).

Concealing such an emotional cost may have significant side effects to the leader (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

Informants use terms such as ‘lonely’, ‘solitary’, ‘tiring’, ‘sleepless nights’, ‘exhaustion’, ‘battered’, ‘upset’, ‘guarded’, ‘cautious’, ‘panicked’, nervous’ and ‘wound up’ to describe the way in which they feel carrying such emotional strain. None of these can possibly be healthy for the individuals’ mental state and therefore they must need to seek emotional support strategies to balance passion and stability. Some of the informants speak of the effects that the emotional cost can have on them, and when two of the informant refer to particularly health worrying strategies; ‘drink not being the answer’ and ‘I took a paper clip to my leg’ it is a perturbing reality to the extent that this emotional labour can realistically have on the leader. Therefore essential steps must be required to counteract the emotional cost (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

Informants begin to share how they may set up an initial coping mechanism for such emotional eventualities. Informant 14 looks to escape reality for a little while ‘quite often I like to be on my own’ (209) whereas informant 15 shares how the intensity of this emotional rollercoaster can cause them to ‘get very angry’ with themselves, as inevitably ‘they let the performance drop sometimes’ (220). Informants shared a variety of ways in which they could ‘escape’, but fundamentally informant 14 asserts that it comes down to their own personal coping mechanisms, without which he individuals’ lives would inevitably be altered, ‘You’ve got to understand yourself and your own personal strengths and weaknesses. When I was younger I just wanted to

please all of the time and sometimes I would suppress things that I wanted in terms of other people’s needs and it took me until I was in my thirties to realise that I was just as important. It’s that awareness of yourself and if issues do arise whether it is with staff or pupils I have to deal with because if I go home and I haven’t I won’t sleep, it will bug me and stop me enjoying life’ (221-231), emphasising the importance and availability of a sounding board in some capacity.

With the view that ‘headship can be a lonely role’ (Informant 8; 134) informants draw upon whom they may turn to for support in order to seek sanctuary for themselves. A vast recollection of individuals in context are reviewed by informant 13 (470-508) who has ‘a very clear agenda in terms of sharing the strategies that we are going to use. I think that people who haven’t been in this position think that these things aren’t thought through. I tend to bounce things off my PA and my deputy head, there tends to be a small number of people who you get to know who will understand the difficulties you will have with particular things … one of the major things is dealing with the emotional side of things but also having enough emotional intelligence to decide which battles to take on and be willing to listen to other people’s advice. It is critical to have some level of support but the really deep emotional support that you need when you are taking on difficult things like redundancy within the senior team, I’ve had a deputy head who lost a kid on a school trip and I had to suspend them and those are the hard things to deal with as a head and when you are in that situation the only people who can really help you are close family’.

Several of the informants agree with the final testimony that it is their spouses or

family members who they look to unburden unto ‘she is very helpful, she is a former teacher and she happens to be very good at that sort of thing’ (1; 186 - 187), ‘Home, yes I would turn to my husband and seek his support and my sister because she is also a headteacher of an academy. I talk to her as she does to me about what we are doing and how we are going to do it’ (15; 190 – 210), ‘…definitely home background, a wife and two kids which I am lucky enough to have and that’s very important.’ (3; 378 – 380), ‘My wife although, I try not to take much home if I can help it’ (9; 330). It is this latter statement which informant 2 sympathises with as they also share at home but continue to be conscious of striking this balance of professional and personal identity, ‘my wife but I don’t go into detail because it doesn’t serve a purpose and I certainly wouldn’t mention names. I will say what type of situation and what I had to say and ask what she thinks; she will say I am sure they will understand … It’s all about the balance. It’s difficult!’ (340 – 352).

Reassuringly, all but one informant is able to name an individual or team of individuals who they feel they can discuss and contemplate performances with to minimise the solitary emotional strain. The majority of informants relate this support directly to the working environment and other senior leading colleagues. And although a certain professional distance needs to remain to ensure authority is evident, they are often the individuals who can relate and listen to suggested performances and feelings in the most structured and sympathetic manner. There are two aspects however, which are raised by informants that have a closer link to some of the literature reviewed in this study. The first is from informant 14, who states that they ‘quite often go it alone’ and informant 12 who says ‘take solitude in

your faith … go for a walk for peace and tranquility and actually that clears your head a lot’. The second is a much larger sanctuary for informants, with over two thirds of leaders seeking refuge with their families. Leaders who seek guidance from like-minded leaders in their own working environment or that of a similar are sharing their ‘professional identity’ and formulating its position.

Emotions are the fabric of one’s self and all of the informants are forthcoming with discussing how their leadership performance has a direct emotional impact on their role.

> “Emotional relationships are the core not just of any school related work, but are pivotal to the concept of educational leadership” (Crawford, 2007. p522)

The emotion, which a headteacher experiences through their job, is an inherent part of it. Their belief is that the emotional aspects of the role that they feel are ‘idiosyncratic, accidental and temporary’, and controlling the ‘annoying side-effects’ is not something that they need to be overly concerned about (Keltchtermans *et al*, 2011).

Each informant is able to discuss strategies to accommodate such emotional times within leadership enactment choice and performances. Leaders will face key challenges that could affect their emotional state and they will be required to handle this emotional cost / strain / labour in the complexities of the work place to ensure that their fundamental leadership role is to be successful and respected (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008). “The Big Five” leader personality factors have been within

literature since 1884, when Sir Francis Galton investigated the hypothesis of human personality traits, Across the years this developed further with Costa and McCrae, who in 1985 publishing the five factor model. Leaders who are able to follow these five factors are reported to be the most effective of leaders (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

Emotional stability: to feel anxious, depressed, angry or worried – informants, when reflecting upon how certain performances made them feel all claimed to have felt and demonstrated such emotions. Those leaders who are able to control and stabilise their own emotions, are likely to be more successful in problem solving. Adapted from Leithwood and Beatty, 2008. p128.

Extraversion: sociable, assertive, talkative – informants, are customised to the fact that it is their responsibility in their role to be the lead performer in the organisation. It is fundamental to the leadership role that the headteacher needs to be an extravert.

Agreeableness: courteous, flexible, trusting – some of the informants spoke about the importance of social engagement, focusing particularly how they need to be approachable for when colleagues need to see them regarding personal issues. Those successful in leadership are able to demonstrate clear social engagement with others.

Conscientiousness: hardworking, achievement orientated, preserving – all of the informants demonstrate fantastic levels of passion for their roles. Individuals

reminisce about how particular aspects of inspections have driven them to ensure that the school and colleagues reap the awards they deserve. Despite feeling tired through their hard work, they continue to strive to keep the levels of motivation high.

Openness to experience: imagination, curious – informants, demonstrate themselves to be very open to learning from new experiences. They share different levels of openness of school-related and personal information to colleagues. The way in which leaders address this has been a determining factor to the extent that colleagues are willing to trust their leaders potential.

Leadership performance development

Research Question Five:

What are the implications of leadership as performance for the training and development of heads?

Leadership research and study in turn informs leadership development practice. With the leadership crisis upon schools, headteachers are being asked to be more proactive in the recognition of Talent Management and take a pertinent role in leadership development. The strategies, which are indicated in the literature, are the same that the informants believe to be key to support aspirant leaders: ‘mentoring and coaching, school-based experiential learning, job rotation, shadowing, internship, peer support, networking and formal leadership programmes’ (Bush and Glover, 2004). Leithwood and Beatty (2008) confirm that there is a need to become more sophisticated in our approach to identifying the next generation of leaders, and the development of that performance that is required for very high levels of leadership. The core emotional preparation that an individual undertakes to ensure that they can face the ‘dangers and dilemmas’ with courage and ethical commitment is the essence of a high performing leader.

Headteachers observe the first stage in performance development to be the identification and talent spotting of potential individuals aspiring to leadership, with informant 2 simply stating ‘it is important that we identify in colleagues the potential to move forwards (432) and informant 7 saying ‘I never say to someone you should be

a headteacher but I often say that I recognise that they have leadership potential and would like the school to help them develop’ (210 – 212). It is this first step in succession planning which allows for specific skills to be embraced and developed; informant 7 claims that ‘it’s as much about spotting the talent at an early age as you can and as early in their career as you can. There are probably four people here that I have identified that could have a skills subset developed to become headteachers’ (200 – 204). It is the view of informants that the next stages which enable colleagues to progress in key skill development come from ‘giving colleagues the opportunity to do it’ (2; 490), informant 7 secures this concept further by stating that they are ‘very formal about it and try and build it into their performance management so that it gets real vision throughout the year or you can informally invite them to take on leadership roles within the schools where they have to perform to different audiences’ (206 – 210). Informant 6 verifies this further with their own approach: ‘I think first of all it is identifying them. Do we know who they are that have that aspiration and then allowing them to sit in on as many situations. With my assistant heads if I’ve got a really difficult parent I will try and get them in because they need to see how I work and they will either go away saying to me that they can’t do that, I can’t be you and I say no you can’t but what you learnt from it’ (273 – 279). The potential to provide such experiences and opportunities underpins skill development through fundamental succession planning.

All informants are in agreement that like classroom practitioners, that leaders also require both training and continuing professional development throughout their careers. However, in comparison to those at the initial stages of their teaching

practice, it is recognised that the emergence of leadership development has been somewhat slower. Informants discuss various ways in which leaders can develop and this is well supported from the literature; however there does not seem to be a meaningful consensus of the ‘best programme’ for a aspirant leader to follow and there almost seems to be an assumption that a ‘good teacher’ can become a ‘good leader’ (Bush and Jackson, 2002). It is clear that the headteachers are purposefully identifying middle leaders, in particular to commence their leadership training, encouraging and supporting them through various development programmes. Many of the informants spoke about individuals whom they had given vital ‘experiences’ to in order for them to develop certain skills and encourage reflective practice. The retention of key personnel seems to be a significant factor to the identification of individuals for such development programmes, ensuring that they have job satisfaction, demonstrating a clear commitment to the motivation and value of their staff. It allows for a clear opportunity to identify, recruit, develop and retain those ‘talented’ individuals who will have a positive impact on school effectiveness, as they have the skills as leaders to bring about change within their schools (Rhodes and Bisschoff, 2012).

There may be opportunities to ‘perfect those skills’ (9; 444) on national courses and conferences, informant 3 agrees, ‘a number of courses through NCSL, Specialist Schools, ASCL all do some super courses for aspiring leaders; courses are generally good because you get to talk to other people, bounce ideas off them which is definitely useful’ (248 – 250). Informant 4 supports and questions the impact of attending the national course, NPQH ‘for its failings it did have some good bits some

of which would be, you have to give a presentation to colleagues who gave you feedback … but I’m not sure they were ever explicit in saying you are learning to do these things’ (324 – 332). This is supported by other informants’ mixed opinions on the effectiveness of the NPQH in the development of performance skills, informant 9 claims that the ‘NPQH one of (my) more resourceful opportunities the experience, discussions and debates that you have on it are really good’ (446 – 448). However, informant 9 goes on to say that ‘the least useful aspects are when you do the face-to-face role play because its such a false activity’ whereas informant 10 found that ‘one of the best things (I) learnt from it was actually how to do some presentations’ (284 – 286).

Many of the informants speak proudly about middle leaders within their establishments who are attending such aspiring courses where they focus upon leadership skill development within their own ‘in house’ CPD courses, ‘on a Tuesday evening, voluntarily (who) partake on a fortnightly basis on a leadership and management course in school delivered by leadership, from our experience of leadership courses’ (2; 420 – 424) taking the firm stance that ‘you don’t always have to go on a course down the motorway and have a nice meal it can be done internally’ (2; 484). Informant 8 also boasts that they have ‘a very strong CPD programme, we’ve done quite a lot of work with middle leaders and we encourage people to engage in various programmes (216 – 220). It is the visionary dream of informant 12 to develop and engage a leadership apprentice system as a school-led improvement system, ‘we spend a lot of time looking at middle leadership in schools because actually they are the canon of change aren’t they? I would love to bring in a 5 year

leadership programme, a 5 year apprentice. You will need a budget for that. You would need a home school, and then maybe a once a month they go to another school. Maybe an assistant head post appointed to 5 or 4 people and they take it in turn? They actually experience a term in the school. I would say that would develop leadership’ (374 – 390).

Rhodes *et al* (2009) focus upon the National Professional Qualification (NPQH) which all of the informants undertook to become headteachers themselves. They see it as a development programme that they had to complete in order to be appointed in their role and reference it through the interviews as the main programme that they can relate to in terms of leadership development. Yet informant 7 interrelates with the research and raises and deliberates the quandary themselves ‘‘I am an assessor on the board so I go once or twice a term to assess but I have to do a lot before-hand because it’s about asking questions and finding the gaps and I am always a bit surprised that there isn’t a performance element in there because quite a proportion of a headteacher’s credibility is based upon them being able to get messages across successfully and have people believe in them and I don’t see that as part of the framework in a significant way. I think it’s important and I think it should be assessed and people should be coached through that experience so they can develop it or are recognised as being competent in particular areas of performance’ (276 – 288). Leadership programmes need to ensure that the leader is prepared through nurturing their “confidence and self-belief”, which are seen as key ingredients in self-efficacy (Cowie and Crawford, 2009. p36).

Nationally or otherwise, informants are in agreement that the core to successful performance skill development is to provide individuals with specific examples of experience, ‘a piece of paper *is* probably not *very useful* but the processes are key, you should have a range of qualities in place before you take on headship but … learning starts on day one of the job and it’s a very steep learning curve’ (8; 296 – 300). Therefore the development of these *qualities* comes from ‘having examples, of what makes a good performance to a variety of audiences’ (10; 320). Informant 13 would like to style the NPQH ‘to have a mix of some long term vision, some of theory behind it but you also need to spend some time with practitioners who are proven to be reasonably decent headteachers. There is a massive range of people out there with different skills sets but just some time with headteachers to see what it is like on the job. I think if you went into it with your eyes a little more open then the next 6-12 months wouldn’t be so painful and you’d have a much clearer idea of what performance skills are expected’ (601 – 611). Informant 15 would like to accompany informant 13’s views further by incorporating some real ‘classical performance training’ to be integrated. It is informant 10’s firm belief that ‘some of these things can be taught or at least indicated as a variety of series of strategies that you may wish to employ when the opportunity comes along’ (340 – 342).

Informant 1 agrees with informant 10 and states that ‘you’ve got to give opportunities for them to do it. There is only one way of developing those particular presentational skills that we are talking about and that’s to do it!’ (228 – 230). They go on to suggest that ‘public speaking; delivering something to an audience and to a variety of audiences. Visit another school and do an assembly there. Go into another staffroom

and do some in-service training or lead on something. Any opportunity that can be easily engineered to give people the opportunity to get up and present a message effectively to an audience and to have feedback’ (1; 256 – 262), informant 6 concurs and wishes to place individuals ‘into a situation where they have to perhaps do some staff training and they can find out how difficult that is’ (287). Informant 5, 7, and 8 all support each other’s style of leadership development by giving aspiring individuals specific opportunities. Informants 7 (228 – 242) and 8 (236 – 242) have both developed specific posts to enable individuals to gain and develop leadership skills by placing them into first hand placements. Informant 5 speaks of a particular individual and the development path they have placed her on ‘we’ve released her for two days per week to go to a PRU which is becoming a free school next year and she is there two days per week being the headteacher so that she is learning the skills on her own and all I am here for is advice when she doesn’t know how to handle things’ (489 – 495). Many of the other informants describe how the invaluable opportunity and experience in observing and shadowing experienced headteachers can be a secure platform in skill development: ‘I would ask practising headteachers to allow people to shadow them for a significant amount of time’ (13; 550 – 552). Informant 13 feels very strongly about this and pushes ‘I think the only way to find out is doing it and I think what’s missing from headship if I am brutally honest is to sit down with aspirant heads and tell them what the job is about … I think the big thing that is missing in terms of skilling people up to be ready to be headteachers is actually letting them know what they are getting into (540 – 546). Therefore in order for individuals to develop their enactment and performance skills, aspiring leaders need to experience and observe the range of performances necessary for the role

directly from those performing, ‘it would be a good to certainly look at the range of different performances and scenarios and give explicit training on each of them’ shares informant 4 (382 – 384) who goes onto say that it needs to be ‘explicit (about) and give training on when you’re giving a presentation to this audience these are the things to consider … it would be a healthy thing to do so that it is explicit rather than implicit, you give a presentation and you get feedback on it, again with a range of audiences’ (352 – 358). Informant 2 supports and concludes the key to development through ‘the experience (you’ve got) to have the platform to deliver but you’ve also got to be seeing other people doing it and you’ve also got to have the professional feedback to say well these are the things that worked perhaps this didn’t work, have you thought of, how about. I would expect the same and experienced that myself’ (522 – 528).

It is felt from a number of informants that individuals are required to take more opportune experiences, discuss them with others, taking stock of their position with informant 16 saying ‘do more of it, when it comes to addressing large groups of people … I think it would have been really useful to have sit down even if it was just an hour to talk about the preparation for these things’ (236 - 240). The development of such skills is based upon the reflective practice, acting upon feedback, followed by the continual placing themselves in further similar and / or contrasting prospects, as informant 5 suggests ‘part of it is getting feedback; I think feedback for everybody is really important whether you are teaching or whether you are giving a speech. Somebody needs to tell you how it was, I say a lot that was good but it would be better if. I try to cushion it when you know somebody has done their best, we discuss

what went well but how it could have been even better, it’s things like not standing up and walking about, volume of speech’ (356 – 373). Taking oneself out of their comfort zone is important to enable key development in skills: ‘if you change the way you work you need to constantly review the things that you find difficult’ (13; 528). All informants agree that for those aspiring for headship, it is necessary for individuals to take experiences and opportunities when and where they arise, with informant 3 being adamant that ‘my school is not different to elsewhere and there are lots of opportunities to perform, not just teaching but speaking to parents, speaking to small groups, governors, its all good practice and I guess that’s how we develop those skills. They are integral to the role’ (338 – 370). However, informant 4 believes that ‘it would be good to certainly look at the range of different performances and scenarios and give explicit training on each of them’ (382 – 384).

‘You’re the face of the school for a starter whether heads are prepared to accept that or not regardless of how good your team’ boldly states informant 1 (94 – 96) emphasising the importance of performance being right for the school and therefore extending the necessity for direction, support and talent harnessing for aspiring individuals to occur. Informant 16 agrees ‘my view would be definitely yes but I wouldn’t have necessarily have thoughts of it until we just worked that side of things. I would say because I started off by saying that performance in front of staff, students and parents is vital for the school to move forward, the relationship that you are generating with large groups of people is important, then there has to be better training in performance for headteachers’ (258 – 264). Informant 11 contemplates the level of detail in which individuals ought to be trained, ‘I think all heads should be

trained in what used to be called oratory so I would actually go back that far’ (419). Others consider how to harness the talent already in school to embed skill development. Informant 16 reflects upon their current practice and ways in which they will begin to cultivate this further: ‘I think there are lots of things I do as a leader from the gut rather than from a thought process. Its more from how would I feel in that situation. Its not planned support; I go into and think what I would be like in that situation and then I work out what sort of support I can offer. It’s not joined up enough, this is great I’m thinking about things I could improve! It could almost do with a plan that I can sit down with them and work through. I have probably never explained why I do it the way I do it with them. My head of house can be very nervous in certain situations, I’ve done little things with her but never explained why.’ (208 – 220). Informant 7 reflects upon a strategy they have already used with a colleague, ‘I coached a member of the senior team who really did not like speaking to large groups of people, so that over the course of the year she could develop that. We sat down at the start of the year and discussed how we would do it through things like parents’ evening or at governors and assemblies and so on. We went through some of the methodology that I suggested and watched her and then we would have a feedback session at the end to say the good things and the things that needed work on. Over the course of the year she got more confident. I’m not really sure how much I helped her but her own skills and her own confidence was a measure of her success’ (292 – 306). It is this ‘coaching’ and ‘mentoring’ mechanism which informant 6 wishes that they had at the start of their headship position, ‘having someone who’s perhaps near retirement and has a record of doing ok then I think it would be great for them to at least have a cup of coffee and say here’s my phone

number ring me if you need me and I think it very sad that head teachers in their late fifties who still have a lot to offer because of the demands of the job retire too soon and they would love to act as a mentor. I think when and if I retire I would like to spend a day per week unpaid sat by the phone helping someone else. I think that’s what is missing and is needed now more than anything’ (257 – 267). Informant 7 summarises the mechanisms of supporting aspiring head teachers by stating that ‘it is these kind of creative solutions to the talent harnessing and talent nourishing pots that I think are very important for schools to develop, and it doesn’t cost a lot and if it helps four or five people through their leadership journey then that’s great’ (252 – 256).

The concept of mentoring with coaching, socialisation and peer support is apparent as a strong mechanism for developing the necessary leadership skills to perform effectively as a leader. A key respected feature for development is through observation and ‘sponsorship’ of experienced headteachers; this takes time and the concept of a highly structured ‘internship’ would be viewed to be a powerful tool to leadership learning (Rhodes, 2012b). However, this concept will have limitations: length of programme, finance, the number and quality of experiences and the use of theory and research to inform training and practice (Bush and Jackson, 2002).

‘It does depend what type of school you are at …’ (11; 385 – 391). Informant 2 has been very proactive to their position as a school in supporting individuals’ development, ‘I’ve linked with another school got funding from Thomas Telford I took the decision that five members of staff were involved in it. Five people were out one

day, which was a big investment. Last Monday those five people had to deliver and they will deliver again on November 15th. Its part of their personal development. So it’s recognising the leadership talents in others most crucially … ‘ (452 – 462), with informant 7 agreeing that ‘these things are very possible within schools but getting somebody external to validate that is more difficult but there are lots of head teachers around that would go into school and assess people if you wanted them to’ (306 - 310). Whereas informant 5, although not opposing such opportunities, highlights the risk that they may carry ‘we tend to get people getting promotions well before they should be doing because we give them a lot of exposure to a lot of things, when they go for interview and talk about what the school has done’ (351 – 355). Informant 13 pushes that ‘if you are going to have training that will really change things you need something that is regular, systematic and over a long period of time and I think that is one of the problems we have (520 – 522).

Another issue raised by informant 2 is ‘that you can do all the theory but if you find you can’t stand up in front of an audience or you can’t articulate the vision that people will buy into you can fall flat’ (510 – 516). With informant 5 in agreement that ‘you can’t learn it from NPQH you have to go through it and learn it’ (525) ‘it’s about heart strings and emotions and every student will be dealt with differently. Its developing that confidence that you do what you feel is right and yet who is to say what is right or wrong’ (475 – 479), summarising that they ‘don’t think you learn how to present, it’s all the substance behind what you are saying’ (453). Informant 1 simply reiterates this view and states ‘its not natural, it’s not inbuilt within their core traits’ (246) meaning that perhaps not everyone has the personality traits to be able

to successfully perform, ‘I think it may be useful to have some kind of training but I am not sure how because it is very individual to the personality and would everybody want to be a head teacher if they haven’t got the personality to deal with it? Definitely not in secondary level but at primary perhaps’ states informant 6 (345 – 350). Informant 6 goes on to question the viability of such development opportunities ‘I’m not sure if you gave people elocution lessons, voice coaching and theatrical skills, I’m not sure and it think round a table looking at a scenario is one thing but actually when you are there it is very different. I think the one message that needs to be communicated to heads is that it’s like its being in a room with a dressing up box and every minute somebody says “Change!” and that’s the difficulty because one minute you are dealing with a child who is crying because somebody told them they have nits and another minute you are talking to somebody like yourself and another minute you’re doing senior leadership time’.

PART FIVE: CONCLUSION

The research theme for this study has been to investigate how leaders perceive themselves to perform in order to be successful in their leadership; by exploring the concept behind 'leadership 'as' performance and leadership 'is' performance' and the individual professional identities they may ordain. These key themes then led the research to question on how aspirant leaders are expected to develop such enactment skills. This thesis sets out to state that leadership development requires the focus upon performance through experience and coaching methods in order to secure the successional plan for talent management. However, this research also reveals that there maybe an emotional cost to the performance element of leadership, which needs to be considered fully when implementing development techniques in order to secure leaders already existent role pressures.

Emerging from the data collated from the seventeen secondary headteachers it is clear that there is a perception that enactment supports their ability to lead, providing them with the 'professional identity' that they like to adopt. The headteacher's elude their emotions and state that it is a range of experiences and opportunities they have had which have led to them developing their repertoire of performances.

A leader will possess a range of qualities to enable them to carry out the practicalities of a leadership role, enabling them to influence and secure the following of others according to their authority and vision. To suggest that leadership on its own is a performance would undermine the theoretical and technical knowledge and skills necessary to be a successful leader (Peck and Dickinson, 2009). However, 'performance' must be seen as a leadership quality and skill necessary for

interpretation and development to allow a potential leader to flourish. They will need to be able to deploy and improvise their performances according to the variety of circumstances, individuals and emotions within a school community (Rhodes & Greenway, 2010).

Leaders will continue to develop their ‘performance’ with each experience, learning from their own mistakes and accepting that on occasions they will get it wrong (Rhodes & Greenway, 2010). Leaders are required to stimulate or suppress feelings to ensure that their performance is accurate despite the emotional cost this may involve (Crawford, 2007).

Schools are seen to be central to the development of aspirant leaders. In the Department for Educations 2016 Act, Educational Excellence is Everywhere, the school-led system is pinnacle to leadership development. Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) and teaching school alliances designate the ‘best school leaders’ and deploy them to underperforming schools. Leaders of the future need to be developed to enable them to have progression opportunities, playing vital and influential roles across more schools. This in turn will provide them and others with experiences and opportunities, providing better leadership development training and boosting capacity where it is needed. Taking the vast amount of experience within these organisations they hold the potential for better and more innovative leadership preparation. It is the responsibility of schools – teaching schools, to spread these expertise and best practice to have maximum impact on school improvement.

The evolution of my own leadership development has seemingly mirrored this particularly unexplored dimension of performance research. My invested interest has

allowed me to reflect not only upon my own personal career development but also in my hierarchical position of leading a Teaching School Alliance within a Multi-Academy Trust, I am imperially reflecting and evaluating the concept and importance of performance for all levels of educational practitioners. From initial teacher training to executive headship, there demonstrates to be a need to fully understand and appreciate the ways in which leadership ought to be enacted. And indeed to answer the original title question 'To perform, or not to perform?', 'perform' seems to be the decisive answer and important to ensure the 'weather' is just right for successful leadership.

As Grint (2000) states:

> "Leadership is the world of the performing arts, the theatre of rhetorical skill, of negotiating skills, and of inducing the audience to believe in the world that you paint with words and props" (Grint, 2000. p28)

Leadership being a performance

Peck and Dickinson (2009) and Peck, Freeman, and Dickinson (2009) discuss the daily repertoire required for a leader to employ to commit followers to their leadership. Labelling it ‘as’ performance gives a notion of ‘acting’ to our leaders, this is terminology that some of the individuals in this study did not feel comfortable with, as it gave the impression of pretense and therefore they may have had the contention that their messages could be perceived as untrue to their audience. Respondents understood and agreed that there is an element of enactment in their leadership but in no form do they have any intention to deliver and perform in a particular way for the result to mislead their followers. This study reveals that the leaders see that a range of performances are required to deliver messages of various types to different audience members. The leaders in this study demonstrated that they understood their professional ‘role’ and the way in which they are ‘expected’ to behave and ‘act’ in particular ways in order to lead particular groups. The study outlined differing opinions regarding the ability to perform as a leader. There are elements of evidence to suggest that performance is an instinctive mechanism to good leadership with the innate ability to stand up and enact, with other areas to suggest that for those whom demonstrate leadership potential, performance is an area for specific focus and development, which can be learnt.

One aspect, which particularly stood out to me with all of the headteachers in this study, was their outward facing confidence. They evidently felt comfortable in their position and fully understood the role that they were play as the leader in their school. This could be linked to the fact that they were all incumbent heads, and no

one was new to their position and perhaps therefore had gained sufficient experiences to reflect and learn from to develop their performance skills. It is evident that the leaders believed their repertoire of performance delivery has been developed and fine-tuned over time from opportune observations and experiences. These moments for many leaders may have occured at any point in their career timeline; the observation of another carrying out a performance will enable a practitioner to experience, reflect and strengthened further with the opportunity to discuss the methodology of the enactment with a coach, in turn this will secure future scenarios to be dealt with effectively by the observer as and when they arise. Together this provides a foundation of self-belief and confidence in ones potential and ability to perform and convey delivery of leadership.

Gronn’s (1999) identification of an individual’s self-belief is evident from this study as being important in their own self-realisation for them to move forward in their leadership journey (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2006). Our leaders demonstrate the two components of ‘self-efficacy’ and ‘self-esteem’ through their persona, delivery and responses during the collection of data. The studies findings supports the theory that it is one’s ‘self belief’ and their own level of ‘self-confidence’ which gives them the determinants of being successful in their leadership, enabling them to deliver a high quality performances (Cowie and Crawford, 2009).

Using performance to support Professional Identity

Lumby and English (2009) states that there is a need to have a number of identities and performances to take up leadership, to enact to the audiences they will encounter. For our respondents it was vital that as they adopted their identities for particular occasions that they ensured that they did not become fully submerged from ones true self, as this may have been to the expense of their leadership. This presented a challenge to our leaders, as they were required to understand and deliver their 'act' in order to 'belong' to varying 'groups' in their leadership position. And as Rhodes (2012) highlights it is seen as achievable and yet not overtly contrary to the true self'. It is the respondents' reflection upon their journey to leadership and their subsequent behaviour and mind-set as educational leaders, which have enabled them to adopt a variety of identities over time. This study supports that it is one's own self-belief in their capabilities, which enable the array of performances to be executed in the course of action required.

The majority of participants supported the concept of adopting a professional identity. The individual interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences, which the leaders have encountered, enabled them on-going formation of their identities to occur. The interaction between the leader and the context has allowed them to adopt and adapt professional characteristics as necessary, with the emphasis on their own personal values upon these key characteristics (Rhodes, 2012). The study supports that the transformation of an identity is essential to enactment and performance of leadership (Maalouf, 2000). The process of enactment is the stance of 'professionalism', to be accepted as a leader it is important to ensure that they have learnt to 'play the part'

(Becker, 1970). It is evident that the context in which the leaders are working, they need their professional identity to lead their performance, taking on the repertoire of enactments for their leadership for the variety of audiences that they will come across (Lumby and English, 2009). It is suggested that an individual’s persona is multiple, and are subject to experience and context (Moller, 2003).

Butler (1993) believes that the formation of such ‘professional identities’ occurs through the repetition of the ‘forced reiteration of norms’, linking together performativity and rituals, with social situations. So the repetition of ‘performances’ enacts the ‘professional’ being, and together constrains the leaders ‘professional’ conduct (Hodgson, 2005).

The emotional cost to performance

Our leaders have the knowledge and understanding, through experience of their conduct, and such norms for their 'professional conscience'. It is vital that leaders are fully aware of one's self which in turn supports them with the understanding of others, this is supported by Pascal and Ribbins (1998)

> "It doesn't matter how many courses you've been on, and how much you know intellectually about the process of being a head if you don't develop an appreciation yourself as a person … you will never make a good head" (Pascal and Ribbins, 1998. p22)

In this study it was important to address such personal concerns of emotion as it is portrayed as a significant aspect of this leadership study. Key values, principles and judgments are connected together to give an insight into their leadership.

> "Emotional colour, passion and individual purpose" (Fineman, 1995. p223)

The leaders in this study all agree that one's emotional involvement in the 'real world' is crucial to leadership, with emotions playing major component, and without, leadership would become almost impossible (Crawford, 2007).

> "In a fundamental sense, headteachers are moved to action by their feelings … leaders not only use their experiences to lead, but they lead from themselves as people, their past experiences and their personalities and life experiences" (Crawford, 2009. p104)

Many of the informants hope and believe that their leadership performances demonstrate a clear, rational and carefully planned 'professional behaviour' where emotions are controlled. It is evident and appreciated however, that through the tales of emotion within this study that this is an illusion in terms of desirability and practice

(Crawford, 2007). Individuals understand that reflection on their performance and emotional experiences is part of their own professional development and growth, and will support them further in their leadership (Crawford, 2007). Like Busher (2005) reports, this study clearly links the grounding of individual’s personal lives, and the interaction with others from the work place to be influential in the adoption of an individual’s professional identity. Performance support can strengthen an individuals self-belief with their ability to perform and take on their ‘professional identity’ but opposed to this it could be that if leaders are repeatedly submerged into their enactment, it may result in stress, loss of self-belief and disenchantment (Rhodes and Greenway, 2010).

Emotion is seen as the ‘language of relationships’ and is the way in which we contextualise ourselves as well as the sense of belonging to a group. Rational leadership intentions are a ‘professional’ expectation and from this study it appears that the management of emotions is necessary. Some found that controlling their emotions and presenting a professional performance more difficult than others, and rational behaviour prompted deeper personal reflections. The outcomes in this study suggest that over time the simulation and suppression of feelings holds an emotional ‘labour’ and ‘strain’. The ability to alter one’s emotional state is described by Hochschild (1979) as the “feeling rules”, whereby the social context dictates the expected emotion. It is suggested that unwarranted feelings regarding inadequacy in the role may ‘threaten and diminish’ the leaders performance and enactment (Labone, 2004).

Individuals in this study begin to reflect upon their journey as they discover and engage with their emotions (Lupton, 1998). Informants from this study support Oatley and Jenkins (1996) as they seek support from others in order to discuss and secure their emotions.

> “In talk, we cultivate, define, redefine, ourselves and our relationships by presenting out experiences to others – we elaborate our emotional bonds and antipathies with specific people we know” (Oatley and Jenikins, 1996. p99)

It is clear that individuals in this study seek to feel psychologically safe from various confidents. When choosing the ‘right’ person some demonstrate a level of wariness as they find professional relationships within organisations superficial and require a clear level of trust (Argyris, 1996).

There were individuals who felt strongly about developing their ‘professional identity’ in order to “play” the role of headteacher and they practice moving consciously from one to the other. Managing emotions through performance can provide individuals with the much-needed support and form of ‘escape’ from the relentless professional demands of their role.

Leadership performance development

Findings from informants in this study are in agreement with Lumby, Crow, and Pashiardis (2008) who suggest that overall, formal leadership development programmes lack focus upon ‘identity construction’. It is crucial for prosperous ‘succession planning’ for future leadership, that schools are required to adopt a role in influencing and shaping the identities of the employees. The expectation for schools to support and prepare individuals through their leadership journey is apparent (Brundrett and Crawford 2008; Bush 2008; Crow 2006). The identification of potential and aspirant leaders is seen to be central to recruitment and retention of talented individuals in their schools. They have found it important to nurture their confidence and self-belief, whilst facilitating a range of experiences and opportunities (Rhodes, 2012a). Crawford (2009) expresses the importance of emotional coherence in leadership and ought to be a focus for development and training. Allowing developing heads to conceptualise knowledge of emotional labour.

A range of strategies for the development of ‘leadership as performance’ are raised and discussed by individuals in this study, majority of which are not original, with many of them that have already been vastly explored and incorporated within many of the more formal leadership development programmes available. However, it is informant 12’s suggestion of the possibility of a ‘5 year apprenticeship’ which seems to be a more innovative option that has been significantly less explored and encountered. The possibility of ‘leadership centres’ being set up to enable the ‘sponsorship’ of individuals has the potential to enable ‘leadership teams’ to grow together. With experienced headteachers, a scheme whereby schools become the

ultimate organisations to integrate leadership potential could be explored further. Together they will experience and learn from strategies and study groups, drawing together theory and research to improve practice. Stemming from the idea of distributed leadership; potential talent can over time develop their knowledge and skills (Rhodes, 2012a).

Individuals who have been identified to demonstrate such leadership potential and who have been given such development opportunities have a higher probability of continuing their employment with the school ensuring that ‘high performing individuals’ are placed into the ‘right jobs at the right time’. It is through this identification and development through experience that one’s self-belief and self-confidence is promoted. Along with an individuals own personal life their work related experiences have a direct impact both intrinsically and extrinsically on the notion of nurturing self-belief to attain leadership goals. The onset of this nurturing and management of self-belief will have a subsequent impact upon the individuals’ levels of personal control, autonomy and inclusion so to ensure the avoidance of feelings of incompetency and attendant low self-belief. Those within this study who demonstrated clear elevated levels of self-belief believed it to be a precursor for competency and success (Rhodes, 2012a) with Helms-Lorenz et al (2012) agreeing that individuals with a perceived self-efficacy have a higher potential of success in their leadership journey.

This study suggests that self-efficacy is an intrinsic component of the ability to ‘perform’ and enact the role of a leader. With experiences and opportunities one’s

self-belief can develop, meaning that their journey through leadership enactment can subsequently grow. It is therefore desirable to ensure that identity transformation gains further attention within strategies for talent management, leadership training and development. The lessons learnt by new and established leaders need to be shared in order to develop the understanding of the need for performance within leadership on those aspiring to headship. It is vital that those embarking upon development training appreciate all skills entailed in the role and have access to these to enable them to have the confidence to ensure that they continue to be engaged and willing to pursue their leadership journey (Rhodes, 2012a).

> "The headteacher as an emotional being is neglected in a target-driven accountability culture in education. The personal and professional lives of headteachers are inextricably entwined" (Crawford, 2009. p106).

Implications of the findings to the overall study

It is evident from this research study along with the supporting literature that leadership as performance is perceived to be an integral part of Headship in Secondary school education. Whilst the terminology used for 'performance' and 'enactment' is questioned by some of the leads, it is clear that the 'role' is 'played' and 'adapted' according to the 'script' and 'audience'. It is clear through discussion that individual's leadership journeys have differed through the impact of their own personal lives as well as the direction in which the 'formation' and 'accession' years have progressed, all of which may have had direct impact on the way in which they deliver their repertoire of performances later in their leadership position (Gronn, 1999). If we were to accurately take the way in which headteachers perceived their leadership as performance and how they have come to develop such a skill set, it would be valid and necessary to investigate the life history of each informant, asking them to reflect and articulate how they have learnt to perform their different enactments. To this end, understanding this would help the future understanding and experiences required to develop aspirant leaders with their enactment skills.

The structure of this study has enabled individual's perceptions of leadership as performance to be explored and linked to how the understanding for this has occurred, including the development of such skills. The data is rich, taking a qualitative approach. The study has begun to ascertain a greater understanding of the importance to be able to 'perform' in leadership, how this can be linked to a professional identity to ensure that one's emotions are managed, how such skills are learnt, and how they can be nurtured in aspirant heads. As a result a tentative finer

understanding of self-efficacy has emerged, interpreting a link between self-belief and self-confidence to an individuals identity and ability to control their emotions through the aptitude to perform. The research can be considered authentic and significant with the opportunity for future knowledge to be widened and theory developed.

This study has been limited to a sample size of seventeen secondary school headteachers and it would be inappropriate to generalise or extrapolate from the findings. However, it does provide a clear root to understand how headteachers perceive ‘leadership as performance’ and how this perception extends to impact onto their professional identity. The data from the interviews enables exploratory answers to the five research questions posed, enabling a narrative of such leadership skill development to occur. The study suggests that it is the experiences and observations that are at the heart of leadership development which have driven their own professional development in this focussed area, and therefore not an area they have spent time focusing upon in more formal profession development paths.

The study concludes that ‘leadership as performance’ plays a significant part in a leaders daily routine and has a profound effect on how leaders enact to their varying audiences in order to gain following. Subsequently from this the emotional cost of such leadership strategies is evident and is significant enough to impact their ability to lead and perform. The leaders reflections in this study regarding the development of enactment skills have not been significantly influential to inform us how leaders go about learning their enactment skills in order to lead proficiently. It has been

suggested that training that has been undertaken has not included sufficient amounts of ‘performance’ skill focus and the understanding that they have received on managing emotional cost is minimal.

The contribution and further research

The research carried out in this study has been successful in making a contribution to the knowledge of how leaders perceive themselves to perform and how they learn enactment skills necessary to be successful leaders. The findings from this research provides us with a platform to further understand the following key aspects:

- How leaders enact their leadership role
- The importance of experience in influencing leaders development for enactment
- The stages of self-efficacy, their professional identity and the role it plays in an individuals ability to perform
- The mechanisms and strategies that are important to manage the emotional cost that leadership can cause
- Implications to ‘fast track’ leadership programmes
- The role of Teaching Schools in successful leadership skill development
- The role of Multi Academy Trusts in successful leadership skill development

I am particularly keen in extending my interest in these aspects highlighted. In my current position I sit at the heart of a Multi Academy Trust as the lead of a Teaching School. As Hopkins says:

> “There is a growing recognition that schools need to lead the next phase of reform … system leaders are those headteachers who care about and work for the success of other schools as well as their own … in networking lies the basis for system transformation” (Hopkins, 2007. p44, p153, p115)

However, in agreement with Hargreaves (2007) system leadership on the ground is currently consistent with being more of an operational school led system than fully adopting a strategic school led position. It is my role to drive professional development for all schools within the trust, as well as supporting schools improvement. Creating new generations of school leaders is a priority, ensuring that there is a succession of exceptional leaders moving up through the profession. As a regional group of Teaching Schools we recently launched our version of the reformed National Professional Qualifications, allowing us to make a difference to schools through highly effective CPD. However, I foresee huge implications to such programmes being led from schools by schools. This fundamentally is linked to the lack of experience of leaders in our schools in order for them to have the ability to role model skills and qualities to individuals for them to learn from mentoring and coaching. In addition the overarching capacity to lead leadership within schools. All of which has been highlighted as being important areas of leadership development in this study.

John Howson (2018) reported some frightening statistics recently with respect to those entering and retaining within the profession, with steady decline in retention rates for teachers in years 3 – 6 of their careers. This number of departing teachers is of concern because from those remaining, are the middle leaders, and then the senior leaders and overall leaders of the profession. Coinciding with an above average of retirement rates it is presenting a worrying landscape before us. There is a significant lack of experience in our schools to model leadership skills and qualities to developing individuals.

Developing and aspiring individuals are being pushed and accelerated through their accession stage of leadership development. The quickening of this phase and the shortfall of experienced leaders will mean that they will not have the time to take opportunities and rehearse their potential leadership abilities. Ambition on its own will not ensure that an individual has the necessary accompanying talent. The evidence supports that it is important to experience leadership, take opportunities to 'perform'. As such I have huge concerns and reservations about programmes which 'fast track' leadership where the time to experience and 'rehearse their enactment' is removed.

How the contribution can be applied

The contribution made by this research can be applied to the sector in the following ways:

1. To ensure aspirant leaders are fully aware of the intricacy involved to be successful in the role `of headteacher, promoting the understanding of the complexities involved in the ability to ‘perform’ as a strong leader.

2. The findings from this research will extend individuals understanding, who are in charge of ‘talent management’, to understand the importance of providing a wide range of opportunities and experiences to those aspiring for leadership.

3. To support those responsible for writing and delivering meaningful and marketable Continued Professional Development programmes. Developing those individuals who demonstrate leadership potential, enabling them the opportunities and experiences to develop enactment skills throughout their leadership careers.

4. To further inform the research agenda for school leaders, with the key literature outlining the implications to those aspirant individuals, seeking to move into headship.

Suggestions for further research

The research carried out in this study was constructed from seventeen semi-structured interviews with secondary headteachers from a relatively narrow geographical area. It is likely that the nature of the locality lent itself to the leaders to have related their experiences and nature of performance delivery. Although this approach is accepted of its subjectivity, it still places it with limitations and raises the pertinent question on whether the understanding and knowledge gained from this locality is transferable to other geographical areas. A more comprehensive study could be drawn upon from a more diverse geographical region wider than the West Midlands, where experiences and performance development may be different.

This study could be extended in the same way as the geographical nature to other key factors that were restricted for this particular study. For example; the research carried out in this study were from secondary headteachers. A further study could be raised to investigate to see if primary headteachers perceive similar performance necessities in their leadership. Do male leaders demonstrate a greater perception of performance than females? In this reported study a mixture of men and women were interviewed, a more comprehensive study could be carried out to see if a gender split exists within the discernment of performance?

A more in depth study could be undertaken by including discussions with people and stakeholders of the educational environment in which the individual leads, this would triangulate the data and offer a more rounded view and therefore enhanced

understanding of how accurate these leaders perception of their own performance to differing audiences actually stands.

A further longitudinal study may be undertaken which tracks a group of aspirant leaders, the experiences and coaching they have specifically on performance and self-efficacy and therefore their subsequent ability and confidence to draw upon a repertoire of performances. An additional dimension could then be to make a comparison of the individuals continued professional development provision; taking into account the delivery style, frequency style of opportunities and ability to reflect with others. The type of educational establishment in which they are employed could also be researched, enabling an assessment of establishments, such as multi-academy trusts and Teaching Schools to occur.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Schedule

a. Informant list
b. Sample of Interview questions.
c. Introductory letter of request
d. Official Letter of request to Head teachers with consent form
e. Thesis Summary for Participants

‘‘To perform, or not to perform: that is the question’

Part A: ‘Leadership as Performance’

1. What are your perceptions of the variety of ways in which you deliver messages in front of different audiences e.g students / parents / staff / senior colleagues – individuals / groups? – What techniques work … why? Which techniques do not work … why?
2. Can you give me two examples of when you have notably had to ‘perform’ to deliver your messages successfully?
3. How do you prepare for your performances in front of these audiences?
4. Is this ‘performance’ skill a necessity to your leadership? – Why do you believe / not believe this?

Part B: Emotional cost

5. Do you ever use ‘performance’ to support you in separating your personal and professional identity when delivering messages? – can you give an example of when you have had to do this?
6. Do you feel emotionally strained when you have to deliver particular messages? – can you give me an example of when you have felt this? – how do you deal with this?
7. What sources of support are available to you when preparing and delivering your performances?

Part C: Development

8. How have you ‘learnt’ to perform?
9. What level of support do you think should be made available?
10. How do you think ‘leadership as performance’ can be incorporated into training and development programmes?

APPENDIX 2

Interview Transcripts