The Sources of Goal Incongruence in a Public Service Network

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A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Cardiff University

September 2013

DECLARATION

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For Fiona,

and for those in the Criminal Justice System who do not pass by.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors: George Boyne, Tom Entwistle and Pauline Found. Without their guidance and advice this dissertation would have proved impossible to complete. Above all I would like to thank them for the generosity and patience they showed as they guided me toward an understanding of academic method, rigour and integrity.

I am indebted to a number of persons within the Ministry of Justice who not only allowed access but also made considerable efforts to facilitate my research. I hope that the individuals who welcomed me into their working lives and allowed me to observe and write about their experiences feel that this thesis justifies their trust. I must also thank the EPSRC whose generous financial assistance made my period of study possible.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank Fiona, Lowri and Iwan and my parents Gwyneth and Deifryn. They always had far more confidence in me than I had in myself. That, together with their love, made the difference.

Abstract

Goal incongruence, both within organisations and between organisations operating in a network context, has long been acknowledged as an important influence on organisational behaviour. This work presents the findings from an ethnographic study of goal incongruence in a public service network located in the UK. The study develops a conceptual framework for defining and researching the extent and sources of goal incongruence within public service networks. The author defines incongruence as contradiction between goals, draws evidence from organizationally enacted behaviours and recognises distinctions between formal goals and the operative goals of network groups. Empirical evidence is used to evaluate two explanations of goal incongruence: that goal incongruence is produced by the nature of bureaucratic delegation (the hierarchical model) and that it is produced by professional difference (the horizontal model).

The findings of the study indicate that bureaucratic delegation is the source of goal incongruence. However, several elements of the hierarchical model are questioned. The evidence does not support the orthodox view that incongruence between formal and operative goals increases as conceptions of desired ends are transmitted downward within hierarchies. The study finds that the operative goals of actors at the apex of the network were most highly incongruent with the formal goals of the network. Professional difference was not a source of goal incongruence. Indeed the study provided evidence that operational staff who exhibited different professional identities co-operated to integrate practice and reduce goal-incongruence.

The study concludes that the application of the novel conceptual framework provides a more selective, detailed and convincing account of goal incongruence than those found in the recent literature. The sources of goal incongruence were hierarchical elites putting the resources of the network to their own purposes as social agents and hierarchically imposed systems of organisational obligation and performance control. Finally, the study suggests that evidence for inter-professional integration indicates that the role of peer groups in moderating goal incongruence is under-represented in theoretical and empirical accounts of goal incongruence.

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Abbreviations

CJS	Criminal Justice System
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
DV	Domestic Violence
HMCTS	Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service
HO	Home Office
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
IVS	Integrated Victim Service
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committees
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NHS	National Health Service
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
SDVC	Special Domestic Violence Courts
SR10	Spending Round 2010 period (extending from 2010 to 2015)
TJC	Transforming Justice Committee
TJP	Transforming Justice Programme
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VPS	Victim Personal Statement
xCJS	Cross Criminal Justice [Efficiency Programme]

Chapter 1 Introduction

It is broadly accepted that the presence of consistent goals makes a positive contribution to delivering public services. The extent to which actors in organisations and networks share goals is considered an important predictor of a variety of desirable organisational behaviours. That is, behaviours likely to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public service provision. Shared goals ensure that limited resources are not dissipated in in incoherent and counterproductive programmes. They are also held to reduce the transaction costs of public organisations and networks as the unity of purpose produced by shared goals increase employee commitment and reduce the need for investments in performance control systems (Cartwright 1965, Gibb 1969). The literature suggests that goal congruence is positively correlated with a range of beneficial attributes. These include reductions in the negative effects of organisational politics (Witt1998), increases in job-satisfaction and reduction in intention to quit (Vancouver and Schmidt 1991; Vancouver, Millsap and Peters 1994), increases in inter-organisational trust and cooperation (Lundin 2007) ,reductions in the incidence of organisational cheating (Bohte and Meyer 2000). It has also been suggested that bureaucratic obedience implicit in goal congruence is considered a desirable attribute by hierarchical elites (Schofield 2001).

However, scholars of public management emphasise that public organisations are frequently characterised by the possession of ambiguous or conflicting goals (Bozeman and Kinsgley 1988, Boyne 2003a, Han Chun and Rainey 2006, Rainey 2011). Public organisations must frequently cooperate with other organisations in network arrangements in order to deliver public services (Hall and O'Toole 2004, Percival 2009). Public organisations can also be reliant on staff who have strongly differentiated professional identities and perceived interests (Abernathy and Stoelwinder 1995, Kenis 2003). These features of public service networks are argued to increase the difficulty of sustaining common goals, not least in terms of policy implementation (Schofield 2004, Sheaff et al 2010b). Instead they introduce tendencies toward goal incongruence.

Goal incongruence is defined within this work as contradiction between organisational actors as to the legitimacy of specific goals in the planning,

conduct and control of work. Goal incongruence is most commonly associated with negative outcomes. Thompson (1967) has suggested that goal incongruence will encourage organizational actors to pursue individual goals at the expense of professed or official organizational objectives. Selznick suggests that incongruence leads to a situation where: "Actions are taken, policies adopted, with an eye more to the effect ... on the power relations inside the organization than to the achievement of its professed goals" (Selznick1943, p.52*)*.

Williamson has argued that discrepancies in de-facto goals can result in behaviours of "Non-compliance and Opportunism by sub-units which can lead to a significant negative difference between an organisation's potential and effective opportunity set" (Williamson 1970, p. 50). Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie (2001) found evidence that incongruent policy and operative goals can act to confuse and demoralise operational staff in their study of welfare reform in the USA. Finally Kochan, Cummings and Huber (1976) found that goal incongruence was correlated with increased conflict within public organisations.

However the conceptions of goal incongruence that underpin the studies described above are frequently inconsistent with each other and occasionally contradictory. There also appears to be little agreement as to the factors that determine the extent of goal incongruence within organisational contexts. The dissertation examines the sources of goal incongruence in a public network responsible for delivering aspects of the UK's Criminal Justice System. This study revisits the concept of goal incongruence with three objectives. They are to address the questions described below:

1. What is goal incongruence? Are current conceptualisations of goal incongruence adequate? If not, how should goal incongruence be conceptualised?

2. How extensive is goal incongruence in the case study network?

3. What are the sources of goal incongruence? Does the evidence provided by the case study validate existing explanations of the sources of goal incongruence?

The primary objective of the study was to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the sources of goal incongruence. However the study was not solely of academic interest. Reductions in the effectiveness and efficiency of criminal justice agencies caused by goal incongruence are of the utmost practical relevance. Assuring operational effectiveness is an essential role for managers and staff within the Criminal Justice System (CJS). At a more fundamental level, goal incongruence within the CJS might be expected to reduce the public value that is generated by public confidence in the administration of justice.

This study develops and tests a new conceptual framework for recognising goal incongruence. The conceptual framework takes established approaches to the description of goal incongruence - difference between formal and operative goals - and applies them within a network context. Goal incongruence consists of contradiction between goals. Contradiction is indicated when there is evidence that goal orientated behaviour acts to disrupt, impede or deflect the attainment of formal or operative goals.

Empirical accounts of goal incongruence are used to evaluate two theoretical explanations of goal incongruence. The first is that incongruence is produced by the nature of downward delegation within bureaucratic hierarchies (the hierarchical explanation of goal incongruence). The second is that goal incongruence is caused by conflict between different professional orientations (the horizontal explanation of goal incongruence).

This study presents evidence that indicates that hierarchy produces goal incongruence. However the validity of a number of theoretical mechanisms for the hierarchical production of goal incongruence proposed in the established literature are questioned. Evidence from the study indicates that professional difference does not produce goal incongruence within the case study network. Indeed the study delivers the empirical surprise that professional difference leads to *reductions* in goal incongruence as professionals pursued organic strategies of network integration.

The remainder of this introduction will describe the research setting and the contributions each of the chapters makes to achieve the overarching objectives of the study.

The Research Setting

The author spent one year conducting ethnographic research in the Ministry of Justice Headquarters and in the local Criminal Justice delivery agencies of an English city. The case study network was selected because its structure was capable of generating data that would reflect both hierarchical and horizontal interactions between network groups. There was also a purposive element to its selection (Addicott, McGivern and Ferlie 2007) as senior managers in the participating organisations had an interest in developing their understanding of network cooperation and felt that the research would be broadly helpful to their operational agenda.

The Network context is acknowledged but remains largely unexplored by goal incongruence research. At the same time the importance of networks in delivering public service is increasingly recognised (Entwistle 2005, Boyne 2003b Rhodes 1996). The network perspective is defined by the insight that services can rarely be delivered by a single organisation operating in isolation (Hjern and Porter 1981, Keast et al. 2004). Network analyses emphasise the importance of inter-organisational information sharing and collaboration founded on a spirit of goodwill (Dore 1983, Sako 1992) that replaces the arms length opportunistic relationships, which are argued to characterise market transactions.

One of the implications of de-facto network arrangements is that studies of goal incongruence that concentrate on single organisations might be considered partial accounts and therefore less compelling. The consequence of accepting this view is that theoretical explanations of goal congruence should attempt to accommodate the network perspective by incorporating analysis of the interaction of goals at a network level.

The case study was conducted within a public network responsible for delivering aspects of the Criminal Justice System within the UK. In order to test the theoretical framework, observation was conducted at multiple points within the network that included different hierarchical levels and a number of network organizations with distinct task and professional orientations.

The Strategic Core

At the Headquarters level participant observation was conducted within one of the directorates of the Ministry of Justice. The directorate selected was chosen on the basis that was heavily involved in transforming practice within the public network responsible for delivering criminal justice policy and practice within the UK. The directorate operated close to the strategic and policy apex of the Ministry. It assisted Ministers and senior civil servants in developing and disseminating strategy and policy. It also reported through various committees and boards on the activity of network agencies and the progress of specific programs and projects. Following common usage within the Headquarters function of the MoJ, this part of the network will be referred to in the remainder of this article as the strategic core. This was a term that was used informally by headquarters staff to distinguish themselves from their operational counterparts in local delivery agencies that will be referred to in this work as the delivery network.

The organisational context within which the case study was conducted was one where the Ministry of Justice had embarked on a high profile programme of Transformational Change. The Transforming Justice Programme (TJP) (Gash and McCrae 2010, McCrae, Page and McClory 2011) focused on achieving radical change in the culture and practice of the Criminal Justice System. The public nature of the commitments by leaders at the most senior level of the Ministry of Justice ensured that the TJP, led by the Transforming Justice Committee (TJC) secured a high profile within the Ministry. Servicing the TJC (preparing papers for committee and implementing actions arising) was observed to be a primary operative goal within the strategic core. The existence of the TJC reinforced hierarchical power relationships and aligned transformational change with the strategic core's commitment to the reporting discourse.

The TJP had been established before the SR10 period. It had originally focused on transformative cultural change that would increase the effectiveness and customer service orientation of the Justice System. However with the advent of the coalition Government transformational change had become synonymous with achieving the MoJ's deficit reduction targets. The TJP comprised three categories of action to achieve deficit reduction. The first was a collection of

major projects inherited from the previous Government. The business cases of these projects usually contained predictions that they would deliver significant savings. In private these projects were seen as discredited and staff were frequently dismissive and occasionally scathing of their prospects for making any contribution to the deficit reduction targets. The second category involved primary legislation to reduce the costs of operating the Justice System. This included reducing the number of prisoners (rather than a projected increase from 85,000 to 91,000 over the period a projected reduction to 81,000). This would be achieved by legislation to increase the use of community sentences and stop the imposition of indeterminate sentences. Reducing the workload of the Courts by offering 50% reductions for early guilty pleas, and reducing the Legal Aid budget by restricting eligibility. The third category was executive action to reduce the number of staff employed in the strategic core and the delivery network by encouraging significant numbers to take voluntary redundancy.

At the same time the MoJ and its agencies had long-standing commitments to developing an organizational culture around the practice of continuous improvement. This included a significant commitment to training large numbers of employees throughout the network at all levels in continuous improvement tools and techniques. The tensions between strategies of radical and incremental change were apparent throughout the period of participant observation. While Continuous Improvement was represented in the TJP by the cross Criminal Justice Efficiency programme (xCJS efficiency programme) it appeared that operative goals of continuous improvement (along with the customer service orientated cultural transformations) had been marginalized within the strategic core in favour of achieving deficit reduction targets within the SR10 period.

The Delivery Network

The case study collected data from four statutory agencies that were responsible for administering the Criminal Justice System within a specific English city. They included the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, HMCTS (the Courts) and the local Probation Trust. The case study focused on services that these agencies delivered to victims of serious crimes (those crimes covered by section

15 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) that in practice meant crimes of violence and sexual violence.

The clearest expression of operative goals in the delivery network consisted of those that related to meeting the operational imperatives of work demanded by the CJS. The dominant operative goals inferred from observation of the delivery network derive from the work necessary to meet the operational imperatives of the CJS. This included a wide range of activities from conducting criminal investigations, making decisions to charge (or not), creating case files, making legal arrangements, listing and conducting trials, ensuring that witnesses attended court to give evidence, providing information to victims and representing the views of victims in legal hearings following sentence. It is vital to emphasise that this experience of immersion in the work of the CJS is a *sine qua non* of the delivery network but is simply unavailable to headquarters staff within the strategic core.

Frequently tasks, which are regarded as routine and unexceptional, require a significant degree of coordinated endeavor across multiple agencies. For example in the UK Criminal Justice System the prosecution of relatively minor offences requires the coordinated participation of a network of local organisations which includes the Police, Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts and Tribunals Service. In addition evidence must be provided to the Defence and in practice a number of agencies from the voluntary sector that may or may not receive public funds provide support services to victims and witnesses of crime. The process is choreographed within a statutory framework implemented and monitored at the national level by two Government Departments (the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office). The performance of each agency is dependent on that of its counterparts within the Network. Collaboration between agencies in bringing a prosecution before the Courts required a degree of co-ordination that was at best balletic, at worst frantic but always intense.

The operational imperative appeared to be experienced in two distinct ways. Firstly, it was experienced as an imposed set of obligations. Secondly, it was experienced as a shared personal commitment to achieving the ends of the CJS. Operational performance data is collected and utilised to compare effectiveness

longitudinally, geographically and against national standards, statutory obligations and voluntary codes of practice. It appeared that comparing local performance data to national performance was particularly important to local managers within the delivery network. Being ranked at the bottom of national performance tables appeared to be a significant motivating factor for addressing performance issues. This appeared to be the case whether it was believed that poor comparisons were a genuine reflection of performance or reflected other organizations 'gaming' the performance measurement system. In either case action had to be taken to save face and protect professional reputations.

At the same time providing services to the victims of crime was seen as 'the right' thing to do. The use of morally unambiguous language to describe Agency commitments to victims appeared to derive from a personal and professional identification with the objectives of the CJS in general and the experience of victims of crime in particular. This may be an example of what Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) have described as Mission Valence, the extent to which organisational purpose resonates with individual motivation. The proximity to and identification with the experience of the victim is another characteristic of work in the delivery network which is unavailable to staff operating in the Strategic Core except in abstract terms.

Overview of the Thesis

This thesis develops a novel conceptual framework for the analysis of goal incongruence and applies it to empirical data obtained from ethnographic research in order to identify the incidence and sources of goal incongruence in a public service network. Chapter two discusses how goal incongruence has been conceptualised by authors who have written on the subject. It describes what those authors have thought goal incongruence is, the type of evidence that they have utilised and the criteria they have employed to judge its presence and warrant the claims they have made for its existence. The chapter argues that conceptualisations of goal incongruence found in the literature are inconsistent. The conception and identification of goal incongruence have changed radically over time. They have tended to become simpler, have relaxed the criteria used

to test for the presence of goal incongruence and attach considerably less importance to drawing evidence from meaningful organisational contexts.

The consequence of this longitudinal shift in the study of goal incongruence is that the test for the presence of goal incongruence has become conceptually, empirically and methodologically easier to satisfy. A more permissive conceptualisation and research approach might be expected to lead to a greater incidence of claimed incongruence. In addition the importance of grounding claimed incongruence within its organisational context has diminished over time. The thick description and mixed methods of the early research has been replaced (with the exception of Vancouver Millsap and Peters 1994 and Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001) by the completion of questionnaires that have a tenuous link to practice by small numbers of respondents.

At the same time the fidelity of empirical research to the enacted practice of organisations (as opposed to accounts of intended, desired, claimed or expected practice) has become more open to question. Chapter two concludes by providing a more rigorous and less permissive conceptualisation of goal incongruence. The conceptual framework is utilized to evaluate the evidence for goal incongruence in a rigorous and systematic manner and warrant subsequent claims. It derives from three perceived gaps in the literature. The first is that recent literature defines goal incongruence on the basis of difference. This is perceived to be inadequate because goals may be different but complimentary. That is they different goals represent different means to attain common ends. Secondly the recent literature invites respondents to rank potential goals from menus of choices provided by researchers. Thirdly the literature does not test for goal incongruence within network contexts.

The discussion in chapter three clarifies the theoretical explanations of the sources of goal incongruence. The chapter presents two alternative theories of the sources of goal incongruence. They are referred to in the text as the hierarchical model and the horizontal model.

The hierarchical model argues that goal incongruence is caused by the nature of downward delegation necessary in bureaucratic organisations. It understands organisations as chains of command, transmitting orders downward through the

hierarchy from the strategic to operational level. In the process aspects of the message can get lost in translation. Goal incongruence is therefore seen as the result of a bureaucratic version of the game of Chinese whispers. It is the expression of an inevitable loss of meaning as goals are transmitted downward through the bureaucratic hierarchy.

The Horizontal model of goal incongruence draws on the theoretical perspective that organisations should not be conceptualized as chains of command but as coalitions of interest (Cyert and March 1963). This theoretical frame suggests that organisations are comprised of coalitions of individuals, some of whom are organised into sub-coalitions. Organizational goals emerge from the process of bargaining, both within and between sub-coalitions. As such the question of goal incongruence is central to conceptual descriptions of organisational contexts.

The discussion that will be developed in chapter three proceeds from the assumption that professional identities and commitments operate as a particularly significant locus for the development of organisational coalitions and sub-coalitions. Arguments that different professional orientations produce inter-professional relationships characterised by conflict and competition are reviewed and three shaping influences for professional conflict are identified and described.

One of the recurrent themes developed by scholars of professionalization is the capacity for conflict and competition between distinct professional groups (Johnson 1972, Derber 1980, Abbott 1988). Indeed DiMaggio and Powell have defined the process of professionalization in inherently competitive terms, describing it as the: “collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their work” (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, p.70).

The chapter will describe the essential aspects of each model. It will then focus on a number of proposed mechanisms by which these models shape goal incongruence that are suggested in the literature. These proposed mechanisms will provide the analytical focus of the evaluation of the two models in the later chapters of this study.

Chapter four explains the study's research design. The study investigates the sources of goal incongruence with a single qualitative case study that utilised participant observation to collect data. It is generally believed that single case studies are suitable for generating hypotheses, but are less effective at testing hypotheses or making generalizable theoretical conclusions. Chapter four explores the countervailing argument that it is possible to generalise and test hypotheses with single case studies where those cases act as 'critical cases' (Goldthorpe et al 1968, Flyvbjerg 2006). Chapter four sets out how the case study meets the requirements of a critical case with regard to drawing warranted theoretical conclusions with regard to the sources of goal incongruence.

The chapter goes on to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of participant observation as a data collection method compared to other methods of qualitative data collection. It then explains how the researcher negotiated access to the research setting, the approach to collecting data and making research notes and the process for interpreting the data in order to draw theoretical conclusions regarding the sources of goal incongruence.

In chapter five the study will present evidence for goal incongruence from three empirical contexts. They represent goal incongruence within the strategic core, within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network. Evidence is derived from the application of the study's conceptual framework to data derived from participant observation.

Analysis indicates that goal incongruence is present in some dimensions and contexts (formal – formal incongruence within the delivery network, formal – operative incongruence within the strategic core, within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network, and operative – operative incongruence within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network) but is absent in others

It is important to stress that difference between goals (as opposed to contradiction) was identified in all dimensions of incongruence and organisational contexts. Indeed had the study employed difference as the sole criterion of goal incongruence then findings of incongruence would have been

ubiquitous and the study would have been overwhelmed by endless and varied examples of the phenomenon.

The application of the new conceptual framework appears to suggest that difference is, on its own, an inadequate indicator of incongruence. It fails to differentiate between goals that are different and contradictory and goals that are different but complimentary. It might be suggested that this conclusion has significant implications for interpreting existing research on goal incongruence (and the corollary construct of goal congruence) and the claims for the presence of goal incongruence that they contain. This appears to have provided richer accounts of goal incongruence than are available from simple tests for the existence of difference. The new conceptual framework provides descriptions of the contexts in which goal incongruence is present *and* absent rather than present *or* absent. This ability to provide more refined analytical perspectives might be considered to be of value in investigating the determinants of goal incongruence.

Chapter six discusses how far the empirical descriptions of goal incongruence produced by the study support theoretical claims that goal incongruence is caused by the nature of bureaucratic delegation. In order to accomplish this purpose the chapter reviews the major elements of the bureaucratic delegation model of goal incongruence. The discussion will then consider whether each of the examples of incongruence identified in the case study is consistent with the bureaucratic delegation model of goal incongruence. For each relevant example of claimed goal incongruence the chapter will describe what might be expected to constitute criteria for identifying convincing evidence for bureaucratic delegation within hierarchical arrangements as the cause of goal incongruence.

The chapter suggests that evidence would consist in actors subverting, deflecting or contradicting practices aimed at achieving delegated formal and operative goals. Furthermore the practice of subversion by intermediaries exercising bureaucratic discretion should correspond to one or more of the shaping influences described in the chapter three. A discussion of the empirical evidence drawn from the case study and the extent to which it supports one or more of the shaping influences for the hierarchical production of goal incongruence is presented below.

The chapter finds that the data provides considerable support for hierarchical explanations of the sources of goal incongruence. That is downward delegation within bureaucratic hierarchies is a source of goal incongruence within network contexts. The vertical explanation of the causes of goal incongruence provides six influences that shape goal incongruence. The evidence drawn from the case study questions three of these (the pre-occupation and compliance, bureaucratic discretion and inadequate comprehension influences). It supports the remaining three mechanisms (the bifurcation of interests, performance control and organisational segmentation influences).

Theory predicts that incongruence between formal and operative goals will be lowest at the apex of organisations and highest at the operational levels of organisations. However the evidence of this study was the opposite. The operative goals of groups that were closest to the apex of the network hierarchy were more incongruent with formal network goals than those at the base.

Chapter seven reviews the theoretical claim that goal incongruence is caused by patterns of interaction between different professional orientations. This analytical perspective rests on the assumption that organisations are coalitions of groups and sub-groups, and not chains of command. Shared professional orientations operate as particularly significant loci for the development of such groups. The discussion of theory presented in chapter seven isolated and tested three influences by which different professional orientations are claimed to shape goal incongruence. They are the reinforced pre-dispositions, the communities of practice and the intra-professional competition influence.

The chapter argues that professional difference in the delivery network was not associated with goal incongruence. On the contrary, the evidence indicated that individuals with different professional orientations attempted to reduce goal incongruence by implementing bottom-up programmes of network integration.

This empirical surprise described in chapter seven raises a number of questions that are addressed in chapter eight. Does the evidence really show professionals attempting to co-operate? Why do they attempt to co-operate by integrating working practices? What modifications to we need to make to the theory of goal incongruence? Chapter eight presents evidence that the case study does indeed

provide compelling evidence for inter-professional co-operation and integration within the delivery network. The chapter provides four examples, the Integrated Victim Service project, two forms of Integrated Offender Management project and a cluster of co-operative practices organised around the local Violence Against Women and Girls strategy. These initiatives are examples organic and local attempts to address perceived deficiencies in the effectiveness and efficiency of the local Criminal Justice System.

Four theoretical models for professional co-operation and integration are described and evaluated. The most compelling theory of network integration is that it emerges from the connected nature of work and the similar demands that patterns of work make on professionals. The theory argues that the complex and intense interactions demanded by the work of the criminal justice system acts as a centripetal force that overcomes the barriers of professional orientation and institutional affiliation. Network integration develops from professionals' identification with and their commitments to their immediate peer group (Kidron 1965). In network contexts the immediate peer group will frequently incorporate members from a variety of professional backgrounds and network agencies.

The implication of this insight is that the professional experience of work acts to connect professionals rather then divide them. The close and meaningful interactions required by patterns of work gave rise to stable relationships that were characterised by intense collaboration and connected professionals in relationships of reciprocal obligation and dependency. The study will argue that the emergence of integrated organisation reflects professional's recognition that the outcomes and efficiency of their own work were dependent on the actions, behaviour and good will of other groups of professionals within the criminal justice system. In other words the experience of work created normative and cognitive systems of reciprocal obligation and dependency between professionals. These systems were reinforced by shared commitments to the overall objectives of the criminal justice system and a strong identification with the experience of the victim.

The study concludes by describing the theoretical and practical implications of the findings. The revised conceptual framework produced a more refined and analytically detailed account of goal incongruence than would have been the

case with established conceptions of goal incongruence. The conceptual framework rejects difference as sufficient criteria for recognising goal incongruence. Goals may be different but complimentary, that is that despite their difference they act as separate means to the attainment of a common end. The conceptual framework replaces difference with contradiction as the criteria for goal incongruence. This acts as a higher test for recognising goal incongruence. The study found incongruence to be present in five network contexts. However had the criteria been difference, goal incongruence would have been ubiquitous. Indeed had the study employed difference as the sole criterion of goal incongruence then findings of incongruence would have been ubiquitous and the study would have been overwhelmed by endless and varied examples of the phenomenon. The selection of contradiction as the marker of goal incongruence is theoretically significant. If the criteria of contradiction applied to the existing literature on goal incongruence it would be reasonable to assume that the empirical findings and the theoretical conclusions derived from them would be significantly modified.

The study finds compelling evidence that goal incongruence was caused by the nature of bureaucratic delegation within hierarchies. Bureaucratic delegation was found to be responsible for goal incongruence within the strategic core, within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network. To this extent the study provides empirical support for hierarchical theories of goal incongruence.

The study indicates that the Bifurcation of Interest model explains hierarchical goal incongruence, supported by organisational segmentation model and hierarchically imposed professional control systems. The necessary use of intermediaries creates a tendency to the bi-furcation of interests, in which intermediaries are concerned chiefly with their social positions as agents. At the heart of the bi-furcation of interest model is the question of the benefits that individuals hope to acquire from their organisational associations. Or, to express the issue in Perrow's Terms: what do individuals and groups hope to gain from participating in affairs of organisation …what are the uses to which they put the organisation (1961). Empirical evidence indicates that hierarchical position

influenced the uses to which groups could put the organisation and the benefits that they could hope to gain from organisational membership.

However theoretical accounts of the operation of bureaucratic authority and delegation do not provide adequate explanations of network arrangements. Theory predicts that the more junior staff should be most incongruent with the formal goals of the network. This study finds that the contrary is true. The most senior staff were found to be the most incongruent. What is theoretically surprising is that the uses that members of the strategic core put the organisation to, as evidenced by their commitment to the operative goal of Reporting, were further from the formal goals of the MoJ than were the operative goals of the delivery network. That is formal – operative goal incongruence was greatest at the higher levels of bureaucratic hierarchy and diminished as you moved down through the hierarchy to operational levels within the delivery network.

Finally, the study will argue that professional difference does not produce goal incongruence as predicted by theory. On the contrary, professionals in the case study do not act as theory predicts, but actually co-operated to reduce goal incongruence. The study revealed that professional difference acted in subtle and complex ways. However on balance professional difference did not produce goal incongruence. This thesis will provide empirical evidence that professionals overcame difference in professional orientations in order to address the negative outcomes of hierarchically produced goal incongruence by pursuing organic strategies of network integration. The empirical evidence for inter-professional co-operation contradicts theoretical predictions that difference in professional orientation will act to increase goal incongruence within network contexts.

This empirical surprise, that professionals within the case study do not behave toward each other as theory predicts they should, raised the issue of why they chose to co-operate and reduce goal incongruence. The most important reason for network integration was professional's experience of work. This acted to connect individuals with different professional orientations in relationships of mutual dependency and obligation. This suggests that peer group relationships were key in promoting network integration and reducing goal incongruence. The importance of peer groups is recognised in the goal incongruence literature. The theoretical implications of the study is to focus attention on the issue that

within network relationships, peer groups are likely to incorporate individuals with a range of professional orientations. Secondly, the study suggests that the role of peer group relationships (as opposed to professional and organisational affiliations) is under-theorised in the goal incongruence literature.

The practical implications of these findings are that hierarchical attempts to 'control' the practice and performance of professionals, while having some policy benefits (legitimacy and accountability) are counterproductive and act to increase goal incongruence and reduce professional effectiveness.

Chapter 2 Conceptualising Goal Incongruence

Introduction

This chapter will examine the manner in which goal incongruence has been conceptualised and identified in the literature. It will describe what previous authors have thought goal incongruence is, the type of evidence that they have utilised and the criteria they have employed to judge its presence and warrant the claims they have made for its existence.

The chapter will develop the argument that conceptualisations of goal incongruence found in the literature are inconsistent. The conception and identification of goal incongruence have changed radically over time. They have tended to become simpler, have relaxed the criteria used to test for the presence of goal incongruence and attach considerably less importance to drawing evidence from organisationally meaningful empirical contexts.

This chapter will begin by describing how the theoretical and empirical literature has conceptualised goal incongruence. It will then critically evaluate how authors have approached the empirical study of goal incongruence from quantitative and qualitative research perspectives, paying particular attention to qualitative case studies of goal incongruence.

The chapter will go on to summarise these approaches and discuss their implications for the current study. It will then describe each of the models and the suggested pathways to goal incongruence. The chapter will conclude by presenting the study's conceptual framework for the analysis of goal incongruence within public networks.

The Conceptualisation of Goal Incongruence

The following discussion sets out to describe how goal incongruence has been conceptualised within the literature. It begins by clarifying the study's concept of the organisational goal as the foundation on which discussion of goal incongruence rests. It then describes what authors have thought constitutes the

phenomenon of goal incongruence that is how they have defined the phenomenon.

Scott has argued that the: “concept of organizational goals is among the most slippery and treacherous of all those employed by organizational analysts” (1992, p.285). This is because of the bewildering variety of ways those goals are manifested within organisational contexts and the equally bewildering variety of ways that they are categorised, analysed and identified by researchers. Scott provides an admirably clear definition of goals as: "conceptions of desired ends" (Scott 1987, p.18). However this definition is not as straightforward as it appears on first reading. There are at least three important areas of uncertainty. What sorts of desired ends might Scott be referring to? What is the ontological status of the desired ends? Who are the people (the constituencies) who share and carry these conceptions? In practice there is very little consistency in the way in which authors have argued these questions should be answered. Consequently the published literature on goal incongruence defies easy comparison, making it almost impossible to identify those issues that have been resolved and those that remain open to question.

Numerous authors have produced classifications systems for organisational goals. The research design employed by this study recognises four types of organisational goal. The first is the teleological goal. These goals relate to the beliefs held about the ultimate purpose of organisations and organisational actions. They may encompass outcomes, methods, principles or operational characteristics. A good example of a teleological goal is the principle that the NHS should provide medical care funded from general taxation, allocated on the basis of need and provided free at the point of use. Of-course these principles are established by Statute. However it can be argued that many (although not all) actors within the NHS would also share the conception that professionals employed by the public sector should deliver services, and this belief establishes a fourth teleological goal of resisting private involvement within the NHS.

The second type of goal has less to do with belief and more to do with practice. Habitus-derived goals (Alvesson 2013) emerge from the practice of individuals within their confined and restricted organisational contexts. Goals do not derive from beliefs but from the routine completion of habitual processes Goals reflect

what Blackburn has described as: "a matter of practical dispositions or a stance toward things." They represent: "A commitment to some practices and some permissions and some prohibitions: and immersion in a 'way of life' " (Blackburn 2012, p.34). From this perspective principled belief in the purpose of organisational activity recedes to the point where it is no more than: "a vague and changing kaleidoscope of imaginings" (Blackburn 2012, p.35).

The third type of goal can be described as accumulative goals. Individuals and groups often exhibit a tendency to acquisitive action, sometimes described as pursuing self-interest. The focus of acquisitive behaviour can sometimes appear to be subordinate to its practice. The objective of accumulation may be money, security, experience, status, prestige, authority or control. Finally the fourth category of goal is the hedonic goal (Lindenberg 2008). Hedonic goal frames reflect the belief that individuals within organisations are motivated to position themselves to avoid dangerous, boring or difficult work (Lipsky 1982) and to attempt to avoid drudgery and even have some fun (Alvesson 2013).

Another area of uncertainty is the ontological status of goals. That is what is the nature of Scott's conception of desired ends? The most profoundly realist view of goals is that they are conceptions of desired ends that are enacted. A goal is only a goal if it is supported by action to realise it's objective. This is a methodologically unproblematic definition of a goal as it should be possible to collect evidence for goal-orientated action within organisations. However insisting that goals must be enacted appears to be a difficult position to sustain.

It is possible to propose an alternative ontological basis for goals, one in which they may not be enacted, but *intended*. The intended goal differs from the enacted in that some impediment exists to its implementation. This may be a matter of insufficient resources or agreement, a lack of capacity or technical know how, of unavailable permissions, a lack of sufficient priority (it will be the next thing to be done) or simply because of an inevitable and reasonable delay between conception and execution. However from a methodological position the intended goal starts to introduce problems, as an intended goal may have no evidence to support its existence apart from talk.

A variation on this theme is provided by the third ontological basis for goals, the aspirational goal. Most people will be familiar with the ironical usage of the term aspirational. It is used in popular politics to indicate intentions that are desirable but practically difficult and therefore unlikely to be realised. In this context, the value of the aspirational goal is its ability to form a desired 'impression' in a target audience. It was, perhaps, the dark side of the aspirational goal, its ability to mislead, that Alexander Herzen was referring to with his criticism of the pursuit of utopias: "A goal if infinitely remote is not a goal, it is a deception" (Herzen, quoted in Ward 1973, p.136).

However aspirational objectives are not inevitably devoid of merit. They can shape the ethical landscape of organisation in a positive way, and guide behaviour by providing a strong sense of 'what ought to be'. It is easy to dismiss the ontological validity of the aspirational goal on the grounds that its unlikely chance of being enacted means that it is just talk. Atkinson Coffey and Delemont (2003) remind us that talk itself can constitute social action:

> Forms of talk - including narratives and interview accounts - are themselves examples of social action. People do things with words, and they do things with narratives" (Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont 2003, p.117).

The inscription of even an aspirational goal represents a social event that confers a definite ontological status. However, this creates the methodological problem of defining and collecting evidence capable of distinguishing between talk as intention and talk as aspiration. Of-course the situation is more complex than that because there is a fourth category of goal that will be referred to here as the pretended goal. The pretended goal has *as its objective* the deception. Its purpose is to secure the legitimacy associated with particular forms of principle, action or belief while avoiding practical compliance or even sustaining contradictory practices. In that sense the object of the pretended goal is to disguise organisational beliefs and practices in order to deceive and mislead. Brunsen (1989) and Pollit (2001) have both argued that organisational hypocrisy is beneficial in that separating talk, decision and action allows organisations to resolve contradictory expectations. However a less charitable view would be

that pretended goals facilitate organisational actors efforts to put organisations to their own uses and benefits (Perrow 1961).

Making Sense of Organisational Goals

As we have already argued, organisational goals can be thought of as: "conceptions of desired ends" (Scott 1987, p.18) that act to provide direction and purpose to organisational activity. For Scott, clear and specific goals are indispensable precursors to effective decision making within organisations:

> Specific goals not only supply criteria for choosing among alternative activities: they guide decisions about how the organization structure itself is to be designed. They specify what tasks are to be performed, what kinds of personnel are to be hired, [and] how resources are to be allocated among participants. (Scott 1987 p.32)

The assumption that organisations possess consistent goals, clearly articulated and widely accepted across functions and operating levels has been contested on a number of grounds. Boyne (2003b) argues that public sector organisations can exhibit goal ambiguity as goals may not be clearly formulated. Lipsky (1983) argues that where staff (including relatively junior staff) work in contact with the public they can enjoy significant *discretion* in the interpretation of formal policies and procedures.

Goals serve as both a necessary tool to state and achieve corporate purpose through directing: the set of "conscious efforts to concert actors and resources to carry out established collective purposes" (O'Toole and Meier, 1999, p.510) and a powerful influence for motivating individuals and groups to persist in exhibiting behaviours and actions necessary to achieve agreed goals (Kristof-Brown and Stevens 2001).

Goals must satisfy different organisational requirements including communicating the purpose of an organisation (Scott 1992) and providing an objective and context for measuring organizational performance (Hall 1996). Goals can be utilized as a strategy for coping with environmental uncertainty by

imposing particular courses of action: "Uncertainty creates problems for action. Actors... resolve these problems by following rules, of thumb, using rituals, relying on habitual patterns, or, more self-consciously, by setting goals and making plans to reach them" (Turner 1976, p.378). Insofar as goals constitute simplifying assumptions about task and environment they act to restrict the range of ends which are constructed as legitimate and can therefore be understood as bounds for rationality (Simon 1957).

Goals can also play an indispensable role in establishing the legitimacy of an organisation (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) particularly in securing claims to the democratic legitimacy of public organizations and actions as illustrated by Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie when they argue that: "In terms of policy delivery...implementation efforts should be directed toward the achievement of public purposes specified in advance by public officials" (Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p.169).

The Early View of Goal Incongruence

Early research on goal incongruence tended to conform to the model of institutional analyses (Selznick 1948, Sills 1956, Perrow 1961, Street Vintner and Perrow1966). These authors sought to identify goal incongruence in the discrepancies and contradictions between formal goal and operative goals inferred from participant observation and rich descriptions of organisational contexts.

Selznick defined goal incongruence in terms of an inevitable dissonance between an organisation's professed and operational goals:

> Running an organisation… generates problems, which have no necessary (and often an opposed) relationship to the professed or "original" goals of the organization. The day-to-day behaviour of the group becomes centered around specific problems and proximate goals, which have primarily an internal relevance. Then, since these activities come to consume an increasing proportion of the time and

> thoughts of participants, they are-from the point of view of actual behaviour – substituted for the professed goal" (Selznick1943, p.48).

Perrow developed this distinction, suggesting two categories of organisational goals. The first was the official or formal goals which: "represented the general purposes of the organization as put forth in the charter, annual reports, public statements and other authoritative statements" (Perrow 1961, p.855). The second type of goal, operative goals: "designate the ends sought through the actual operating policies of the organization. They tell us what the organization actually is trying to do, regardless of what the official goals say are their aims" (Perrow1961 p.855).

Operative goals, unlike official, or formal goals: "are tied more directly to group interests and while they may support, be irrelevant to, or subvert official goals, they bear no necessary connection with them" (Perrow 1961, p.856). Street et al suggest goal incongruence consists in the "contradictions between goals and [the] structured conflicts [that] might arise" (Street et al 1966, p.16). The consequence of goal incongruence is that the professed goals of organisations are deflected, distorted or frustrated (Selznick 1943 p.1, 48-49), or subverted (Perrow 1961 *p.338*).

The Later View of Goal Incongruence

The majority of later research dispenses with institutional analysis and the investigation of difference between formal and operative goals. Quantitative analysis of questionnaire responses is utilized to discern difference. The simplest measurement strategies ask respondents direct questions with regard to goal congruence. For example: "Do you believe that the multiple agencies… are all working to achieve the same common goals or outcomes" (Percival 2009, p.812).

Vancouver Millsap and Peters describe goal congruence as: "the agreement among employees on the importance of the goals the organizations could be pursuing" (Vancouver Millsap and Peters 1994, p.666). They extend the use of the constituency approach developed by Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) that

evaluates supervisor – subordinate goal congruence (the extent to which individual supervisors and subordinates share or agree on goal priorities), between constituency goal congruence (the degree to which everyone agrees with the boss) and member – constituency goal congruence (the degree to which each member agrees with all the other members in his or her constituency).

However more common is the practice of inviting respondents (whether from the same or different organisations) to rank a number of possible goals in order of priority. The resulting prioritizations are then used to statistically analyse the extent of agreement or difference. Goal priorities can be researcher selected (Jauch et al 1980, Lundin 2007), selected by senior managers (Witt 1998) or moderated by Delphi panels with the intention of increasing their practical relevance to respondents (Kristof-Brown and Stevens 2001, Vancouver and Schmitt 1991, Vancouver, Millsap and Peters 1994).

The goal priorities offered to respondents can appear to have a somewhat general character. Brief and non-comprehensive examples include: Achieve career growth, satisfy the customer, upgrade the physical work environment (Witt 1998); Reducing unemployment, reducing expenditure on social assistance, following central government rules and regulations (Lundin 2007), increase students' basic skills, increase breadth of courses, and increase cost effectiveness (Vancouver, Millsap and Peters 1994). The extent to which the goal priorities described above are relevant to organisational practice or reflect the actual choices experienced by organisational actors is open to question. It is also unclear whether utilizing experienced choices from organisational contexts would influence the identification of goal incongruence.

The process by which operative goals are established is contested in the literature. Hall (1996, p.262) argues that operative goals are a: "derivation and distillation" of official goals and Perrow feels that operative goals are constructed and implemented by what he refers to as dominant groups (Perrow 1986). However Lipsky (1983) argues convincingly for the role of "street level bureaucrats" who may occupy relatively unimposing positions in the organizational hierarchy but who nevertheless have the discretion to establish ad-hoc policy and operative goals that can effectively subvert and supersede official goals.

Lipsky argues that goal conflict at the operational level of public sector agencies arises within an organisational context of confusion, ambiguity and conflict. According to Lipsky the goals of complex public sector organisations tend to have an "idealised dimension which make them difficult to achieve and confusing and complicated to approach" (Lipsky 1983, p.40). In Lipsky's view agency goals may be ambiguous because they have accumulated over time and reflect different policy concerns or objectives, or for the reason that organisations are unsure that approaches to service delivery will be successful and therefore hedge their bets by retaining multiple goals. However Agency goals may also conflict with each other: "because there is such fundamental disagreement among constituents of ... policy that [government] has never been willing to address and resolve the conflict directly" (Lipsky 1983 p. 41).

These issues lead Lipsky to reject the assumption that employees generally conform to organisational expectations and share organisational goals:

> What if workers do not share the objectives of their superiors? Low-level participants in organizations often do not share the perspectives and preferences of their superiors and hence in some respects cannot be thought to be working toward stated agency goals. One can expect a distinct degree of noncompliance if lower-level workers interests differ from the interests of those at higher levels... (Lipsky 1983, p.16).

Lipsky's argument that the formally stated goals of public agencies may not coincide with the operative goals of the individuals and groups who are responsible for service delivery resonates with Scott's emphasis on the distinction between professed and actual goals. Scott describes two dimensions of goal congruence:

> First, there is frequently a disparity between the stated and the 'real' goals pursued by organisations – between the professed or official goals that are announced and the actual or operative goals that can be observed to govern the activities of participants. Second...even when the stated goals are actually being pursued, they are never the only goals governing participants behaviour (Scott 1987, p.52).

The distinction between formal and operative goals provides for three possible 'dimensions' of goal congruence: Firstly there is the extent of congruence between the formal goals of the organisation or network (formal-formal goal congruence), secondly the extent of congruence between formal and operative goals (formal-operative goal congruence) and finally the extent of congruence between operative goals themselves (operative-operative goal congruence). In particular, as operative goals might not be constructed uniformly across all organisational or network constituencies there may be significant inter-constituency discrepancies in operative goals which reduces inter-constituency operative-operative goal congruence.

Empirical Analysis of Goal Incongruence

How does the empirical literature approach the study of goal incongruence? The section presents an overview of the qualitative literature. It then moves on to a detailed discussion of the way that empirical studies have conceptualised goal incongruence and the research designs that they utilised to study the phenomenon. The empirical literature (outlined in figure 2.1 overleaf) conceptualises goal congruence in two distinct forms. The first recognised categorical differences between goals and attempts to incorporate these differences into their research designs, while the other does not consider the aetiology of organisational goals and conceptualises them in terms of undifferentiated menus of choices or values to which individuals can attach greater or lesser significance.

The majority of quantitative authors also appear to conceptualise goal congruence as operating in a dyadic (or dualist) manner. The dyads explored include organisation – organisation (Lundin 2007), supervisor – subordinate (Bozeman and Kingsley 2001), member – constituency (Witt 1998), and constituency – constituency (Abernathy and Stoelwinder 1994). Qualitative authors attempt to provide a pluralistic account of goal congruence that rests on thick descriptions of the meanings ascribed by organisational constituencies to formal and operative goals.

Figure 2.1 Overview of the Empirical Literature on Goal Congruence

Source	Definition of GI	Conception of GI	Indicators of GI	Research Design
Street, Vinter and Perrow (1966)	Agreement between senior executives and staff on the goals of the organisation	Congruence between goals as: -Official mandates - Outputs to external agents -Personal and group commitments -Essential constraints built into the organisation	Inferred from observed behaviour and service provision and congruence of goals expressed in interview and survey	Mixed method multiple longitudinal case study
Sills (1957)	Extent of agreement between the organisation and the individual member as to legitimate means and ends	Congruence of the views of the organisation and individual members of legitimate means and ends	Beliefs actions and statements of individuals and the formal policy objectives of the organisation	Qualitative ethnographic case study of a single voluntary organisation
Bozeman and Kingsley (1998)	Extent of Goal Clarity within an organisation	-Clearly defined goals, tasks and mission	Opinions of Senior and Middle Managers	Statistical analysis of survey results to test hypothesis

Source	Definition of GI	Conception of GI	Indicators of GI	Research Design
Abernathy and Stoelwinder (1994)	Extent of conflict between professional orientation and the control environment	-Professional orientation -Control environment -Job satisfaction -Sub-unit performance	-Role conflict	Statistical analysis of survey results to test hypotheses
Lundin, (2007)	Extent of agreement between managers in separate dyadic organisations in the importance of certain goals	13 specific societal, organisation centered and client centered goals selected by the researcher	Differential ranking of the importance of research-selected goals	Statistical analysis of survey results to test hypotheses
Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie, (2001)	Extent of agreement between the formal goals of policy officials and the operating goals of implementing agencies and managers	Local understanding of -Formal policy goals - Agency priorities - Operative performance goals used to judge the performance of front-line staff	Congruence between formal policy goals and: -Staff understanding of policy goals -staff understanding of the actual priorities of organisations -Operative goals against which front-line worker's performance is judged	Comparative case studies to address research questions Data collection by interview of multiple managers and staff within each case study organisations

Source	Definition of GI	Conception of GI	Indicators of GI	Research Design
Witt, (1998)	Extent of agreement in the goal priorities of supervisors and direct subordinates	Congruence between the priorities of supervisors and their direct subordinates: Congruence between the priorities of direct subordinates and their peers Supervisors evaluation of subordinate's performance	Congruence of 5-8 non-operational goals suggested by survey respondents	Statistical analysis of survey results to test hypotheses
Vancouver, Millsap and Peters (1994)	Agreement among organisational employees on the importance of the goals the organisations could be pursuing	14 researcher selected societal, organisation focused and client focused goals moderated by a 'Delphi' panel	Goal congruence between Principal and teacher (Between constituency goal congruence) -Goal congruence between teachers (Within constituency goal congruence)	Statistical analysis of survey results to test hypotheses

Source	Definition of GI	Conception of GI	Indicators of GI	Research Design
Kristof-Brown and Stevens, (2001)	The congruence between personal goals and the perception of the personal goals of team members	-Congruence of Performance goals -Congruence of Mastery goals	Self- reported personal goals compared to performance in social science experiment	Statistical analysis of experiment
Bohte and Meier, (2000)	Goal Displacement (organisational cheating)	Operative goals are congruent with attaining adequate output measures but are incongruent with attaining the formal goals of the organisation	Discrepancies in the activity and output performance data which are consistent with organisational cheating	Forensic analysis of published performance data (both activity and output)

The exception to this dualistic / pluralistic conception of goal congruence is Rainey and Steinbauer (1999), who use their unusually comprehensive data set to present findings on patterns of goal congruence in multiple dyads embedded within specific organisations within a particular organisational field (within constituency, between constituency, member - constituency and supervisor-subordinate goal congruence).

The definitions of goal congruence in the empirical literature follow those described in the theoretical literature, that is the congruence of agreement with regard to possible organisational goals. However it is important to note that a majority of empirical papers retain control of the definition of goal congruence by only allowing organisational actors to respond or react to researcher selected goals (Lundin 2007; Witt 1998). Bozeman and Kingsley (2001) imposed goals selected by senior management while Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) used a Delphi panel to moderate original research questions. This raises the possibility

that the results gained by such a method bear no relation to the actual goals that direct and constrain behaviour within organisations. Such a research design may be able to identify a correlation between goal congruence and organisational performance / improvement, but not a causal relationship as it cannot demonstrate the goals analysed are those which motivate behaviours of actors which occur within organisational contexts.

Abernathy and Stoelwinder (1994) utilised a research design intended to establish the degree of goal congruence between professionals and the organisation in a healthcare environment. Their method established professional orientation by asking five questions, three of which focused on respondents desire to publish research in peer reviewed academic journals. Physicians and nurses who did not attach high importance to publishing research were marked as having a low professional orientation.

Rather than impose an external measure of goal congruence, Witt (1998) asked senior managers in case study organisations to provide between 5 and 8 non-operational goals which illustrated senior management's view of organisational value priorities. These formed the basis of the measurement of goal congruence among first-line supervisors and their direct reports. They included statements such as: "be seen by our customers as being the best at what we do; be an organisations that people want to work for; use supplies e.g. paper, pencils, paper-clips wisely; work as a team to get the job done" (Witt 1998, p.624).

Lundin (2007), in surveying Swedish employment agency dyads only presents data collected from one manager in each organisation. This research limitation is identified and its implications discussed. Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) collected a minimum of 76 responses per organisation surveyed (1 principal and at least 75 teachers).

Qualitative Case Studies of Goal Incongruence

Qualitative case studies are utilised by Street, Vintner and Perrow (1966), Sills (1957) and Meyer Riccucci and Lurie (2001). In each of these cases thick descriptions of inter constituency goal congruence are provided which discuss

the interaction of different categories of goals (formal and operative, or means-ends chains) on organisational behaviour. Measures of goal congruence derive from data collected by interview and participant observation that describes the meanings organisational actors attach to work and organisational life. Street Vintner and Perrow (1966) triangulate interview and participant observation data with survey results to enable a more robust description of goal congruence's role in organisational performance to be extended. It is important to note that these qualitative studies appear to attach far more importance to establishing that accounts of goal congruence are authentic and reflect the experience of actors within case study organisations who may not enjoy senior or middle manager positions.

The Volunteers

Sills (1957) presents a case study of a single voluntary organisation, the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, at the time the largest voluntary organisation in the United States measured by popular membership and annual budget. The study focuses on the operation of the Foundation's local organisations that were distinctive in that volunteers and not professional managers directed them, as would be the case in public and private sector organisations of a corresponding scale.

In addressing this central concern Sills is interested to explore the interaction (and potential conflict) between the top-down goals of the organisations and the bottom-up goals of the volunteers and to describe how the implementation of top-down goals are moderated, subverted or otherwise influenced by the actions and behaviours of volunteers. Fundamental to Sills conception of goal congruence is the view that the downward delegation of responsibility in large organisations creates the generic problem of goal preservation that is, how can organisations maintain a commitment to their original goals and purpose.

Sills suggests that in order to accomplish their goals, organisations establish a set of procedures or means. In the course of following these procedures, the sub-ordinates or members to whom authority and functions have been delegated often come to regard them as ends in themselves, rather than as means toward

the achievement of organization [al] goals. As a result of this process, the actual activities of the organization become centered around the proper functioning of organization procedures, rather than on the achievement of the initial goals (Sills 1957, p.62). This process results in the "displacement" of the original organisational goals by a new set (or sets) of goals. Unless the displaced original goals are formally and explicitly repudiated then a condition of goal incongruence will be created between the organisations due to the disparity between professed and actual goals.

The ultimate source of goal displacement is understood to be the necessity to delegate responsibility for action to local or operational parts of the organisation. The actors to whom authority and responsibility is delegated are exposed to the influence of a number of institutional processes which act to shape goal displacement. The first potential influence is their status within the organisation. Actors may attach greater importance to the maintenance and progression of their own position, status and indeed salary than achieving the goals of the organisation. Second is their interpretation of organisational rules.

Sills (1957) suggests that the personal and professional commitments required to enforce bureaucratic rules and procedures go beyond that which is strictly necessary to the point that complying and enforcing rules becomes more important than achieving the official goals of the organisation. Third is their "execution of organizational procedures". This leads actors to identify their responsibility with the proximate goals of conducting procedures in an approved manner rather than the professed goals of achieving defined outcomes as a result of those processes.

Fourth is their "relationship with other participants". Sills recognises that in addition to the formal structures of organisations informal structures (groups) are likely to form, which will, to a certain extent, "act to protect their entrenched interests rather than assist their clientele" (Sills 1957, p.68). Informal groups might develop norms that are contradictory to purposive action to achieve the formal or original goals of the organisation. Finally their relationships with the public might lead them to moderate behaviours and goals, either to the advantage of individual members of the public or groups, or with the objective

of protecting or enhancing perceptions of the legitimacy or status of the delegated individual.

Sills is silent on the active measurement of goal congruence. Instead goal congruence (in Sills' terms goal preservation) is inferred from the success of the National Foundation in sustaining its goals over time. This inference leads Sills to propose a number of control mechanisms that must inhibit the universal process of goal displacement. Sills describes the research as an Institutional Analysis. The objective of the research was to compare the empirical findings of the research with prevalent institutional theory. The main data collection methods of institutional analysis are listed as witnessing day-to-day operations (participant observation), interviews with key personnel and examining the organization's records.

The Analysis of Goals in Complex Organisations

The Analysis of Goals in Complex Organisations is a journal article that presents an institutional analysis of goals and their congruence. The article, published in the American Sociological Review, presented a theoretical framework derived from empirical evidence collected during Charles Perrow's Doctoral research. Perrow's PhD thesis was submitted in 1960 under the title Authority, Goals and Prestige in a General Hospital. It consisted of the institutional analysis of a 300 bed voluntary general hospital in a US city that operated on a non-profit basis. The purpose of the research was to: "inquire into the social conditions that effect organizational goals" (1960, p.1). Perrow felt that the prevalent organisational literature took goals as unproblematic, partly because it did not recognise the social (or institutional) nature of organisations.

Perrow quotes his PhD supervisor, Phillip Selznick, in order to explain his view of the differences between the concepts of organisation and institution:

> Organisations are technical instruments; designed as means to definite goals... they are expendable. Institutions... may be partly engineered, but they have also a "natural" dimension. They are the products of interaction and adaptation; they become the receptacles of group

> idealism; they are less readily expendable. (Selznick, quoted in Perrow 1960, p.4)

Perrow argues that institutions develop a particular character that is produced over time as a result of the interaction of influences caused by natural social forces from within and outside the institution. Explanations of institutionalised behaviour cannot be meaningful unless they incorporate accounts of how informal structures and relationships exert considerable influence on the pattern of institutional preferences, decisions and actions.

Perrow's research proposed that in institutions the: "unambiguous pursuit of official goals is not likely to be common" (Perrow 1961, p.21). This proposition led Perrow to pose the question: "Where and how will official goals be subverted" (Perrow 1961, p.23). The empirical evidence provided by his Doctoral research led to the contrasting of official and unofficial goals. In his 1961 publication unofficial goals had been renamed operational goals in recognition of the disproportionate influence unofficial or operative conceptions of ends have on the planning, conduct and control of work in institutional settings.

Perrow explored the congruence between official and unofficial goals by analysing the policy-making levels of the case study organisation. In essence this meant the leadership of the hospital. In this Perrow appears to be consistent with the top-down view of goals expressed by the other authors reviewed in this work. However there are two important differences. Perrow argues that the hospital has multiple sources of leadership (the board of trustees drawn from the local community, senior physicians represented by the medical board and the director of the hospital whom the research refers to as the administrator). Therefore leadership and authority is not vested in a monolithic executive or executive core as it is in the other studies.

Additionally, actors in a leadership position cannot act without regard to the values, norms and interests of their 'constituents' or without consideration of the response their actions might elicit from the leaders and constituents of other institutional groups. Perrow conceives institutional goals as being the: "product of complex interactions within and between the organization's social structure,

leadership groups and environment. ... They are never static but subject to continual pressure and changes over time" (Perrow 1961, p.2).

The phenomenon of goal congruence derives from the differential expression and outcomes of those complex interactions in particular institutional groups. Perrow established the distinction between two types of organisational goal. The first was the official goal that represented the: "general purposes of the organization as put forth in the charter, annual reports, public statements and other authoritative statements" (1961, p.855). The second type of goal identified by Perrow was the unofficial or operative goals. In order to identify unofficial (operative) goals Perrow suggests that researchers consider:

> What do individuals or groups of similarly hope to gain from participation in the affairs of the organization? Or, to use an awkward phrase we shall reiterate frequently, what are the uses to which they put the organisation? (Perrow 1960, p.16).

Any uses that deviate from the official goals of the organisation (identified for the case study as patient care, medical teaching and medical research) are described as *unofficial* (1960) or *operative* (1961) goals. It is important to realise that for Perrow unofficial and operative goals describe the same phenomenon. The difference in words between the 1960 and 1961 publications represent a development in exposition rather than conceptualisation.

In order to illustrate how unofficial (read operative) goals might be identified by research Perrow suggests that:

> Some of these by-products [of official goals] may become so important to the participants who make up the institution as to constitute unofficial goals. "I would not be interested in this hospital unless it..." did something or other. "The trouble with this place is everyone is so concerned with" this or that pursuit. Where these blanks are not filled in with good patient care, teaching and research we have <u>unofficial goals</u> of some group or individual, and thus we have <u>uses</u> to which the institution is put other than the avowed ones. (Perrow 1960, p. 15. Emphasis in the original).

Perrow conducts a qualitative case study of a single organisation. However, due to the belief that institutions develop a character over time, the case study incorporates a detailed history of the organisation (from its inception in 1887) that describes the evolution of the official goals of the hospital and how they reflect internal and external events. Such a history might seem unusual from a modern perspective but Perrow is insistent that the past:

> Covers the history and tradition, the precedents and established commitments involved in all past action. These limit, though not determine, the present actions that any one group may take. If any single thing deserved the designation "the institution" or "the hospital" it would be this." (Perrow 1960, p. 14)

In this statement Perrow appears to suggest the institutional history as the dominant discourse in establishing institutional behaviour.

Organization for Treatment

A similar approach is presented by Street, Vintner and Perrow (1966) in their book, Organization for Treatment. These authors set out to evaluate the effectiveness of juvenile correctional institutions in the United States. The research on which conclusions are drawn was conducted in six separate institutions over a period of two years. As such it attempts to operate at two levels of institutional analysis (Scott 1981), the single organisation and the organisational field. The authors describe their research purpose as the: "evaluation of the effects of those institutions that have the goal of changing human personality and human values so that their clients can participate effectively in the larger society" (1966, p.*v*). Effectiveness is measured on the basis of the ability of 'people changing organisations' to prepare inmates for a successful return to society. The evaluation is between organising correctional institutions around concepts of treatment and rehabilitation versus custody and correction.

The authors openly acknowledge that they are far from neutral on the most appropriate method for organising people-changing organisations and advocate

organisation around conceptions of treatment and rehabilitation as a matter of principle and pragmatism. The research focuses on the congruence of goals values and norms within and between organisations and the influence of such congruence on the success (in the author's terms) of study institutions in implementing and sustaining humane regimes organised around the treatment and rehabilitation of inmates. In particular the empirical research strategy focuses on the role of the executive in conceiving particular (treatment) ends and then implementing the means to achieve that end within an organisation where 'rank and file' staff may not share a commitment to selected ends or means (formal and operative goals).

Street Vintner and Perrow define goal incongruence as the: Possible contradictions between goals and [the] structured conflicts [which] might arise as new goals are introduced. (Street, Vintner and Perrow 1966, p.17).

Goals rooted in value and belief systems that have the ability to influence the behaviour actions and decisions of individuals and organisations. As we have already described, the authors perceive a contest between values and beliefs centered on treatment and those that emphasise custody. Such values and beliefs incorporate societal discourses with humane, political religious and professional strands. The authors perceived that treatment values and beliefs were spreading among correctional institutions, but with disappointing speed due to the resistance encountered from individuals, groups and institutional practices which acted to resist the change. Goal consensus, which might predict organisational performance, therefore depended on the values and beliefs of those within the organisation. Goal consensus might exist within executive groups and staff groups or between those groups. Equally the goals of policy makers, external institutions (such as the police, courts etc.) and the values and local public opinion might also exert an influence on the competition of ideas between treatment and custody.

The research design is intended to: "examine and explain the variations within and among residential institutions" (Street Vintner and Perrow 1966, p.*vii*). The study was intended to be comparative and comprehensive. Comparative because six organisations were studied, each at two points in time, and comprehensive

because the goals norms and values of senior executives, rank and file staff and inmates were collected.

The analysis of the institutions utilised a number of methods. The data collection began with a preliminary period of observation and interviewing of executives, rank and file staff members and inmates. This led to the development of separate questionnaires for executives, staff and inmates. These questionnaires were administered twelve months apart in each organisation, but were not used to provide longitudinal data. Formal and informal interviewing and lengthy informal conversations supported the questionnaires with executives, participant observation and the coding of evidence provided by relevant organisational documents. In addition, a training seminar was organised in each organisation to provide interim feedback on the initial questionnaire and to increase staff commitment to the completion of the second questionnaire.

The study adopts a phenomological theoretical perspective. The research attempts to describe the goals, norms, values and practices of correctional institutions as an experienced social phenomenon. The authors seek to: "present the definitions of the situation as seen by the actors involved. The richness of detail is designed...to represent the institutional context" (Street, Vintner and Perrow 1966, p. *viii*).

Achieving Goal Congruence in Complex Environments

Meyers Riccucci and Lurie (2001) conduct a similar qualitative analysis of welfare services in three counties in separate US states (Michigan, Georgia and Texas) in order to address the questions:

> Is it possible to achieve and maintain congruent goals among actors in complex, intergovernmental and multi-organizational policy systems? If so, what conditions foster greater congruence in goals? If not, what are the consequences for the performance of public programmes and for the achievement of policy objectives? (Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p.166)

The background to the research is provided by the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act that reformed the US welfare delivery system by delegating responsibility for establishing welfare policy goals from Federal to State governments, creating what the authors describe as a natural experiment. The experiment is particularly relevant to an investigation of the role of goal congruence as one of the motivations for the reform legislation was the perception that local delivery of welfare services had become uncoupled from welfare policy devised at the federal level. The delegation of goal setting to state governments was intended to facilitate the effective implementation of policy goals.

The research develops the earlier institutional literature in that it recognises that public services are frequently delivered not by single organisations but by networks of cooperating organisations (referred to as multi-organizational policy systems). Networks were selected to participate in the research on the basis of two characteristics; the perceived complexity of their policy goals, and their institutional complexity. Policy goal complexity was defined by the presence of consistent and stable policy goals established at the State level. Institutional complexity was defined by whether welfare services were delivered by multiple agencies in a loosely coupled system (high) or a single agency or a tightly coupled system (low). The three networks selected each described a different possible configuration of policy goal and institutional complexity.

The research was unable to present meaningful performance data for the three networks. In consequence the third research question, what effect does goal incongruence have on organisational performance, was not addressed, although some inferences are tentatively suggested. This issue will be developed in the critical evaluation of the paper.

Meyers Riccucci and Lurie present two complimentary definitions of goal congruence. The first is intended to explicate the purpose of researching goal congruence. They suggest that: "the congruence of the goals that motivate and direct the efforts of actors within organisational systems as a criterion for comparing and evaluating the organisation of multiple interests within public sector organisations" (Meyers Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p.169). Goal congruence should be recognised empirically by: "the extent of agreement by the

official or formal policy goals of political officials and the operative goals of the organisations or networks charged with delivering that policy" (Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001. p.170). Thus Meyers et al appear to adopt Perrow's theoretical framework of official and operative goals. This provides continuity with the early institutional literature on the influence of goal congruence in determining organisational performance.

Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie cite the academic literature to support three propositions concerning goal congruence. Firstly goal congruence is positively related to network performance. Secondly the presence of goal congruence is more likely in simple institutional arrangements. Thirdly the presence of goal congruence is more likely where policy objectives are consistent. As we have indicated the second and third, but not the first of the propositions are tested by the research design. Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie provide comprehensive information with regard to the bases employed for the measurement of goal congruence. Their objective in measuring goal congruence was to identify the: "extent of congruence between formal policy goals and operative goals at the network and agency level" (Meyers Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p.173). This was achieved by evaluating four aspects of goal congruence:

> Formal goals espoused by policy officials described in state statutes, policy documents and public pronouncements of formal policy makers at State and County level.
>
> Local understanding of formal policy goals which were tested by questioning officials, managers and workers as to their understanding of the formal goals espoused by policy officials.
>
> Agency Priorities, defined as operational priorities that are believed to drive the day-to-day work of the agency.
>
> Operative Goals, defined as the standards against which staff members judge, and are judged, with regard to performance. (Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p. 177)

The study appears to adopt, but then modify, Perrow's definition of official (here referred to as formal) and operative goals. For Meyers et al. the goals of external

policy makers are 'formal' and the goals of agencies are 'operative'. Perrow is more likely to have argued that both policy makers and delivery agencies would possess official (formal) goals and those directly involved in organising the work of welfare delivery (managers and workers) would also possess operative goals. This distinction has significant implications for the design of goal congruence research.

The final point to be discussed here flows from the last. Meyers et al make no attempt to describe the extent or nature of intra-organisational goal congruence by examining between constituency goal congruence. They are explicit that they are concerned with: "goal congruence at the organisational level" (Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p.175). Their research is therefore unsuited to exploring the role of differential values, beliefs, norms and practices that occur within organisations. The research seeks to present a monolithic, unitary view of organisations that is explicitly and implicitly criticised by Perrow, Sills and Street et al.

Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie adopt a comparative case study research design. The unit of analysis is the network, not the organisation. The network incorporates those responsible for formulating and communicating policy goals at the state level and the agencies (private or public) responsible for organising the work of finding employment, providing cash assistance and organising and funding child care for individuals who are eligible for welfare support. The studied networks are categorised by the complexity of their institutional structures and the stability of the overarching policy goals selected at state level. The data collection method was comprised by semi-structured interviews with officials, managers and front line workers within welfare agencies.

The research was successful in identifying different degrees of goal congruence in the case study networks. In addition lower institutional complexity and lower policy goal complexity were associated with higher levels of goal congruence (although the small sample size limits the generalisations which can be sustained by these findings). The impression gained in reading the paper is that the authors had formed the view that goal congruence was linked to performance:

> These differences [in goal congruence] suggest that the congruence of operative goals may matter, not only for the achievement of policy objectives but for the achievement of effective and innovative public organisations. ... These cases do suggest ... that conditions that support greater congruence between formal policy and operative goals at the agency level may have payoffs in terms of staff morale and commitment (Meyers, Riccucci and Lurie 2001, p.199).

However the research does not establish a link between goal congruence and organisational performance. This is due to the unavailability of performance data for the case study organisations.

A Conceptual Framework for Goal Incongruence

This section will present the study's conceptual framework for the analysis of the sources of goal incongruence within a network context. It will begin by describing the challenges inherent in the conceptualisation, identification and analysis of goal incongruence. It will then summarise the perceived limitations of existing research on the subject of goal incongruence and discuss how the conceptualisation of goal incongruence developed by the study addresses those limitations.

The identification and analysis of goal incongruence demands that a number of foundational questions are answered before the researcher can have any confidence that their empirical enquiry or theoretical analysis is robust. The first question is to ask; what is meant by the term organisations goal? This work has used Scott's definition of goals as: "conceptions of desired ends" (Scott 1987, p.18). However, as has been described, this definition glosses over problems caused by the imprecise ontological status of organisational goals. Imprecise because goals may refer to both *enacted* and *intended* or *desired* ends. How can conceptions of organisational goals and the research that rests on those conceptions make meaningful distinctions between latent, aspirational and enacted goals? If organisational actors possess access to a wide *repertoire* of goals then isn't it likely that only a sub-set of this repertoire will be enacted? Those goals that are attain an objective facticity in the behaviours and practices

intended to realise conceptions of desired ends. However organisational actors may still experience a profound commitment to those goals that are not enacted but remain potential or aspirational. This reflects the enduring issue of how to distinguish between sentiment and action (Mitchell 1996, 2002).

Secondly what, specifically, constitutes *incongruence* between organisational goals? In chapter two we described contradictions in the literature between early authors who generally found goal incongruence established in contradiction and later authors who favoured the more easily satisfied test of difference. Whether difference or contradiction is taken as the criteria of incongruence, it still remains for the researcher to explain how they will recognise evidence of difference or contradiction. In other words what do they count as convincing evidence that the criteria of incongruence have been met?

Third is the issue of how to draw boundaries around goals. A convincing theory of goal congruence should rest on a coherent definition of organisational goals that is both theoretically consistent and empirically meaningful. However the vast literature on organisational goals is characterised by a wide variety of approaches to description and categorisation. Perhaps the most persistent categorical distinction is that of "professed and operational goals" suggested by Selznick (1943) and developed by Perrow (1960, 1961, 1967, 1976). This distinction has been explained in the following terms;

> There is frequently a disparity between the stated and the 'real' goals pursued by organisations – between the professed or official goals that are announced and the actual or operative goals that can be observed to govern the activities of participants (Scott 1987, p.52).

However the literature is almost over-burdened with competing categorisations of organisational goals, which jostle for attention and seem, in aggregate, to reduce rather than increase clarity and understanding of the issue.

Finally, if we are to avoid reifying organisational goals, how are we to draw convincing boundaries around the individuals who carry those goals within organisations? Responses to this question have included comparing the goal preferences of the individual with other individuals, comparing individuals to a group (in which they may or may not have membership status), making

comparisons between groups and finally comparing the degree of congruence between either individual or group goals with overarching organisational goals. How should research frameworks accommodate the multiplicity, complexity and ambiguity of goals expressed by individuals and groups in complex and extensive public networks?

This is the shifting ground on which theories of goal congruence must present convincing accounts of the extent of agreement on the importance of specific goals between groups of organisational actors. Against this research background it has been vital to develop a conceptual framework capable of testing whether empirical evidence indicates the presence of goal incongruence. The conceptual framework is utilized to evaluate the evidence for goal incongruence in a rigorous and systematic manner and warrant subsequent claims.

The conceptual framework developed by this study addresses four perceived limitations found in later research on goal incongruence in public organisations. The suggested limitations are that:

1. Goal Incongruence is defined by difference
2. Evidence for Goal Incongruence does not derive from organisationally enacted behaviours and therefore its relevance to organisational practice cannot be assured
3. Accounts of goal incongruence do not recognise categorical differences between formal and operative goals. (there is generally no analysis of the nature of incongruence, merely that it exists or otherwise)
4. Research on goal incongruence is grounded within an organisational perspective and does not address the network context

The conceptual framework addresses these perceived limitations by:

1. Defining goal incongruence as contradiction
2. Drawing evidence for goal incongruence from *secure* organisational contexts
3. Reinstating the earlier convention of the categorical description and analysis of incongruence between formal and operative goals
4. Presenting representations of goal incongruence within a network context

Each of these four components of the conceptual framework will be dealt with in subsequent sub-sections

Incongruence is Contradiction

In chapter two we traced the transition from conceptions of goal incongruence based on the criteria of contradiction to conceptions of contradiction based on the criteria of difference. A great majority of later research dispenses with the need to establish contradiction (meaning that action to achieve a particular goal impedes, deflects, alters or subverts the attainment of others) in favour of adopting difference as the test of incongruence. Difference is usually established by inviting respondents to rank possible goals in order of importance and comparing results. Findings of difference are assumed to be sufficient to infer incongruence.

However this study suggests that difference is an unsatisfactory and unreliable indicator of incongruence. In the context of the case study network members of the Police Service may focus on operative goals of detecting crimes while members of the Crown Prosecution Service may concentrate on making charging decisions and prosecuting trials. From a nominal and textual perspective these goals clearly exhibit difference. If we were to apply the most common method for establishing goal incongruence employed by the literature – asking respondents to rank goals which include detecting crimes, making charging decisions, prosecuting trials etc. in order of importance – we might reasonably expect differential prioritizations and infer the existence of goal incongruence. Members of the police might be expected to exhibit a preference for detecting crimes, while their counterparts in the Crown Prosecution Service might promote the importance of effective and efficient charging.

Does this speculative example really provide convincing evidence for incongruence? This study suggests that far from establishing that difference is an adequate and sufficient indicator of goal incongruence it demonstrates its unsuitability as a criterion for identifying goal incongruence. In the example given above difference between the Police and Crown Prosecution services may be real, but complimentary. That is difference is produced by a variation in

means that are intended to achieve (at least to some extent) the common ends of the Criminal Justice System. Empirical difference in this case reflects no more than professional and task specialisations within the public network responsible for the delivering the Criminal Justice System.

To utilise to a more prosaic metaphor to explore the issue of task specialisation more thoroughly, the incongruence is difference school are likely to find a symphony orchestra highly incongruent. They would doubtlessly find evidence for dissonant priority ordering between woodwind, strings brass and so on. Analysis might further probe difference within and between the instrument groups, possibly finding complex empirical patterns that hint at the sources of ubiquitous dissonance. Those findings might well be empirically valid. They would not be imagined or contrived but would reflect real differences in the priority orderings of the orchestra's members. However what the data would not do is indicate incongruence. It would merely show that in order to meet the common purpose of the orchestra to the greatest possible extent, individual members are required to follow a strategy of task specialisation.

For this reason the conceptual framework developed and applied in this work does not accept that difference is synonymous with incongruence. It goes beyond established conceptions in insisting that difference between goals must also be demonstrated to be contradictory. Contradiction is confirmed when it can be demonstrated to give rise to organisational consequences whereby action to attain particular goals impedes, deflects, alters or subverts action to attain other formal or operative goals of organisations with the effect of moderating or subordinating organisational purposes.

That may occur where an organisation, in the attempt to optimize its own efficiency, takes decisions and actions that have negative consequences for the efficiency of other network organisations. Of-course it is perfectly possible that professional and task specialisation may lead to contradiction. The goals of the Police and Crown Prosecution Services described in the example on the preceding page might quite possibly lead to decisions and actions that are indeed experienced as contradictory. The police might allocate resources in such a way to maximise the number of crimes that are detected but minimise the quality of the files that are transferred to the Crown Prosecution Service.

However the study contends that this potential contradiction is just that, potential. Incongruence is not an inevitable implication of difference. Therefore difference on its own cannot by taken to be synonymous with or evidence of goal incongruence. Furthermore difference is an unreliable indicator of goal incongruence. It tends to overstate the degree of incongruence where task specialisations are a feature of the empirical context. As task specialisation is so frequently encountered in modern organisation it could be argued that adopting the incongruence is difference approach to the study of goal incongruence would create an almost ubiquitous account of the presence of goal incongruence. Such an account would be empirically incorrect and theoretically misleading. The 'noise' produced by task specialisation would drown out the 'signal' of meaningful (that is contradictory) goal incongruence.

Existing conceptions of goal incongruence accept difference between goals as a sufficient for establishing incongruence. The conceptual framework developed and applied in this work does not accept that difference is synonymous with incongruence. Instead it rejects the 'incongruence is difference' view as being unsatisfactory and unreliable. It replaces it by reinstating the earlier position of Selznick and Perrow that 'incongruence is contradiction'. That is it insists that difference between goals must also be demonstrated to be contradictory to support claims of incongruence. Contradiction is confirmed when it can be demonstrated to give rise to organisational consequences whereby action to attain particular goals impedes, deflects, alters or subverts action to attain other formal or operative goals of organisations with the effect of moderating organisational purposes.

Incongruence is Enacted

Identifying contradiction as the signifier of goal incongruence requires an explanation and a justification of how contradiction between goals should be recognised empirically. One approach would be to allow organisational actors to self-report perceived contradiction.

This is indeed the approach for identifying goal congruence adopted by the majority of quantitative studies of the phenomenon. They seek to establish the

consistent prioritisation / selection of goals by organisational actors from a menu of goals or values provided by the researchers. The dyads explored include organisation – organisation (Lundin 2007), supervisor – subordinate (Bozeman and Kingsley 2001), member – constituency (Witt 1998) and constituency – constituency (Abernathy and Stoelwinder 1994). The exception to this strictly dualistic conception of goal congruence is Rainey & Steinbauer (1999) who present findings on patterns of goal congruence in multiple dyads embedded within specific organisations within a particular organisational field (within constituency, between constituency, member – constituency and supervisor-subordinate goal congruence).

However, this approach gives rise to two methodological concerns. The first is that organisational actors are responding to a menu of goals that are researcher-selected. The preference orderings respondents are asked to furnish have an unclear relationship to organisational practice. Secondly it remains unclear whether respondents are indicating their preferences for goals that they are pursuing, would like to pursue, believe that they should pursue, or believe that others believe they should pursue. In short the relevance of order rankings to organisational contexts and practices is open to question. It is not clear whether preference rankings are intended to reflect the enacted, intended, desired or expected domains of organisational practice.

Once again an earlier generation of authors exhibited a very different approach to the identification of goal incongruence. They recognised different categories of goal, for example professed and operative goals (Selznick) and Formal and Operative goals (Perrow). Rather than simply asking respondents to prioritise the importance of a range of potential goals these researchers established actual differences between formal and operative goals. This enabled a richer empirical description and theoretical analysis of the phenomena of goal incongruence. Authors could describe and explain multiple dimensions of goal incongruence. Their research was also firmly placed within secure organisational contexts, descriptions of what organisational actors actually do (operative goals) and what organisations claim they do (formal goals).

This study suggests that it is preferable for contradiction to be evidenced by descriptions of operational consequences within organisational contexts. That is

contradiction and therefore goal incongruence is established when it is demonstrated to impede, deflect, alter or subvert organisational purposes. As such contradictions between organisational goals must attain an objective facticity (Berger and Luckman 1967) expressed in organisational practice.

This empirical strategy marginalizes latent contradictions between possible, potential or aspired-to organisational goals. For example, contradictions between goals rooted in ideological commitments to conceptions of punitive or restorative justice, or between professional adherences to the practice of particular task specialisations. These latent differences and potential contradictions will only constitute evidence for goal incongruence where they are enacted in organisational practice and produce evidence that they deflect, impede, alter or subvert organisational purposes, that is they create operational consequences.

The conceptual framework articulates criteria for recognising contradictory goals and a methodological approach for inferring operative goals. Contradiction is indicated when there is evidence that goal orientated behaviour acts to disrupt, impede or deflect the attainment of other formal or operative goals. Operative goals and their consequences are inferred from observed behaviour. Operative goals are only inferred when they attain an "objective facticity". This was empirically and theoretically relevant because it ensured that the conceptual framework screened operative goals that are not enacted (but are intended, desired or claimed).

The conceptual framework eliminated operative goals that were aspirational or potential. For example ends that were deemed desirable but were not enacted, or self-reported goals intended to present individuals and groups in favourable terms, either to themselves or others. This grounded empirical claims within organisational practice and secure network contexts. We respectfully suggest that limiting the analysis of goal incongruence to enacted goal-orientated behaviours has the potential for significant influence on empirical and theoretical accounts of goal incongruence.

Dimensions of goal incongruence

The conceptual framework adopts the established categorisation of formal and operative goals. Perrow developed this distinction, suggesting two categories of organisational goals, formal goals and operative goals.

The advantage of this approach (over nominal prioritisations of specific goals) is that it grounds goal incongruence within organisational practice. The recognition of formal and operative goals also enables conclusions to be drawn not simply for the binary presence of incongruence, but for the nature of that incongruence. Adopting the categories of formal and operative goals gives a tripartite conception of the possible 'dimensions' of goal incongruence. These are:

1. Incongruence between formal goals

2. Incongruence between operative goals

3. Incongruence between formal and operative goals

The Network Context

The multiple conception of goal incongruence (formal – formal incongruence, formal – operative incongruence and operative – operative incongruence) does not take into account the organisational contexts that frame the empirical phenomenon of goal incongruence. This work suggests that the framing empirical context is a particularly important component of goal incongruence in the complex organisational contexts encountered in network arrangements.

It has been argued that the increasing focus on the importance of network arrangements is a response to: "the emergence of a class of problems whose causes are so complex, and whose solutions are so multi-factorial, that they require a multi-agency response" (Ling 2002 p.622). Whilst the author accepts that the complexity of some public services provides a rationale for network arrangements, this work suggests that complexity of service is not an exclusive cause for the development of network arrangements.

Frequently tasks, which are regarded as routine and unexceptional, require a significant degree of co-ordinated endeavour across multiple agencies. Research conducted by the author in the UK's Criminal Justice System illustrates this point. The prosecution of relatively minor offences requires the coordinated participation of a network of local organisations that includes the Police, Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts and Tribunals Service. In addition evidence must be provided to the Defence and in practice a number of agencies from the voluntary sector that may or may not receive public funds provide support services to victims and witnesses of crime. The process is choreographed within a statutory framework implemented and monitored at the national level by two Government Departments (the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office).

Even within a single agency, separate groups may be responsible for delivering widely differing services to the public. For example the police may have different teams responding to incidents, building files of evidence to support prosecution and providing on-going support and information to victims and witnesses of crimes.

If collaboration under network arrangements is the de-facto and necessary response not only for complex but also for 'routine' services, what are the implications for the study of goal congruence? One possible implication is that studies of goal congruence, which concentrate on particular organisations, might be considered partial accounts and therefore less compelling. The consequence of accepting this view is that theoretical explanations of goal congruence should attempt to accommodate the network perspective. Accounts of the determinants of goal congruence should be capable of incorporating inter and intra-organisational determinants of goal congruence within their theoretical frameworks. In particular it might be argued that propositions for the role of group and organisational boundaries and the spheres of practice and interest, which they delineate, will be of special interest in explaining the determinants of goal congruence.

The current study achieves this by including organisational context within its conceptual framework for identifying goal incongruence. Two contexts are recognised, the strategic core and the delivery network. As with the conception

of goal congruence, this gives rise to three contexts for goal incongruence. They are:

1. Goal incongruence within the Strategic Core

2. Goal incongruence within the Delivery Network

3. Goal incongruence between the Strategic Core and the Delivery Network

The case study was conducted within a public network responsible for delivering aspects of the Criminal Justice System within the UK. In order to test the theoretical framework observation was conducted at multiple points within the network that included contexts from different hierarchical levels and within a number of network organizations with distinct task and professional orientations.

At the Headquarters level observations were made within the Strategy and Change Directorate of the Ministry of Justice. This directorate operated close to the strategic and policy apex of the Ministry. It assisted Ministers and senior civil servants in the Ministry to develop and disseminate strategy and policy. It also reported through various committees and boards on the activity of network agencies and the progress of specific programs and projects. Following common usage within the Headquarters function of the MoJ this part of the network will be referred to in the remainder of this article as the 'Strategic Core'. This was an imprecise term that was used informally to distinguish between the actions of Headquarters staff from that of operational staff within network organizations that were commonly referred to as the 'Delivery Network'.

At the operational level the researcher observed a collaborative project conducted between the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Trust, Court Staff and representatives of various voluntary groups. The project aimed to improve the services offered to victims of serious crime by integrating inter-agency processes and communication within a single English city.

The combination of three modes of goal incongruence with three empirical contexts gives nine possible expressions of goal incongruence. This conceptual model for the expression of goal incongruence within a network context is described in figure 2.2 overleaf.

Figure 2.2 Conceptual Models for the Expression of Goal Incongruence within a Network Context

	F-F Goal incongruence	**F-O Goal incongruence**	**O-O Goal incongruence**
Goal Incongruence Within the Strategic Core	F-F Incongruence Within the Strategic Core	F-O Incongruence Within the Strategic Core	O - O Incongruence Within the Strategic Core
Goal Incongruence Between the Strategic Core and the Delivery Network	F - F Incongruence Between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network	F - O Incongruence Between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network	O - O Incongruence Between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network
Goal Incongruence Within the Delivery Network	F - F Incongruence Within the Delivery Network	F-F Incongruence Within the Delivery Network	O - O Incongruence Within the Delivery Network

In summary, the greater part of the literature takes difference to be an adequate indicator of goal incongruence. However for reasons described above we take difference alone to be inadequate to establish incongruence. In order to establish goal incongruence organisational goals must not only be different but also contradictory. Claims of contradiction should be supported by evidence that that contradiction has attained an objective facticity within organisational practice such that the purposes of network organisations are impeded, deflected, altered or subverted. In short that actions and decisions taken to achieve specific goals reduce the network's ability to achieve other formal or operative goals.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the manner in which goal incongruence is conceptualised in the relevant academic literature. It has sought to describe how previous authors have defined goal incongruence; the types of evidence they have collected; and the criteria they applied to that evidence in order to establish the presence of goal incongruence.

The chapter has described how the conceptualisation and analysis of goal incongruence has changed significantly over time. The insistence of the early institutional analysts on categorising goals as formal or operative that enabled the use of analytical frameworks capable of discussing different dimensions of goal incongruence has been superseded. It has been replaced by a preference for comparing rankings from lists of possible goals provided by researchers.

Furthermore the criterion of contradiction (meaning that action to achieve a particular goal impedes, deflects or subverts the attainment of others) has been replaced by the criteria of difference. In the overwhelming majority of later research, it is not necessary to demonstrate contradiction in order to establish goal incongruence, but merely difference.

In addition the importance of grounding claimed incongruence within its organisational context has diminished over time. The thick description and mixed methods of the early research has been replaced for the most part (with the exception of Vancouver, Millsap and Peters; and Meyers, Riccucci and

Lurie) by the completion of questionnaires that have a tenuous link to practice by small numbers of respondents. The consequence of these changes is that the test for goal incongruence has become easier to satisfy. The implications of these conclusions are that the conceptualisation of goal incongruence in the later research is unsatisfactory for the reasons summarized above. This work will return to this subject at the end of chapter three where the current study's conceptual framework for the analysis of goal incongruence is presented and discussed.

Finally the chapter presented a novel conceptual framework for the analysis of the sources of goal incongruence within a network context. The conceptual framework takes established approaches to the description of goal incongruence – dissonance between the operative goals of different groups and between formal and operative goals – and applies them within a network context.

The conceptual framework developed by this study addresses four perceived limitations found in later research on goal incongruence in public organisations. It addresses these perceived limitations by defining goal incongruence as contradiction, drawing evidence for enacted goal incongruence from secure organisational contexts and reinstating the categorical analysis of goals. Finally the framework is capable of being applied to accounts of goal incongruence in two dimensions of a network context.

The application to network contexts constitutes a novel contribution to a theoretical literature that has described goal incongruence within single organisations, organisational dyads and organisational fields. The ability to describe the presence and absence of goal incongruence within specific network contexts contributes to the theoretical literature on goal incongruence and to the analysis of public networks.

Chapter 3 Explanations of Goal Incongruence

Introduction

The previous chapter clarified the concept of goal incongruence. The discussion in this chapter seeks to perform the same task for theoretical explanations of the sources of goal incongruence. This chapter will present two alternative conceptions of the sources of goal incongruence. These models were developed following the review and critical evaluation of explanations of goal incongruence found in the literature. They are referred to in the text as the hierarchical model and the horizontal model.

The hierarchical model argues that goal incongruence is caused by the nature of downward delegation necessary in bureaucratic organisations. It understands organisations as chains of command, transmitting orders downward through the hierarchy from the strategic to operational level. In the process, aspects of the message can get 'lost in translation', either accidentally or deliberately. Goal incongruence can be thought of as the result of a bureaucratic version of Chinese whispers. It is the expression of a loss of meaning as goals are transmitted downward through the bureaucratic hierarchy.

The horizontal model provides a quite different explanation of goal incongruence. Its advocates generally prefer to understand organisations as coalitions of interest rather than chains of command. Goal incongruence is an expression of the range of goals that different individuals, groups and sub-groups are committed to attaining. Coalitions, groups and sub-groups may form around a number of axes. However the literature pays particular attention to the role of professionalization and professional identity as a particularly important locus for group formation. Horizontal explanations therefore emphasise differences between professional groups as the source of goal incongruence.

The chapter will begin by describing the essential aspects of each model. It will then focus on a number of proposed influences by which these models cause goal incongruence that are suggested in the literature. These proposed influences will provide the analytical focus for contributing to the evaluation of the two

models in the later chapters of this study. The remainder of this chapter will first describe how the two theoretical models were developed from the literature.

Developing The Explanatory Models

This section will describe the process that led to the distillation of two explanatory models for the sources of goal incongruence, the Hierarchical and Horizontal models that were described in the introduction to this chapter. Its purpose is to explain how an extensive range of explanations was distilled into two overarching theoretical explanations of incongruence. Development of the models began with a literature review of the terms goal congruence and goal incongruence. The initial literature review produced a wide range of sources, some of which dealt with the subject of goal incongruence directly, and others that included theoretical descriptions of goal incongruence as peripheral to their main research theme or as an interesting empirical consequence of their main theoretical concern.

The initial result of this literature review was a collection of sometimes similar, sometimes very different explanations for the sources of goal incongruence, frequently made by authors with startlingly different conceptions of organisational behaviour and theoretical purposes. What followed was a prolonged attempt to make sense of this list by a process of critical evaluation. It involved attempting to identify fundamental relationships between their arguments. Several possible organising themes were applied to the literature but proved unsuccessful. Gradually however a unifying theme did begin to emerge. It had been, perhaps, the obvious theme from the start; that incongruence was generated by hierarchical difference. As an example, Simon and March's concept of means – ends chains, Lipsky's description of street level bureaucrats' role in determining de-facto policy and Meyer and Rowan's argument for decoupling between the operational and strategic levels of organisations approach the study of organisations from very different theoretical perspectives and explain the empirical reality of organisations in very different ways. However they all agree that organisations have tops and bottoms and that the cardinal feature of organisational life is that what happens at the top is very

different to what happens at the bottom. That hierarchical difference in desired ends can be described as goal incongruence.

However there were also a number of explanations of goal incongruence that did not conform to the hierarchical model. These explanations described differences between individuals and groups that either had no hierarchical component or did not allocate hierarchy an instrumental role in producing goal incongruence. The majority of these explanations concentrated on the role of professional identity as a carrier of goals. Goal incongruence reflected different preference orderings preferred by different professional groups. Of course some professions are noted for producing pronounced hierarchical distinctions between their members. However the argument made by the horizontal model of goal incongruence is that differences between different professional groups, or between professional constituencies and managerial constituencies are greater than the differences within those groups.

Having identified and delineated the two models a similar process began to discern the specific pathways by which each was claimed to act as a source of goal incongruence. As with the identification of the models themselves, a range of claimed pathways were isolated from the source texts. Critical evaluation of the proposed sources led to the combination of explanations wherever possible. What remained were explanations that did not appear amenable to combination or where combination appeared to entail a significant loss of analytical value. The conclusion was that each of the explanatory models contained a number of proposed influences capable of shaping goal incongruence. These will be discussed in the subsequent two sections.

Hierarchical Explanations of Goal Incongruence

The following section sets out to clarify Hierarchical explanations of goal incongruence. It describes the development of the idea that goal incongruence can be explained in terms of hierarchy. It then goes on to discuss a number of shaping influences that act as a source of goal incongruence within hierarchical arrangements.

The earliest theoretical analyses of goal incongruence locate the cause of the phenomena in the downward delegation of responsibility necessary in large organisations. Goal incongruence is viewed as a consequence of the difficulty of sustaining common commitments and shared purposes across the span of the bureaucratic hierarchy. Selznick (1943), Sills (1957) and Simon and March (1958) all present theoretical analyses of goal incongruence which emphasise the role of bureaucratic delegation in the production of the phenomenon. In each of these theoretical frames subordinate actors to whom authority and responsibility must be delegated in bureaucratic organisations are exposed to a number of factors that influence their orientation to formal and operative goals. In each explanation the task of executing organizational procedures and achieving proximate ends leads intermediary and subordinate actors to identify with the achievement of operative goals rather than the professed formal goals of achieving defined outcomes as a result of those processes. Goal incongruence is therefore explained as a function of an organisations' ability (more accurately perhaps inability), to replicate goals accurately as they are deployed downward through the bureaucratic hierarchy. This top-down understanding of the aetiology of goal incongruence is illustrated in the assertion that operative goals are a: "derivation and distillation of official goals" (Hall 1996, p. 262).

With reference to the top down transmission of organisational goals, Selznick describes what he refers to as the organizational paradox of professed or original goals of organisation being displaced by operative goals: "In every organisation, the goals of the organisation are modified (abandoned, deflected or elaborated) by processes within it" (1943, p.47). The internal processes referred to above are the necessary delegation of responsibility in large organisations to intermediaries. This creates the generic problem of goal preservation that is how can organisations maintain a commitment to their original goals and purpose.

Selznick's explanation of the causal determinants of goal incongruence within bureaucratic hierarchies is of such central importance to the argument presented in this chapter that it deserves to be quoted comprehensively:

> (1) Co-operative effort, under the conditions of increasing number and complexity of functions, requires the: "delegation of functions". Thus action which seeks more than limited, individual results

> becomes "action through agents". (2) The use of intermediaries creates a tendency toward a "bifurcation of interest" between the initiator of the action and the agent employed. This is due to the creation of two sets of problems: for the initiator, the achievement of the goal which spurred him to action, and for the intermediary, problems which are concerned chiefly with his social position as agent. The character of the agent's new values are such as to generate actions whose objective consequences undermine the professed aims of the organization. … (3) This bifurcation of interest makes dominant, for initiator and agent alike, the issue of "control". What is at stake for each is the control of the conditions (the organizational mechanism), which each group will want to manipulate (not necessarily consciously) toward solving its special problems. … (4) Because of the concentration of skill and the control of organizational mechanisms in the hands of intermediaries, it becomes possible for the problems of the officials… to become those, which operate "for the organization". The action of the officials tends to have an increasingly "internal relevance", which may result in the deflection of the organization from its original path, which, however, usually remains as the formally professed aim of the organization (Selznick 1943, p.51).

In the description of causation given above the conflict inherent in the appointment of agents and consequent bifurcation of interests leads to the generation of contradictory (incongruent) goals that act to: "deflect organisational purposes" (Selznick 1943, p. 48).

Simon (1957) and March and Simon (1958) describe the operation of similar processes in terms of the adoption of rational organisational goals or ends and the instrumental operational means for achievement of those ends. They suggest that formal organisational goals, while they may be vague in themselves, serve an important function as initiators of means –ends chains whose operation is described in the following manner:

> (1) Starting with the general goal to be achieved, (2) discovering a set of means, very generally specific for accomplishing this goal, (3)

> taking each of these means in turn, as a new sub-goal and discovering a set of more detailed means for achieving it (March and Simon, 1958:191).

Such means-ends chains create hierarchies of goals where each level is: "considered as an end relative to the levels below it and as a means relative to the levels above it. Through the hierarchical structure of ends, behaviour attains: "integration and consistency" (Simon 1957, p.63). This indicates an iterative process where general goals are translated into particular means that give rise to sub-goals that in turn enable a set of more detailed means for achieving them. Thus the perception of what constitutes an organisational goal and what constitutes means to achieve such goals is dependent on the position of specific actors.

Sills echoes these arguments by suggesting that:

> In order to accomplish their goals, organisations establish a set of procedures or means. In the course of following these procedures, the sub-ordinates or members to whom authority and functions have been delegated often come to regard them as ends in themselves, rather than as means toward the achievement of organization [al] goals. As a result of this process, the actual activities of the organization become centered around the proper functioning of organization procedures, rather than on the achievement of the initial goals. (Sills, 1957 p.62).

This confusion of ends and means results in the displacement of the original organisational goals by a new set (or sets) of potentially contradictory goals. Unless the displaced original goals are formally and explicitly repudiated then a condition of goal incongruence will be created due to the disparity between professed and actual goals. Again the ultimate cause of goal incongruence is understood to be the necessity to delegate responsibility for action to local or operational parts of the organisation. The actors to whom authority and responsibility is delegated are exposed to the influence of a number of institutional processes which act as causal factors for goal displacement.

Sills (1957) explains that the first potential influence is their status within the organisation. Intermediary actors within the organisation may attach greater importance to the maintenance and progression of their own position, status and indeed salary than achieving the goals of the organisation. Second is their interpretation of organisational rules. The personal and professional commitments required to enforce bureaucratic rules and procedures go beyond that which is strictly necessary to the point that complying and enforcing rules becomes more important than achieving the official goals of the organisation. Third is their execution of organizational procedures. This leads actors to identify their responsibility with the proximate goals of conducting procedures in an approved manner rather than the professed goals of achieving defined outcomes as a result of those processes. Fourth is their relationship with other participants. In addition to the formal structures of organisations informal structures (groups) are likely to form that will exhibit a tendency act to protect their entrenched interests rather than assist their clientele (Sills, 1957, p.68). Finally their interactions with the public might lead intermediaries to moderate behaviours and goals, either to the advantage of individual members of the public or particular groups, or with the objective of protecting or enhancing perceptions of the legitimacy or status of the delegated individual.

The process by which operative goals are established is contested in the goal congruence / incongruence literature. We have already referred to the fact that the bureaucratic delegation model takes operative goals to be a: "derivation and distillation of official goals" Hall (1996, p.262). Among others Perrow (1966) feels that operative goals are constructed and implemented by what he refers to as dominant groups, with the assumption that dominant can be taken to be synonymous with superior or senior. However Lipsky (1983) argues convincingly for the role of street level bureaucrats who may occupy relatively unimposing positions in the organizational hierarchy but who nevertheless have the discretion to establish ad-hoc policy and operative goals that can effectively subvert and supersede official goals. Adopting the perspective of operational staff rather than executives might appear to sit uneasily within the bureaucratic delegation model. However Lipsky's theoretical contribution is located within the tradition that emphasises the difficulty or inability of downward delegation

within hierarchical bureaucracies to influence or control the actions of intermediary actors or operational staff.

Lipsky (1983) argues for the role of workers he describes as street level bureaucrats in producing goal congruence. Street level Bureaucrats may occupy relatively unimposing positions in the organizational hierarchy. Nevertheless the significant discretion they enjoy in delivering services to clients enables them to establish ad-hoc policy and operative goals that can effectively subvert and supersede official goals.

Goal conflict at the operational level of public sector agencies arises within a general organisational context of confusion, ambiguity and conflict. The goals of complex public sector organisations tend to possess an: 'idealised dimension which make them difficult to achieve and confusing and complicated to approach" (Lipsky 1983, p.40).

Such arguments appear to resonate with Down's concept of the self-interested application of bureaucratic discretion within contexts of discrepant cognitive frames, asymmetric access to information and uncertain outcomes (Downs 1966). Downs (1966) provides compelling support for the argument that the determinants of goal incongruence are to be found in the nature and practice of bureaucratic delegation.

Downs advocates the view that the fundamental objective of hierarchies is the realisation of its formal goals but that: "in any large, multi-level bureau, a very significant portion of all the activity being carried out is completely unrelated to bureau goals, or even to the goals of its topmost officials" (1966, p. 270).

The reason for this contradictory and sub-optimising position is, once again, the need for bureaucratic delegation:

> If bureaus were really monolithic, control over nearly all their activities would be concentrated in the hands of their topmost officials. However, those officials must always delegate some of their power to their sub-ordinates. (Downs 1966, p.133).

However Lipsky develops these concepts to the point where the orders, policies or means and ends that are delegated downward through bureaucratic hierarchies

are marginalised to the extent that they become inconsequential. In their place the discretion of bureaucratic subordinates who operate at the lowest levels of hierarchies and the challenges of meeting their operative goals are privileged as the effective determinants of de-facto policy.

This position explicitly rejects the assumption that employees generally conform to executive expectations and share in formal organisation goals. It locates goal incongruence in the conflict, tension and discordant discourses of individuals separated by hierarchical distance. Lipsky's contribution to the discussion of bureaucratic delegation demands that theoretical explanations of goal incongruence accommodate the desire of (ultimate) subordinates to avoid dangerous, difficult, or boring work and contexts in which workers are unable to distance themselves emotionally from the negative consequences of their decisions and actions for organisational clients.

While adopting a radically different perspective to the treatments of bureaucratic delegation already discussed, Lipsky's argument does not amount to a rejection of the bureaucratic delegation model. Rather it presents hierarchical interactions as separating rather than connecting actors who occupy different levels of the organisation. While Lipsky's perspective of bureaucratic delegation is from the bottom rather than the top of organisational hierarchies, it nevertheless presents goal incongruence as being determined by inadequacies in bureaucratic delegation within those hierarchies. In many ways the marginalisation of authority in favour of concentrating on the de-facto goals of operational staff can be regarded as the logical conclusion of theories that emphasise deficient aspects of the process of bureaucratic delegation to transmit goals downwards through a hierarchy.

A number of shaping influences for hierarchical goal incongruence can be discerned from study of the literatures. The conceptual attributes of the principal models of those shaping influences are described in the following sub-sections.

Preoccupation and Compliance

The simplest and most straightforward shaping influence is described in the propensity for the operational behaviours of intermediaries to become centred on specific daily problems and proximate goals that are effectively substituted for the professed goals of the organisation. This presents the most 'innocent' explanation of the shaping influences for goal incongruence. Intermediary and subordinate actors become pre-occupied with their work and ultimate ends and goals are forgotten, or at least recede from consciousness. The propensity to become pre-occupied with daily problems is re-enforced by the tendency for office holders to identify with the importance of bureaucratic rules and procedures and the necessity of securing compliance with those rules and procedures even at the expense of achieving the formal goals or ultimate ends of the organisation. The hallmark of the preoccupation and compliance mechanism is that goal incongruence is produced by a *passive forgetting* of formal and operative goals delegated within hierarchical contexts.

Bifurcation of Interests

Selznick (1943) argued that the use of intermediaries creates a tendency toward a *bifurcation of interests*, under which intermediaries are concerned chiefly with their *social positions as agents*:

> The use of intermediaries creates a tendency toward a bifurcation of interest between the initiator of the action and the agent employed. This is due to the creation of two sets of problems: for the initiator, the achievement of the goal which spurred him to action, and for the intermediary, problems which are concerned chiefly with his social position as agent. The character of the agent's new values are such as to generate actions whose objective consequences undermine the professed aims of the organization. (Selznick 1943, p. 48).

This introduces the possibility of operative goals aimed at advancing the status of intermediaries (Sills 1957) and their relationships with individuals outside the hierarchical chain of delegation (Sills 1957, Lipsky 1983), general self-interest

(Downs 1966) and self-aggrandizement and illegitimate functions (Bozeman 1993). Lipsky contributes to this debate by reminding us that intermediaries' conception of self –interest will extend to avoiding dangerous, difficult or boring work and that work which is destructive of the individual's ability to maintain a positive representation of self.

At the same time the discretion enjoyed by intermediary or subordinate actors render organisational rules vulnerable to being appropriated by individuals and groups in order to achieve objectives of: "self-aggrandizement and illegitimate functions*"* (Bozeman 1993, p.286) . Bozeman assumes that rules should: "serve a legitimate, organizationally sanctioned functional object, either for the focal organization or for a legitimate external controller…" (Bozeman 1993, p.286). Rules that are put to the parochial advantage of individual or groups but contradict organizational purposes reflect the improper and opportunistic misappropriation and consequent subversion of bureaucratic authority.

The Bifurcation of Interests model presents a far more active explanation of hierarchical goal incongruence. The model allows groups that operate at particular levels of the hierarchy far more agency in actively choosing to ignore, substitute and shape goals that promote their own parochial interests. Goal incongruence is not produced by impersonal discourses such as the experience of work, misunderstandings on both sides of the hierarchical communication of means and ends or the well-intentioned application of discretion required in complex operational environments. Instead incongruence is the outcome of decisions and actions intended to benefit specific groups.

It is also vital to recognise that individuals that are concerned chiefly with their social position as agents take these decisions. This means that the ends on which they focus are unlikely to be the same as the official ends articulated in the formal goals of the organisation. They are far more likely to reflect the individual's social position within their constituency and their constituency's position within the organisation or network. This is probably best summed up by repeating Perrow's foundational questions:

> What do individuals or groups of similarly placed individuals hope to gain from participation in the affairs of organization? ... What are the uses to which they put the organization? (Perrow 1960, P. 16)

The Bifurcation of Interest model suggests that individuals and groups forming their own answers to Perrow's questions produce goal incongruence.

The Discretionary Gap

The *discretionary gap* associated with the iterated downward delegation of goals within hierarchies is experienced within a context characterised by differential access to information and perceptions of reality and uncertain outcomes (Downs 1966) and the misapplication of policies due to genuine misunderstanding of their nature by subordinates (Bozeman 1993). In consequence a *rule entropy* operates for downward delegation within hierarchical arrangements in which the greater the number of occasions on which the realisation of goals must be delegated the greater the loss of meaning (Bozeman 1993) and resultant authority leakage (Downs 1966).

This delegation proceeds from the need for topmost officials who wish to implement particular policies to formulate those policies in "general terms". Details must necessarily be left to sub-ordinates. When proximate sub-ordinates receive orders from above they must be translated into more specific terms. However this detailing can only be conducted up to a point, before the policy must be once more delegated downwards through the hierarchy. Within this iterative process, orders must be: "expanded and made more specific as they move downwards" (Downs 1966, p.134).

At each stage of delegation officeholders enjoy "leeway" and "discretion" over implementing orders and suggesting alternative means to achieve delegated ends:

> At every level, there is a certain discretionary gap between the orders an official receives from above and those he issues downward, and every official is forced to exercise discretion in interpreting his superiors' orders. (Downs 1966, p.134).

Downs argues that divergence between formal and operative goals are not caused by *delegation per se* but by the actions of officials who do not faithfully reproduce imposed goals but instead exercise discretion in their implementation or further delegation. Bureau officials exercise discretion under conditions of: "differential self interest, differential modes of perceiving reality, access to differential information and uncertainty with regard to the outcomes of particular courses of action" (Downs 1966, p.50). It is this discretion that is the precise cause of goal incongruence. However to the extent that Downs argues persuasively that the conditions of discretion are strongly associated with hierarchical forms of organisation it is possible to perceive his defence of bureaucratic delegation as perhaps overly generous.

Downs describes a form of rule entropy, that consists of an almost inevitable loss of fidelity as organisational rules are transmitted within bureaucratic hierarchies: "The more organizations, organizational levels, and jurisdictions involved in rule promulgation and application, the more likely the meaning will be lost" (Bozeman 1993, p.288). Rule entropy appears as a structural component of hierarchical delegation and is the product of imperfections and vulnerabilities in the downward transmission of goal orientated action within bureaucracies. The result is likely to be the adoption of increasingly contradictory goals as ends are delegated downward through successive hierarchical levels.

Inadequate Comprehension

The operation of the discretionary gap is reinforced by the inadequate practice of superiors, particularly top-most officials, who may not appreciate the difficulty involved in implementing the policies that they formulate. This issue is described by Bozeman in terms of the inad*equate comprehension* of office holders at the apex of bureaucracies of the difficulties involved in applying policies (polices which Downs tells us are frequently formulated in general terms). Lipsky expands on this theme with by characterising formal goals as idealised, difficult to achieve and confusing to approach. Thus goal incongruence is caused by the inability of superiors, particularly top-most

officials, to formulate policy and goals that can be articulated clearly and implemented effectively.

Inadequate comprehension refers to the practical inability to organised effective means – ends chains due to the: "persons designing the rules have insufficient understanding of the problem at hand, the relationship of the rule to the perceived problem, or others' likely application or response to the rule" (Bozeman 1993, p. 286). In other words individuals in superior hierarchical positions do not appreciate the constraints under which subordinates operate or their propensity to put delegated rules to their own ends. The corollary of incomprehension on the part of those in superior positions originating organisational rules is the Misapplication of rules by individuals in subordinate positions. Misapplication derives from various types of ineffective communication between superiors and those in subordinate positions who: " are expected to comply with a rule do not understand it or its purposes" (Bozeman 1993, p.289).

Organisational Segmentation

The proposed mechanisms discussed up to this point describe vertical sources of goal incongruence within single hierarchies. However the network context introduces the issue of vertical expressions of goal incongruence within clusters of multiple hierarchies. Under network arrangements institutionally bound professionals possess organisational commitments articulated in contracts of employment, normative systems of behaviour and self-interest. It has been suggested that this organisational segmentation of workers into distinct hierarchies can act as a mechanism for producing goal incongruence

Organisational commitments are not distributed uniformly across or within professional orientations; simply put professionals are employed to practice their skills by and on behalf of different organisations. The resultant organisational allegiances and obligations they experience act as brute facts imposed on patterns of intra and inter professional relationships.

Organisational segmentation acts as a shaping influence of goal incongruence in three ways. At the most obvious level differential organisational commitments will result in professionals prioritising goals that are perceived to promote the interests of their employing organisations.

Furthermore identifying with the interests of organisation might be expected to lead to goal-orientated action that not only promotes the interest of the employing organisation but also damages that of rivals (Forster 1952). This potential tendency might be articulated in framing measurement of effectiveness, efficiency and economy in organisational terms.

The second manner in which organisational segmentation might cause goal incongruence is the way in which it will influence the professional's experience of practice. Organisational membership will entangle professionals with a wide range of institutional commitments. These include their physical location, working environment, production and information technologies, patterns and forms of communication, working hours, dress codes, language use and management and financial reporting. These organisationally authored practices act to establish distance and reinforce difference between professionals, particularly from different professional orientations. This facilitates representing other professional orientations as an'out-group'. This process frames inter-professional cooperation as a transgressive boundary- spanning activity (Vancouver, Millsap and Peters 1994) rather than a normal and routine aspect of professional practice.

Thirdly, as Larson (1997) reminds us organisational boundaries act as protective institutional boundaries. Organisational boundaries not only distance but also protect professionals. Organisations act as refugia in which professionals can shelter from the depredations of more powerful counterparts. Professions that are relatively weak and could not expect to withstand the influence of more powerful professionals groups if they inhabited a single organisation can use organisational boundaries as a shelter that enables them to maintain control over their work. In this way goal incongruence that would be resolved if it occurred within an organisation is maintained by the protection afforded by organisational boundaries.

By these influences goal incongruence is caused by the organisational segmentation of professional environments and the differential commitments this segmentation encourages and facilitates. While organisational segmentation causes both intra and inter professional goal incongruence it is particularly relevant to inter-professional contexts where professional interactions are distributed across organisational boundaries where differential professional and organisational commitments will reinforce each other.

Performance Control

Professional orientations differ on whether their performance is measured or not and if so, what measures are used and what use is made of those measures, for example are their results shared with other professionals or even members of the public. Performance control can be defined as "the process of monitoring performance, comparing it with some standards, and then providing rewards and adjustments" (Ouchi 1977, p.97). Professional groups in the UK Criminal Justice System are generally subject to performance measurement and control systems (Chenhall 2003, Kenis 2006). These systems typically measure the conduct of particular aspects of professional practice and the outcomes that practice secures.

Systems of performance measurement and control exhibited within case study organisations are characterised by: concentrating on only a sub-set of potential measures, that is they are selective rather than comprehensive; concentrating on the discreet performance of professionals, organisationally segmented, rather than the integrated performance of networks; results are made available to other professionals or members of the public; and results are used to compare professionals against their peers, frequently in the form of explicit league tables.

Perhaps most importantly, performance control systems are externally and hierarchically imposed (Ashworth, Boyne and Walker 2002). Evidence from the case study appeared to indicate that control systems appear to have significant influence on the actions of professionals, particularly when they are compared to their peers. Professionals appear to care about their published performance results, even where they doubt their veracity or validity. Professional integrity expressed in the ability to withstand the influence of dubious measurement

appears to be somewhat fragile. It may be objected that performance measurement and control is a hierarchical expression of bureaucratic management as the basis of the systems are, to an extent, imposed on professionals by bureaucratic and policy elites. However that is to ignore both the role of senior professionals in sanctioning and enacting performance control systems and the pervasive influence such systems have on the experience of professional work. That is an experience where to be a professional is to be exposed to external scrutiny, to be judged and to have that judgement made public.

How do systems of performance control act as shaping influence for goal incongruence? The answer is that performance control systems are operate as carriers of explicit and implicit operative and formal goals. These measurement-defined goals are constructed around professional articulations of practice. They emphasise professional orientations as being discreet entities rather than constitutive elements of wider systems and networks (for example the Criminal Justice System). This is reinforced by the introspective comparison of individual and small groups of professionals to peers who share their orientation at the expense of peers from alternative professional orientations with whom they must cooperate in organisational or network contexts. In that sense professionally discreet performance control systems that encourage intra-professional comparison and competition deploy coercive, normative and mimetic pressures that lead to institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Members of professional orientations become pre-occupied with the introspective consideration of their relation to exclusive bases of measurement that acts to isolate them form other orientations. This facilitates the maintenance of different and potentially contradictory goals.

Horizontal Explanations of Goal Incongruence

The following section sets out to introduce and clarify an alternative explanation of the sources of goal incongruence. The Horizontal model suggests that differences in professional orientation and not hierarchical distinctions are the source of goal incongruence. This section will describe the idea that goal

incongruence can be explained in terms of differences between different professional groups. It then goes on to discuss a number of shaping influences for goal incongruence derived from the relevant literature.

The professional orientation model of goal incongruence draws on the theoretical perspective that organisations should not be conceptualized as chains of command but as coalitions of interest (Cyert and March 1963). This theoretical frame suggests that organisations are comprised of coalitions of individuals, some of whom are organised into sub-coalitions. Organizational goals emerge from the process of bargaining, both within and between sub-coalitions. As such the question of goal incongruence is central to conceptual descriptions of organisational contexts. As Cyert and March explain:

> Individual participants in the organization may have substantially different preference orderings (i.e., individual goals). That is to say, any theory of organisation must deal successfully with the obvious potential for internal goal conflict inherent in a coalition of diverse individuals and groups. (Cyert and March 1963, p.31).

This study argues that professional identities and commitments operate as a particularly significant locus for the development of organisational coalitions and sub-coalitions. Arguments that different professional orientations produce inter-professional relationships characterised by difference and contradiction are reviewed and three shaping influences for horizontal production of goal incongruence are identified and described.

There is a vast and multi-faceted literature on professionalization (Scott 2010). A comprehensive discussion of the competing definitions of a professional worker is beyond the scope of this work. However one of the recurrent themes developed by scholars of professionalization is the capacity for conflict and competition between distinct professional groups (Johnson 1972, Derber 1980, Abbott 1988). Indeed DiMaggio and Powell have defined the process of professionalization in inherently competitive terms, describing it as the "collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their work" (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, p.70).

Abernathy and Stoelwinder (1995) develop the theme of professional self-reliance and introspection when they emphasise the discretion and independence with which professionals utilise knowledge derived from professional experience in making decisions. They quote Derber and Schwartz's contention that professionals are: "trained to perform complex tasks independently and to solve problems that arise in the performance of these tasks using their experience and expertise" (Abernathy and Stoelwinder, 1995, p.2).

Empirical support for this explanation of how professional orientation is responsible for the production of goal incongruence is provided by Kirkpatrick, Ackroyd and Walker who suggest that in the case of welfare delivery in the UK: "professional groups exercised considerable de facto control over both the means and (sometimes) ends" (Kirkpatrick, Ackroyd and Walker 2005, p.1) and that the ability of professional groups to "negotiate and capture reform in ways that minimise disturbance to their day-to-day activities should not be underestimated" (Kirkpatrick, Ackroyd and Walker 2005, p.3).

This quote draws on the professional versus management control debate. This debate privileges the relationship between professionals and managers by taking as its central issue the "extent to which professionals and quasi-professionals subscribe to the goal priorities of management" (Jauch, Osborne and Tarpening 1980, p.544). Various authors argue that conflict between professionals and managers is grounded in fundamental differences between the experience of membership of a professional rather than management group and the dissonant commitments which professional orientations generate. However the professional orientation perspective questions whether managers should be regarded as categorically different to professionals. Instead of regarding management and professional constituencies as dichotomous, management constituencies are understood as one more professional group.

The professional control perspective locates the determinants of goal incongruence in the contest for control conducted between different professional constituencies. This contest is an expression of the pursuit of group interest and derives from the ability of professions to establish and maintain group identities that can extend across or be reinforced by formal organisational boundaries.

The empirical expression of goal incongruence will be determined by the extent of agreement between professional norms and goals and their organisational (or network) counterparts (Harrison and Rosenzweig 1972). Individual professionals will have the propensity to be more or less congruent with professional or organisational goals. Kenis argues that:

> Some organisations are characterised by the fact that they have staff who have precise ideas about the criteria they use in their work and on which the organisation should be assessed. The most common example is the one in which professionals play an important role. Professionals do not usually relate to the organisation's criteria for success, but more commonly to the criteria that are central to their profession (Kenis 2003, p.119).

Commitments to professional goals may also override commitments to identify with the goals and interests of peer groups, either within organisation or network contexts. Peer groups are likely to incorporate individuals with multiple professional orientations, particularly within Network contexts. In the case study network peer groups will incorporate members of other criminal justice professions and / or organisations in complex patterns. From a study of collaborative public management conducted within the Criminal Justice system Geddes quotes a manager's view that: "it's almost hard to think of settings to manage that aren't multi-agency…you have to have a multi-agency perspective in mind…partnership working is a massive part of my work today…" (Geddes 2012, p.954).

Despite such public claim of commitment to inter-professional cooperation, the professional orientation model suggests that commitments to differential professional orientation and the goal incongruence generated as a result acts as an effective barrier to inter-professional collaboration and instead promotes competition between professional groups. Individual actors prioritize goals that are produced by and reflect the interests of the professional groups (sub-coalitions) to which they are affiliated.

A number of shaping influences of inter professional competition are proposed within the relevant literature that attempt to explain why inter-professional

relationships should produce goal incongruence. These shaping influences are described in the following section. The proposed influences emphasise the discreet nature of professional organisation and identity. Certain forms of formal communication are denser within professional groups than between them. As a result of such professional introspection differences emerge that can lead to goal incongruence. A common method for discussing this phenomenon is to present professions as 'communities' that exhibit different and potentially contradictory conceptions and preference orderings of desired ends, in other words express incongruent goals. Different aspects or elements of professional 'communities' are described below.

Reinforced Pre-dispositions

For professional communities to emerge and sustain themselves individuals must desire (with varying levels of encouragement) to become a part of the community, and they must then be socialised into the values, norms and practices of the community. The reinforced predispositions model suggests that the extensive training individuals must receive in order to acquire the knowledge, expertise and credentials necessary for professional membership and practice produces goal incongruence.

Simon (1944) argued that training constitutes an effective means of organisational control: “Training prepares the organisation member to reach satisfactory decisions himself, without the need for authority or advice” (Simon 1944, p.24). Professional training programmes represent processes of socialisation where goals are inculcated both explicitly and implicitly as professional norms and legitimate means and ends. Training produces and epistemic community (Knorr-Certina 1999) organised around the knowledge required to operate in a professional capacity in a predictable manner that conforms to established norms, values and practices.

It is essential to remember that systems of professional training are not imposed on random or representative samples of the population. Individuals make more or less active choices to join or avoid particular professions. In other words aspirant professionals are attracted to the professional identities they select and

the professions that they attempt to join. This is especially true for those professions that hold out the prospect of status, prestige or financial rewards. Therefore professional training builds on or reinforces the individuals pre-disposition to professional values, ideologies, goals and practices.

For many professionals, the process of socialisation through training begins when they embark on technically specialised university training, or pre-service training (Simon 1944). The consequence of these formal systems of socialisation of the willing is that training acts to reduce variability among a group of aspirant professionals who have self-selected on the basis of their attraction to the values goals and practices of their chosen profession.

Such systems of socialisation through training are organised within "professional networks that span organisations and across which new models diffuse rapidly" and produce "a pool of almost interchangeable individuals who… possess a similarity of orientation and disposition" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, p.152). Goal incongruence is produced by the introspection of these professional systems of training and their inconsistencies with parallel systems produced by other professional groups present within organisational or network contexts.

The implications of the reinforced pre-dispositions model are that goal incongruence is produced by three factors. Firstly certain types of person will be motivated to seek membership of particular professional communities. Goal incongruence, at least to a certain extent, reflects the commitments held by individuals prior to becoming members of a professional community. Secondly individuals are socialised by explicit and implicit training programmes intended to reinforce commitments to certain goals. Crucially these systems are professionally introspective.

Communities of Practice

The second proposed shaping influence of horizontal goal incongruence is the specialised nature and experience of professional work and the consequent manifestation of professional groups as communities of practice.

Simon suggests that to:

> Gain the advantages of specialized skill at the operative level, the work of an organization must be so sub-divided that all process requiring a particular skill can be performed by persons possessing that skill. Likewise, to gain the advantages of expertise in decision-making the responsibility for decisions must be so allocated that all decisions requiring a particular skill can be made by persons possessing hat skill. (Simon 1944, p.17).

The consequence of this specialisation is that professionals engage with the technical requirements of their work and the development of expertise necessary to achieve proximate ends and means. The corollary of this outcome, less frequently discussed, is that professionals are distanced or excluded from engaging with work that is outside their jurisdictional domains. In itself this differential experience and consequent preoccupation with the technical demands of work might be considered sufficient to produce goal incongruence between workers with different professional orientations.

The community of practice model emphasises the constraints placed on professional's operative goals by their engagement with the practice of their work: "Each profession is bound to a set of tasks by ties of jurisdiction ... " (Abbott 1988, p.33). These constraints may be regulative, in the sense of the constraint to work within prescribed jurisdictions or to comply with the demands of statutory obligation or contract. They may be normative constraints imposed by patterns of technology, process, custom and the need to develop and demonstrate skills and experience vital to professional identity. However they can also be cognitive in the sense that they can come to be taken for granted by individual professions. This is Berger and Luckman's (1967) contentions that cognitive orientations are embedded in rituals and routines that we referred to in the previous sub-section.

Communities of practice also incorporate conceptions of professions as knowledge carrying communities, what Knorr-Certina has referred to as epistemic communities (Knorr-Certina 1999). Professions are organised around systems of formal knowledge. These systems of formal knowledge have two

aspects. Firstly, and most instrumentally, they are focused on solving particular problems. Torstendahl suggest that: "most professions are centered on typical problem solving systems of knowledge... " (Knorr-Certina 1990, p.4). Secondly they act as: "conceptual frameworks" within which "problems are posed and solved" (Torstendahl 1990, p.4).

The incorporation of knowledge systems into concept of the community of practice implies that goal incongruence is caused by differences in the systems of knowledge operated by particular professional groups. This will include differences in the proximate problems that the knowledge intends to solve. It can also encompass different conceptual frameworks / ideologies within which problems and solutions to those problems are defined and evaluated. Additionally, incongruence can be ascribed to differences in the structure of the apparatus for creating and curating problem solving knowledge. The recognition that knowledge operates as a discourse also raises the issue that knowledge has symbolic as well as instrumental value (Torstendahl 1990) and is socially organised (Collins 1990). This wider discourse of professional knowledge: "provides a basis of mutual understanding among professionals which is not shared by others" (Torstendahl 1990, p.2).

Shared practice can also encourage professions to develop shared systems of meanings. It is vital to recognise that organisational goals have social meanings. From the institutional perspective the individual's conception of desired ends are mediated by: "cognitive frameworks that guide organisation members' thoughts and actions" (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms 2008:753). That means that professional groups are inclined to develop shared interpretations (ascribe similar meaning) to conceptions of desired ends.

Under such circumstances the individual's relationship to organisational goals can become entangled with shared understandings of and commitment to identities and practices within cognitive communities (Porac and Rosa, 1996; Porac, Wade and Pollack, 1999). Berger and Luckman argue that the individual's cognitive orientation, or what they refer to as the reality of their everyday life: "maintains itself by being embedded in routines" (1967:169). They note that the characteristic of modern society and the organisation of work is the plurality of systems of meanings that they refer to as life-worlds. Berger,

Berger and Kellner contend that individuals experience "vastly different and often severely discrepant worlds of meaning and experience" and that: "different occupations have constructed for themselves life-worlds that are not only alien but often totally incomprehensible to the outsider" (Berger, Berger and Kellner 1973, p.63).

Professional's goals emerge from the nature and experience of professional work within their community of practice. Differences in professional practice and the social meanings attributed to that practice ensure that the goals produced by professional groups are different and potentially contradictory and therefore incongruent. The social meanings and significance ascribed to professionally produced goals act to reinforce and entrench professional commitments to those goals and consequent patterns of goal incongruence.

Inter-Professional Competition

The shaping influences discussed above may be considered persuasive. However they appear to provide a somewhat passive explanation of the sources of goal incongruence rooted in impersonal discourses and alternative systems of shared meanings. Viewed through their lenses, goal incongruence can appear as an unfortunate accident of diversity. However the inter-professional competition model concentrates on the intended and deliberate nature of goal incongruence. It emphasises that the objective of professions is to contend with out-groups in a struggle for survival, dominance and control.

Scott describes inter-professional competition as: "contests among contending occupations for professional status and the obvious rewards – money, status, influence – accruing to winners" (Scott 2010, p.220) and quotes Freidson's argument that: "The process determining the outcome [one's position in the medical division of labor] is essentially political and social rather than technical in character — a process in which power and persuasive rhetoric are of greater importance than the objective character of knowledge" (Freidson 1970b, p.79). Cousins sets out in detail how power and rhetoric are employed in these political and social struggles conducted by particular professions to marginalize, exclude

and subordinate professional 'out-groups' by pursuing "strategies of solidarism and exclusion" (1987, p.109).

However perhaps Abbott provides the clearest and least forgiving description of professional conflict:

> Control of knowledge and its application means dominating outsiders who attack that control. Control without competition is trivial. ... each profession has its activities under various kinds of jurisdiction. Sometimes it has full control, sometimes control subordinate to another group. Jurisdictional boundaries are perpetually in dispute, both in local practice and in national claims. It is the history of jurisdictional disputes that is the real, the determining history of the professions (Abbott 1988, p. 2).

For professional groups whose members are generally employed by organisations and can therefore be described as being institutionally bound (Hughes 1958), the tendency toward inter-professional competition is reinforced by the intersection of organisational commitments. The literature recognises that when the boundaries of public organisations coincide with professional organisation the contest or struggle between professional groups can be further entrenched. Larson argues that in such cases: "a protective institutional barrier is erected around occupations…when the organisation itself asserts its monopoly over a given functional area" (Larson 1977, p.180).

Abbott goes on to argue that professional jurisdiction consists of acquiring rights (ideally exclusive rights) to solve particular problems. The fundamental concept in acquiring and protecting jurisdictional rights is that of *audience*. Professionals are involved in a constant process of influencing pubic opinion, both as an end itself and as a way of influencing legal and political constituencies:

> Jurisdictional claims can be made in several possible arenas. One is the legal system, which can confer formal control of work. Another is the related arena of public opinion, where professions build images that pressure the legal system. ... A jurisdictional claim made before the

> public is generally a claim for the legitimate control of a particular kind of work." (Abbott 1988, p. 59)

According to the inter-professional competition model, the source of goal incongruence is the contest between professional groups that it inherent in the professionalization project. The competition may be for the resources of power, prestige, status and financial rewards, or may be an existential contest for jurisdictional rights. Goal incongruence is both an outcome of that struggle and a means by which it is conducted.

Conclusion

This chapter has clarified the theoretical explanations of the sources of goal incongruence. It has critically evaluated a variety of explanations found in disparate literatures and organised and incorporated those explanations into two explanatory models. The Hierarchical model of goal incongruence locates the cause of the phenomena in the downward delegation of responsibility necessary in large organisations. It understands organisations to operate as 'chains of command'. Goal incongruence is viewed as an inevitable consequence of the difficulty of sustaining common commitments and shared purposes across the span of the bureaucratic hierarchy.

The chapter proposed six influences by which goal incongruence might be produced under conditions of bureaucratic delegation. The simplest and most straightforward shaping influence is described in the propensity for the operational behaviours of intermediaries to become centred on specific daily problems and proximate goals that are effectively substituted for the professed goals of the organisation. This presents the most 'innocent' explanation for the shaping of goal incongruence. Intermediary and subordinate actors become pre-occupied with their work and ultimate ends and goals are forgotten, or at least recede from consciousness. The propensity to become pre-occupied with daily problems is re-enforced by the tendency for office holders to identify with the importance of bureaucratic rules and procedures and the necessity of securing compliance with those rules and procedures even at the expense of achieving the formal goals or ultimate ends of the organisation.

The use of intermediaries creates a tendency toward a *bifurcation of interests*, under which intermediaries are concerned chiefly with their *social positions as agents*. This introduces operative goals of advancing their status (Sills) relationships with individuals outside the hierarchical chain of delegation (Sills 1957, Lipsky 1983), general self-interest (Downs 1966) and self-aggrandizement and illegitimate functions (Bozeman).

The discretionary gap associated with the iterated downward delegation of goals within hierarchies is experienced within a context characterised by differential access to information and perceptions of reality and uncertain outcomes (Downs 1966) and the misapplication of policies due to genuine misunderstanding of their nature by subordinates (Bozeman 1993). The fifth and sixth shaping influences apply to hierarchies in network arrangements. They describe situations where organizational segmentation leads individuals to advocate parochial organizational interests and the hierarchical imposition of different performance control systems on professional groups.

The organisational segmentation model focuses on the organisational allegiances of professionals as the shaping influence for goal incongruence. Differential organisational membership intensifies inter and intra professional competition and goal incongruence. Organisational affiliation acts to encourage professionals to identify with and promote goals that reflect the interests of their organisation. It also influences patterns of inter and intra professional interaction, tending to ensure that interactions within organisation boundaries are denser than interactions across organisational boundaries. Finally organisational boundaries act to protect and maintain goal commitments that would be resolved to the satisfaction of dominant professional groups without the influence of such 'protective institutional boundaries' (Larson 1977).

The performance control model locates the cause of goal incongruence in the different systems of performance measurement used to control professional practice. Performance control systems prioritise action to achieve the goals they contain at the expense of those that they omit. They can also act as powerful goals in themselves as professionals strive to achieve comparative advantage in performance comparisons. Performance measurement and control systems tend to be co-terminus with professional orientations. They therefore operate as

discreet systems that concentrate on professionally introspective measures of practice and outcomes. The result is that professional performance measurement and control systems tend to act against the tendencies toward inter-professional co-operation. They act to establish and maintain inter-professional goal incongruence while reducing intra – professional goal incongruence.

The Horizontal model of goal incongruence draws on the theoretical perspective that organizations should be conceptualized not as chains of command but as coalitions of interest. This theoretical frame suggests that organizations are comprised of coalitions of individuals, some of whom are organised into sub-coalitions. Organizational goals emerge from the process of bargaining, both within and between sub-coalitions. Professional identities and commitments operate as a particularly significant locus for the development of organisational coalitions and sub-coalitions.

The chapter proposed described three influences by which goal incongruence might be shaped by differing professional orientations. The first is the reinforced pre-dispositions model. New entrants to professionals are not selected at random, but self-select on the basis of attraction (their pre-disposition) to the values, goals, practice and benefits of their chosen profession. This expression of fundamental difference in the commitments of prospective professionals is reinforced by the pre-and in service training those individuals received.

The communities of practice model emphasises the differential nature of professional work as the shaping influence of goal incongruence. Professional orientations are defined around the control and conduct of specific categories of work that define professional identities and experience. The inter-professional competition model argues that a foundational aspect of professional identity is conflict with professional out-groups. This competition is articulated in struggles for jurisdictional control and authority. Control is understood to derive from the perceived legitimacy of particular professional groups in the eyes of professional *audiences*, generally the public, other professional constituencies or policy / political elites. The inter-professional competition model regards conflict as being intrinsic to the professionalization project. Goal incongruence therefore arises in consequence of professional's need to define themselves and their interests and their status in opposition to other professional constituencies.

Chapter 4 Research Design

Introduction

The purpose of the research was to identify goal incongruence within a public network in order to further develop the understanding of theoretical models of the sources of goal incongruence. An investigation's Research Design can be understood as the process selected for the collection and analysis of data in order to test, develop or generate theory. The selection of a research design requires a range of decisions which at the operational level will include selecting the research questions, deciding what data to collect, by what method, from whom and in what form. Selecting a particular research design will also involve decisions of a more fundamental nature. For example: Should the research be situated within the qualitative or quantitative research paradigms? Should the purpose of the research be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory? Should the investigation be conducted on an inductive or deductive basis?

The principal aspects of the investigation's research design were that it was a single, qualitative case study in which the primary method of data collection was participant observation. The decisions to adopt this approach was taken as the author wished to study incongruence between enacted operative and formal goals within a meaningful organisational context, that is an empirical context where goal preferences could be clearly linked to organisational actions and consequences. The specific research questions were those discussed in the introduction: What are the empirical expressions of goal incongruence? How much goal incongruence is there and of what form? What are the sources of goal incongruence? How do those sources shape goal incongruence?

One of the issues that relate to qualitative case studies and participant observation is that it privileges the role of the researcher in collecting, interpreting and presenting data. Conclusions can appear, as if by magic, without reference to the innumerable decisions involved in reducing a lived experience to a single text, the auto-interrogation of which constitutes analysis that produces conclusions that are; "warranted or otherwise" (Orr 1996, p.144). Under these

circumstances the researcher's intimacy with the data can put readers at a considerable disadvantage.

The chapter will advocate the use of single case studies to evaluate theory. It will discuss the motivation for and benefits of participant observation as a method for collecting data. It will then go on to describe how access to the research settings was negotiated, how the researcher engaged (and refused to engage) with the social settings of the case study and how data was collected and interpreted. In describing these activities the purpose of the chapter is to dispel the mystery that can surround participant observation and ensure that the practical arrangements and compromises inherent in composing ethnographic cases are not placed beyond scrutiny.

Critical Case Studies

The research questions were investigated using a single qualitative case study. Bryman and Bell describe qualitative research methods as those which: "rely on words to convey meaning and are characterised as being; inductivist, constructionist and interpretivist" (Bryman and Bell 2003, p.279). Case studies differ from other forms of research designs (surveys, experiments and histories) in that they are a form of empirical research design that: "Investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 2003 p.13). The advantage of the case study is that: "it can 'close in' on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice" (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 235).

Case study research suffers from a number of claimed drawbacks and disadvantages. Perhaps the most fundamental is the objection that it is impossible to generalise from single case studies, and that as a result their scientific utility is limited to developing hypotheses (Popper 1957) that might be tested by 'more rigorous' research methods. These positions are articulated in statements such as:

> A case study cannot provide reliable information about the broader class, but it may be useful in the preliminary stages of an investigation since it provides hypotheses, which may be tested systematically with a larger number of cases (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner 1984, p. 34).

And more succinctly: "Such studies [single cases] have such a total absence of control as to be of almost no scientific value" (Campbell and Stanley 1966, p.6).

Despite this view it has also been argued that it is possible to generalise from single case studies and, indeed, that single case studies can be used to test as well as develop hypotheses. These claims rest on the concept of the 'critical case' (Goldthorpe et al 1968, Entwistle 2005, Flyvbjerg 2006). A critical case possesses a: "Strategic importance in relation to the general problem under study" (Flyvbjerg 2006, p.229). The objective of the critical case is to: "achieve information that permits logical deduction of the type, 'if this is (not) valid for this case, then it applies to all (no) case [sic]" (Flyvbjerg 2006, p.230). From this perspective, the characteristics possessed by some empirical contexts are especially relevant to the analysis and evaluation of the predictions made by theoretical models of social phenomena.

The analytical justification for the critical case study is provided by Goldthorpe et al's description of their approach to studying the embourgeoisment of affluent workers:

> In planning the field investigations, which formed the major part of the research, our first concern was to find a *locale* for these, which would be *as favourable as possible* for the validation of the *embourgeoisment* thesis. ... we felt it important that our test of the thesis should, if possible, be made a critical one in the following sense: that if, in the case we studied, a process of *embourgeoisment* was shown *not* to be in evidence, then it could be regarded as extremely unlikely that such a process was occurring to any significant extent in British society as a whole. (Goldthorpe et al 1968, p.2).

These arguments suggest that it is possible to generalize from single case studies where those case studies are drawn from social contexts that approach ideal

conditions for the expression of the phenomenon that is the object of research.

The Ministry of Justice was selected as a suitable critical case, or to use Goldthorpe et al's (1968, p. 2) phrase an 'ideal locale' for research on the sources of goal incongruence for a number of reasons:

> (i). The case study presented clear vertical (hierarchical interactions between a clearly defined strategic / policy core (the strategic core) and operational agencies (the delivery network).
>
> (ii). Hierarchical interactions between core and network were made empirically visible due to the organisational and geographic patterning of those interactions.
>
> (iii). The case study presented clear expression of horizontal difference (in professional orientations) within the delivery network that was expressed independently of hierarchical relationships.
>
> (iv). The operational work and statutory obligations of the CJS demanded intense inter-professional interaction. Inter-professional interactions were consequently not experienced as ephemeral and optional, but as inevitable and critical to professional effectiveness.

In summary the MoJ represented a critical case for the analysis of goal incongruence because the intense vertical and horizontal interactions provided an ideal incubator for goal incongruence. The nature of horizontal and vertical relationships, particularly the fact that the network arrangement allowed the influence of the two vectors to be empirically isolated provided the opportunity to draw conclusions as to the source of goal incongruence. Furthermore the stability of the horizontal and vertical relationships, for example the agencies were statutorily and practically precluded from 'exiting' vertical or horizontal relationships provided a compelling context fro the development of goal incongruence. Finally the nature of the work (both in terms of its intrinsic importance and its demand of co-operative action) meant that goal incongruence was not a peripheral issue, but a feature of organisational behaviour that mattered to actors within the case study.

In order to establish empirical accounts of goal incongruence it was necessary to identify formal and operative goals within the case study network. Formal goals have been defined as those goals that: "represented the general purposes of the organization as put forth in the charter, annual reports, public statements and other authoritative statements" (Perrow, 1961, p. 855). The research identified formal goals from the business plans published by each of the case study organisations. These sources were selected because they were consistently available (all of the case study organisations published documents described as Business Plans or Strategic Business plans for the 2011-15 period and for specific years within that period). They also fulfilled the requirement of being formal documents whose content might reasonably be expected to be the considered product of reflective thought and therefore to meet Perrow's criteria of being authoritative public statements.

Formal goals were therefore taken from analysis of the selected documentary field. The Strategic Business Plans of the Ministry of Justice and each of the statutory agencies within the Delivery Network were obtained from the web sites of those organisations. The documents were then analysed and the formal goals set out in those documents were identified and recorded.

Operative goals within the case study network were inferred from observed behaviour. The objective of the data collection methodology has been the provision of narrative accounts that are sufficiently 'thick' (Geertz 1983) to provide convincing evidence that those representations of observed behaviour and the subsequent inference of operative goals are trustworthy (Lincoln and Guba 1985). In the present case study participant observation was conducted for a prolonged period of time (over twelve months) on an intensive basis that involved the researcher in more than one hundred days of participant observation at various points within the case study network. Detailed field notes were compiled concurrently with observation. These notes provided the evidence for subsequent interpretive analysis.

Participant Observation

The primary method of data collection was participant observation. Participant observation involves: "establishing a place in some natural setting on a relatively long-term basis in order to investigate, experience and represent the social life and social processes that occur in that setting" (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995: 352). Another definition of participant observation is that it is a:

> Research practice in which the investigator joins the group, community or organisation being studied, as either a full or partial member, and both participates in and observes activities, asks questions, takes part in conversations and reads relevant documents. [Participant observation] is a practice in which the researcher engages with the people being studied, shares their life as far as possible and converses with them in their own terms (Watson 2011:5).

Participant observation is a form of ethnographic enquiry. Watson has defined ethnography and participant observation in the following terms:

> [Ethnography is] a style of social science writing which draws upon the writer's close observation of and involvement with people in a particular social setting and relates the words spoken and the practices observed or experienced to the overall cultural framework within which they occurred" (Watson 2011:4).

The advantages of participant observation to the study of goal incongruence are that it is a research method that is capable of generating rich and meaningful data of how organisations actually work (Geertz 1973, Orr 1996, Jarzabkowsky 2005). It also allows data to be collected from other qualitative methods (such as interviews, and qualitative questionnaires) to be 'situated' within knowledge of the organisational context (Watson 2011).

Research based on participant observation generally conforms to the following features:

> People's actions and accounts are studied in everyday contexts. ... Data are gathered from a range of sources ... . Data is, for the most part, relatively unstructured. The focus is usually on a few cases... , this is to

> facilitate in-depth study. ... The analysis of data involves interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional practices. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2003:3)

This tension between interviews and observation, sentiment and action, claims and practice is recognised by Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont when they record that: "part of the reported comparison between participant observation and interviewing has revolved around the ironic contrast between what people do and what people say they do" (2003:106). This simple dichotomy is criticised by the authors for being reductionist and failing to understand the empirical value of narrative accounts where individuals choose what to say and what not to say. Nevertheless interviews are seen as a "performance" and a "collaborative act of identity construction" (Atkinson Coffey and Delamont 2003:111) rather than a straightforward, reliable and uncontested description of social action. Indeed Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont conclude that:

> While conventional distinctions between 'what people do' and 'what people say' are often overdrawn, we should not lose sight of the importance of what people do. The practices of everyday life, the performance of social selves, or the conduct of social encounters will not be documented through the collection of interview data. If we wish to understand the forms of life and the types of social action in a given social setting, then we surely cannot escape the kind of engagement that is implied by participant observation. (Atkinson Coffey and Delamont 2003:116).

Thus participant observation holds the promise of allowing the researcher to go beyond superficial, misleading or legitimising representations of practice in order to apprehend the 'hidden' and elusive reality of that practice

Defining the Goal Carrying Constituency: Who to Observe?

A question of significant methodological importance for participant observation of goal incongruence is: Precisely who shares the conception of the desired end: Cyert and March (1963) point out that organisations cannot have goals, only

people can. So how can a research design place boundaries around groups of people who can be shown to hold shared conceptions of desired ends. This work recognises six types of constituency. At the most basic level there is the individual, the constituency of one. Much research in the field of goal incongruence does actually concern itself with the individual, defining goal incongruence as disagreement between individuals. Increasing in scale from the individual you arrive at the peer group. The peer group refers to the small group of individuals with whom the individual engages in co-operative (although not necessarily conflict free) working relationships. The important point to remember about the peer group is its potential heterogeneity. Lawyers may spend their careers in peer groups comprised of police officers, court officials, probation staff and administrators and only rarely have meaningful work based co-operation with their fellow professionals. In the case described the peer group will include individuals with different professional and organisational experience, different financial, cultural capital and status and different seniority within their respective hierarchies. However it is within these peer group relationships that the work of the individuals is likely to be conducted.

The third constituency is the professional orientation. The important point to make is that the profession will almost always be supra organisational. Indeed some professions can extend across several organisational fields. This means that the organisational view can fall away from studies of goal incongruence. In this approach research attempts to show how the goals of different professional groups are more or less congruent. The fourth constituency is represented by organisational membership. This is particularly relevant in the study of goal incongruence within networks where the goals of different organisations might be incongruent.

The fifth approach is to focus on hierarchical position. This assumes that individuals who operate at equivalent levels within a hierarchy are more likely to share goals with their equivalents. This assumption is expressed in the number of studies of goal incongruence that seek to compare the congruence of goals between superiors and subordinates.

The final constituency is described as the informal interest group. This is a constituency that is ignored in the goal incongruence literature. They consist of

informal social networks that form to advance shared interests. An excellent (if somewhat parochial) example of this type of constituency is provided by the Cardiff University Bicycle Users Group. This group formed to advance the interests of staff who cycled to work and despite having no formal basis or cohesive identity beyond a commitment to cycling nevertheless proved extremely effective in organising and presenting their views within the University. More significant examples might include networks formed around gender politics, employment practices or various respect agendas. Despite having little formal basis such informal interest networks can display a high commitment, influence, motivation and can prove to be surprisingly effective in influencing organisations. They represent the intrusion of societal institutions (cycling, equality, employment rights, fair working practices respect gender fairness) into the organisational landscape.

The case study set out to infer operative goals from observed behaviour. In one sense this ensured that the method was open to each of the goal carrying constituencies described above if their conceptions of desired ends were manifested in the social setting for research. In practice the nature of the case study and the particular way in which participant observation was undertaken marginalised individual commitments and those of informal interest groups. Participant observation was organised around inferring the operative goals of shared conceptions of desired ends with different professional orientations and hierarchical positions. However in practice it also developed to encompass peer group membership, particularly in the delivery network, as the social settings emphasised attempts to reduce inter-professional barriers by developing integrated working practices.

Negotiating Access to the Research Settings

One of the first (and potentially the last) challenges faced by researchers conducting participant observation is how to gain access to the social settings to be researched (Feldman 2003). Numerous ethnographic texts discuss the difficulties encountered in negotiating access to the settings of social action. In my case I was aware that I wanted to conduct participant observation research on

goal incongruence within a public sector organisation, preferably in a network context. This meant that I would need to gain access that permitted me to observe social action from several perspectives or positions within the social setting of the research. The process by which I gained access is described below.

I used my own contacts, and those that were made available trough the offices of the Lean Enterprise Research Centre of Cardiff Business School. I had meetings with managers from organisations within the NHS, voluntary organisations, a social services department of a local authority and central government departments. In the event the most effective contact proved to be an individual within the Ministry of Justice, which ultimately proved successful in generating research access. This person was a member of the Senior Civil Service and effectively acted as a sponsor to the research project, taking responsibility for presenting the research to more senior gatekeepers and piloting the proposal skilfully through the process of gaining authorisation.

Reference to 'negotiating' access is common in the ethnographic literature. However frequently explanations do not explicitly refer to what is being 'traded'. The host organisation clearly offers access, and the connected permission to publish narrative accounts of the events and access observed. However the question of what the researcher has to trade in the negotiation is often less clearly described.

The obvious answer may be that the host organisation is interested in and will benefit from the product of the research. In my case the result of the research, a better theoretical understanding of the sources of goal incongruence in a public network, was of limited interest to the host organisation. Another reason that is less frequently discussed is the opportunity ethnographic research holds for generating positive representations of host organisations and sponsors. One might go so far as to describe them as hoping to be the subjects and beneficiaries of, if not hagiographies, then at least the co-production of heroic identity as a person or group that deserve to be talked and written about, that being the subject of research might offer. In this understanding of the access negotiation the observer can offer themselves as a status symbol for particular managers or groups, similar to an exotic pet or an expensive foreign car, an example of ostentatious managerial display through the conspicuous consumption of

academic interest. While I can't discount this motivation entirely it did not appear particularly relevant in my case. The display value of a PhD student is easy to overstate. It did not appear to be a primary motivation of the sponsor or to outweigh the potentially career limiting damage that participant observation could cause if negative narratives were publicised, a possibility that individuals within several potential host organisations indicated was of concern to them.

What I had to trade was supposed experience and claimed competence. In the mid 1990's I worked for four years as a research fellow for Professor Daniel T. Jones in Cardiff Business School's Lean Enterprise Research Centre. Professor Jones was one of the authors of the Machine That Changed The World, a book that introduced the concept of Lean Production. Over the thirteen years between my employment and negotiating access the Lean paradigm had been widely institutionalised within the public sector in various forms. This provided me with excellent credentials and credibility with the project sponsor within the MoJ.

What I could offer in the negotiation around access was the possible contribution I could make in areas of public service improvement and continuous improvement within the MoJ network. In addition I had spent time after my employment at Cardiff University working on consultancy and training projects for various government departments including the Treasury, Home Office, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Department for Transport in addition to teaching a wide variety of civil servants at the National School for Government. In this way I had gained extensive knowledge of public sector issues and had learned to model vocabularies and behaviours that enabled me to pass convincingly as an insider within public sector organisations.

Limiting Engagement in The Research Setting

Despite, or perhaps because of my experience, I was extremely firm not to over-promise with regard to my contribution within the research settings. I explained carefully in written briefs and oral communication that the principles of participant observation precluded me from leading projects or fulfilling a business development role. I was happy to work as an 'extra set of hands', particularly as this would make being part of a working environment more

natural and less obviously intrusive. However I could do no more as to do so would threaten the integrity of my research.

There were two reasons for my insistence on limiting engagement within the research setting. Firstly I had become disillusioned with the simplistic, superficial and (in my opinion) largely unsuccessful manner of the majority of improvement initiatives that I had been involved in. I believed (and still believe) that the most important responsibility of actors in public organisations is to build organisational cultures around the practice of continuous improvement and that developing organisational effectiveness is of prime importance. At the same time I didn't want to be personally involved with the extravagant claims, raised worker expectations and subsequent disappointment that I had come to associate with improvement projects that appeared only to succeed in improving the CV's and career opportunities of project leaders and owners.

At the same time I was concerned that if I strayed from a strict interpretation of participant observation I would be accused by academics of conducting action research or even worse, consultancy attempting to pass itself off as action research. I was concerned that academics who prefer: "to look at journals such as Organization rather than Harvard Business Review" (Alvesson 2013, p. 79), would dismiss the value of my inquiry if they believed it to be a form of action research or consultancy.

I believed that this was a real and not imagined threat to the project because I was aware of an antipathy held by many academics to the Lean paradigm. This was exemplified in comments that Lean was prescriptive, simplistic, breathtakingly arrogant and its: "analysis of workplace relations ... trite" (Delbridge 1995 p33-34). Given my background in training and consultancy (which had been explicitly raised as a concern) I felt particularly vulnerable. Of course the irony was that I had come to share their academic doubts about the implementation of operational effectiveness paradigms and had come to be repelled by the opportunism of consultancy practices. Nevertheless, I was concerned that they would: 'shoot first and not bother to ask questions later'.

My response to dealing with this perceived threat was to talk endlessly within academic circles (at every opportunity) about ontology and epistemology, social

constructionism, phenomenology, interpretivist research and thick description. This was partially due to genuine intellectual exhilaration at encountering ideas that I found 'good to think' (with apologies to Claude Levi-Strauss), and partly to establish my bona fides with regard to academic intention. I suspect that several individuals found this somewhat tiresome, and I received some feedback that I was being excessively theoretical. Such comments were welcome, because I felt that being criticised for being too theoretical protected me from accusations of being an action researcher or consultant that I worried might prove fatal to my research ambitions.

My approach proved successful in gaining access to the MoJ. I discussed with my sponsor my need to move into conducting participant observation in the delivery network as the second phase of the research. However because I lacked a clear understanding of what social settings would be appropriate or necessary we agreed that we would decide on an appropriate approach at a later stage when appropriate situations had emerged.

Some months later, my original sponsor having moved to another role, I negotiated access to the delivery network with a different and less senior individual within the MoJ. Again the basis for participant observation rested on my experience and my ability to make a contribution as another set of hands. I felt that my new 'sponsor' was far less committed to my involvement than the original sponsor. I sensed that they were far more concerned about managing risks to the organisation of unwanted publicity. I was also far more sensitive about negotiating access for the second phase because I was concerned that without observation in the delivery network I wouldn't have a research project and my significant investment of time and effort would be wasted.

In the event I was fortunate to be in the right place at the right time. A group of senior individuals from organisations in the delivery network had been persistently requesting resource to support a project to develop an integrated victim service in their area. Members of the strategic core either did not wish, or were unable, to provide a resource at a time when staff numbers were undergoing significant reductions. My presence provided a solution, it suited the centre and network for me to provide the resource. Again I insisted on my role as a participant observer, not a project leader. In other words I made my

involvement conditional on being an additional set of hands and no more. The value of my labour, and the lack of alternatives, overcame reluctance in both quarters (core and network) to: "air their dirty laundry in public" (participant observation notes).

Despite having a clear conscience, at least from a research ethics perspective, having been clear at all times about my contribution, as participant observation progressed it became clear that sponsors expected me to do more work than I was doing. Particularly in the delivery network I sensed that I was expected to do more work than had been agreed and to take more responsibility for project implementation than I was comfortable with or prepared to do. This reflects Atkinson and Hammersley's reminder that the difficulties associated with negotiating access: "persist, to one degree or another, throughout the data collection process" (Atkinson and Hammersley 2003:41).

Collecting Data

Data was collected in two research settings. Altogether I spent more than one hundred days over the course of a little over a year collecting data. The first social setting was located at the MoJ HQ in Westminster. This was a pleasant and modern office environment complete with atrium, coffee areas and conference facilities opposite St. James Park underground station. Following a major refurbishment he building was light, open and airy and provided an extremely pleasant working environment. This was a big difference to the gloomy and dour offices that filled the building as I remembered it prior to the refurbishment when I had visited it to provide training programmes for the Home Office.

Being based in Cardiff, having family commitments and being relatively short of funds, I chose to commute to central London by train. Obtaining the cheapest tickets meant leaving Cardiff on the 5.15 am train and returning on trains that left after 6.30 pm. This generally involved setting the alarm for 4.30 in the morning and arriving home at around 9.30. My field notes from the time make constant reference to the fatigue I constantly experienced. My day involved driving into Cardiff railway station, sleeping as best as I could in a business suit

on the train to London, arriving in Paddington at 7.30. I would then walk to Westminster through Hyde Park, Green Park and St. James' park. This was a pleasant walk in the summer that gave me the opportunity to recover from the stupor of the train. It was an enormous relief when the second phase of participant observation, in an English City that was closer to home, reduced the time spent travelling and gave me some respite from early starts and late returns. In some ways it cold be argued that travelling to the research setting each day reduced the opportunity for collecting data in social settings after work. However I did 'stay in town' on a number of occasions to attend social occasions. In addition many of the Civil Servants that I worked with also commuted long distances on a daily basis. So in a way the experience of long commutes was an authentic component of the social setting.

The environment in which observations were made in the first research setting was an open plan office. As a refurbished and modern workspace the 'working environment' complied with the now near ubiquitous 'long-bench' hot-desking system. Work teams were allocated a space on a floor, but sat at desks as they became available. There were no personal files. Each worker had his or her own locker for personal effects. Each floor area had kitchen facilities, meeting room suites and photocopying equipment and also had various round tables at which informal meetings and conversations could be convened. In addition to working within MoJ headquarters I also conducted participant observation at MoJ activities in HM Treasury, the Cabinet Office, Royal Courts of Justice and a number of other Headquarters buildings in Central London and Magistrates' Courts in various parts of England.

In the second research setting I was loosely based in a variety of settings connected to the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). This started with being located in an office shared with the Crown Prosecution Service that was rather tired and shabby. However part way through the period of observation the location moved to a newly refurbished Police building that conformed to the increasingly common 'long bench' form of open plan working environment. I also spent a considerable amount of time in various police stations, probation buildings and Magistrates' and Crown Courts.

The sense that you can take from superficial accounts of participant observation is that the observer gains access to a research setting. They then wait to watch what happens and as a series of distinct and theoretically relevant of events occurs they document (inscribe) those events for future reference and analysis. However my experience of conducting participant observation is far more occluded, fragmented and complex. In particular participant observation is comprised of a number of connected but separate methods by which 'data' is produced.

Participant observation took two forms. In the first the emphasis was on the researcher as a participant. That is as a team member and fellow worker engaged in co-producing the work of the team. In the second the emphasis was on researcher as observer, access to the social setting allowed the researcher to watch while others worked. However this form of participant observation could prove quite unsatisfactory. Watching, from an oblique angle, a person typing at a computer or even less informatively staring inertly at a screen (what I came to refer to in notes as 'screen peering') was less than informative. Were they engrossed in contemplating the latest strategy for privatising the UK Criminal Justice System, browsing Wikipedia or wrestling with their on-line grocery order? It was usually impossible to tell.

In part I came to view participant observation as an opportunity to initiate informal conversations. These conversations could be attempts to pass the time and establish relationships or at least common ground. They could also evolve toward informal and terribly unstructured interviews. I was a researcher interested in collecting relevant information. The 'conversee' knew this and most of the time understood the rules of the game. That is we both understood that we were engaged in a joint production of narrative (and at a push culture and identity). In that sense these 'informal conversations' frequently took on a performative aspect. For example one intelligent and erudite individual commented; "this place is like Gormenghast and people either fit in or leave" (Participant Observation Notes). As the comment was made I envisaged it on the page in the final dissertation. In retrospect I suspect that the person was, at least to an extent, 'feeding' me those lines and at the same time deriving some

satisfaction from giving voice to their opinion and co-opting the authorship of a small part of 'my' thesis.

The open plan nature of the research setting also gave consistent opportunities for eavesdropping on the conversations of others. At its most innocent this involved listening to the conversations between other team members who were aware of my presence and my intent. Alternatively a member of staff from a different floor of the building might begin a conversation with a team member within my hearing. The most interesting of these conversations were generally conducted with members of the Ministerial private office or press office, both because of the cachet of the content and also because of the panache of the performance delivered by the 'actors' employed in those offices. Thirdly, other teams from our floor would occasionally hold informal meetings not in closed meeting rooms but at the round tables scattered across the office. Their conversations were often audible and eavesdropping provided valuable information about what was going on outside of your team.

I did everything in my power to avoid conducting formal interviews because I did not want to 'contaminate' participant observation data with the dubious sentiments that were to be found in the province of formal and 'artificial' interview performances. In retrospect my prejudice against interviews appears overstated and excessively cynical. In my field notes for the 20.7.2012 I wrote:

> Another point is that #3 was keen that I do interviews, with #14 [a very senior member of the MoJ]. I'm not really pushed on doing this, because I will ask some questions and they will say some things. I've become quite dismissive, bored with the game of public claims and suspicious of my intellectual ability to ask the right questions and 'get to the heart of the matter'. (Participant Observation Notes)

However as part of my work I was required to interview a number of people in a variety of organisational contexts. For example about the organisation of services for victims of serious crime or progress in improving the operational effectiveness of Court and Police processes. Again I informed all interviewees of my dual role as a MoJ 'worker' and a doctoral researcher. While I mistrusted interview data I was always astonished at how much more productive (at least in

terms of quantity) conducting an interview was when compared to conducting participant observation.

One of the advantages of participant observation was the access it provided to official documents, often restricted. In fact the sheer volume of documentary evidence could be a significant problem. On the other hand the use of such documents could be severely limited. In the first research setting the restraint was confidentiality, the restricted status of many of the documents and the restrictions of the Official Secrets Act. In the second research setting IPR was of far more interest than confidentiality to the sponsors of the research. However I was also acutely aware of the criminal implications of mis-using police computers and data.

Writing Field Notes

Many participant observers make reference to the difficulty encountered in writing field notes. It is surprising how many describe disappearing into the nearest toilet to write their notes. I was spared that indignity because I was conducting participant observation in an office environment. I could sit at my computer and type my notes in close to real time without drawing attention to myself. I rarely had so much work that I had no time to write up notes. When I did I completed notes while waiting for the train at Paddington Station or sitting on the train. This allowed my desk time to be devoted to analysis. However on occasion I was sufficiently upset by my experiences of participant observation that it was many days before I could face documenting my experiences.

My experiences of conducting participant observation were generally positive. I built many good relationships and established friendships that continued beyond the period of active data collection. However the experience of being an outsider pretending to be an insider is fundamentally uncomfortable and sometimes unpleasant. I frequently felt a sense of being an imposter and intruding into a private situation where I did not belong. I also could not lose an uneasy sense that I was acting somehow in bad faith. That is I was pretending to be part of the team, but only so that I could capture their stories for my own purpose without committing to share their fate. This created a conflicting sense

of professional and personal fulfilment in conducting ethnographic research and disdain for the element of pretence and in a sense exploitation that such research demanded.

Delbridge (1995) described how he developed a facial tick during the early stages of fieldwork. I don't believe that I exhibited physical signs such as that. However I did feel excruciating embarrassment at the voyeuristic and exploitative aspects of my research activity and the relationships that were essential to it. I felt that I was essentially a "mere spectator" (Thesiger 1959, p.6). Worse, I intended to appropriate the experience and stories of the people I was observing for my own purposes, hence the concern over the exploitative nature of the research relationship.

Anxiety also emerged from the fear of having my outsider status recognised and acted upon. It is not clear why I should be fearful of this event. There was no threat to my safety as can sometimes be the case in ethnographic research. What concerned me was the social embarrassment that might arise from a challenge to ethnographic conventions and the insult to my competence that would result from such a challenge. In other word's I was concerned to establish and maintain my ability to 'carry-off' the contrived normalcy of observation.

In both research settings I was tremendously aware of the nuanced behaviour of my key sponsors. I was acutely conscious of my dependence on them, particularly as time went on and my investment in the project increased. I was constantly looking for small changes in body language, tone of voice, favourable dispositions and invitations to participate in activities that would indicate my position. Looking back I am surprised at how neurotic I became on this point. This focus on key sponsors meant that I was constantly pre-occupied in cultivating my relationship with them. However I was also cultivating relationships with almost every individual that I met. This was emotionally exhausting and also alienating as I adopted different roles and personas for different interactions. It was also, of course, impossible to satisfy all individuals. While I found the practice of observation enormously rewarding I also found it to be a dislocating experience.

On a number of occasions my attempts to foster 'obliviousness' and pass as an insider became difficult to sustain. On those occasions it became necessary to decide when to press on with observation and when to withdraw. The example below is taken from participant observation notes and describes an occasion where the decision was made to gamble on remaining 'within the social setting'.

> I was looking forward to today because the second benefits tracking workshop was scheduled for 9.30am to 11.30am on the 9th floor conference room. The first workshop had concentrated very heavily on behaviours and values and the second workshop was convened very much to address the perceived inappropriateness of the outcomes of the first.
>
> On arrival I found an e-mail from #10 cancelling the meeting. At 9.25am I went down to the room anyway, and sure enough #10 was there preparing for the meeting. I was unsure whether I was 'crashing' the workshop. I asked if the meeting had been cancelled and they mumbled something about a mistake, but that I could stay, and in the end I was volunteered to write up notes of the informal discussions. It was an uncomfortable situation. It may be that there was a genuine error, but more likely I suspect that #6 had indicated that my presence was undesirable. (Participant Observation Notes).

Usually reference to my outsider status was less acute. For example: "when #4 took their team across to the project table she said in a weary sort of a way "you can come too Owen". She didn't seem to be very keen, and also was pointing out my position as not really part of the team" (Participant Observation Notes).

Observation of the meetings described in the examples produced a significant quantity of high quality data. However there is no way of knowing how many meetings or events that I was excluded from without my knowledge. It is also the case that on a small number of occasions I was explicitly and publicly excluded from social contexts:

> As this was occurring the ... team were led off by #4 to one of the meeting rooms. #3 suggested that I follow them. Anyway, I followed along, was almost last into the room, and as I walked in saw [from

> their expression] that #4 didn't want me there. I asked if it was ok for me to be there, that #3 suggested that I tag along (which they had). #4 said that it 'no not really because it's not that sort of meeting'. I said something like "fine, no problem" in an attempt at a genuine and understanding voice and left.
>
> My first time to be explicitly denied access as an ethnographer – no participant observation now. It was fairly embarrassing, although no doubt #4 was correct to do what they did in order to protect the dignity / integrity of the other team members. I felt uncomfortable going into the room, I sensed that I was intruding in a meeting at which I was not welcome, and I sensed that #3 knew what the meeting was going to be about. I should have checked that I was welcome or at least acceptable before walking into the room.. (Participant Observation Notes)

In the event it emerged that the meeting had been to inform the team that they would be taken over by another manager but that the future roles of the affected individuals had not been finalised. In this case #4 had clearly drawn a distinction between allowing me to observe 'normal business' and not allowing me to observe a private meeting that related to the future employment and career prospects of their team. In retrospect #4's actions appear reasonable, responsible and correct.

On other occasions I became aware that 'informants' were guiding me away from practices within the network. One memorable instance of this is described below:

> As we were talking #61 started telling me about multiple listing [organising multiple cases to run at the same time in the expectation that most of them would not go ahead] and how it had got much worse over the past couple of years. She said that it was very frequently the case that domestic abuse victims would attend court only for the case to be rescheduled. They would often complain vociferously and it was a lot of work to get them to attend for a second or third time, which might require a summons, which itself took a lot of additional work and was frequently ineffective. I was quite keen to find out how

> frequently was frequent. I asked how often it was likely to occur. #61 said that if you took 10 victims of domestic violence, 7 of them would be 'bumped' on the first occasion.
>
> #61 was telling me over their computer screen of a case that cracked because the judge refused to reschedule a planned game of golf. #49 smiled and shook their head and said that they didn't think that those stories were true. #61 was insistent that this wasn't a story, but had actually happened to them, recently. #49's head dropped down below their computer screen, out of my line of sight. #61 looked at them, stopped talking and said, "what, I shouldn't say?" (Participant Observation Notes).

Despite these inevitable difficulties of collecting data and writing field notes over the course of a year's participant observation I had hundreds of pages of detailed notes describing various empirical contexts. I had also collected a small library of documents and e-mails that were relevant to the analysis of contradictory conceptions of desired ends within the case study network. These texts constituted a body of data that could be analysed and interpreted in order to draw empirical and theoretical conclusions.

Interpreting The Data

During the period of participant observation there was no systematic analysis of the accumulating data. In fact there was a deliberate attempt to allow the data to develop without being 'contaminated' by the reflexive perspective of the researcher. However there was a reflective engagement with the notes that represented an attempt to both make sense of the emergent data and assure and refine the conduct of participant observation.

Following the active collection of data analysis began in earnest. The objective of data collection, its purpose and usefulness for analysis was the identification of operative goals. As has been explained in earlier sections of this work, operative goals were inferred from observed behaviours. In order to do this the notes were interrogated for evidence capable of providing convincing narrative

accounts of operational goals. It might be desirable at this point to suggest that the researcher cleared their minds and interpreted the data with an unbiased mind. It is difficult to see how this can be the case in practice. Field notes are an expression of the lived experience of the ethnographic researcher. The analysis of researcher-produced notes by the author can never be an entirely 'clean' process.

Coding encompasses a range of approaches to the organising of qualitative data in order that data can be subject to rigorous analysis. (Coffey and Atkinson 1996, p.27). To that extent codes provide the: "decisive link between the original 'raw' data... and the researcher's theoretical concepts..." (Seidel and Kelle 1995, p.52). Most usually, coding is initiated following data collection. Researchers attribute themes, outcomes, motives and descriptive key words to particular elements of qualitative data. These organising themes and emergent narratives develop from the researchers interaction with collected data as a text, but also as a lived experience.

Despite qualitative research generally being held to be inductive, there was a clear deductive element to the coding conducted in the case study. The coding system did not emerge from engagement with the data. Instead the coding system was taken into the field as an observational framework. The conceptual framework described in chapter three effectively provided the coding system. There were three levels of coding. The first involved data being organised into evidence of Formal and Operative goals, expressed by members of the Strategic Core and Delivery Network. The second organised evidence for contradiction, the test of goal incongruence. The third categorised evidence for the sources of goal incongruence (vertical or horizontal) and the specific shaping influences claimed for each explanation of goal incongruence.

The formal coding of participant observation notes and computerised statistical analysis was rejected because of a wish to avoid disguising the role of the researcher in constructing narrative accounts of ethnographic data (ethnography means, after all, writing about people) and to avoid the practice of reifying participant observation notes as opposed to the practices being observed. Computerised analysis packages were not used because it was felt that they would count the researchers words (written in the participant observation notes)

and that these words would be likely to be heavily influenced by the researchers frame of reference.

In that sense statistical analysis of participant observation notes would constitute research into the researcher and not the social setting. Identifying patterns of behaviour in the notes, supported by the lived experience of participant observation, while still subject to the dangers of reflexivity, places the analysis back into the social settings and reduces the danger of reifying the researchers choices in translating lived experience into a text.

Conclusion

In this chapter the author has sought to reveal the sequence of talk, decisions and actions that comprise (and potentially compromise) the research process. The chapter began with a discussion with the motivation for the research and the selection of participant observation as the primary data collection method due to its perceived advantages over other forms of qualitative inquiry. While the researcher remains committed to the method of participant observation and feels that it has succeeded in providing evidence for interpretation in this study, inevitably what emerges from practice is knowledge of the limitations of the method.

A number of limitations of participant observation emerged during the fieldwork. The view that participant observation allows researchers to distinguish between what people do rather than what they say they do was a gross simplification in my research. In my case what people did was to talk or write. As a result there was an unavoidable blurring between talk and action. In addition talk was far more productive of data than participant observation. A five-minute conversation would usually produce more notes than a day of participant observation.

Interviews, where individuals were intent on producing dense and relevant answers produced quantities of data that were 'off the scale' compared to most days spent observing what people did. Indeed whole days of participant observation could go by where nothing, or at least nothing novel happened. Of-

course that reflects the nature of practice, the answer to the question "what happened?" is frequently going to be "nothing much". However, when it comes to analysing data and writing dissertations, it is very difficult to resist the large quantities of data that derives from talk as opposed to action. This brings you back to the starting point of participation observation, are we describing what people do or what they say about what they do? Are we giving narrative accounts disproportionate influence in theoretical explanations of organisational practice?

The data generated by participant observation is entirely dependent on the position of the researcher. The researcher only sees what they see, hears what they hear etc. In this case position has a powerful physical aspect. To observe you must be in the room, or speaking to somebody who was in the room who is reporting events to you. This makes data contingent. If you had been in different rooms at different times, the events witnessed would have been different. This acts as an enduring caveat to descriptions of organisational practice and the analysis those descriptions support.

The participant observer can be (will be) misled. They will be misled because actors are presenting themselves in legitimate ways and because they are protecting their organisations, superiors, sub-ordinates and peers. They will also be misled because informants are trying to be helpful, to give the researcher the information it is believed they want or need. They will be misled because informants will want to give voice to their own beliefs. However they will also mislead themselves. Their commitment to ideas, explanations purposes will bias their research, not least by influencing what they seek to observe and how they observe it.

During my period of participant observation the team that I was a member of was 'taken-out' by a rival group. Some individuals who were regarded as valuable were incorporated into the victorious group. Others were left to scramble to find new roles within the organisation. Inevitably my interpretation of this event was biased by the fact that it was 'my' team that was 'taken out'. However it is very difficult to know how far my interpretation of this event was biased because the counter-factual experience was not available to me.

In summary these limitations illuminate the contingent nature of interpretive ethnography. The findings of such studies depend on a stream of decisions, interpretative frames and serendipity. Changing the pattern of these three pillars of interpretive research will inevitably change the nature of the findings and the theoretical conclusions those findings support.

This does not invalidate qualitative approaches to organisational research. However it does mean that the trustworthiness of conclusions depends on the decisions, interpretive frames and the sequence of positions available to the researcher to be made available for the scrutiny of readers. This, of-course, is not a new insight. Indeed Virginia Woolf made just that point in a lecture at Cambridge in 1928:

> When a subject is highly controversial... one cannot hope to tell the truth. One can only show how one came to hold whatever opinion one does hold. One can only give one's audience the chance of drawing their own conclusions as they observe the limitations, the prejudices, the idiosyncrasies of the speaker" (Woolf, 1929 p.6).

The author has attempted to do this in the material contained within this chapter.

Chapter 5 Evidence of Goal Incongruence

Introduction

This Chapter will present evidence for goal incongruence within the case study network. Goal incongruence can be defined as contradiction between organisational actors as to the legitimacy of specific goals in the planning, conduct and control of work. The conceptual framework described in chapter three is utilized to evaluate the evidence for goal incongruence in a rigorous and systematic manner and warrant subsequent claims.

Existing conceptions of goal incongruence accept difference between goals as a sufficient criterion for establishing incongruence. The conceptual framework developed and applied in this work does not accept that difference is synonymous with incongruence. It goes beyond established conceptions in insisting that difference between goals must also be demonstrated to be contradictory. Contradiction is confirmed when it can be demonstrated to give rise to organisational consequences whereby action to attain particular goals impedes, deflects or subverts action to attain other formal or operative goals of organisations with the effect of moderating or subordinating organisational purposes.

The chapter will present an overview of the evidence for the presence of goal incongruence within the case study network and how that evidence satisfies the criteria for the identification of goal incongruence set out in the conceptual framework. It will then discuss in more detail those instances where the conceptual framework indicates that the empirical evidence does and does not indicate the presence of goal incongruence. The chapter concludes by reviewing the evidence for goal incongruence and the value of the new conceptual framework over established conceptions of goal incongruence utilized in the existing literature on goal incongruence in public organisations. Goal Incongruence in the case study network is described in figure 5.1 (overleaf). It indicates the presence or otherwise of goal incongruence. Following Figure 5.1 the evidence for goal incongruence in the nine sectors of Figure 5.1 is described.

An Overview of Goal Incongruence in the Case Study Network

Figure 5.1 Description of Goal Incongruence in the Case Study Network

	F-F incongruence	F-O incongruence	O-O incongruence
Within the Strategic Core	Congruent – goals are different but not contradictory.	**Incongruent** 1. Formal goal of xCJS efficiency Programme incongruent with operative goal of subverting the programme 2. Formal goals of CJS improvement incongruent with operative goal of Reporting	Congruent – evidence of processes for enforcing / maintaining congruence.
Between the Strategic Core and the Delivery Network	Congruent – goals are different but not contradictory.	**Incongruent** Formal Goals of the Strategic Core (Reforming the CJS) incongruent with the operative goals of the Delivery Network (meeting operational imperatives and the interests of clients).	**Incongruent** Operative goals of meeting operational imperatives in the Delivery Network are incongruent with the operative goal of reporting in the Strategic Core.
Within the Delivery Network	Congruent – goals are different but not contradictory.	**Incongruent** Inter-organisational incongruence between formal and operative goals of Delivery Network organisations	**Incongruent** Inter-Organisational incongruence between operative goals of meeting operational imperatives that reflect the differential experience of the operational imperative within a functionally specialized Delivery Network.

Empirical Contexts in which the presence of Goal Incongruence is Established

The following section describes the five empirical contexts in which the conceptual framework suggests the evidence establishes the presence of goal incongruence. For each empirical context the nature of goal incongruence is described and discussed. The implications of these conclusions for the explanations of goal incongruence will be returned to in chapters six and seven.

Formal – Operative goal incongruence within the Strategic Core

There were two examples of formal – operative goal incongruence within the strategic core. The first was that the formal goal of the cross criminal justice system (xCJS) efficiency programme was operatively subverted. Data collected during participant observation included explicit and implicit evidence of the operational subversion of this formal goal. This appears to constitute clear evidence of difference and contradiction between formal and operative goals. This work suggest that the criterion of contradiction achieving operational consequence is met in that the operative subversion of the formal goal appeared to derive from the senior leadership constituency in the MoJ who were in a position to make decisions concerning the prioritization of action and the allocation of resource.

Continuous improvement was represented in the case study by the xCJS efficiency programme The objective of this programme was to integrate the practices of delivery agencies in order to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. The logic for the xCJS programme was set out in a MoJ policy document in the following terms:

> The Criminal Justice System is the product of incremental change over centuries, based on principles of fairness, independence and due process, rather than efficiency; there is a need for greater collective responsibility amongst criminal justice agencies (including defence practitioners) with no incentive for any particular agency to take

> actions which save money for other parts of the system (MoJ Policy Document, Participant Observation Notes).

However despite this official position there was a view held by some in the Strategic Core that the xCJS programme was: unlikely to deliver in acceptable time scales:

> Being focused on incremental improvement the xCJS efficiency is unlikely to save the Ministry money. This only occurs when infrastructure is closed. Senior leaders are only interested in saving money. At best, this will be achieved without impairing performance too greatly. ... if organisational activity is not focused on driving cash out, should we be devoting resources to it? (Participant Observation Notes).

Within the policy environment of the strategic core the xCJS efficiency programme was characterised as: "having a big name but little substance, lacking a clear long term narrative and failing to secure the engagement of Ministers" (Participant Observation Notes). In addition there was a sentiment that it was unwise to commit to a course of action that was not in the direct interests of the MoJ:

> Any xCJS efficiency changes should represent what worked for the MoJ as opposed to other government departments. In particular the MoJ should resist changes which would deliver big improvements to the system, but which could be claimed by other departments: "why should we fall on our sword?" (Participant Observation Notes).

Evidence for the low importance attached to continuous improvement was provided during participation at a closed MoJ event at a civil service conference:

> In the afternoon I took part in an event where eight teams of 5 to 6 people from across the MoJ came together to create presentations on a range of challenges which face the MoJ network. Two senior civil servants from the MoJ judged the presentations. My group's subject was how the MoJ could reduce the number of cracked and ineffective trials. These are trials which are scheduled for hearing in the criminal

> courts but do not go ahead, causing disruption and expense to criminal justice agencies and potential distress to the victims of crime. My group argued that part of the solution would be to align the measures of different criminal justice agencies that cooperate to conduct trials. Our suggestion was picked up by one of the event judges who asked in a weary tone which hovered somewhere between disappointment and exasperation "how realistic we thought it was" that delivery agency measures could be aligned, particularly within the 2010-15 period (Participant Observation Notes).

This experience is offered as evidence of the relatively low importance attached to continuous improvement within the delivery network. Inter-agency integration had been dismissed by authoritative figures in a public forum. This conclusion appears to be supported by a middle manager within the strategic core who dismissed the MoJ's Business Plan as: "just for public consumption" (Participant Observation Notes).

The second example of goal incongruence is the claim that the MoJ's formal goals of reform are incongruent with the operative goal of reporting. This claim rests on the impression formed during Participant Observation that individuals within the strategic core prioritized their commitment to the operative goal of reporting above their commitment to achieving the formal goals on which they were reporting.

It is difficult to convey the amount of effort and resources directed toward the activity of Reporting within the strategic core and the proportion of staff for whom reporting was in many cases their most significant operative goal. Headquarters staff in the MoJ reported extensively and persistently on activity within the Ministry of Justice and its delivery agencies. The term Reporting is used in this study to indicates collecting data requested by the senior leadership community and presenting it either on an ad-hoc basis or through papers prepared for standing committees. The basis of reports might be management information on activities, capabilities and outputs, progress on implementing projects, or compliance with obligations imposed on the delivery network by the strategic core.

The availability of reporting data is often an issue. Operational areas in the delivery network find the continued requests for data to be unwelcome, onerous and a distraction from their operational commitments. The result is widespread non-compliance with requests to provide data. Even where reporting information is provided the quality of the data is frequently poor in terms of accuracy, intelligibility and relevance. Members of the reporting structure within the strategic core have developed several strategies for dealing with these deficiencies. The first is a profound commitment to achieving the highest standards of presentation. This is manifested in its most complete form in the routine production of sophisticated documents that are often produced at A0 scale or larger (in some cases they include panels comprised of numerous sheets of A0 paper).

These sophisticated documents frequently incorporate graphics, flow-charts, process maps, critical paths, narrative accounts, and spread sheet data imported from multiple software applications. Considerable creative effort is invested in the appearance of these documents and their visual impact can be striking. Formatting and printing such documents can be a prolonged and skilled process where the modification of a single word can result in hours of reformatting.

The production and maintenance of these sophisticated documents absorbs considerable amounts of resources and appear as significant operative goals of specific individuals and teams. The documents themselves can come to serve as talismans of the teams that produce them. Their presentation to senior leaders, the location and persistence of their display and the response they elicit serve as signals of the status of the team. Consequently the production of these sophisticated documents can take on a competitive dimension. The finite amount of space and number of display boards in and on which such documents are displayed lead teams to: “"fight for the same territory, sometimes almost literally" (Participant Observation Notes).

The ability to produce pretty documents is highly valued. Judgement is frequently based not on the content of the documents but on their aesthetic impact. This is illustrated in the following passage that describes the response to one such document:

> Today I spoke with a person who is acknowledged as an expert in producing large and sophisticated documents that are used to report data to senior civil servants and ministers. The document presented progress on the MoJ's plan to achieve £2.4 in expenditure reduction over the SR10 period (2010-15). It was unusual for the density of data it contained concerning the ability of the MoJ to meet its deficit reduction targets. It included actions and projects that would secure savings, the business / project owners, savings to date, progress against project milestones and business risks. The data it contained indicated clearly that there were significant threats to the projects that the MoJ were relying on to deliver savings.
>
> These threats were so serious that the team that produced the document felt they demanded immediate action from the senior leadership constituency within the MoJ. However when reviewed by the Transforming Justice Committee, the only comment from a senior civil servant who had line responsibility for the team who compiled the document was that they "did not like the colour scheme" as it was "*too monochromatic*." This comment was relayed to the creator of the document, who was deeply unimpressed by the shallow and inappropriate nature of the response, but who took action to amend the colour scheme (Participant Observation Notes).

This passage is offered in support of the argument that commitments to realizing formal goals were superficial and tactical while commitment to maintaining the practice of reporting were profound and expressed in the practice and maintenance of taken for granted routines. A considerable amount of evidence drawn from participant observation appeared to indicate that the commitment to the process of reporting exceeded the commitment to achieving the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice was so prevalent that it meets the study's criterion of significance.

In summary it is suggested that in both of these cases (the subversion of the cross CJS efficiency programme and the privileging of the operative goal of reporting over realising formal goals set out in the MoJ business plan) participant observation identified goal incongruence. Differences between

formal and operative goals were experienced as contradictory and that contradiction resulted in the impeding, deflection and subversion of formal goals.

Formal – Operative goal incongruence within the Delivery Network

Comparing the formal and operating goals of delivery network organisations indicates intra-organisational congruence, but inter-organisational incongruence. Formal - operative goal incongruence might occur within each of those organisations (between the formal and operative goals of the same organisation) and between those organisations (between the formal and operative goals of different organisations).

There was remarkably little evidence for formal - operative goal incongruence within individual delivery network organisations. There were examples of managers reconciling competing operational requirements. Perhaps the clearest example of this was given in the Participant Observation notes which describe a Delivery Network manager taking action to maintain a relatively low access rate to service in order to maintain quality and control workload:

> Currently 40% of eligible victims register for post-trial services to which victims had a statutory entitlement. There are a variety of reasons for this low take-up rate (which in previous years was lower at 30%). One of them is that victims have to opt-in to the system. The Agency responsible for the service writes to victims a short period after the conclusion of the trial to invite them to register for the service. If there is no response a second and final letter is sent. On a pilot basis, it was decided to telephone victims rather than write to them. The result was that after two weeks, the take-up rate had increased to 80%. The manager terminated the pilot and returned to inviting victims to opt-in by letter. The take-up rate returned to 40% (Participant Observation Notes).

In the scenario described above the delivery agency manager responsible for terminating the pilot justified their action with the persuasive argument that an

increase in service recipients would not be matched by a corresponding (or any) increase in resources. Therefore an increase in the number of clients would result in higher workloads for staff and a diminution in the quality of service provided to clients. If the increased workload led to one or more members of staff taking sickness leave the output of the team and the outcomes for clients would suffer even further damage. Better then to manage on the basis of sustainable incremental improvements.

This work suggest that if such attempts to optimize the configuration of resources process and output is taken as evidence of goal incongruence then goal incongruence would be an ubiquitous phenomenon within organisations with finite resources, where demand exceeds ability to supply and a network context where funding is frequently dislocated from activity. Rather than reflecting the subversion of formal goals the above example illustrates a profound operational commitment and best attempts to achieve those goals inevitably constrained by the resources available to provide comprehensive and high quality services.

The case study collected data from four statutory agencies that were responsible for administering the Criminal Justice System within a specific English city. They included the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, HMCTS (the Courts) and the local Probation Trust. The case study focused on services that these agencies delivered to victims of serious crimes (those crimes covered by section 15 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) that in practice meant crimes of violence and sexual violence.

Differences in priority were reinforced by the practice of drawing organisational boundaries around professional / task orientations. This had the effect of reinforcing patterns of communication within rather than between professional / task groups. It also ensured that creation of hierarchical management teams who had an interest in optimising (in operational and financial terms) discreet elements of the delivery network (their agency) but no formal interest in optimising the performance of the network as a whole.

There is considerable evidence from participant observation of actors pursuing operative goals that are different and contradictory to the formal goals of other delivery agencies. This contradiction might be regarded as an almost inevitable

consequence of the functional specialisation of delivery network organisations. The operative goals of specific organisations within the delivery network focus on attaining the formal goals of the same organisation and frequently bear little overt relationship with the formal goals of other delivery network organisations. The articulation of functional agency objectives in formal goals necessarily restricts those formal goals to agency objectives that contradict the operative goals of other delivery network agencies. The significance of that contradiction may of-course be reduced by actors' tacit recognition of the formal goals of other delivery agencies and a consequent modification of behaviour.

Participant observation appears to indicate that while the evidence is mixed, the differential experience of the operational imperative does appear to satisfy the third criterion for the identification of goal incongruence, that of organisational consequence which impedes, deflects or subverts the attainment of network goals. This final criterion is satisfied by evidence for the prioritization by delivery network professionals of the operative goals of their own organisations that results in the subversion and deflection of the formal and operative goals of other delivery network organisations.

Operative - Operative goal incongruence within the Delivery Network

Participant observation indicated that there were widespread differences in the operative goals in the delivery network. This appeared to reflect the differential experience of operational imperatives within functionally specialized delivery agencies. The clearest expression of operative goals in the delivery network was one that might be most expected, that was goals that derived from the operational imperative of conducting work demanded by the operation of the Criminal Justice System.

The dominant operative goals inferred from observation of the delivery network derive from the work necessary to meet the operational imperatives of the Criminal Justice System. This included a wide range of activities from conducting criminal investigations, making decisions to charge (or not), creating case files, making legal arrangements, listing and conducting trials, ensuring that

witnesses attended court to give evidence and providing information to victims and representing the views of victims in legal hearings following sentence.

The operational imperative appeared to be experienced in two distinct ways. Firstly it was experienced as an imposed set of obligations. Secondly it was experienced as a shared personal commitment to achieving the ends of the Criminal Justice System. This duality was articulated most clearly by a delivery network manager who argued that a high level of service should be provided to victims of crime: "Because we have to and because its right" (Participant Observation Notes).

At a high level of generalisation it is possible to argue that operative goals in the delivery network were congruent around meeting operational imperatives. Closer analysis reveals that individual delivery agencies focus on specific operational imperatives that derive from their task and professional orientation. Incongruence of operative goals is most clearly illustrated in the tasks, targets and measures of performance exhibited by particular agencies and their lack of mutual relevance. These patterns are reinforced by the existence of discreet management teams embedded within distinct professional orientations and financial objectives whose formal responsibility is for the performance of their Agency regardless of the implications for the network. Participant observation conducted within the delivery network provided detailed descriptions of differences in operative goals. Observation provided numerous examples of operative goals being experienced as contradictory, particularly within inter-organisational contexts.

Analysis during participant observation of the interaction of CJS agencies when investigating and prosecuting sexual violence cases indicated agencies working at cross-purposes due to the consequences of agencies prioritising their own operative goals. Police investigators might wait up to two months to obtain a meeting with CPS advocates responsible for making charging decisions. Statutory Agencies might have no knowledge (let alone communication) with voluntary agencies that provide invaluable practical assistance and emotional support to victims. Trials were ‘vacated’ (rescheduled) because files had not been prepared. The availability of allocated prosecution advocates was not considered when ‘listing’ (scheduling) and ‘re-listing’ trials. There was a

widespread lack of knowledge in Criminal Justice Agencies regarding post-trial services available to victims (which were only taken up by 40% of eligible victims). There was also widespread frustration expressed across the delivery network at the effort required in obtaining information from other CJS agencies.

It was widely believed that the inclination to prioritise agency over network (with regard to effectiveness, efficiency and economy) had been exacerbated by budget reductions aimed at achieving deficit reduction targets. It was commonly accepted that agency managers made decisions about the deployment of resources that were in the financial and operational interests of their own agencies rather than the best interests of the network and network beneficiaries. These decisions included action to reduce agency workloads and cost and meet agency-specific performance targets despite negative consequences for the CJS network.

A simple but illustrative example of the above was given at a meeting of the local Criminal Justice Board victim and witness group:

> A participant reported on a survey that had examined witness attitudes to waiting times in Magistrate's Courts. The HMCTs has national targets on waiting times, measuring how many witnesses have to wait longer than two hours to give evidence. One area in the region had excellent performance on witness waiting times. However they did poorly on 'cracked' trials (trials which are listed but do not go ahead). It was suggested that this was explained by their practice of listing 3 or 4 trials to run concurrently, then releasing three. In consequence performance against waiting time targets was excellent. The meeting went on to discuss the consequences of this target driven behaviour for the Criminal Justice Network and the public.
>
> Firstly witnesses had to return to Court on a rescheduled date in order to give evidence. This created additional work for the police Witness Liaison Unit who had to inform witnesses of rescheduled dates and persuade them to attend. If witnesses were particularly reluctant or even refusing to attend this might require the expensive and time-consuming action of issuing a summons. Police witnesses might also be required to

return to Court to give evidence, reducing their efficiency. The Crown Prosecution Service experienced additional work and disruption to the schedules of Crown Advocates. The CPS might also have to meet the expenses of witnesses necessary to compensate additional costs of travel, lost wages, child-care and on occasion overnight expenses. The survey suggested that witnesses preferred to wait for longer to give their evidence 'on the day' rather than be released and required to return to Court on a subsequent day (Participant Observation Notes).

As such there is considerable evidence of widespread incongruence within the delivery network manifested in the differential experience of the operational imperative (targets and measures, professional practice, management objectives and financial performance). This work suggests that these operative goals demonstrate difference and contradiction. The result of incongruence is reduced operational effectiveness of the network as agencies prioritise actions and decisions that make sense for their own agency but reduce the effectiveness and efficiency of other delivery network agencies.

Formal – Operative goal incongruence between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network

There was some evidence of difference and contradiction between the formal and operative goals of the strategic core and delivery network. The formal goals of the strategic core emphasise reform of the Criminal Justice System. The operative goals of the delivery network concentrate on meeting the operational imperative of maintaining the activity of the CJS. Some might argue that these goals are complimentary. However the evidence sets out in the Participant Observation notes suggests that they are experienced as incongruent. The inconsistency between formal goals of the strategic core and the operative goals of the delivery network were clearest in the description of the tension and inconsistent and contradictory interaction over Victim Personal Statements.

These were statements taken by Probation Trust staff from victims of serious crime. The statements could be used to inform parole board hearings which considered whether offenders should be released from prison, and if so on what

license conditions. Ministers were believed to be extremely keen that all victims of serious crime were given the opportunity to complete such a statement in order that their views and experience might be better represented within the Criminal Justice System, an example of the formal goals of reforming the system. However in practice Probation Trust staff were reluctant to engage with the completion of Victim Personal Statements. The situation was explained in the following terms:

> The Victim Liaison Officers can help victims to write personal statements that might be read to parole board oral hearings. These reports describe the impact that the crime had on victims and their fears of risks associated with the release of offenders. I was told that 'like any system' writing Victim Personal Statements had started off badly. However as the reports became better written, they started to influence the outcomes of oral hearings against the interests of offenders. This led to the statements being challenged by offenders' legal representatives.
>
> Despite the initial assumption that the Victim Personal Statement would be confidential, (an application can be made to the parole board to withhold its contents from the offender) offender's solicitors were indeed applying for them to be disclosed.
>
> In some cases parole boards had decided to provide statements to offenders even though they had previously agreed to withhold them. They had then refused to allow the victim to withdraw their statement. It was explained that in one case, where the victim was an elderly wheelchair-bound woman, the offender's solicitor had applied to summons the victim to attend the oral parole hearing. This is a quasi-judicial process, chaired by a judge and convened within a prison. The victim would have been cross- examined by the offender's solicitor, in the presence of the offender, without recourse to her own legal representation.
>
> In this case the chair of the parole board had refused to summons the victim. However the probation staff member was appalled by the case.

> One of the probation staff responsible for assisting victims to write personal statements said “I haven’t written a victim report for five months”. This was because they were frightened of the possible consequences for the victim, in particular that reports would not be withheld. They went on to say that they had reduced the time taken in victims meetings from three hours to 45 minutes, “closing them off” in order to discourage people from writing personal statements which might put them in a compromised and distressing position in future parole board oral hearings. They concluded by saying that in victim meetings: “you can manipulate people really easily and I feel rotten about that" (Participant Observation Notes).

The difference in the manner of engagement with this policy between policy staff in the Ministry of Justice and operational staff in the delivery network which resulted in a practice of non-compliance at the local level cannot be described in terms of different but complimentary. Instead it illustrates contradictions between the formal goals of the strategic core and the operative goals of the delivery network that presented a clear example of groups working at cross-purposes.

The formal goals of the delivery network (largely focused on meeting operational imperatives) were also different and contradictory to the operative goal of reporting in the strategic core. The formal goals of the delivery network again concentrate on meeting operational imperatives sometimes informed by the disciplines of meeting comparative performance targets or exposure to market forces. On the other hand this work has argued that operative goals within the strategic core focus on maintaining a commitment to the reporting culture. Again the evidence from Participant Observation would suggest that these goals are experienced as incongruent.

There was considerable evidence from participant observation (which has been included in earlier discussions) about the irritation (sometimes intense) with which members of the delivery network experienced as a result of requests for information. This resulted in contradictory behaviour of compliance at least effort, refusal to comply with requests for information, and on occasion the provision of inaccurate information.

At a deeper level it has been argued in earlier sections of this work that the objective of the reporting culture in the strategic core was the construction of plausible narratives that might enjoy a flexible relationship to practice. The case of Victim Personal Statements described above is again a good example of this. The VPS policy enabled the strategic core to construct and disseminate a narrative that presented change in the Criminal Justice System that benefited the victims of serious crime.

This was incongruent with the delivery network's formal goals that focused on operational performance and were grounded in the victim's experience of the realities of the Criminal Justice System. It is vital to stress that the experience of immersion in the work of the CJS is a sine qua non of the delivery network but is simply unavailable to staff within the strategic core. The author is not suggesting that the delivery network refrained entirely from engaging in such narrative creation practices. However the nature of their formal goals (focusing on the operational imperative) and the public scrutiny of that performance significantly reduced their ability to present legitimizing narratives at the expense of taking responsibility for operational outputs and outcomes.

Operative – Operative goal incongruence between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network

Participant observation appeared to indicate that there was difference between the strategic core's operative goal of reporting and the delivery network's operative goals of meeting operational imperatives. This author also wishes to suggest that these differences are contradictory and led to incompatible prioritizations of outcomes, resources and activities.

Evidence from participant observation, particularly that which describes interactions between members of the strategic core and delivery network, indicates that interactions organized around the practice of reporting are experienced as significant and negative feature of those relationships. Participant observation evidence drawn from the operational implementation of the policy on Victim Personal Statements indicates that the perceived operative goals of staff in the strategic core and delivery network were experienced as

being in conflict. This conflict resulted in behaviour within the delivery network that acted to subvert the operative goals of the strategic core (influencing victims of crime not to complete victim personal statements). This work suggests that this evidence for the modification of intended outcomes meets the criterion of significance.

In the discussion of the operative goals of the strategic core the author spent some time describing the effort Headquarters staff devote to obtaining and reporting information from the delivery network. Providing such data can also be a significant task within the delivery network. However the practice is perceived as a frustrating distraction from their main purposes and ends. Attitudes to reporting were generally characterised by minimal compliance. Even so, minimal compliance might entail a significant investment of resources. On some occasions the competing requirements of work and reporting were reconciled by submitting data that gave a misleading impression of operational aspects of the Criminal Justice System. On other occasions the demands to report data were felt to be so onerous, sensitive or potentially career limiting that members of the delivery network refused to engage with requests to provide information for reporting purposes. Presenting members of the strategic core with reporting data that was accurate but unwelcome was an act that might be interpreted by elite members and managers of the core and delivery network as tantamount to whistle-blowing:

> When I arrived at the MoJ I overheard a conversation between two accountants. They were getting quite heated, one said to the other: "We have to put in [to the committee pack] that they won't give an answer. Nobody comes back with answers [for cash variances in the accounts]. We can't make up an answer. We get frustrated that the businesses are not responding. If we write that in the pack then D---- will do something. They are hiding the truth from the likes of D----" (participant observation notes).

In such cases it was not always clear that the sanctions available to those requesting data in the strategic core were sufficiently credible to be effective. While members of the strategic core might make threats to individuals within the delivery network (and frequently did, usually implicitly but sometimes

explicitly) it was clearly understood that such threats were empty unless there was a real prospect of incurring the active displeasure of senior individuals. As one policy civil servant in the strategic core indicated: "its not a good idea to upset the Criminal Justice System as they will pay lip service to changes, say they are doing them, while not implementing in practice" (Participant observation notes).

Claims from the strategic core that the requirements to report data to the centre were being relaxed were widely disbelieved and their veracity challenged with accounts of the persistence of 'reporting culture'. It was not uncommon for staff in the delivery network to be dismissive of the accuracy of official data (although it was also common for staff within the strategic core to be equally dismissive). One policy civil servant in the strategic core:

> Pointed to inconsistencies in the satisfaction surveys that appear to suggest that 85% of victims are happy with the service that they receive. The survey excludes homicides, sexual violence and young victims because the survey is by phone and it is considered too insensitive to include the victims of serious crime. There are insufficient funds to justify face-to-face interviews. The satisfaction survey is: "useful because it allows us to say that the government is doing well, but in reality we know that that is not the case" (participant observation notes).

Engagement with the Headquarters reporting culture appeared to be regarded as a distraction, an occupational hazard and an unfortunate but unavoidable fact of organisational life rather than an operative goal of individuals within the delivery network.

The dissonance between policy and operational ends is perhaps most clearly illustrated in the participant observation notes by the conflict experienced over the collection of Victim Personal Statements which has been described in an earlier section. This case describes a clear incongruence between the operative goals of the strategic core and delivery network with regard to a specific component of the Criminal Justice System (specifically the Victim Personal Statements). The strategic core were motivated by operative goals which

emphasised the need to report compliance with national policy. This would enable the creation of a plausible and desirable narrative describing progress made by the senior leadership constituency in representing the interests of victims in the Criminal Justice System. However members of the delivery network were motivated by the operational imperative of protecting victims from distress caused by encounters with the realities of the Criminal Justice System.

In the face of these difficulties members of the strategic core could on occasion retreat from an engagement with reality to a safer, more controllable and benign environment:

> While restating a business case in order that it could be reported to a forthcoming Transforming Justice Committee (abstracting data and rewriting vague descriptions of activity into snappy purpose statements) for a major £100 million plus NOMS project which is of pretty low quality (in an earlier meeting with the NOMS individuals responsible for the project that had repudiated the contents of the business case, saying that figures in business cases should never really be taken too seriously"). I overheard a conversation between one of my colleagues and an individual from a Minister's private office.
>
> "Could we put up a fast tracker? Someone who will be amazing on camera!", to present to the senior civil service conference being held within the MoJ. The message that the fast tracker would have to deliver was: "we want them the proletariat saying to them the leadership, come on, buck your ideas up" (Participant Observation Notes).

As such the cases described above and the dysfunctional relationship between the strategic core and the delivery network mediated by reporting practices emphasises the difficulty encountered in maintaining goal congruence across different organisational contexts that exhibit contingent objectives and constraints. Operative goals were found to be different, experienced as contradictory and that contradiction resulted in the subversion or modification of

organisational purposes with goal congruence resulting in the impeding, deflection and subversion of operative network goals.

Empirical Contexts in which the presence of Goal Incongruence is Not Established

The following section describes the five empirical contexts in which the conceptual framework suggests the evidence does not establish the presence of goal incongruence. For each empirical context the nature of goal incongruence is described and discussed.

Formal – Formal goal incongruence within the Strategic Core

Formal goals of the Strategic Core were taken from the Ministry of Justice Business Plan 2012-13. The document states that the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice are to:

- Introduce a rehabilitation revolution
- Reform sentencing and penalties
- Reform courts tribunals and legal aid and work with others to reform delivery of Criminal Justice
- Assure Better Law
- Reform how we [the Ministry of Justice] deliver our services
- Reduce expenditure over the SR10 period

Comparison of the textual content of the formal goals of the strategic core indicates difference. That difference is expressed in the multiple spheres of activity with which the formal goals of the strategic core engage and prioritize. Formal goals reflect the range of activities in which the Ministry of Justice is engaged, including developing policy, reviewing network structure and delivering operational effectiveness within the UK justice system. However the differences identified by comparison of individual formal goals with each of the others fails to demonstrate that those differences are contradictory.

There are two factors that militate against inferring that difference in the formal goals indicated contradiction and therefore support claims of incongruence between the formal goals of the strategic core. The first derives from the wording of the formal goals of the strategic core suggests that identifying contradiction would be difficult. All of the formal goals except for the final one of reducing expenditure are presented in categorical terms. Goals introduced by the indeterminate injunctions of *reforming, assuring* and *introducing* permit a wide range of means and conceptions of specific ends to be consistent with the stated formal goals. This indeterminacy creates a "space for congruence" (Boyne 2012 personal communication) that acts against the positive identification of incongruence from an analysis of formal goals.

The second is that even where textual analysis suggests difference, for example between the formal goals of reducing expenditure and introducing a rehabilitation revolution, evidence from participant observation indicated that these goals were experienced as congruent. For example a significant component of the plan to reduce expenditure was achieving a reduction in the size of the prison population. One anticipated challenge to this policy was how offending behaviours would be managed if not by prison sentence. The different but complimentary formal goal of introducing a rehabilitation revolution provided a plausible response to this anticipated and unwelcome critical scrutiny.

In addition evidence from participant observation indicated that a further and supporting attraction of the formal goal of introducing a rehabilitation revolution not exclusively concerned with reducing the prison population or re-offending rates. This was the opportunity the rehabilitation revolution had for broadening responsibility or 'sharing blame' (Kline 2001) for offenders and re-offending. Within the Strategic Core prison was understood to concentrate responsibility for managing offenders, offending and re-offending within the Ministry of Justice. On the other hand the rehabilitation policy was understood to broaden responsibility for dealing with offending and offenders to include a range of other Government agencies and private and third sector organisations (contracted to provide rehabilitation services). This view was summarized in the assertion that "Prison is a respite provider for other [government] agencies"

(Participant Observation Notes) made by a senior manager within the strategic core.

This appears to suggest that textual differences between formal goals might be a misleading indicator of incongruence. In this case textual differences appear insufficient to warrant claims of incongruence. This is due to the qualified and indeterminate nature of those goals creating a space for the constructions of complimentary associations. In addition formal goals, which exhibited difference, appeared to be experienced by actors as complimentary and therefore congruent within complex organisational contexts. The inability to establish contradiction between different formal goals leads to the conclusion that goal incongruence cannot be demonstrated between the formal goals of the strategic core.

Formal-Formal goal incongruence within the Delivery Network

Comparison of the formal goals of delivery network agencies indicates a considerable degree of difference. As was the case with the strategic core the majority of the difference between formal goals in the delivery network could not be shown to meet the criteria of being contradictory and therefore do not constitute evidence for goal incongruence. Instead they reflect differences in the task orientations of functionally specialized agencies within the overarching objectives of the Criminal Justice System and consequently it is extremely difficult to demonstrate that these goals do not act in a complimentary manner.

There were two exceptions to this position. The first was the local Probation Trust's commitment to formal goals orientated around norms of market competition. These were articulated in the Strategic Plan as:

- To develop our business and professional skills to be a provider of choice in a competitive market
- To deliver services to contract
- Developing commercial capability and delivering competitive advantage

The local probation trust is the only organisation in the delivery network to reference market norms and objectives in its formal goals. Its strategic vision

and objectives includes references to the development of business and professional skills to be a provider of choice in a competitive market and delivering services to contract. This is different to the other organisations in the delivery network that occupy protected positions in the network secured by statute.

The precarious position of the local probation trust, conceivably threatened by the commercial activities of other probation trusts or private sector entrants to the market, arguably creates a state of incongruence with the formal goals of other delivery network organisations. Considerations of competitive advantage, expressed in concern over the protection of proprietary knowledge and other forms of intellectual property might contradict active inter organisational cooperation which would make it more difficult to maintain confidentiality and unambiguous ownership of intellectual property.

The second example of possible incongruence is provided by the local police service's formal goals orientated on norms of operational performance and institutional competition. The Strategic Policing Plan sets out a number of operational targets. For example:

- Detection rates for serious sexual offences
- Detection rates for serious violence
- Serious acquisitive crime rate

The performance of the local police service is given by their ranking in performance league tables of the 43 police services. The Strategic Policing Plan indicates comparative performance targets – either to improve the position of the local service in the national league tables or to achieve or maintain a position in the top ten.

It is noteworthy that the local police service Strategic Police Plan is the only example in the delivery network to set out operational performance measures and to make commitments to attain specific targets. The explicit targets are comparative. They either require the local police service to improve on its position in national rankings or to be ranked in the top 10 of police services. It can be argued that such targets constitute goal incongruence with the other formal goals of delivery network organisations. Formal goals of achieving

specific performance targets might lead to resources being allocated in order to attain public commitments to comparative performance targets as opposed to cooperative action with other Criminal Justice Agencies.

This is especially relevant as the Policing Plan Targets concentrate on measures that do not require the cooperation or assistance of other delivery network organisations. In other words the performance targets concentrate almost exclusively on internal rather than boundary spanning activities. This clearly meets the criterion of difference (this form of goal is absent from the Strategic Business Plans of other delivery network Agencies) in that it provides a radically different basis of legitimization to that found in other delivery network agencies. That is the public comparison of operational effectiveness within an organisational field as measured by a set of operational performance indicators.

However, in neither case can it be established that these very significant differences are contradictory. That is the study was unable to offer a compelling argument to establish that the base of an organization's legitimization will inevitably likely to have organisational consequences likely to act to impede, deflect or subvert the formal goals of other delivery network organisations. Therefore the evidence drawn from documentary analysis was unable to establish formal - formal goal incongruence within the delivery network.

Formal – Formal goal incongruence between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network

The formal goals between the strategic core and the delivery network do not demonstrate incongruence. While there is difference between formal goals this difference cannot be demonstrated to be incongruent as the criterion of contradiction is not met. As was the case within the strategic core the categorical nature of the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice creates a 'space for congruence' that makes it difficult to identify incongruent positions between formal goals.

The case study identified formal goals from the business plans published by each of the case study organisations. These sources were selected because they were

consistently available (all of the case study organisations published documents described as Business Plans or Strategic Business plans for the 2011-15 period and for specific years within that period). They also fulfilled the requirement of being formal documents whose content might reasonably be expected to be the considered product of reflective thought and therefore to meet Perrow's criteria of being authoritative public statements.

The formal goals of the delivery network tend to concentrate on the operational aspects Criminal Justice System. The formal goals of the strategic core concentrate on the structural reform of the system. This reform includes the introduction of a rehabilitation revolution, reform of sentences and penalties, reform of the way in which the Ministry, the HMCTS and Legal Services Commission operate and the creation of 'better law'.

This study's criteria for the identification of goal incongruence are that goals are different, contradictory and that contradictions are not trivial but result in organisational consequences that impede, deflect or subvert the attainment of organisational goals. It is possible to argue that the formal goals of the strategic core and delivery network are different from the perspective of a textual or content analysis. As such it could be argued that rather than being complimentary they are inconsistent with each other and lead to members of the strategic core working at cross purposes with members of the delivery network.

However it is difficult to sustain the argument that the formal goals of the strategic core and the delivery network are contradictory. Variation in formal goals reflects the categorical differences in the task orientations between the strategic core and delivery network particularly the strategic core's responsibility and accountability for policy and legislative change. In analyzing organisational business plans for evidence of formal-formal goal incongruence it proves extremely difficult to establish definitively that goals are contradictory as well as different. Again the documentary evidence provided by organisational business plans is inconclusive. The nature of the information available prevents us from making a definite statement as to whether the formal goals of the strategic core and delivery network are contradictory.

In an earlier section this work suggested that there are two examples of formal-formal goal incongruence within the delivery network. They are incongruence around market orientated formal goals of the local probation trust and the performance target orientated goals of the local police service. However comparison of the formal goals of the strategic core and the delivery network indicates that market-orientated goals of the local probation trust are congruent with the provisions of the MoJ's formal goal of delivering a rehabilitation revolution. The formal goals of the local police service orientated on comparative performance targets are again consistent with central government (not the Ministry of Justice but the Home Office) formal goals for managing the performance of the police. Again this reflects that the outcome of inquiries into the existence of goal incongruence depends to a large extent on the conceptual framework used to define goal incongruence and the framing organisational context.

The formal goals of the strategic core did not appear to be incongruent with the operative formal goals of the delivery network. While comparison does indicate some difference with the formal goals of the strategic core emphasizing reform and the formal goals of the delivery network emphasizing meeting the operational imperative there is little evidence that those differences were contradictory. It is difficult to argue that there are fundamental contradictions between the formal objectives of delivering reform and maintaining operational effectiveness. As we have argued the indeterminate nature of the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice which permit a wide range of ends and means make the identification of goal congruence from the study of formal goals less likely.

Operative – Operative goal incongruence within the Strategic Core

Participant observation indicated that operative goals within the strategic core were congruent. There was some evidence for different and contradiction in the operative goals of the strategic core. In particular the tension between commitments to reporting practice versus implementing operational change appeared to offer a context for competition between different conceptions of how the strategic core should operate. Observation stressed that practices that

were interpreted as incongruent with the operative goal of reporting were problematised. Senior managers asserted practices associated with the operative goal of reporting. Individuals who could not be reconciled to the operative goal of reporting were marginalized and moved from the strategic core to the delivery network. Therefore participant observation appeared to indicate the presence of effective processes for establishing and maintaining congruence between operative goals within the strategic core.

It would be misleading to suggest that the focus on the construction of credible narratives and the commitment to reporting was universal within the strategic core. A number of significant exceptions were observed. The first related to those objectives that could be realised through the policy process (for example legislative changes to reform the practice of the Justice System). The second involved executive decisions that fell under the authority of the strategic core (for example the decision to reduce staff through a programme of voluntary redundancy). In these cases Headquarters staff within the strategic core were able to demonstrate a commitment to achieving planned outputs and outcomes.

The third exception were those groups of Headquarters staff who did exhibit a commitment to achieving outcome orientated goals and working with elements of the delivery network to delivery transformational change and continuous improvement. There was unambiguous evidence of considerable work to improve the operation of the delivery network, particularly within the Criminal Justice System). However during the period of participant observation it became clear that groups and individuals who maintained a persistent commitment to operationally meaningful goals at the expense of engaging in the Headquarters reporting culture were perceived as disruptive and their behaviour problematised. This resulted in marginalization of those groups and occasionally in their ultimate removal (voluntary or forced) from the Headquarters environment.

Evidence for the precarious nature of operative goal incongruence within the strategic core focused on the resistance of a minority to accepting operative goals of maintaining a reporting culture that actively avoided taking any operational responsibility for change. These were individuals who wished to pursue a more active involvement in and greater responsibility for operational

improvement. The opportunity to realise these ambitions took three forms. The first was to pursue operational continuous improvement via the cross Criminal Justice Efficiency project. The second was to develop a more interventionist role with regard delivery network projects, effectively transforming reporting roles into change agent roles. The third was to engage in formal learning and development activities operated by the strategic core, and to organise these activities around active involvement with improvement projects.

During participant observation evidence accumulated that each of these incongruent possibilities were problematised and acted against by individuals in positions of formal authority. We described earlier how public commitments to the cross Criminal Justice Efficiency Programme were privately contradicted by members of the senior leadership constituency and individuals close to them. The programme was seen as being discredited, a distraction from deficit reduction and viewed as being 'unhelpful' by influential members of the senior leadership constituency.

For the second and third sources of incongruent goals, evidence drawn from participant observation indicated how a commitment to active engagement with operational change was interpreted as deviant behaviour which, if uncorrected resulted in pressure to leave the strategic core. For example line-management responsibility for a particular team within the strategic core was moved from an individual who actively encouraged the 'change manager' conception of the role to a person who was seen as being much closer to individuals within the senior leadership constituency and who made it clear that the change agent role was unacceptable and would not be permitted. The role of members of the team was to act as a conduit of information between the senior leadership constituency and project and portfolio leads in the delivery network. The manager who had encouraged the more interventionist change agent role subsequently left the strategic core for a position in the delivery network.

Finally the team responsible for delivering the MoJ's programme for the MoJ's continuous improvement learning and development programme were moved from the strategic core to the delivery network. The argument for this action was explained in two ways. The quasi-official explanation was that the incoming TJ Director (the original Director had moved to a similar role in

another Ministry) did not understand how continuous improvement might contribute to the Transforming Justice Programme. In private it was explained that the new line manager and other members of the senior leadership constituency resented having team members who were not actively involved in reporting practices. Moving the team to the delivery network meant that individuals who were fully committed to reporting practices could replace them.

As such there was considerable evidence that within the strategic core measures were taken to reduce goal incongruence. The weight of evidence appears to indicate that these measures were effective in sustaining a shared commitment to the reporting culture. The inability to demonstrate difference and organisationally meaningful contradiction between the operative goals of the strategic core preclude any claims of incongruence.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced and tested a new conceptual framework for identifying goal incongruence. Existing conceptions of goal incongruence accept difference between goals as a sufficient criterion for establishing incongruence. The conceptual framework developed and applied in this work does not accept difference as synonymous with incongruence. It goes beyond established conceptions in insisting that difference between goals must also be demonstrated to be contradictory in order to provide evidence for goal incongruence. Contradiction is confirmed when it can be demonstrated to give rise to organisational consequences whereby action to attain particular goals impedes, deflects or subverts or alters action to attain other formal or operative goals with the effect of moderating or subordinating organisational purposes.

The application of the new conceptual framework to case study data indicates that goal incongruence is present in some dimensions and contexts (formal – operative incongruence within the strategic core, within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network, and operative – operative incongruence within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network) but is absent in others (all expressions of formal -formal goal incongruence and operative – operative incongruence within the strategic core).

It is important to stress that difference between goals was identified in all dimensions of incongruence and organisational contexts. Indeed had the study employed difference as the sole criterion of goal incongruence then findings of incongruence would have been ubiquitous and the study would have been overwhelmed by endless and varied examples of the phenomenon.

The application of the conceptual framework appears to suggest that difference is, on its own, an inadequate indicator of incongruence. It fails to differentiate between goals that are different and contradictory and goals that are different but complimentary. It might be suggested that this conclusion has significant implications for interpreting existing research on goal incongruence (and the corollary construct of goal congruence) and the claims for the presence of goal incongruence that they contain.

In addition, the conceptual framework incorporates criteria that allow accounts of differing types of goal incongruence (formal – formal, formal – operative, and operative–operative) distributed across different network contexts (incongruence within the strategic core, within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network).

This appears to have provided richer accounts of goal incongruence than are available from simple tests for the existence of difference. The new conceptual framework provides descriptions of the contexts in which goal incongruence is present *and* absent rather than present *or* absent. This ability to provide more refined analytical perspectives might be considered to be of value in investigating the determinants of goal incongruence. This is the subject we will turn to in the following chapters.

Chapter 6 Bureaucratic Delegation as the Source of Goal Incongruence

Introduction

This chapter will test whether the evidence of goal incongruence within the case study network supports the hierarchical explanation of goal incongruence and the six shaping influences of hierarchical goal incongruence. The chapter begins with a summary of those influences and then provides an overview of the evidence for bureaucratic delegation as the source of goal incongruence. The evidence that supports the claims made in the overview is then explored for each of the five empirical contexts that were found to exhibit goal incongruence in chapter five.

Analysis indicates that hierarchical goal incongruence arose from four of the six shaping influences. Evidence suggests that a mixture of the pre-occupation and compliance model and the Bifurcation of Interests model provides the most prevalent shaping influence. In addition the organisational segmentation and performance control models also explained the emergence of hierarchical goal incongruence within the delivery network.

However two proposed shaping influences were not supported. The case study found no evidence for inadequate comprehension or discretionary gap models of hierarchical goal incongruence. Indeed on balance the evidence cast doubt on the explanatory value of these models.

Finally, analysis of the evidence of goal incongruence produced an empirical surprise. Formal-operative goal incongruence was greater at the apex of the network than it was at the base. In other words the operative goals of the strategic core were more incongruent with the formal goals of the network than were the operative goals of the delivery network. This contradicts the established view of goal incongruence presented in the literature, that senior staff and policy makers are more 'trustworthy' in terms of commitment to achieve formal public goals than junior or operational staff.

Summary of Shaping Influences for Hierarchical Goal Incongruence

Chapter three presented six suggested influences by which goal incongruence might be produced under conditions of bureaucratic delegation. The objective of this chapter is to test whether the empirical evidence produced by participant observation supports any or all of these suggested influences. For the benefit of the reader they are summarised below.

1. The *Pre-Occupation and Compliance model* describes the propensity for the operational behaviours of intermediaries to become centred on specific daily problems and proximate goals that are effectively substituted for the professed goals of the organisation. This presents the most 'innocent' explanation for goal incongruence. Intermediary and subordinate actors become pre-occupied with their work and ultimate ends and goals are forgotten, or at least recede from consciousness. The propensity to become pre-occupied with daily problems is re-enforced by the tendency for office holders to identify with the importance of bureaucratic rules and procedures and the necessity of securing compliance with those rules and procedures even at the expense of achieving the formal goals or ultimate ends of the organisation.

2. The use of intermediaries creates a tendency toward a *bifurcation of interests*, under which intermediaries are concerned chiefly with their social positions as agents. This introduces operative goals of advancing their status (Sills 1957) relationships with individuals outside the hierarchical chain of delegation (Sills 1957, Lipsky 1983), general self-interest (Downs 1967) and self-aggrandizement and illegitimate functions (Bozeman 1993). Lipsky contributes by reminding us that intermediaries' conception of self–interest will extend to avoiding dangerous, difficult or boring work and that work which is destructive of the individuals ability to maintain a positive representation of self.

3. The *discretionary gap* associated with the iterated downward delegation of goals within hierarchies is experienced within a context characterised by differential access to information and perceptions of reality and uncertain outcomes (Downs 1967) and the misapplication of policies due to genuine misunderstanding of their nature by subordinates (Bozeman 1993). In consequence a form of rule entropy operates for downward delegation within hierarchical arrangements in which the greater the number of occasions on which the realisation of goals must be delegated the greater the loss of meaning within the hierarchy (Bozeman 1993).

4. The *Inadequate Comprehension* model attributes the goal incongruence to the inadequate practice of superiors, particularly top-most officials, who may not appreciate the difficulty involved in implementing the policies that they formulate. This issue is described by Bozeman in terms of the inadequate comprehension of office holders at the apex of bureaucracies of the difficulties involved in applying policies (polices which Downs tells us are frequently formulated in general terms). Lipsky (1983) expands on this theme with by characterising formal goals as idealised, difficult to achieve and confusing to approach. Thus goal incongruence is caused by the inability of superiors, particularly top-most officials, to formulate policy and goals that can be articulated clearly and implemented effectively by staff in operational levels of hierarchy

5. The *organisational segmentation* model focuses on the organisational allegiances of professionals in multiple hierarchies clustered within network arrangements as the shaping influence for goal incongruence. Differential organisational membership intensifies inter and intra professional competition and goal incongruence. Organisational affiliation acts to encourage professionals to identify with and promote

goals that reflect the interests of their organisation. It also influences patterns of inter and intra professional interaction, tending to ensure that interactions within organisation boundaries are denser than interactions across organisational boundaries. Finally organisational boundaries act to protect and maintain goal commitments that would be resolved to the satisfaction of dominant professional groups without the influence of such protective institutional boundaries (Larson 1977). Under this model hierarchy produces goal incongruence as a result of intra organisational introspection and inter-organisational parochialism and competition.

6. The *performance control model* locates the cause of goal incongruence in the different systems of hierarchically imposed performance measurement used to control professional practice (particularly within network arrangements). Performance control systems prioritise action to achieve the goals they contain at the expense of those that they omit. They can also act as powerful goals in themselves as professionals strive to achieve comparative advantage in performance comparisons. Performance measurement and control systems tend to be co-terminus with professional orientations. They therefore operate as discreet systems that concentrate on professionally introspective measures of practice and outcomes. The result is that hierarchically imposed professional performance measurement and control systems tend to act against the tendencies toward inter-professional co-operation. They act to establish and maintain inter-professional goal incongruence while reducing intra – professional goal incongruence.

Evidence for Bureaucratic Delegation as the Source of Goal Incongruence

In chapter five it was suggested that goal incongruence was present in five network contexts. In the subsequent section we will consider whether the nature of bureaucratic delegation within hierarchical arrangements is a persuasive or convincing determinant of that goal incongruence. As the different organisations of the delivery network do not share hierarchical relationships bureaucratic delegation cannot contribute an explanation of goal incongruence within the three delivery network settings. Therefore the examples of goal incongruence within the delivery network are excluded from the following discussion.

If goal incongruence is determined by the nature of bureaucratic delegation within hierarchal arrangements what evidence would we expect to find for the causes of goal incongruence within the case study network? Evidence would consist in actors subverting, deflecting or contradicting practices aimed at achieving delegated formal and operative goals. Furthermore the practice of subversion by intermediaries exercising bureaucratic discretion should correspond to one or more of the shaping influences described in the proceeding section.

A discussion of the empirical evidence drawn from the case study and the extent to which it supports one or more of the explanations of the hierarchical production of goal incongruence is presented below. Figure 6.1 presents the evidence produced by the study for the sources of hierarchical goal incongruence.

For each of the five empirical contexts that exhibit goal incongruence figure 6.1 (overleaf) sets out whether evidence supports each of the six shaping influences or not, or whether it is not applicable within the empirical context. Following figure 6.1 the evidence supporting the conclusions drawn from the figure are evaluated.

Figure 6.1 Evidence for Sources of Hierarchical Goal Incongruence

	F/O Incongruence Within SC	F/O Incongruence Between SC and DN	O/O Incongruence Between SC and DN	O/O Incongruence Within DN	F/O Incongruence Within DN
Pre-Occupation and Compliance Model	***Equivocal Support provided by accounts of Reporting Practice***	*No Evidence of 'Passive Forgetting' of Formal Goals*	***Equivocal Support provided by accounts of Reporting Practice***	*Not Applicable*	***Not Applicable***
Bifurcation of Interests Model	***Support provided by accounts of Reporting Practice and operative subversion of Formal Goals***	***Support provided by contradictory conceptions of interest***	***Support provided by contradiction between Reporting Practice and Operational Imperatives***	*Not Applicable*	*Not Applicable*
Discretionary Gap Model	*Incongruence characterised by radical discontinuity rather than gradual decay*	*Incongruence characterised by radical discontinuity rather than gradual decay*	*Incongruence characterised by radical discontinuity rather than gradual decay*	*Not applicable*	*Not applicable*

	F/O Incongruence Within SC	F/O Incongruence Between SC and DN	O/O Incongruence Between SC and DN	O/O Incongruence Within DN	F/O Incongruence Within DN
Inadequate Comprehension Model	*No Evidence of Inadequate Comprehension on part of superiors or subordinates*	*No Evidence of Inadequate Comprehension on part of superiors or subordinates*	*No Evidence of Inadequate Comprehension on part of superiors or subordinates*	*Not Applicable*	*Not Applicable*
Organisational Segmentation Model	*Not applicable*	*Not applicable*	*Not applicable*	***Evidence that actors compelled to act as 'organisational advocates'***	***Evidence that actors compelled to act as 'organisational advocates'***
Professional Control Model	*Not Applicable*	*Not applicable*	*Not applicable*	***Support for Imposed systems of control as a source of incongruence***	***Support for Imposed systems of control as a source of incongruence***

The Pre-occupation and Compliance Model

The pre-occupation and compliance model predicts that organizational actors will become focused (pre-occupied) on proximate goals and day-to-day problems and challenges and ensuring compliance with processes and procedures to achieve such proximate objectives. The test for the pre-occupation and compliance model is that intermediary and subordinate staff become focused on achieving proximate goals and complying with proximate bureaucratic procedures. To cause goal incongruence subordinate pre-occupation and compliance must act to subvert formal or original goals of organisation. The author has earlier characterised this model as emphasising the 'passive forgetting' of formal organisational goals.

Analysis of the empirical evidence generated by the case study appears to indicate that this is indeed the case. Members of the delivery network concentrate on meeting the functional operative imperatives of their agencies. Members of the strategic core appear committed to overcoming day-to-day problems encountered in the conduct of Reporting practices. To this extent the pre-occupation model appears to be provide a valuable contribution to the explication of the causes of goal incongruence within the case study network. Empirical descriptions also seem capable of accommodating the 'passivity' of the pre-occupation model. A concern with reporting practice results in the appreciation of the importance of meeting operational imperatives 'falling away' within the strategic core. Similarly the concern with the operational imperative leads to the importance of reporting being almost 'incomprehensible' to members of the delivery network.

However, closer consideration of the validity of the pre-occupation model reveals a concern, or more accurately an analytical dissatisfaction, with the prospect of accepting it as an explanation of operative goal incongruence between the strategic core and the delivery network. This reluctance concerns the legitimacy of the strategic core's commitment to Reporting. The author contends that Reporting is hardly an end and barely a means. The extent of the strategic core's commitment to reporting is extremely difficult to justify by reference to its importance for achieving the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice. It therefore should no be regarded as a legitimate 'means' to achieving formal goals. Indeed the author argues that there appeared to be a real sense that when it came to reporting the strategic core regarded content as being of secondary importance. The operative goals of the strategic core focused on the construction of plausible and convincing narratives. It was also clear that staff within the strategic core were uncomfortable in taking responsibility for the absolutes of output and outcome, efficiency and effectiveness. Instead there appeared to be a pronounced enthusiasm for evolving operative goals that focused on disseminating appropriate values and behaviours throughout the network. It might be argued that this retreat from the measurable and objective reflected the distance between the strategic core and the operational areas of the delivery network. However the point we feel worthy of emphasis is our belief

that that distance could have been closed quite easily had members of the strategic core wished it.

Within the strategic core, in the case of the subversion of the formal goals of delivering the xCJS efficiency programme, a pre-occupation with the proximate challenges of servicing committees, formulating and implementing policies and reporting on the progress of those implementations diverted the attention from the formal goal of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Criminal Justice System through network co-operation. This explanation presents an innocent explanation of goal incongruence to the extent that describes the determinants of goal incongruence in terms of a 'passive forgetting' of original objectives and ultimate aims.

However the plausibility of this benign explanation based on the passive forgetting of ends is undermined in empirical accounts that emphasise the way in which members of the strategic core actively rejected and problematised the xCJS efficiency programme. In addition the strategic core was able to engage with other challenging policy objectives despite the distraction of day-to-day challenges. Equally tellingly, the strategic core were able to organise a limited engagement with the xCJS efficiency programme which was sufficient to give the appearance of compliance without requiring the full operative enactment of the formal goal. Taken together, these strands of evidence tend to undermine the argument that the xCJS efficiency programme was lost or forgotten due to a pre-occupation with day-to-day challenges and proximate goals.

Turning to the incongruence between formal goals of reforming the Criminal Justice System and the strategic core's commitment to the operative goal of Reporting, it is more difficult to dismiss the pre-occupation explanation. The case study described a plethora of Reporting activities that dominated the experience of work within the strategic core and the way in which managers acted to enforce compliance with rules and procedures related to reporting practices. It is therefore more plausible to argue that in their preoccupation with reporting, members of the strategic core became distanced from original and ultimate ends, and that attempts to rediscover those ends by developing the 'active change manager' role described in chapter five were seen as threats to bureaucratic authority that were acted against decisively. That is superiors and

intermediates within the strategic core acted successfully to enforce compliance with local conceptions of appropriate bureaucratic rules and procedures.

Despite this positive evidence, the pre-occupation model appears to be a partial and somewhat generous explanation of goal incongruence. It omits important aspects of the case study evidence. In particular it does not appear able to incorporate the informal advantages of the subversion of formal goals to members of the strategic core. These included; the avoidance of responsibility for operational effectiveness, the protection against blame for operational failure or inadequacy, and the reduction in objective scrutiny to which the strategic core was exposed. In short a range of informal benefits associated with mitigating risks to the perceived competence, effectiveness and legitimacy of the strategic core that derived from being associated with responsibility for the operational performance of the Criminal Justice System. Therefore the pre-occupation model of goal incongruence fails to incorporate important and significant patterns of behaviour described in the empirical evidence.

Empirical descriptions of the incongruent implementation of the Victim Personal Statement policy are also inconsistent with the pre-occupation and compliance model. A superficial reading of the case study might lead to the view that the Victim Personal Statement policy was indeed subverted by subordinate actors' pre-occupation with protecting the interests of victims. However this work suggests that this protection should not be defined as a day-to-day problem. Rather it reflects fundamental deficiencies and contradictions in the policy. The Victim Personal Statement policy, intended to improve the experience of victims and represent their interests more effectively, actually achieved the opposite in practice.

While subordinate actors subverted the delivery of the Victim Personal Statement policy (VPS policy), they did not subvert the principle of the formal goal, protecting and representing the interests of the victims of serious crime. In particular, empirical descriptions provide no evidence of the 'passive forgetting' that characterises the model. Instead subordinate actors made regretted but active and deliberate choices to subvert the VPS policy.

For these reasons the conclusions drawn for the validity of the pre-occupation model of hierarchical goal incongruence must be equivocal. The case study did provide evidence in support of the model. However that evidence was of a partial and unsatisfactory quality. Once again, the pre-occupation model of goal incongruence fails to incorporate important and significant patterns of behaviour described in the empirical evidence.

The Bifurcation Of Interest Model

The Bifurcation of Interests model suggests that the pursuit of self-interest by intermediaries is the prime determinant of goal incongruence within hierarchical contexts. The model incorporates considerations of the social position of intermediate actors and consequently encompasses a wide range of self-interest including aggrandisement, the maintenance of status relationships with other actors and the avoidance of undesirable work. For both examples of incongruence between formal and operative goals within the strategic core there is evidence that the pursuit of self-interest was associated with goal incongruence. However what is less clear is that the empirical evidence establishes that such self-interest was a decisive factor in producing goal incongruence or indeed that conceptions of self-interest were hierarchically contradictory

In the case of the xCJS efficiency programme, the evidence for self-interest is made in the explicit statement that the MoJ should; "resist changes which would deliver big improvements to the [Criminal Justice] system, but which could be claimed by other Departments" (Participant Observation Notes). In this case delivering big improvements to the Criminal Justice System which would; realise the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice, benefit victims of crime and contribute to the general social good of society were to be resisted in order to protect against the undesirable outcome of credit for those big improvements being appropriated by other Government Departments. This would appear to provide convincing support for the theory of Bifurcation of interest as a shaper of goal incongruence.

However, it is not clear that in subverting the formal goal of the xCJS efficiency programme intermediaries within the strategic core were demonstrating a commitment to self-interest that was incongruent with their superiors. On the contrary, there was considerable evidence that the most senior policy makers in the Ministry had also discounted the formal goal associated with xCJS efficiency programme. Therefore, far from following their own self-interests, intermediaries were faithfully reproducing the delegated goal priorities of their superiors.

The evidence from participant observation for this position is provided in statements such as: "Senior leaders are only interested in saving money…. Being focused on incremental improvement xCJS efficiency is unlikely to save the Ministry money" and that the programme lacked a " clear long term narrative and had failed to secure the engagement of Ministers" (Participant Observation Notes). On that basis it appears doubtful that incongruence between formal goal of xCJS efficiency programme and its operative subversion were caused by imperfections in the mechanism of bureaucratic delegation, on the contrary it appears that the subversion of the formal goal was faithfully reproduced as it was delegated within the strategic core. Intermediate actors believed that they were carrying out the wishes of superiors in limiting the operative enactment of the formal goal.

In the case of incongruence between the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice and the strategic core's commitment to the operative goal of Reporting, can we show that bifurcation of interest provides a persuasive explanation of the empirical data? We have already touched on an argument that we wish to develop here, that the incongruent commitment to Reporting is very strongly associated with the self-interest seeking behaviours predicted in the bifurcation of interests model. However if this incongruence is caused by the nature of bureaucratic delegation it is noteworthy that such a significant example of incongruence occurs at the first stage of delegation, that between the formal goals of the MoJ and the practices of the strategic core. Perhaps more importantly, we might question the validity of reporting as a legitimate means within the means – ends chains that characterise the conceptions of bureaucratic delegation we are discussing. During participant observation the impression was

formed that the commitment to reporting was better understood as an attempt to absent members of the strategic core from those means – ends chains and consequent responsibility for any failure to achieve ultimate ends (the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice).

Time and again over the period of participant observation there were references in meetings and in overheard conversations (an inevitable consequence of working in open-plan environments) to the; “best way of presenting information”, how to go about “telling the story”, or the need to “build a narrative” (Participant Observation Notes). This established a sense that individuals were involved in constructing plausible, convincing and satisfactory stories that the more senior people who they were briefing could engage with in an unproblematic manner.

The practice of Reporting arguably led to a fluid relationship with operational practice where it is easy to make big claims and then fail to deliver them, safe in the knowledge that allowances will be made. In this context failure to achieve formal and operational ends becomes not just an option, but also possibly the easiest option. If formal goals were not achieved then Reporting practice would come to the rescue. Narratives could be constructed containing descriptions of the great deal of activity undertaken to develop plans, plausible explanations for their lack of success and the promise of future plans for Transforming Justice to distract attention from present difficulties. One example of this was provided by a senior civil servant's comments at a meeting within the strategic planning meeting within the strategic core described below:

> A participant suggested that in the year before the election it would be better to run prisons empty rather than close them. This would defer redundancy payments and increase the amount of savings the MoJ could claim.
>
> A colleague gently dismissed the idea by reminding the room of its similarity to a Yes Minister episode in which a hospital had been run with no patients in order to ‘save money’.
>
> In response the originator of the suggestion speculated that; "you might be able to run the prison half-full and sell it as a pilot".

(Description of a meeting attended by senior civil servants attended during participant observation.)

Throughout the period of participant observation at MoJ Headquarters evidence accumulated that senior individuals were more comfortable discussing concepts such as desirable values and behaviours (frequently in abstract terms) than they were with the outputs and outcomes of the delivery network's processes. This was inferred from many observations in meetings, workshops and informal discussions where senior individuals ignored or failed to engage with agenda points which focused on measuring and improving operational outputs and outcomes. On the other hand discussions about appropriate and desirable values and behaviours were engaged with enthusiastically and at length.

It is possible to speculate on the reasons for this condition. The most generous is that the remoteness of operational practice to Headquarters staff (both geographically and administratively) makes effective control of practice unavailable. A more challenging suggestion might be that privileging the abstract over the practical represented an attempt to protect Headquarters staff in general and the accounting officer in particular from responsibility or blame for perceived operational inadequacies.

The practice of Reporting insulates members of the strategic core from responsibility for the operational effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System. More particularly, Reporting protects them from the negative consequences associated with taking responsibility for real and perceived failure within the Criminal Justice System whether that failure is associated with operational inadequacies or the implementation of policy delegated from the strategic core. It also makes effective scrutiny of the activities of the strategic core more difficult by restricting evaluation to subjective and qualitative measures.

The Reporting culture's concentration on narrative construction provides the strategic core with a flexibility that enables operational and policy failure to be explained in ways deemed favourable to the strategic core. In particular the objective of Reporting practices appears to be the preservation of the perception that the strategic core and senior individuals within the strategic core are competent, effective and legitimate. Reporting practice therefore reflects the

active self-interest seeking of members of the strategic core by providing an effective method for dissociating the strategic core from blame associated with representations of operational or policy failure. To that extent it might be represented as what Bozeman would describe as an illegitimate organisational function serving the needs of intermediaries as social agents (promoting status, aggrandisement and avoiding undesirable work). However it should also be remembered that the illegitimate function of Reporting also benefits intermediaries as *economic agents* by protecting established employment benefits and assuring career opportunities and progression.

The Bifurcation of Interest model stresses the potential for intermediary and subordinate actors to act to further their self-interest particularly in their capacity of social actors at the expense of realising delegated means and ends. A persuasive case can be made that the Bifurcation of Interest model is consistent with empirical accounts of the subversion of the Victim Personal Statement policy as delegated from the strategic core to the delivery network.

That evidence appears to indicate that the subordinate actors to whom delivery of the policy was delegated were unable to dissociate themselves from the potential negative consequences of the Victim Personal Statement policy for those victims of serious crime whose interests the policy was intended to promote. This derived from subordinate's personal and professional identification with the interests and experience of the victims of serious crime that were generally experienced in an unmediated and visceral manner.

This self-interest was articulated in the "Because its right" rhetoric which indicated the high mission valence subordinate actors within the delivery network experienced towards supporting and protecting the interests of the victims of serious crime. These personal and professional commitments to the victims of crime led subordinate actors to subvert the delegated VPS policy because they felt that the provisions of the policy as delegated potentially contradicted the interests of those victims. To comply with the delegated policy threatened the self-interest of subordinate actors' personal and professional identity as social agents. Therefore the study produced compelling evidence for the positive role of the bifurcation of interests model as a shaper of hierarchical goal incongruence.

The bifurcation of interest model rescues us from the doubts described above. It reminds us that interests can coalesce around and be sustained by intermediary actors' social role as agents. This may give rise to commitments to what Bozeman (1993) describes as *illegitimate functions* that are by definition difficult to resolve satisfactorily with the professed or official claims of organisational purposes.

We suggest that the stubborn refusal to vacate the ambiguous ground of values and behaviours is explained by the freedom and flexibility it confers on members of the strategic core to constructing plausible and protective narratives. These narratives act as a buffer between operational performance and the strategic core. In that sense one of their functions is to restrict the consequences of operational failure to the delivery network, thereby protecting senior civil servants, and particularly the most powerful civil servants, from potentially adverse consequences of being associated with operational failure.

In the delivery network the interests of members are much more closely aligned with meeting the (legitimate) operational imperatives of functionally specialised agencies within the Criminal Justice System. At the same time the influence and demands of top-most officials (which pervades the strategic core) on conceptions and constructions of self-interest is replaced or at the least ameliorated by the moral demand to satisfy the needs of victims of serious crime.

As has been described in earlier passages of this section, the bifurcation of interests of actors in the core and network operating in their capacity as social agents provides a convincing explanation for the patterns of data collected during participant observation. As such a reinforcing combination of the bifurcation of interest model and the pre-occupation model appears to resolve the issue of the pursuit of illegitimate goals and provides a plausible and convincing explanation for the evidence of operative goal incongruence between the strategic core and delivery network.

There is a further issue that must be discussed here, what might be described as an empirical surprise. The literature on hierarchical goal incongruence indicates that goal incongruence will increase with iterated bureaucratic delegations. That

is the operative goals of lower (operational) levels of hierarchies will be more incongruent with formal goals than will be the higher (strategic or policy) levels. The evidence drawn from the participant observation contradicts this theoretical perspective. In the case study network

Evidence drawn from the case study indicates that the operative goals of the strategic core were more incongruent with the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice than were the operative goals of the delivery network. In other words it is managerial elites and their staffs at the apex of hierarchies who are the most likely to exhibit goal incongruence and divert the organisation to their own illegitimate purposes. Correspondingly, delivery network members who operate lower levels in the hierarchy are more likely to act in accordance with formal network goals. The common sense view that incongruence between formal and operative goals increases as move down the hierarchy is wrong; it actually decreases. This is a crucial insight that will be returned to later in this work.

The Discretionary Gap Model

The discretionary gap model argues that goal incongruence is caused by the iterated delegation of orders that are necessary in bureaucratic hierarchies. The repeated nature of delegation, on each occasion requiring subordinates to exercise discretion in translating policies and orders formulated in general terms into more detailed instructions, leads to a gradual and cumulative loss of meaning as means and ends are transmitted downward through the bureaucratic hierarchy. The concept of a gradual but inevitable decay as delegation follows delegation is central to this explanation of goal incongruence. How far does is it supported by the empirical evidence provided by the case study? Neither example of formal – operative goal incongruence within the strategic core appear to offer support for the discretionary gap model.

Consideration of the xCJS efficiency programme emphasises that the means – ends chains (the span of bureaucratic control) within the strategic core were short, and concentrated within a single (albeit rather large) building. This ensures that superiors, intermediaries and subordinates are readily available to each other and operate within similar information contexts and shared

perceptions of reality. This contextual transparency and normative and physical proximity appear to ensure that superiors exercise effective control over the actions of subordinates. In other words the authority of superiors, particularly top-most officials and their intermediaries is more meaningful than the discretion of subordinates.

Turning to the goal incongruence generated by the strategic core's commitment to the operative goal of Reporting, we again suggest that empirical accounts provide little support for the model. The general impression of the commitment to the Reporting culture formed during participant observation within the strategic core was that it was pervasive, homogenous and stable. It was not characterised by a gradual decay, or change in meaning as it was delegated down through the hierarchy. Instead it was experienced as a shared commitment to a common set of practices by individuals at different levels of the bureaucratic hierarchy within the strategic core. Indeed attempts by individuals to use discretion to challenge the Reporting culture in favour of a more active change management role were susceptible to action by superiors to exercise their authority to protect the operative goal of producing a Reporting culture. This was achieved by enforcing compliance with Reporting practices and, on occasion, removing individuals from the strategic core.

This behaviour is not consistent with the picture presented by the discretionary gap model of subordinate actors applying discretion to modify delegated orders or policies. The model therefore appears to be inconsistent with empirical accounts of formal – operative goal incongruence within the strategic core.

The view that goal incongruence is caused by the incremental decay in meaning as means and ends are transmitted down bureaucratic hierarchies by successive delegations does not appear to correspond with empirical evidence for formal – operative goal incongruence between the strategic core and delivery network. The essential elements of the VPS policy appear to be transmitted accurately to the 'lowest' operational levels of the case study hierarchy. There is little evidence for the application of discretion by intermediaries operating within the chain of delegation. Instead subordinate actors at the operational level choose to implement the policy or not in ways determined most appropriate within their operational contexts.

In the case of subordinate actors from case study delivery agencies, the response to the delegated policy is not a subtle and nuanced implementation of aspects of the policy (as predicted by the 'decay' concept of the model) but by the decision to entirely reject engagement with the policy, as evidenced by the statement made by one subordinate responsible for preparing Victim Personal Statements: "I haven't written a victim report for five months" (Participant Observation). This absolute response of subordinate staff, individuals responsible for the ultimate delivery of the policy who satisfy Lipsky's conception of the street level bureaucrat is dissonant with the theoretical suggestion of the discretionary gap model that actors within the chain of bureaucratic command will apply a limited discretion to the implementation of delegated means and ends.

The discretionary gap model emphasises the gradual decay of meaning as organisational means and ends are delegated downward through successive layers of superiors and subordinates within bureaucratic hierarchies. Empirical evidence drawn from the case study does not appear to support this explanation of the cause of goal incongruence. Changing goal commitments appear to manifest themselves in radical discontinuities, whether between the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice and the commitment to reporting practices in the strategic core, and between those practices and the delivery network's commitment to meeting the operative imperatives of the Criminal Justice System.

In addition it is vital to recognise that within the case study hierarchy did not operate in a straightforward or unified manner. Members of the delivery network report through their own local and national hierarchies (Police Services, CPS, HMCTS etc.) that are connected to the strategic core in complex, nuanced and occasionally ambiguous relationships. Senior members of delivery network hierarchies frequently posses' far greater status, influence and authority than those members of the strategic core who transmit delegated actions to operational members of the delivery network. Under these circumstances the authority of members of the strategic core was frequently unclear and contested.

The contested nature of bureaucratic authority was exposed on those occasions where the demands to report data were felt to be so onerous, sensitive or potentially career limiting that members of the delivery network refused to

engage with requests to provide information for Reporting purposes. In such cases it was not always clear that the sanctions available to those requesting data in the strategic core were sufficiently credible to be effective. While members of the strategic core might make threats to individuals within the delivery network (and frequently did, usually implicitly but sometimes explicitly) it was clearly understood that such threats were empty unless there was a real prospect of incurring the active displeasure of very senior individuals within the strategic core or delivery network. For these reasons it appears that empirical accounts of goal incongruence between the strategic core and delivery network do not provide support for the discretionary gap model.

The Inadequate Comprehension Model

The inadequate comprehension model of the causes of goal incongruence places the emphasis on the inadequate comprehension of top-most officials of the difficulties, challenges and constraints under which intermediaries and under which subordinates operate, or the unintended purposes to which subordinates will put delegated tasks. This explanatory model emphasises the failure of top-most officials to formulate achievable policies and goals in the production of incongruence rather than the modification of goals by subordinates. However neither example of formal – operative goal incongruence within the strategic core, as described in empirical case study accounts, appears to support the model.

To adopt a formal goal of improving the operational effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System by developing network cooperation appears unremarkable. It was certainly not a novel goal, and had been the focus of activity within the Criminal Justice System for a substantial period of time. To argue that it represents an overly optimistic or excessively ambitious objective, in effect asking an organisation to deliver what it is incapable of, lacks credibility. The conclusion that must be drawn from study of the empirical evidence is that, while it would certainly have entailed difficult and unglamorous work, the xCJS efficiency could have been delivered reasonably straightforwardly had members of the strategic core wished to do so.

Similarly, with regard to the commitment displayed by members of the strategic core to the operative goal of the Reporting culture, the empirical evidence indicates that members of the strategic core were unwilling rather than unable to take meaningful responsibility for delivering objective improvements to the Criminal Justice System. Their commitment to the operative goal of Reporting as described in earlier sections is explained by the advantages it holds for protecting the reputation of the strategic core (and particularly its senior members) as competent, effective and legitimate rather than lying in an inability to engage with formal goals due to their complexity and incoherence.

It is difficult to argue that the empirical evidence supports the view that the subversion of the xCJS efficiency programme or the commitment to the operative goal of Reporting was caused was consistent with the inadequate comprehension model. In neither case is there compelling empirical evidence that incongruence between formal and operative goals within the strategic core was caused by the failure of top-most officials to formulate implementable policies.

The inadequate comprehension model of goal incongruence focuses on the inability of superiors, particularly top-most superiors, to formulate and delegate clear and consistent polices: "persons designing the rules have insufficient understanding of the problem at hand, the relationship of the rule to the… problem, or others' likely application or response to the rule" (Bozeman 1993, p. 286).

This theoretical explanation appears to resonate with empirical descriptions of the operation of the Victim Personal Statement drawn from the case study. Members of oral hearing boards relied on victim statements in unintended ways (basing their decisions on the victim's fear of the risk of re-offending rather than the risk of re-offending. Offender's legal representatives could and did challenge the confidentiality of Victim Personal Statements, demanded disclosure, and despite the formal intension and operative assurance that personal statements were confidential, the chair of the oral hearing might order disclosure and prevent the victim from withdrawing their statement. In addition it was expected that disclosure might be made inadvertently due to inadequate management of documents by statutory agencies during legal processes. Finally, there was the

prospect that victims might be summonsed to attend oral hearings, in the presence of offenders, convened on prison premises, without recourse to legal representation.

The VPS policy as formulated by top-most officials contained inherent contradictions and dangers that were beyond the ability of subordinate actors to resolve or manage. The refusal of top-most officials and their intermediate representatives to acknowledge difficulties indicated during implementation and take corrective action compounded the impact of these inherent deficiencies.

This catalogue of unintended and unforeseen consequences resulted in subordinates feeling that in practice the VPS policy achieved the opposite of what it was intended to achieve. From the subordinate perspective of those implementing the policy this unsatisfactory position was compounded by the apparent refusal of top-most superiors to acknowledge and address deficiencies in the delegated policy. This refusal to engage with practice appeared to derive from a settled desire on the part of top-most superiors and their functionaries in the strategic core to present a positive, uncomplicated and consequently legitimising narrative account of the success of the VPS policy.

The case study does not appear to provide evidence to support the inadequate comprehension model as an explanation for incongruence between the operative goals of the strategic core and the delivery network. This model would predict that superiors would delegate confused, inappropriate and unachievable goals on subordinates. There was little empirical evidence of this pattern of behaviour (at least for the case of operative goals discussed here). The case study indicates that members of the strategic core were aware of the practical challenges and constraints encountered in the delivery network, but the operational areas of the delivery network were, if not actually irrelevant, then of only marginal relevance to their actions.

An important consideration in this regard is the integration of senior and operational staff within networks of electronic communication capable of transmitting information on operations in real time. Furthermore even if one posits a breakdown in internal communications (accidental or intended) then top-most officials remain in a position to obtain detailed information regarding

the implementation of policy from non-governmental organisations, social media web sites and the media.

The relationship between the strategic core and delivery network was therefore characterised by the former's desire to disengage as far as practicable from involvement with the delivery network. This resulted in an arm's length relationship that was not conducive to the development of the conditions of interaction necessary to sustain the inadequate comprehension model.

Organisational Segmentation

Organisational segmentation appeared to be a fact of professional life within the delivery network. Professional identity was tethered to organisational membership. Delivery network professionals were distributed across an organisational landscape comprised of the local police service and probation trust and the regional divisions of the Crown Prosecution Service and the HMCTS.

Organisational boundaries were frequently co-terminus with those of professional orientations within the local delivery network. As such it was difficult to distinguish the empirical influence of organisational segmentation from other proposed shaping influences for goal incongruence. As described earlier the 'dichotomy between organisational commitment and professional allegiance' was difficult to discern in empirical contexts.

However organisational affiliation was observed to produce goal incongruence to the extent that professionals were *compelled to represent organisational interests and goals* in boundary spanning professional interactions. Actors might represent such interests enthusiastically, reluctantly or even apologetically. On occasion representing organisational interests presented as a conscious advocacy of organisational advantage. On other occasions it was manifested in actors' performance of taken for granted habituated routines that were shaped by organisational affiliation.

These parochial contests were shaped by representations of economy, efficiency and effectiveness that were shaped by the needs of the organisations rather than

the network. In other terms, professionals were compelled, with greater or lesser degrees of reluctance, to act as advocates of narrow organisational interest. To the extent that those differences were different and contradictory organisational segmentation acted to reinforce inter-professional goal incongruence.

The organisational segmentation model is supported by evidence drawn from the case study. Differences in priority were reinforced by the practice of drawing organisational boundaries around professional / task orientations. This had the effect of reinforcing patterns of communication within rather than between professional / task groups. It also ensured that creation of hierarchical management teams who had an interest in optimising (in operational and financial terms) discreet elements of the delivery network (their agency) but no formal interest in optimising the performance of the network as a whole.

The inevitable result of task specialisation is that the formal goals of particular agencies are dissociated from and contradict the operational goals of other agencies. This is perhaps an unremarkable insight from a theoretical perspective. However in practical terms its importance is difficult to overstate. It is felt in the in the abdication of responsibility for the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the CJS and the incentive to optimise discreet components of the system even at the price of sub-optimising the system as a whole.

The Performance Control Model

The evidence in favour of the performance control model of goal incongruence is perhaps the clearest provided by the case study. Performance control regimes were readily available in published documents that frequently set out measurement and control metrics applied to discreet professional orientations. Performance measurement enabled the comparison of professional sub-units against their professional peers and where the metrics had remained stable the longitudinal performance of particular groups. This established a clear link between the system of performance control and professional practice. There was clear evidence that the professional groups represented in the delivery network were influenced by their respective performance measurement / control system.

Performance measurement and control systems were professionally organised and focused and reflected professional concerns, practices and meanings. They incorporated coercive, normative and mimetic influences on the behaviour of professionals (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). They were coercive because they frequently measured performance against statutory obligations. Normative because of the pervasive influence they had on the values and actions of professionals. They were mimetic due to the practice of professionals replicating the apparently successful behaviours, actions and structures of fellow professionals.

Performance measurement / control systems focused on the actions of particular professional groups to the exclusion of others. Each professional orientation was subject to a distinct and discreet performance measurement system. These acted to foster an introspective preoccupation with professional performance that marginalised or excluded perspectives from outside or adjacent perspectives. Thus performance control systems tended to replicate inherent contradictions in the sphere of professional practice. Differences in the measurement and control systems to which professionals were exposed, and the professional response to the influence of those systems acted to produce inter-professional goal incongruence within the delivery network.

Near identical arguments can be made with regard to hierarchically imposed systems of professional control. Aligning discrepant professional control systems with agency boundaries results in contradiction between formal and operative goals drawn from different professional control regimes. The similarity of the arguments derives from the close association in the delivery network between agency identity and professional control system. Indeed analysis was complicated by the fundamental entanglement between these two concepts, to the extent that it became almost impossible to make theoretical distinctions between organisational identities and imposed professional control systems.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the extent to which hierarchical explanations of goal incongruence are supported by the empirical evidence provided by the case study. It has also sought to unpack the hierarchical model and draw conclusions about which of the proposed shaping influences for hierarchical goal incongruence are supported by the empirical evidence. The chapter finds that the case study evidence provides considerable support for hierarchical explanations of goal incongruence. In each of the empirical contexts that exhibit goal incongruence a plausible case is made that the hierarchical model is provides a convincing explanation of the source of goal incongruence.

Analysis indicates that hierarchical goal incongruence arose from four of the six shaping influences. Evidence indicated that a mixture of the pre-occupation and compliance model and the bifurcation of interests model provided the most prevalent shaping influence of goal incongruence. In the analysis evidence for the former model was described as equivocal. It is worth exploring this qualification in more detail in this conclusion. While there was undoubtedly evidence that actors (particularly in the strategic core) became pre-occupied with complying with proximate goals, the pre-occupation and compliance model appeared excessively generous to those actors in ascribing an 'unintended' aspect to their actions. It presented a passive view of their behaviour that was at odds with the active and deliberate choices actors were observed to make during the research. In more technical terms, it appears to ignore the agency of organisational actors.

On the other hand the bifurcation of interests model incorporates this evidence of active shaping of the operative goals very well. Its exposition of individual's behaviour as social (and economic) actors presents an effective analytical lens and compelling explanation of why operative goals become incongruent with formal goals within hierarchical settings. The case study provided considerable evidence of individuals prioritising their interests and behaving as social actors. In the strategic core this concentrated on reducing responsibility and blame for operational outcomes in favour of constructing and presenting plausible narratives. Within the delivery network it focused on meeting operational

imperatives and the inability of actors to distance themselves professionally and personally from CJS outcomes experienced by the victims of serious crime.

In addition the organisational segmentation and professional control models also explained the emergence of hierarchical goal incongruence within the delivery network. Both models acted to produce and maintain a hierarchically imposed introspection that produced goal incongruence. Members of the delivery networked were compelled to by organisational segmentation to act in the capacity of 'organisational advocates', even in circumstances where this required them to act against the overall interests of the network. Hierarchically imposed systems of professional control institutionalised a rigid goal incongruence that was impossible to overcome by 'legitimate means'. Professionals were compelled to represent (with varying degrees of enthusiasm) contradictory organisational interests. Perhaps most powerfully professional behaviour appeared particularly susceptible to the influence of the performance control regimes to which they were subject.

However two proposed shaping influences were not supported. The case study found no evidence for inadequate comprehension model of hierarchical goal incongruence. Indeed on balance the evidence cast doubt on the explanatory value of these proposed models. The problem for them appears to be that given modern communication technology and the manner in which pervasive social and formal media can transmit information, it is difficult to sustain a belief that top-most officials can be in ignorance of events 'on the ground' or that sub-ordinates can mistake the intentions of top-most officials when the words of those officials are available verbatim. The effect of modern communications technology on collapsing the distance between hierarchically separated organisational actors in public networks appears to mitigate against the arguments of the discretionary gap and inadequate comprehension models. With regard to the discretionary gap model, it suggests that there will be a gradual decay in meaning as ends are delegated downward through hierarchies. The case study found very little evidence of entropy. Instead incongruence appeared to emerge from radical discontinuities. This provides support for the bifurcation of interest model at the expense of the discretionary gap model.

Finally, analysis of the evidence of goal incongruence produced an empirical surprise. Formal-operative goal incongruence was greater at the apex of the network than it was at the base. In other words the operative goals of the strategic core were more incongruent with the formal goals of the network than were the operative goals of the delivery network. This contradicts the established view of goal incongruence presented in the literature, that senior staff and policy makers are more 'trustworthy' in terms of commitment to achieve formal public goals than junior or operational staff. This insight problematizes the apex of networks rather than the base with regard to goal incongruence and is a subject that this work will return to in the conclusion.

Chapter 7 Professional Difference as the source of Goal Incongruence

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the extent to which the empirical descriptions of goal incongruence set out in chapter five support theoretical claims that goal incongruence is caused by different and contradictory professional orientations. The professional orientation model of goal incongruence draws on the theoretical perspective that organisations should not be conceptualized as chains of command but as coalitions of interest (Cyert and March 1963). This theoretical frame suggests that organisations are comprised of coalitions of individuals, some of whom are organised into sub-coalitions. Organizational goals emerge from the process of bargaining, both within and between sub-coalitions. As such the question of goal incongruence is central to conceptual descriptions of organisational contexts. As Cyert and March explain:

> Individual participants in the organization may have substantially different preference orderings (i.e., individual goals). That is to say, any theory of organisation must deal successfully with the obvious potential for internal goal conflict inherent in a coalition of diverse individuals and groups. (Cyert and March 1963, p.31).

The discussion that will be developed in this chapter proceeds from the assumption that professional identities and commitments operate as a particularly significant locus for the development of organisational coalitions and sub-coalitions. Arguments that different professional orientations produce inter-professional relationships characterised by conflict and competition are reviewed and three shaping influences for professional conflict are identified and described. These shaping influences are described as the: reinforced pre-disposition model, the communities of practice model and the inter-professional competition model.

The chapter will then progress to consider whether evidence of goal incongruence drawn from participant observation within the case study network is consistent with the each of the explanations of the shaping influences for goal incongruence put forward by the professional orientation model. Due to the expression of professional difference within the case study only one empirical context for goal incongruence will be discussed. It is that of goal incongruence within the delivery network.

The chapter will describe how within the delivery network inter-professional goal incongruence is balanced by organic attempts at network integration. The chapter will conclude by suggesting that attempts to reduce goal incongruence within the delivery network reflect perceptions of inter-professional obligation and dependency derived from the nature of work and equivalence between different professional orientations within the Criminal Justice System.

The chapter will begin by summarizing the suggested shaping influences for professional orientation as a source of goal incongruence. It will then provide and overview of the claimed sources of horizontally produced goal incongruence and discusses the evidence that supports these claims.

Professional Difference as a Source of Goal Incongruence

The proceeding discussion of the proposed causes of goal incongruence suggests a number of shaping influences by which professional difference might lead to goal incongruence. These are summarised below.

The first shaping influence for goal incongruence within the professional orientation paradigm is the *reinforced pre-dispositions model*. New entrants to professionals are not selected at random, but self-select on the basis of attraction (their pre-disposition) to the values, goals, practice and benefits of their chosen profession. This expression of fundamental difference in the commitments of prospective professionals is reinforced by the pre-and in service training those individuals received. Professional training acts to socialise professionals into a cohesive epistemic community (Knorr-Certina 1999), reducing variability in an already self-selecting group. Voluntaristic commitments to undergo professional

training produce goal incongruence within a heuristic cycle of attraction, selection and attrition (Schneider 1987) that acts to establish and maintain inter-professional distinction and preference orderings.

The second shaping influence for goal incongruence is the specialised nature and experience of professional work and the consequent manifestation of professional groups as communities of practice. Professionals operate within specific and closely defined jurisdictional domains (Friedson 1986). These domains define the limit of professional responsibility, skills, experience and expertise and act to separate individuals of different professional orientations. The consequence of this specialisation is that professionals engage with the technical requirements of their work and the development of expertise necessary to achieve proximate ends and means.

The corollary of this outcome, less frequently discussed, is that professionals are distanced or excluded from engaging with work that is outside their jurisdictional domains. In itself this differential experience and consequent preoccupation with the technical demands of work might be considered sufficient to produce goal incongruence between workers with different professional orientations. From the institutional perspective the individual's conception of desired ends are mediated by: "cognitive frameworks that guide organisation members' thoughts and actions" (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms 2008:753). That means that professional groups are inclined to develop shared interpretations (ascribe similar meaning) to conceptions of desired ends. Under such circumstances the individual's relationship to organisational goals can become entangled with shared understandings of and commitment to identities and practices within cognitive communities (Porac and Rosa 1996; Porac, Wade and Pollack 1999).

From this perspective goal incongruence is a product of the extent of agreement or similarity of particular cognitive orientations produced and maintained by the cognitive group that exist within network arrangements. Professions are organised around systems of formal knowledge. The apparatus required to accomplish this task effectively produces a discourse. Indeed Larson has argued that professions comprise of discursive fields and that: "Professions can be distinguished by the nature and the structure of their discursive field" (1990,

p.38). The distinct communities of practice shaped by action, meaning and knowledge will influence the means and ends of distinct professional groups and will tend to create conditions of inter-professional goal incongruence. The shaping influences discussed above may be considered plausible. However they appear to provide a somewhat passive explanation of the sources of goal incongruence rooted in impersonal discourses and systems of shared meanings. Viewed through their lenses, goal incongruence can appear as an unfortunate accident of diversity.

Conversely the inter-professional competition model emphasises the intended and deliberate nature of goal incongruence. It emphasises that the objective of professions is to contend with out-groups in a struggle for survival, dominance and control. For professional groups whose members are generally employed by organisations and can therefore be described as being institutionally bound (Hughes 1958), the tendency toward inter-professional competition is reinforced by the intersection of organisational commitments.

According to the inter-professional competition model, the source of goal incongruence is the contest between professional groups that it inherent in the professionalization project. Professional jurisdiction consists of acquiring rights (ideally exclusive rights) to solve particular problems. The fundamental concept in acquiring and protecting jurisdictional rights is that of *audience*. Professionals are involved in a constant process of influencing pubic opinion, both as an end itself and as a way of influencing legal and political constituencies. The competition may be for the resources of power, prestige, status and financial rewards, or may be an existential contest for jurisdictional rights. Goal incongruence is both an outcome of that struggle and a means by which it is conducted.

Evidence for Professional Orientation as the Determinant of Goal Incongruence

In chapter five goal incongruence was identified in five network contexts. In the following section we will evaluate whether professional orientation is a persuasive explanation of that goal incongruence. As members of the strategic

core share a professional orientation the discussion will concentrate on goal incongruence within the delivery network and goal incongruence between the strategic core and delivery network.

If goal incongruence were determined by dissonant professional orientations what evidence would we expect to find for the causes of goal incongruence within the case study network? As was the case in the previous chapter we suggest that such evidence would consist in actors subverting, deflecting or contradicting practices aimed at achieving the formal and operative goals of other professional constituencies. Furthermore the practice of subversion by organisational actors should correspond to one or more of the shaping influences described in the preceding section. A discussion of the empirical evidence drawn from the case study and the extent to which it supports one or more of the shaping influences for the professional production of goal incongruence will follow. The discussion will present analysis of goal incongruence between different professional groups in the delivery network.

Professional Orientations, Goal Incongruence and Integration within the Delivery Network

The case study collected data from four statutory agencies that were responsible for administering the Criminal Justice System within a specific English city. They included the local Police service, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) and the local Probation Trust. The dominant work practices observed within the delivery network have been described at length in earlier chapters and revolved around the operational tasks necessary for the operation of the local criminal justice system.

At a high level of analysis it is possible to argue that professional orientations in the delivery network were congruent around meeting the operational imperatives of the Criminal Justice system. Each of the professional orientations observed appeared to reflect the individual's experience of being 'immersed' in the work of the Criminal Justice System. Each appeared to share what we have described as the dual 'because we have to, because its right' motivation towards meeting operational imperatives. Each professional orientation was exposed to systems

of performance measurement that published selected data on the efficiency and effectiveness of agency performance. In summary each professional orientation exhibited a high commitment to meeting the operational imperatives of the Criminal Justice System within the inevitable and predictable constraints of resources and demand.

However analysis reveals that particular delivery agencies focus on different operational imperatives. Professional orientations were not distributed uniformly over the delivery network. Differences in priority were reinforced by the practice of drawing organisational boundaries around professional / task orientations. This had the effect of reinforcing patterns of communication within rather than between professional / task groups. It also ensured that creation of hierarchical management teams who had an interest in optimising discreet elements of the delivery network (their agency), but no formal interest in optimising the performance of the network as a whole.

Chapter five presented a discussion of how professional constituencies with different professional or task orientations exhibited commitment to different and sometimes contradictory operative goals. One person with experience of leading improvement projects in the Criminal Justice System described their view that: "the police's main priority is detection, the CPS care about what proportion of cases are successful and the Courts measure court room utilization." (PO Notes). Subsequent data collection indicated that this description while undoubtedly an over-simplification was not devoid of merit.

Analysis during participant observation of the interaction of CJS agencies when investigating and prosecuting sexual violence cases indicated agencies working at cross-purposes. Police investigators might wait up to two months to obtain a meeting with CPS advocates responsible for making charging decisions. Statutory Agencies might have no knowledge (let alone communication) with voluntary agencies that provide invaluable practical assistance and emotional support to victims. Trials were 'vacated' (rescheduled) because files had not been prepared or submitted by the CPS. The availability of allocated prosecution advocates was not considered by HMCTS who were responsible for 'listing' trials. There was a widespread lack of knowledge in Criminal Justice Agencies regarding post-trial services available to victims (which were only taken up by

40% of eligible victims). There was also widespread frustration expressed at the effort required to obtain essential but unremarkable information from other CJS agencies.

It was widely believed that the inclination to prioritize agency over network had been exacerbated by budget reductions aimed at achieving deficit reduction targets. It was commonly accepted that agency managers made decisions about the deployment of resources that were in the financial and operational interests of their own agencies rather than the best interests of the network and network beneficiaries. These decisions included action to reduce agency workloads and cost and meet agency specific performance targets despite negative consequences for the CJS network.

A simple but illustrative example of the above was given at a meeting of the local Criminal Justice Board victim and witness group:

> A participant reported on a survey that had examined witness attitudes to waiting times in Magistrate's Courts. The HMCTs has national targets on waiting times, measuring how many witnesses have to wait longer than two hours to give evidence. One area in the region had excellent performance on witness waiting times. However they did poorly on 'cracked' trials (trials which are listed but do not go ahead). It was suggested that this was explained by their practice of listing three or four trials to run concurrently, then releasing three. In consequence performance against waiting time targets was excellent. The meeting went on to discuss the consequences of this target driven behaviour for the Criminal Justice Network and the public.
>
> Firstly witnesses had to return to Court on a rescheduled date in order to give evidence. This created additional work for the police Witness Liaison Unit who had to inform witnesses of rescheduled dates and persuades them to attend. If witnesses were particularly reluctant or even refusing to attend this might require the expensive and time-consuming action of issuing a summons. Police witnesses might also be required to return to Court to give evidence, reducing their efficiency. The Crown Prosecution Service experienced additional work and

> disruption to the schedules of Crown Advocates. The CPS might also have to meet the expenses of witnesses necessary to compensate additional costs of travel, lost wages, child-care and on occasion overnight expenses. The survey suggested that witnesses preferred to wait for longer to give their evidence 'on the day' rather than be released and required to return to Court on a subsequent day (Participant Observation Notes).

There appeared to be a fundamental incongruence within the delivery network in the experience of the operational imperative, targets and measures, professional practice, management objectives and financial performance. The result of such incongruence between professional orientations is a paradox. Professional commitments to meeting the operational imperative result in sub-optimal performance both for the network and individual agencies as professionals prioritize actions and decisions that make sense for their own Agency but reduce the effectiveness and efficiency of other Criminal Justice agencies.

In summary, the case study provides significant evidence that professional orientation was associated with goal incongruence. Professional orientations, reinforced by the practice of eliding organisational boundaries with professional / task orientations led to a concentration on proximate operative imperatives grounded in the professional's distinctive experience of work. The main expression of goal incongruence was in groups of professionals pursuing their own interests and agendas to the extent that it impeded the effectiveness and efficiency of other delivery network agencies through boundary spanning activities. The perverse but predictable outcome of this pattern of behaviour was the direct impeding of the capability of other network agencies and indirectly the impeding of the effectiveness of the professionals own agency through its dependency on other network agencies. Inter-professional cooperation was significantly impaired despite the fact that the nature of the work demanded an extensive, dense, continuous and seamless sharing of information that was essential to the effective performance of complex tasks and decisions demanded by the nature of the Criminal Justice System.

Despite the emphatic evidence for goal incongruence in the delivery network, the case study also produced a clear indication that senior professionals in the

delivery network understood the benefits of inter-agency integration and cooperation and the benefits of adopting an approach to resource configuration based on mutual assistance. This was evidenced by the success of organic local initiatives to develop integrated services to address problems caused by prolific offenders of acquisitive crimes and to provide integrated services to victims of sexual violence. These initiatives had proved to be so successful that the model was being extended to the management of dangerous offenders and services offered to victims. One participant commented that:

> Integration has been very successful. A lot of progress has been made. Success means that you want more but Agency priorities are inevitably different (Participant Observation Notes).

At least four examples of significant integration (either implemented or being planned) were observed during participant observation. The integration models ranged from increasing the efficiency of information exchange between CJS agencies to the physical co-location of multi-disciplinary teams. These initiatives were believed to have been successful in increasing the effectiveness of the local Criminal Justice System. They had received national recognition and were widely regarded as presenting a positive impression of agency and the reputation of senior local leaders for professional competence. However it is important to emphasise the local, organic and contingent nature of such integration activities. It appeared that even where integration was seen as successful, effective and legitimizing, senior advocates of integration struggled to resist pressure to prioritize narrow agency interests.

This organic commitment to integration emerged from professional's shared commitment to the formal goals of the criminal justice system, identification with the experience of the victims of serious crime and shared representations of what constituted satisfactory criminal justice outcomes for those victims. The author also argues that the emergence of integrated organisation reflects professional's recognition that the outcomes of their own practice are dependent on the actions, behaviour and goodwill of other groups of professionals within the criminal justice system. The performance of each agency is dependent on that of its counterparts within the network. The implication of this insight is that the professional experience of work acts to connect as much as divide, and

results in the recognition of the value of inter-professional dependency and obligation as much as the tactical advantages of inter-professional competition.

If the case study produced evidence in support of professional orientation as an explanation of incongruence between operative goals within the Delivery Network what inferences can be drawn for the shaping influences of that goal incongruence that we discussed earlier in the chapter? The following section will evaluate the evidence.

The Reinforced Predispositions Model

Differences in predisposition and training between distinct professional groups within the delivery network were clearly demonstrated during participant observation. Difference was expressed in dissonant entry requirements and career pathways, alternative reward systems and different ideological commitments. This was the case between delivery network agencies, where the experience of being a member of the local Police Service, Crown Prosecution Service or Probation Trust were very different. It was also experienced within agencies, for example between warranted police officers and the civilian staff who ensured that victims and witnesses appeared at Court or the legal and administrative professions within the HMCTS.

However it is difficult to claim that predisposition and training shaped goal incongruence. This work has argued consistently that difference is an insufficient criterion to establish goal incongruence. The connection between dissonant reinforced predispositions and goal incongruence was empirically indistinct. While there certainly appeared to be an association between the two the nature of the evidence produced by participant observation was insufficient to provided a convincing argument for reinforced predispositions as a shaping influence for goal incongruence. Therefore the limit of the claims that can be warranted by the evidence is that there is an association between reinforced predispositions. While a shaping relationship might be suspected, it cannot be confidently inferred.

The Communities of Practice Model

The case study appears to provide convincing evidence for the communities of practice model as a shaping influence for goal incongruence. Differences in the working practices of distinct professional groups provide the basic definition of professional difference and commitments. The nature of work defined professional experience, what they did and what they knew, how their proficiency was evaluated, what they contributed to the criminal justice system and how that contribution defined their value and identity as professionalised workers.

The inevitable pre-occupation with the proximate goals of work resulted in goal incongruence (the pursuit of contradictory goals) between professional orientations. This occurred due to professionals prioritising goals that emerged from their own work, and benefited the effectiveness and efficiency of their own work, at the expense of the work of other professional groups, as described in the empirical description of interaction within the delivery network earlier in this chapter.

However it would be a misleading simplification to suggest that the differential experience of work operated exclusively to produce goal incongruence. What emerges from consideration of the data is the realisation that while the nature of work within the criminal justice system not only separates but also connects groups with distinct professional orientations. The tendency toward the discrepant experience of work between professional groups was moderated by extensive interactions that were demanded by the nature of work within the Criminal Justice System. Organising effective criminal prosecutions demanded extensive, intense and protracted communication between multiple elements of various delivery network agencies.

Therefore the evidence for the experience of work as a shaper of goal incongruence was balanced. On the one hand it created difference and contradiction between professional groups that resulted in goal incongruence. On the other the connected nature of work established inter-professional dependencies and obligations that acted to reduce goal incongruence. The experience of work connected as well as divided individuals with different

professional orientations. This is an intriguing feature of the evidence that we will return to at several points in the remainder of this chapter.

The case study produced clear evidence that professional groups exhibited different and exclusive epistemic commitments. That is they operated as distinct communities of knowledge. In addition each profession, to a varying extent, operated as a discursive community, that is, produced systems and structures for the creation, curation, dissemination, acquisition consumption of specific bodies of knowledge. This experience of knowledge as a discursive identity was perhaps most visible and material in the Headquarters of the local Police Service that had lecture theatres and seminar rooms that were equivalent to those found in the best resourced Universities. These were used to educate new and existing members of the professional community.

However there was little positive evidence that the existence of these communities of knowledge shaped goal incongruence. Furthermore, the observation of professional commitments to integration within the delivery network suggests that communities of knowledge do not act as an inevitable shaper of goal incongruence. In examining this problem, that distinct communities of knowledge existed but did not produce uncontrollable goal incongruence, it might be worth considering two moderating influences. The first is that while discreet, the bodies of knowledge incorporated shared commitments to the outcomes of the Criminal Justice System.

The second is that they were frequently connected in that they shared elements of knowledge. For example a presentation organised by the local police service in their state of the art lecture theatre by a respected academic on the myths and stereotypes that apply to serious sexual violence was made available to and heavily attended by members of other professional groups within the delivery agency. For each epistemic community the myths and stereotypes knowledge had a significant valence. In that sense the 'distinctness' of the various epistemic communities lay in the way that they created, curated and credentialed knowledge (the discursive structures that carried knowledge) rather than knowledge itself. It is possible to argue that provided the integrity (and therefore utility) of these discursive structures were protected, the shared knowledge they carried could act to reduce goal incongruence as much as

increase it.

The communities of practice model suggest that goal incongruence is caused by patterns of shared interpretations of meaning across professional groups. Professional groups act as cognitive communities and goal incongruence emerge and are maintained because different professional groups 'see their worlds in the same way'. The case study certainly provided evidence that different professional groups did operate as cognitive communities. The patterns of their dress, language, manner, concerns and values did appear to exhibit professional patterning.

Of-course discerning the private subjective meanings ascribed to particular events is notoriously difficult. The researcher is frequently left to puzzle at empirical hints and nuances, frequently these are from the material or linguistic domain simply because these domains are more empirically available. For example several individuals commented that the police had natural authority in formal multi-professional interactions because they wore uniform. It was intriguing to note that non-uniformed male police officers were almost invariably adorned with ostentatious cuff links, a practice that was generally avoided by Courts and CPS staff, and positively shunned the Probation Service.

However, once again the presence of these empirically indistinct communities of meaning did not preclude significant commitments to inter-agency integration within the delivery network. Therefore the conclusion must be that (in the case study at least) the existence of professional communities of meaning did not act to shape goal incongruence. Why might this be? This work suggests that competing communities of meaning founded on peer group relations moderated the effects of professional communities of meaning. This is a subject that will be returned to in the following chapter. However it is worth making the point here that for many professionals within the CJS, their primary working interactions (that is peer group interactions) are with members of other professions as they co-operate to bring cases before the Courts. As such, professionals are engaged in multiple communities of meaning. Evidence from the case study might indicate that the peer group community is particularly powerful in reducing goal incongruence (in this case by promoting the concept of network integration.)

The Inter-Professional Competition Model

The inter-professional competition model suggests that different professional groups will compete to protect control of their own jurisdiction and to attempt to extend their control over the jurisdiction of other professional groups, that is to exclude or sub-ordinate other professional groups. The other important aspect of the model is that of audience. Professional groups will attempt to influence the perception of their audience (whether the public or policy makers) as to the effectiveness, efficiency and ultimately the legitimacy of the profession. They attempt to position themselves as deserving rather than undeserving professions (to borrow a phrase). The difficulty in studying this model in the case study was that professional groups were aligned with organisational boundaries, isolating organisational and professional interests was not a straightforward task.

The case study does appear to provide relevant evidence for this model. For example, professionals in the delivery network appeared to be very sensitive to newspaper stories that could influence opinion. They also appeared to have an absolute horror of agencies blaming each other for poor performance in informal communications with victims of crime. In addition influencing the policy audience in the strategic core by proposing novel projects or by developing narratives of best practice and improved outcomes were coveted activities that were regarded as a marker of professional accomplishment and prestige.

However the case study also furnished evidence that challenged to the inter-professional competition model. The most overt was that the different professions came together to organise network integration. That in itself suggests that inter-professional competition was experienced in a more sophisticated way than simple expressions of the model suggest. Within the case study, the possibility of one profession usurping the jurisdiction of another (for example the police taking over the running of the courts or the CPS taking operational responsibility for police investigations) was remote to say the least. What was of greater concern was that particular professional groups might be maneuvered into taking the blame for perceived failures of the joint enterprise of the Criminal Justice System. Furthermore, some professionals (and particularly professional

elites) feared losing their rights to operate their inherited jurisdictions. Not to competing professional groups within the CJS, but to private organisations. This effectively meant that adverse publicity might increase the chance that existing professional elites would 'losing their franchise' to operate elements of the CJS. Against this background the logic for inter-professional competition was moderated. Jurisdictional boundaries within the CJS were viewed as relatively stable, and professional co-operation between professional groups to improve performance and reduce public blaming was seen as an effective defense against the members of the Strategic Core opening the CJS to the jurisdictional incursions of the private sector

Conclusion

This chapter has presented and evaluated the theoretical argument that goal incongruence is caused by differences in the professional orientation of network actors. This theoretical perspective derives from conceptions of organisations as coalitions of interest (Cyert and March 1963) rather than chains of commands. Professionalization, understood as the "collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their own work" (DiMaggio and Powell 1991) is taken as the predominant institutional frame for the construction of those coalitions.

This chapter has discussed three shaping influences by which divergent professional orientations are claimed to produce goal incongruence. It evaluates the claims made by these models of the causal determinants of goal incongruence by testing them against case study evidence derived from participant observation of goal incongruence within the Delivery Network.

What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence? Evidence from the case study indicates that differences in professional orientations produced goal incongruence. The case study produced data that appeared to support professional difference as the source of goal incongruence. Evidence described how professional orientation determined engagement with work that acted as barriers to inter-professional cooperation and understanding. Evidence drawn from participant observation provided accounts that supported the communities

of knowledge, meaning and practice models. The evidence also appeared to suggest an association between goal incongruence and differences in the reinforced pre-dispositions of different professional orientations despite the empirical evidence being insufficiently strong to allow the confident inference of a causal relationship. Participant observation also provided qualified (or more accurately nuanced) support for the inter-professional competition model to the extent that professional groups were particularly sensitive to inter-professional criticism and its role in questioning the legitimacy and desirability of jurisdictional control.

However as the work describes, accounts of practice from the delivery network included evidence of inter-professional *integration* within the delivery network. This represented an organic attempt to reduce goal incongruence and its negative consequences for the operational performance of the Criminal Justice System. These attempts to integrate network activities represent an attempt by senior professionals within delivery agencies to self-medicate against the negative effects of goal incongruence.

How can this apparently contradictory empirical surprise be resolved? Narratives that explore the experience of inter-professional interactions emphasise the evidence for the existence of mutual obligation and dependency that exist between professional groups within the Criminal Justice System. Patterns of connection, obligation and dependence emerge from analysis of the three shaping influences discussed in this chapter. The most important is the experience of work. The nature of the work of the Criminal Justice System demands extensive, sustained, complex and intense communication. We have argued work acts to connect as much as to separate professional orientations. Communities of practice produced by the shared aspects of the experience of work within the delivery network are to some extent professionally inclusive and are not entirely co-terminus with professional and organisational boundaries.

The reinforced pre-dispositions model demonstrates equivalence as professional groups share commitments to the overarching goals and values of the Criminal Justice System, reflected in a common identification with the experience of the victim of serious crime. Finally the realization of professional interests is

understood by delivery network members to be dependent on the goodwill and cooperation of other delivery network agencies.

In summary, evaluation of the case study indicates that goal incongruence was not produced by differences in professional orientation as predicted by the professional conflict literature. It would be wrong to suggest that competition and contradictory difference were absent from inter-professional relationships. However the empirical surprise provided by the data is that local professional elites organised to reduce goal incongruence by developing practices of network integration. This work concludes that this empirical surprise, that professionals who were supposed to compete with each other in fact attempted to co-operate, reflects the fact that the shaping influences for goal incongruence were moderated and altered by perceptions of inter-professional dependency and obligation that were experienced within the delivery network. The conclusion drawn from this account is that the tendency to professional introspection and the creation of contradictory conceptions of desired ends was not the source of goal incongruence within the case study.

In summary the case study provides evidence that different professional orientations did exist, did act to limit the effectiveness of cooperation and collaboration and on occasion did result in inter-professional tension and conflict. However evidence also indicates that the suggested shaping influences for goal incongruence were associated with the production of goal incongruence, they also appeared to account for organic actions to limit goal incongruence by promoting inter-professional collaboration in the shape of network integration. The propensity for network integration demonstrated in the case study stands against inter-professional conflict as a cause of goal incongruence. However we suggest that the organic integration initiatives represent a tacit recognition on the part of local professionals of the negative impact that inter-professional conflict on the effectiveness of all the local Criminal Justice Agencies. It can be thought of as senior professionals in the delivery network taking steps to reduce the effects of inter-professional conflict and goal incongruence.

Chapter 8 Theorising Network Integration

Introduction

Theory suggests that goal incongruence is caused by two factors. The first is the nature of bureaucratic delegation within hierarchies. The second is difference between professional orientations. Theorists and policy-makers have assumed that disparate groups of professionals will pursue their own interests and goals unless they are induced or even coerced into meeting external performance expectations and cooperating with each other. This practice of control is most clearly expressed in the performance measurement systems that are imposed on professionals by bureaucratic hierarchies.

The evidence of the study confirms hierarchical explanations of goal incongruence (see chapter six). However the research found that the influence of professional orientations (at least in the delivery network) acted *to reduce* goal incongruence. Evidence indicates that groups with different professional orientations were attempting to co-operate by deliberately integrating their practice. However the literature predicts that they should be competing with each other and attempting to separate their working practices. Perversely, hierarchical attempts by the strategic core to manage network performance appeared to push professional groups further apart, promoting goal incongruence and reducing network effectiveness.

This empirical surprise, that professional groups are capable of voluntary action to reduce goal incongruence and that they are prevented from doing so by hierarchical interventions that have the same purpose, raises three important questions.

1. Does the evidence really show professionals attempting to co-operate?
2. Why do professionals in the delivery network attempt to co-operate by integrating working practices?
3. If professionals do show a propensity to co-operate, what modifications do we need to make to the theory of goal incongruence?

This work needs to establish with confidence that the evidence of the case study contradicts theoretical perspectives that argue that dissonant professional orientations will create goal incongruence. Warranting this claim demands a close evaluation of the evidence. The chapter will do this by scrutinising four examples of professional co-operation and network integration drawn from the case study.

The chapter will then go on to explore the influences of professional co-operation. Four shaping influences will be suggested and evaluated. They are that co-operation is a response to professional control systems, that it emerges from the nature of work within the network, that it is an attempt to realise institutional benefits and that it reflects attempts on the part of senior individuals to acquire professional recognition. The chapter will argue that the case study provides no empirical support for the first theoretical explanation, but considerable evidence that professional co-operation and integration is produce by the conditions of work, institutional benefits and professional recognition.

The chapter will conclude by proposing modifications to theory suggested by the research findings. The proposed modifications include those drawn directly from empirical observation. They are that different professional groups act to promote co-operation and network integration, integration is caused by the nature of professional work, attempts to realise institutional benefits and the desire to acquire professional recognition and that performance control systems act to increase goal incongruence and reduce professional co-operation and network integration.

There are also two modifications that derive from analysis of the data. Firstly, theory underestimates the role of peer group interactions in favour of institutional and professional interactions. Secondly theory over-emphasises the identification of inter-professional difference and underestimates the influence of equivalence between different groups of professionals within network contexts. In both cases the author suggests that what is searched for influences what is found. Modifying theory to include the influence of peer groups and the concept of equivalence is likely to lead to different interpretations of the causes of goal incongruence.

Professional Integration in the Delivery Network

Does the evidence really show professionals attempting to co-operate? This work suggests that it does, and in compelling terms. This section will present four examples of integration to support our case. They include the Integrated Victim Service (IVS) project, two forms of Integrated Offender Management (IOM) and a cluster of integrated practices that support the local Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy. The work argues that in each case professionals in the delivery network demonstrate a commitment to boundary spanning co-operation. This results in network integration despite institutional barriers to professional collaboration.

Integrated Victim Service Project

The IVS project's objective was to provide services to victims of crime in a 'more joined up and effective way' (participant observation notes). The most recent official satisfaction surveys indicated that 85% of victims were satisfied with the services that they received from local criminal justice agencies. Despite this, senior professionals within the delivery network expressed a profound dissatisfaction with the performance of the system. It was felt to be disjointed, incoherent and incapable delivering effective outcomes for victims.

Senior professionals expressed a variety of negative views with regard to the operation of the system:

> At the moment victims ricochet around the system like a ball in a pinball machine.
>
> [The system is]… not just fragmented, but inconsistent, with victims being given contradictory information on a regular basis.
>
> At present victims and witnesses are more confident that offenders will harm them than they are that the system will protect them. (Participant Observation Notes)

More junior members of delivery agencies could give a more visceral impression of victims' experience of the Criminal Justice System. One, employed to provide post-trial services to victims whose work involved developing long term relationships with victims of sexual violence, explained the victim's position (and indirectly their identification with it) in less constrained terms:

> At the end of the trial victims feel like they have been shat on by the Criminal Justice System. We are the people who get the backlash because we are the ones who go out and speak to victims in their own homes (Participant Observation Notes).

Professionals felt that the fragmented nature of the system impaired the service offered to victims. It was also felt to have a serious negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of professionals and their agencies as they struggled to obtain information and coordinate the processes of the Criminal Justice System. Initial work conducted under the auspices of the IVS project indicated that each of the participating agencies experienced significant negative impacts as a result of poor information flow and inefficiencies, long lead times and poor quality associated with boundary spanning activities.

The formal aim of the IVS project was to "review the way services are currently delivered in a dis-jointed way across the Criminal Justice agencies and re-write the end-to end processes / services that victims receive…" (Participant observation notes). The logic of promoting integration is illustrated in the anticipated benefits from integrated victim services that were set out in the project proposal. These included:

- Raise the profile of the victim and the victim's voice in the CJS.
- Better target available resources according to need.
- Victims will be presented with a more coherent and positive CJS, reducing instances where services are disjointed, repetitive or contradictory information is received from different agencies, therefore improving efficiency.
- The Integrated Victim Service would provide a single point of contact for resolving queries / issues / complaints about the CJ process.

- Shared information about the victim, case and offender will reduce the number of times a victim has to share personal information, impacting on the confidence of the victim and increasing efficiency and responsivity across the CJS.

- Integrated information sources would provide a better opportunity to devise protective services for victims, therefore reducing risk of repeat victimization.

- Achieve efficiency savings from economies of scale.

- Bringing services together breaks down barriers and increases focus on need

  Adapted from Local Criminal Justice Board IVS Paper, (Participant Observation)

During the research phase of the case study, the IVS project was at a pre-implementation stage. Challenges had been experienced in securing adequate project resources. The numbers of people in the local Criminal Justice Board (who would have been most likely to provide project management and analysis resource) had reduced from eight full time equivalent employees to just one. It was only at the end of the period of participant observation that funding for a IVS project manager was secured from the voluntary sector.

The evidence of the IVS project consists of analyses of perceived deficiencies in the delivery of victim services and expectations of how integration might be expected to address them. It is a representation of desired rather than actual practice. Nevertheless it serves to illustrate the perceived benefits of co-operation and integration held by network professionals. The anticipated benefits outlined above indicate that integration is understood to confer three broad categories of benefit. First the experience of the victim would improve. Services would be more coherent, clearer and easier to access. Secondly Criminal Justice agencies will be made to operate more efficiently. Economies of scale, easier access to information and reductions in duplication and errors will reduce agency workloads and costs for meeting particular levels of outputs. Thirdly the effectiveness of criminal justice agencies would be enhanced. Agencies would be placed in a position to provide statutory services to a greater

proportion of victims more frequently than they do now. In addition, integration was seen as a pathway to new services being offered to victims, and a way in which their needs could be identified more accurately and met more appropriately.

The commitment to integration indicated by the IVS project did not derive solely from principle. Professionals in the case study could draw on their successful recent experience of establishing and operating Integrated Offender Management (IOM) projects. The perceived success of IOM projects provided a significant stimulus to persist with diffusing the practice of co-operation and integration into the provision of services to victims.

Integrated Offender Management

As the name suggests IOM involves criminal justice agencies co-operating by coordinating their activities in order to reduce offending in their local areas. The Government Policy Statement (Home Office, 2009) indicated that IOM: was to be the strategic umbrella that brought together agencies across government to prioritise intervention with offenders causing crime in their locality; was to build on and expand current offender-focused and public protection approaches; and should relate to all agencies engaged in Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) with direction and support in bringing together the management of repeat offenders in a more coherent structure.

In 2008/09 the criminal justice agencies within the case study network were selected to be one of six 'pioneer' areas that received central funding from the Home Office and Ministry of Justice to implement an IOM project. The project concentrated on reducing crimes committed by prolific acquisitive offenders. In layman's terms this meant offenders who were responsible for high numbers of burglaries, robberies and thefts.

The IOM project introduced intense cooperation between different criminal justice professionals. An integrated project team was established that included members of the police, prison and probation services and drug workers. The co-

location of this team within a single office was widely regarded as an important and meaningful action. It facilitated cooperation and signified agency commitment to the project. The provision of inter-agency access to IT systems and resources to IOM project members was also regarded as evidence of a radical approach to professional coordination.

The practical form of integration was essentially interventionist. The integrated IOM team gathered intelligence that enabled the integrated team to form a 'cohort' of approximately 800 prolific acquisitive offenders active in the local area. These offenders were contacted and made aware of the IOM project and its intention to disrupt their offending behaviours. This disruption was founded on a carrot and stick approach. On one hand offenders were informed of the resources that the integrated team would devote to intelligence gathering and surveillance and ensuring that where evidence of criminal actions was collected it would be brought before the Courts. On the other offenders were offered support to follow a range of 'reducing re-offending pathways' that included support connected with employment, housing, education and addiction.

The case study did not involve direct observation or contact with active members of the prolific acquisitive IOM project. However within the delivery network the project was regarded as being extremely successful and a beacon of best practice that attracted national attention and appreciation. It was credited with reducing crime in the local area. It was also regarded as being a more intelligent way of working and utilizing agency resources. The positive understanding of the IOM is revealed in the following quotations, again taken from the web site of the local police service:

> One of the most effective ways to cut crime is to focus most of our efforts on the people who are committing most of the crimes in our communities. … [IOM] is a multi-agency team who are all working together as one.
>
> [IOM] doesn't cost any extra. Probation, Police, Prisons and Local Authorities have come together and worked out how to get more for their money by working together to tackle the same problems.

> [IOM] gets real results. When it was introduced … as a trial in 2008 serious acquisitive crime (which includes domestic burglary, theft from motor vehicle, theft of motor vehicle and robbery) dropped by 28.3% in just two years.
>
> (Descriptions of IOM published on agency web sites. Web site Address Withheld)

The project was seen as a positive story to be associated with both for the agencies involved and senior professionals within those agencies. Interest in the project was so great that the numbers of visitors proved disruptive to the work of the team. It became necessary to restrict external visits by visiting professionals who wanted to understand how integration operated to a fixed day each week to minimize such disruption.

The perceived success of the initial project was such that the IOM approach was extended to managing dangerous offenders. This commitment required agencies to undertake a significant amount of preparatory work identifying a cohort of dangerous or potentially dangerous offenders, creating appropriate crime reduction pathways and developing relationships with public agencies that were more peripheral to the Criminal Justice System. The dangerous offender IOM included the local mental health partnership NHS Trust as a core organisation in addition to the established involvement of the police, probation and prison services.

However in other respects the integration model remained unchanged. Co-location, information sharing and the carrot and stick approach were all facets of integration that were carried forward from the management of prolific acquisitive offenders to that of persistent dangerous offenders. The anticipated benefits remained extremely similar and the perceived effectiveness of the pioneer project was taken as an indication that the second IOM could expect to meet with the same success. When the dangerous offenders IOM project was formally announced launched (after the period of participant observation) it was described in an official press release in the following terms:

> "By adopting a similar approach [to the prolific acquisitive offender IOM] … staff from the different agencies will be based at the same

location, sharing information and joint responsibility. We think using this approach we can achieve similarly positive results with dangerous offenders and do reduce the risk to the public" (Press Release 27.06.12; Web address withheld)

"The …team will work together to identify, assess and monitor individuals who we believe pose a risk of causing harm. This initiative will help us to work together even more closely with our partners in probation, the NHS and prison service to manage those who we believe pose a risk so we are even more effective in reducing the risk of harm to the public"

(Press Release 27.06.12; Web address withheld)

Taken together, these accounts of two IOM projects in the case study network, the second a consequence of the perceived success of the first, illustrate professionals' commitment to co-operation and integration. Integration was seen as an effective way of improving the outcomes of the criminal justice system. It was also seen as a more attractive, intelligent and efficient way for agencies to deploy resources and for professionals to work. The hallmarks of the IOM approach were co-location, shared access to system information and IT systems, and joint responsibility for outcomes. National interest in IOM within the case study network ensured that it was seen as a positive story to be associated with by professionals working within the Criminal Justice System. IOM was widely perceived to be a different, better and more professional way to organise work within the Criminal Justice System. It therefore represented professionals desire to overcome institutional barriers to inter-professional co-operation and consequently acted to reduce of goal incongruence within the delivery network.

It might be objected that however effective, the IOM projects do not reflect inter-professional co-operation because they received initial funding from central Government and were conducted under a hierarchical policy framework. However this objection can be safely dismissed. The Government policy statement was guidance rather than proscription. It envisaged that local agencies would enjoy considerable discretion in devising, implementing and developing

IOM approaches. Central government's role was seen to create a permissive environment characterised by benign neglect rather than mandated actions enforced by intrusive systems of performance control.

In their evaluation of the pioneer IOM projects Senior et al (2011) describe the situation in the following terms:

> Sites … were provided with 'pioneer' funding from the Home Office (HO) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in 2008/09 and 2009/10, to develop IOM free from central prescription. IOM has been characterised by 'bottom up' developments in local areas. While this approach has been supported by central government it has not been directed towards a single model or mode of operation (Senior et al 2011, p.3).

Establishing the primacy of local professionals in the production of patterns of integration within IOM projects is of such vital importance to this discussion that it is worth quoting such an authoritative source even more completely. Writing about the role of local professionals in IOM projects versus the civil servants of central government Senior et al. state explicitly that:

> Definition of the approach [to IOM] was left to local discretion (Senior et al 2011:i)

And:

> The enthusiasm and commitment to IOM from local stakeholders was critical to IOM development and resulted from encouraging local development *free from national prescription* (Emphasis added) (Senior et al 2011:iv).

These accounts of IOM projects emphasise that integration flows from the commitment of professionals working within local criminal justice agencies. This commitment is not based on prescription, coercion or control but emanates from professionals belief that integration presents the opportunity to work in a better, more effective and more professional way. As such it provides compelling evidence for professionals' influence in reducing goal incongruence.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy

Co-operation and integration was not restricted to IVS and IOM projects. A range of practical attempts to realize the objectives of the local VAWG strategy also provided evidence for professional integration that reduced goal incongruence. These were coordinated attempts to reduce violence directed against women and girls. This included domestic abuse, sexual violence, and female genital mutilation, so called 'honor' killings, as well as prostitution and trafficking.

The varied nature of these challenges meant that rather than a unified approach pursued by IOM projects a wide range of integrated responses was developed. This produced a crowded and complex landscape of inter-agency co-operation that included statutory initiatives such as Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs) and voluntary arrangements such as Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committees (MARACs) and Special Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs). Each of these initiatives represented attempts to coordinate inter-agency action in order to improve process outcomes and efficiency.

The initiative that was most visible within the case study was the organisation of SDVCs (Robinson 2004, Robinson and Tregidga 2005). SDVCs originated in North America during the 1980s. They are attempts to concentrate resources awareness and skills in order to ensure that cases of domestic violence are brought before the Courts, offenders are convicted and offered effective support to address their behaviour. Key to achieving this is that victims of domestic abuse have the confidence to report crime, prosecute their attacker and give evidence in a trial. The components of SDVCs are designed to assure that confidence and include:

- Frontline police officers trained in investigating domestic violence.
- Accredited independent domestic violence advisors (ISVAs) who offer victims one point of contact during and after their case.
- Dedicated prosecutors, specially trained magistrates, legal advisors.

- Either a fast tracking of domestic violence cases, or a clustering-together of cases on a designated day each week or month.
- Where possible, separate entrances, exits and waiting areas so that victims do not face the risk of being confronted by their attackers while attending court.
- Single rather than double list domestic violence trails. Morning trials only to accommodate childcare and the school run, applications to very bail only considered after all the parties have ben informed.
- Applications to use special measures, such as screens around the witness box or video links should be used wherever it is felt needed

Adapted from Specialist Domestic Violence Court Programme: Resource Manual (Home Office 2006)

SDVC's demand that statutory and voluntary agencies cooperate to deliver the policy effectively. Clustering and fast tracking of cases required close co-operation between court listing officers, police witness care staff responsible for assuring the attendance of victims and witnesses, and the CPS who were responsible for preparing cases in time and ensuring that they were presented by prosecutors who had received specialized training in prosecuting domestic violence cases. Assurance of the victim's experience required co-ordination and management of the communication between statutory agencies and the victim and their voluntary IDVA. Courts staff was responsible for ensuring that Magistrates had been made aware of domestic violence issues. They also had to pass listing information to voluntary witness service units who provided a welcoming and safe environment in Court and providing support to victims, for example by coordinating the provision of special measures and where requested, sitting with victims while they gave evidence by video-link.

SDVCs were highly regarded by professionals in the case study. They were seen as being effective, representing good practice and enabling professionals to make a difference to the experience of victims of domestic violence. Delivering the individual components of SDVCs effectively was seen as an expression of

successful collective action. Each agency expected the others to make their contribution and recognised their own obligations to do the same.

The importance of SDVCs was illustrated by an event that occurred during the case study. Rumors began to circulate (apparently started by members of voluntary agencies) that the local HMCTS was going to stop running SDVCs. This was because they were felt to be expensive and disruptive at a time when HMCTS was under intense pressure to reduce costs and maximize efficiency. Concerns were expressed regarding HMCTS' action to reduce the quality of SDVCs to the point where they are no longer fit for purpose. This involved putting DV cases into non-DV courts. In addition, because of the courts' multiple listing policy (up to quadruple listings were claimed) witnesses were expected to turn up to court on several occasions as a matter of course.

It was stated that it was: "impossible to get witnesses to turn up more than once, so cases were collapsing as a result." (Participant observation notes). When the rumors of the possible threat to SDVC's emerged and were discussed at a meeting with HMCTS staff it was reported that the meeting had got: "really, really nasty" (Participant observation notes).

The veracity of these rumors was never established. However they galvanized professionals from other agencies to make informal representations to members of the local HMCTS to protect SDVCs. When the subject of the possible 'fraying' of the HMCTS' commitment to SDVCs arose in a multi-agency meeting that was not attended by Court staff:

> There was a lot of anger in the room, particularly as the Police, CPS and Probation felt that they had fought very hard for domestic violence courts and they felt that they were very effective. One individual said that it had taken twenty years to achieve this, [referring to SDVCs] and we can't go back now (Participant Observation Notes).

Whether these representations were effective or necessary was unclear. The local HMCTS was quick to assure their colleagues from other agencies that they had no intention of suspending SDVCs. This account illustrates the informal influence, mutual dependency and tacit obligations that characterised inter-

agency relationships. Integration was frequently founded on inter-agency goodwill rather than statutory obligations or the demands of local service level agreements. As an example the local CPS had been providing assistance to their counterparts in the local Police Service. At one observed meeting the CPS representative reminded the meeting that this assistance had been agreed as a short-term measure and it could not be carried on indefinitely:

> The local police service had a very high caution rate for domestic violence (in excess of 40%). This was regarded as being highly unsatisfactory and out of line with good practice and national averages. The CPS agreed to provide mandated advice to police officers before they dealt with domestic violence cases by offering a caution, for a limited period. The consequence of this was that the cautioning rate for domestic violence fell to 17%. This was felt to be a much more appropriate rate. However the CPS were doing this 'as a favour' which they found they could no longer fund. The Police representative at the meeting understood the reason for the ending of the 'favour', but was concerned that the cautioning rate would return to an unacceptably high level. They committed to developing robust guidance in an attempt to maintain desirable cautioning rates (Participant observation notes).

What does the evidence of SDVCs imply for inter-professional relationships? This work argues that it demonstrates the intense interactions that characterise inter-professional relationships and the presence of at least a degree of goodwill within those relationships. SDVCs were regarded as collectively produced. Professionals from statutory and voluntary agencies were committed to intense if imperfect collaboration. Professionals embraced integration and the mutual dependencies, obligations and expectations that arose from integration. The fundamental insight appears to be that professionals were particularly exposed to formal and informal influence and pressure from members of their peer group who came from different agencies and different professional affiliations. These multi-agency peer groups acted to reduce goal incongruence within the delivery network.

Theoretical Explanations of Professional Integration

What are the theoretical explanations of professional co-operation and network integration? This work will examine four alternative models. The first suggests that co-operation is a response to performance control systems imposed on professionals. Secondly that co-operation emerges from shared experiences of work. Thirdly that it confers institutional benefits and finally that co-operation is pursued because it provides opportunities for professional recognition.

'Co-operate to Compete': a response to performance control systems?

The first explanation of professional co-operation is that it is a response to imposed systems of performance control. The previous chapter discussed how systems of performance measurement are used to control professional practice and become *goals in themselves*. The most important attributes of these control systems are that they make comparisons within professions and those comparisons are made public, frequently in the form of league tables. The author has argued that professionals care about their comparative performance within such systems. It has also been suggested that being placed at the bottom or close to the bottom of the performance range appeared to constitute a particularly powerful motivating factor for improvement.

One of the ways in which performance can be improved is by collaborating with adjacent professional groups employed by different agencies. Institutionally bound professionals are induced to *co-operate* with other professional groups in their local network in order to *compete* more effectively with fellow professionals distributed across an organisational field. With reference to the case study, a local police service might seek co-operation with other local criminal justice agencies (Courts, CPS and Probation etc.) in order to directly or indirectly improve its performance and subsequent position in national police service league tables.

'Co-operate to compete' is a widely recognised and long established logic in private sector literatures (Sako 1992, Lamming 1993, Nishiguchi 1993). Writing in 1982 Peter Drucker commented that:

> Nowhere in business is there greater potential for benefiting from … interdependence than between customer firms and their suppliers. This is the largest remaining frontier for gaining competitive advantage – and nowhere has a frontier been more neglected. (Drucker 1982, p.4)

However is there evidence that it was responsible for inter-professional integration in the case study network? Plausible evidence might be observations that integration was initiated, justified or evaluated on the basis of improving comparative agency performance within professional fields. Given the importance attached to poor performance, it might be considered that the evidence should be scrutinized particularly carefully for evidence that integration was initiated by poor or very poor performance in performance measurement systems.

In fact the case study provides very little positive evidence for the role of performance control systems in encouraging professional co-operation. While there was certainly evidence of action taken to address unsatisfactory performance measurement outcomes, that action did not include network integration. Instead, the repertoire of responses to unsatisfactory external scrutiny tended to concentrate on three types of action. They were:

- Gaming the measurement system
- Concentration of resources
- Remedial competence building

Gaming the performance measurement system was frequently the most straightforward method of avoiding the undesirable outcomes of scrutiny. For example waiting time targets in the Courts were met by cancelling trials without need in order to prevent witness waiting times extending beyond targets.

Genuine attempts to improve performance usually consisted of concentrating resources in order to meet specific and limited goals that would have maximum effect on performance measures. In addition, as very poor performance can often reflect a fundamental lack of competence, remedial competence building is frequently an appropriate and obvious response to poor performance.

Responses to the adverse effects of performance control systems appear to lead not to integration but to organisational introspection. Institutions appeared to turn away from their network partners in order to concentrate on internal improvement strategies. The case study indicates that professional integration is not a response to performance measurement systems imposed on professional practice. The 'co-operate to compete' theorization of integration is not empirically supported.

Why might this be? Internally focused strategies might be preferable because they promise a faster response to urgent situations. Similarly their implementation also falls within the span of control of agency decision makers, and action can be taken without securing the uncertain support of counterparts in other network agencies. However it can also be suggested that a contributory factor was that the 'co-operate to compete' logic was too abstract to have a meaningful influence on professional behaviour. The professional experience was one of immersion in the work of the criminal justice system and membership of communities of practice associated with that work. The immersive nature of the experience of work appeared to prevent professionals from engaging seriously with a somewhat complicated concept of organisational behaviour. The argument that cooperation within a network will enhance competitive advantage within an organisational field was too remote form practice for it to have a serious influence on professional behaviour.

The Experience of Work

An alternative theory of network integration is that it emerges from the connected nature of work and the similar demands that patterns of work make on professionals. This argument suggests that the complex and intense interactions demanded by the work of the criminal justice system acts as a centripetal force that overcomes the barriers of professional orientation and institutional affiliation. Network integration develops from professionals' identification with and their commitments to their immediate peer group (Kidron 1965). In network contexts the immediate peer group will frequently incorporate members from a variety of professional backgrounds and network agencies.

Furthermore, the Justice System is essentially local. Interactions occurred with a high degree of geographical and in some cases physical proximity and relationships, both institutional and personal were generally stable. Face to face communication, particularly between managers, was common and regular. Communication between operational staff was frequently verbal and informal. Inter –agency interaction became a habitual, taken for granted process.

The implication of this insight is that the professional experience of work acts to connect professionals rather then divides them. The close and meaningful interactions required by patterns of work gave rise to stable relationships that were characterised by intense collaboration and connected professionals in relationships of reciprocal obligation and dependency.

This work has argued consistently that the professional experience was one of immersion in the work of the Criminal Justice System. The case study produced considerable evidence that professionals understood and took for granted that their performance depended on the performance of their counterparts in other network agencies. We also argue that the emergence of integrated organisation reflects professional's recognition that the outcomes and efficiency of their own work were dependent on the actions, behaviour and goodwill of other groups of professionals within the criminal justice system. In other words the experience of work created normative and cognitive systems of reciprocal obligation and dependency between professionals. These systems were reinforced by shared commitments to the overall objectives of the criminal justice system and a strong identification with the experience of the victim.

Collective commitments could not eliminate the fact that real differences existed between professional within the network. However despite undeniable differences they were united by several factors. For example their shared experience of connected and co-ordinated work within the criminal justice system, their dependency on and obligation to other professionals, and collective commitments to the overall objectives of the criminal justice system. Finally professionals appeared to be committed to meeting the needs of the victims of serious crime because this was: "the right thing to do" (adapted from participant observation notes).

Co-operation and network integration is understood to enable professional work to be completed more efficiently and effectively. It is believed to improve the experience of the victim. It also protects professionals from the negative experience of being associated with or even held responsible for perceived failure of the criminal justice system, negative outcomes for the victims of serious crime and inefficient and unrewarding working practices.

Institutional Benefits

Another approach to theorizing the development of professional co-operation and network integration is to emphasise the institutional benefits it confers to integrating agencies. The term 'institutional' is used to describe benefits that are not directly linked to service delivery. Instead they reflect improvements in the agency's ability to influence its proximate environment and maintain its network position.

In the first instance professional integration is attractive because it extends the influence of agency actors outside agency boundaries. Integration is a method to influence the decisions taken in other network agencies that are nevertheless likely to cause affects within the original agency. Such boundary spanning influence may be desirable as an end in itself. However it is also likely to be used to achieve certain ends. For example the influence of network integration might by hypothesized to allow agency actors to influence the strategic priorities, organisational structures and resource allocations to their own advantage. In such a way integration is an approach that agency actors can employ to co-opt the resources of other network agencies for their own purposes.

The second category of institutional benefit is that integration makes it more difficult to marginalize or replace agencies within network contexts. Integration creates shared tacit knowledge, informal structures, complex agency interfaces, collaborative relationships and, if successful, inter-agency goodwill. Together, these act as a barrier to new entrants, thereby protecting and institutionalizing the position of network incumbents. Integration therefore represents a strategy of solidarity and exclusion (Cousins 1987). It acts to exclude new entrants and marginalize existing competitors. It does this by increasing the perceived risks,

costs and relational disruption of switching service providers. It provides integrated network incumbents with advantageous access to information and increases the costs of acquiring tacit information and establishing required competency to potential replacements.

There was clear empirical evidence that integration was valued because it reduced the willingness and ability of agencies to be critical of their network counterparts. Senior professionals appeared to be particularly sensitive to criticism from network peers. This sensitivity appeared especially pronounced when criticism was made to members of the public who experienced network services. This was because it was thought to bring the professional reputation of agencies into disrepute. Integration was felt to reduce inter-agency criticism because it was seen as a breach of good faith. It also became difficult because under integration delivering effective outcomes became a shared network responsibility. In one inter-agency meeting observed during the case study where:

> A number of participants indicated that they were dissatisfied with agencies blaming each other [for poor performance] in the presence of victims and witnesses. It was a sign of poor trust that was extremely negative for the public's confidence in the administration of justice (Participant Observation Notes).

The case study supports theories of professional co-operation and network integration that emphasise the causative role of institutional benefits. Co-operation and integration reduced the likelihood of public criticism. It acted to secure the position of agencies and gave the opportunity for agencies to acquire boundary-spanning influence within network contexts.

Professional Recognition

Observation indicated that professional co-operation and network integration depended on the support of senior professionals. One theoretical explanation of their commitment is that integration provided them with an opportunity to obtain professional recognition. Integration was an effective method of achieving

professional recognition because staff generally supported it. Integration was viewed as a legitimate and beneficial activity by the policy community and was generally perceived to deliver positive results. Integration was therefore viewed as a good thing to do. Beyond this, and perhaps more importantly, integration represented a novel practice. It was a new way of working as opposed to business as usual and therefore it was exciting and worthy of discussion and comment. Integration projects gave senior professionals the opportunity to talk about themselves, their projects and their agencies and in turn to be talked about by other professionals. The discussion of integration projects allowed senior professionals to become centres of attention and the subject of others' appreciation.

Vitally, senior professionals had far more control over the terms of these conversations than they could hope to exercise over imposed performance measurement systems and targets. Conversations around integration projects therefore acted to transform their roles from that of passive subjects of direction and scrutiny into active social entrepreneurs. It may be regarded as hyperbole to suggest that integration projects enabled senior professionals to present themselves and be presented within a 'heroic' frame. However the case study provided considerable evidence that acquiring professional recognition was a significant factor in securing the commitment of senior professionals to integration projects.

Integration projects were used to engage with prestigious but distant authority figures. For example one integration project within the case study was formally initiated by the submission of a two page briefing paper to the Home Secretary, submitted ostensibly as a request for funding. Despite being unsuccessful in its stated objective, some years later it was widely referred to as 'the Jack Straw paper'. The project benefited from the cachet of the association, however tenuous, and was eventually funded by a far more mundane source (a local charity).

Prizes and awards also appeared to play a prominent role in ensuring commitment to integration projects. Several case study integration projects had applied for or had won awards. Prizes and awards appeared to enjoy a surprisingly high importance in the discourse of senior professionals. For

example identifying prizes and awards that a project might win was observed to occur before the project was implemented and therefore acted *a priori* to encourage integration projects.

Being talked about and becoming the subject of professional conversations also appeared an important motivating factor. This professional equivalent of being 'mentioned in dispatches' could take several forms. At its most formal it might involve external evaluations of the benefits of integration projects conducted more or less rigorously by academics, consultants or think-tank staff. Several of the case study integration projects had been the subject of rigorous and official process evaluations conducted by academic institutions. The positive results of these evaluations had been incorporated into other official documents such as policy guidance and Government Green papers. They could also be shared at policy and practitioner conferences.

Successful integration projects within the case study network had received considerable publicity and were widely regarded as examples of excellent practice. As a result there was a very high demand for professionals to visit integration projects within the case study, witness them working and discuss their innovations. The demand for visits was so great that 'industrial tourism' was regarded as a significant disruption to the work of the integrated teams. Visits from professionals from other agencies to see how the model worked and to talk to senior professionals and team members were restricted to one set day each week in order to limit the interruption of work.

The evidence appears to indicate that professional recognition is a plausible theory for the development of network integration. It does seem that integration projects allowed senior professionals to acquire status through professional recognition through talking about themselves and their practice and in-turn being talked about by other professionals. Integration projects were well suited to this purpose because they were regarded as novel and effective but not particularly radical.

Proposed Modifications To Theory

The case study found that groups with different professional orientations were committed to co-operation and network integration. This finding contradicted established theoretical perspectives that difference in professional orientation acts to produce goal incongruence and inter-professional competition. The starting point of any discussion of desirable modifications to theory must be the desirability of developing theory that can account for inter-professional co-operation that results in network integration and reductions in goal incongruence. In order to achieve this overarching objective there are a number of specific areas where it can be argued that modifications to theory would be appropriate and beneficial. These are described below.

The Causes of Co-operation and Integration

The research found that three factors were responsible for professional co-operation and integration. The first and most powerful was the collaborative nature of work within the criminal justice system. The nature of the work itself, and professional's shared experience of engaging with that work was found to be a powerful factor for co-operation and integration. The integrating experience of work was reinforced by the institutional benefits of co-operation. Network integration increases agency influence over their network counterparts and reduces risks to agency legitimacy and network position. Integration also benefited agencies and senior individuals as it represents an effective strategy for acquiring professional recognition.

It is proposed that theory should be modified to incorporate the role of these three factors in stimulating professional co-operation and network integration. This will enable empirical tests in other UK local criminal justice networks that share similar characteristics as the case study network. It will also allow investigation of other public networks that exhibit different patterns of work, professional and institutional fields and opportunities for professional recognition.

Rejecting the influence of professional control systems

The case study rejected the influence of professional control systems as a cause of co-operation and integration. This model of professional co-operation is theoretically plausible. This model has been described as the logic of co-operate to compete. Institutionally bound professionals are induced by external scrutiny to co-operate with professionals in their local network in order to compete more effectively with fellow professionals distributed across an organisational field. However the case study provided no support empirical support for this theory, however plausible.

Unsatisfactory performance within professional control systems did not result in professional co-operation and integration. Instead three alternative organisational responses were preferred. One of these (gaming) is fundamentally illegitimate. Another (concentration of resources) is unsustainable in that it operates on the principle of robbing Peter to pay Paul. The third (remedial competence building), while legitimate, is internally focused and results in institutional introspection rather than network integration.

It is proposed that theory should be modified to incorporate the hypothesis that professional control systems act to reduce network effectiveness and efficiency by disrupting the tendency for professional co-operation and integration.

Recognising the Influence of Peer Groups

The case study confirms that professionals experience commitments to their organisation, their profession and their immediate peer group (Kidron 1965; Jauch, Osborn and Terpening 1980). This is by no means a novel theoretical insight. However it is essential to recognise that in case study, the immediate peer group included professionals who exhibited a range of professional orientations and institutional affiliations.

It is proposed that theory should be modified to give more significance to the influence of peer groups in the promotion of co-operation and integration and

the consequent reduction of goal incongruence within network contexts. The findings of this study indicate that the influence of peer group has received insufficient theoretical attention. Without wishing to overstate the case, the author suggests that disproportionate attention is paid to institutional and professional membership. Peer group interactions are marginalized in theoretical explanations of professional interaction as ephemeral and second-order 'boundary-spanning' activities.

The findings of the case study suggest that peer-group interactions are of central importance to the development of professional co-operation and network integration. However institutional and professional modes of organisation are empirically noisy and therefore theoretically visible. Peer groups lack press officers, human resource departments and chief executives or other formal advocates. The importance of peer groups can therefore recede from theoretical predictions and empirical accounts of practice. This study suggests that models of professional interaction and goal incongruence should be modified to ensure that the evidence for the influence of peer group interactions could be tested.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the evidence of participant observation is that groups with different professional orientations reduced goal incongruence by co-operating and integrating network practices. This is the opposite of the theoretical prediction that the interaction of different professional orientations will increase goal incongruence and reduce co-operation.

The significance of the contradiction between theoretical prediction and empirical finding demanded that the evidence was made available for further scrutiny. Four examples of professional co-operation and network integration drawn from participant observation were presented and evaluated. They were the IVS project, two forms of IOM and a cluster of practices that support the local VAWG strategy. The author suggests that they present compelling evidence for inter-professional co-operation within the case study network.

Analysis of the evidence indicates that the causes of professional co-operation are to be found in the particular nature of work within the criminal justice system, the institutional benefits of integration, and the professional recognition that can be acquired from association with integration projects. The work of the criminal justice system demanded professional collaboration that crossed professional and institutional boundaries. It resulted in inter-professional relationships that were founded on mutual obligation and dependency. In addition, integration allowed network agencies to reduce risks to network position and influence adjacent agencies. It also enabled senior professionals to accumulate the prestige associated with professional recognition.

However analysis rejected professional control systems as a cause of co-operation and integration. Evidence from the case study indicates that unsatisfactory performance against systems of external scrutiny results in gaming, concentration of resources and remedial competence building, but not inter-organisational co-operation. Professional control systems are counter-productive in that they reduce network effectiveness and efficiency by increasing goal incongruence and reducing inter-agency co-operation.

The chapter has argued that theory should be modified to incorporate the empirical insight that: different professional groups act to promote co-operation and network integration; integration is caused by the nature of professional work, attempts to realise institutional benefits and the desire to acquire professional recognition; and that performance control systems act to increase goal incongruence and reduce professional co-operation and network integration.

It has also argued that professionals within the case study network are engaged in peer group interactions characterised by mutual obligation and dependency. Furthermore, while the evidence shows that significant and contentious differences exist between professional groups, that difference is mediated within a shared commitment to the formal ends of the Criminal Justice System. The tendency to integration emerges from professional's connected experience of work and the dependencies and obligation work produces, shared commitment to the overall objectives of the criminal justice system and a common identification with the experience of the victim. This suggests that professionals' conception

of equivalence produces a consensus around the desirability of co-operation and network integration.

The final theoretical suggestion is that established theoretical models underestimate the influence of peer groups and conceptions of inter-professional solidarity. In both cases this work suggests that what is searched for is frequently what is found. Modifying theory to include the influence of peer groups and the concept of equivalence is likely to lead to different interpretations of professional co-operation, network integration and the determinants of goal incongruence.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

Introduction

This study has attempted to identify goal incongruence within a public network in order to evaluate theoretical explanations of the source of goal incongruence. The research questions set out in the introduction were:

1. What is goal incongruence? Are current conceptualisations of goal incongruence adequate? If not, how should goal incongruence be conceptualised?

2. How extensive is goal incongruence in the case study?

3. What are the sources of goal incongruence? Does the evidence provided by the case study validate existing explanations of the sources of goal incongruence?

This concluding chapter will review the answers that the research has provided to these questions. It will describe how the study developed a novel conceptual framework capable of identifying goal incongruence within a network context. The conceptual framework dispenses with difference as the empirical test of goal incongruence. Instead goals must be contradictory in order to be incongruent. Contradiction is established by the criteria of goal-orientated behaviour impeding, deflecting or impeding the achievement of other network goals.

Evidence was drawn from a single critical case study conducted within the strategic core of the UK's Ministry of Justice and the statutory agencies that operated the Criminal Justice system within an English City. Analysis of the data produced evidence for goal incongruence in five out of nine possible empirical contexts provided by the conceptual framework. This chapter will review how the results of this analysis were used to test two theoretical accounts of the

determinants of goal incongruence, bureaucratic hierarchy and professional difference. The study strongly supports for the theory that goal incongruence is produced by the nature of downward delegation in bureaucratic hierarchies. It rejects the theory that incongruence is caused by professional difference. Indeed evidence from the case study demonstrates that individuals with different professional orientations defied theoretical predictions by co-operating to integrate network practice and reduce goal incongruence.

Following a discussion of the development of the conceptual framework, research design and empirical findings the chapter will summarise the theoretical and policy implications of the research and suggest areas of further research.

The Research Approach

Chapter two examined how goal incongruence has been conceptualised and identified by previous authors. It described how recent theoretical and empirical accounts conceptualise goal incongruence solely terms of difference. An earlier generation of authors exhibited a more sophisticated conceptualisation of goal incongruence. They recognised different categories of goal, for example professed and operative goals (Selznick) and formal and operative goals (Perrow). Rather than simply asking respondents to prioritise the importance of a range of potential goals these researchers established actual differences between formal and operative goals. This enabled a richer empirical description and theoretical analysis of the phenomena of goal incongruence. Authors could describe and explain multiple dimensions of goal incongruence. Their research was also firmly placed within organisational contexts, descriptions of what organisational actors actually do rather than what they claim they do.

The review of how goal incongruence has been conceptualised and identified in the literature concluded that definitions of goal incongruence were inconsistent. Furthermore the criteria for identifying goal incongruence have tended to be relaxed over time. Increasingly permissive tests for empirical claims of goal incongruence are easier to satisfy, raising the possibility that accounts of goal incongruence are more prevalent than they deserve to be. They also tend to become less grounded in organisational practice and are consequently less

organisationally meaningful. Chapter two concludes that the conceptualisation of goal incongruence in the majority of later research is unsatisfactory.

Given the uncertainty, variation and confusion in the terms used to describe goal incongruence it was essential to develop a rigorous conceptual framework that could recognise and support claims of goal incongruence. The conceptual framework possesses three interlocking components: A description of various forms of goal incongruence, an analytical perspective, and a set of criteria for identifying organisational goals and defining them as incongruent or not. The conceptual framework adopts the established categorisation of formal and operative goals. This means that there are three forms, or dimensions of goal incongruence, between formal goals, between operative goals and between formal and operative goals.

Unlike recent research the conceptual framework regards difference as an unsatisfactory and insufficient criteria for goal incongruence. Put simply goals may be different but complimentary. Difference may reflect task specialisation that is organised to achieve common ends. In order to establish goal incongruence goals must be shown to be different and contradictory. The conceptual framework recognises contradiction when the pursuit of goals can be demonstrated to impede, deflect, alter or subvert organisational purposes. As was described in chapter five, this aspect of the conceptual framework restricts claims of goal incongruence to practices that obtain an objective facticity by being enacted in organisational practice. The novel conceptual framework presented in chapter two possesses four elements:

- Incongruence is contradiction. Difference is taken to be insufficient to establish incongruence, as goals may be different but complimentary.

- Incongruence is enacted. Incongruence should be inferred from purposive behaviour observed within social contexts. That is incongruence should describe enacted practice.

- Incongruence should recognise contradictions between formal and operative goals.

- Incongruence should recognise the network context and distinguish between contradictory goals between the strategic core and delivery network and within each empirical contexts.

Chapter three reviewed two explanations for the sources of goal incongruence. It organised theory into two models. The first (hierarchical) model, suggested that goal incongruence was caused by the nature of bureaucratic delegation. The second (horizontal) model suggests that goal incongruence is caused by different professional orientations. The first theoretical explanation of goal incongruence suggests that it is caused by the nature of bureaucratic delegation within hierarchical organisations. Goal incongruence is viewed as the inevitable consequence of the inability to sustain common commitments and shared purposes across the span of bureaucratic control. The theory provides six potential shaping influences for the production of goal incongruence. The evidence drawn from the case supports three of these models (the bifurcation of interests, organisational segmentation and professional control models) and provides partial and qualified support for the fourth (Inadequate comprehension model). The evidence does not support two of the models (pre-occupation and compliance and the bureaucratic discretion model).

Horizontal explanations of goal incongruence rest on the assumption that organisations are coalitions of groups and sub-groups, and not chains of command. Shared professional orientations operate as particularly significant loci for the development of such groups. The study conceptualises professionalization after DiMaggio and Powell as the: "collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their own work" (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, p.70). The struggle will be conducted against principally against other professional groups, and it is from this competitive and conflicted inter-professional milieu that goal incongruence emerges.

The discussion of theory presented in chapter three isolated three models by which discrepant professional orientations are claimed to shape goal incongruence. They were the; communities of practice model, the reinforced pre-dispositions model, and the inter-professional competition model.

Evidence for Goal Incongruence

Chapter five presented the evidence for goal incongruence produced by the case study. The conceptual framework provides three forms of goal incongruence within three empirical contexts, giving nine possible expressions of goal incongruence (described in figure 5.1). In the event evidence for five expressions of goal incongruence were found.

Goal Incongruence within the Strategic Core

Within the strategic core the case study provided evidence for incongruence between formal and operative goals. Participant observation provided two examples of incongruence. The first was the way that the formal goal of implementing the xCJS efficiency programme was subverted by staff who operated close to the senior leadership constituency of the strategic core. Despite the fact that implementation of the programme was a formal goal of the Ministry it was described as: "having a big name but little substance, lacking a clear narrative and as failing to secure the engagement of ministers" (participant observation notes). In addition it was thought sensible to: "resist changes that would deliver big improvements to the system, but which could be claimed by other Departments" (Participant Observation Notes).

The other example was the incongruence between the formal goals of the strategic core and the commitment of staff to what this thesis has described as the operative goal of Reporting. The constituent elements of Reporting practice were described at length in Chapters five and six. It includes the collection of data and its preparation and presentation to ministers and external audiences, frequently in the form of sophisticated documents or narrative accounts of practice that act to legitimise members of the strategic core.

The commitment to reporting impeded the ability of the strategic core to achieve the formal goals of the MoJ. The commitment to those goals was superficial and tactical, commitment to reporting was profound and embedded in habitual practices and taken for granted routines. The pervading commitment to the operative goal of Reporting enabled one insider to dismiss the formal goals set

out in the strategic core's business plan, and the document itself as: "just for public consumption". The real business of the strategic core was Reporting. Indeed attempts to challenge this reporting hegemony were forcefully countered. Participant observation indicated that attempts to promote alternative conceptions of the role of members of the strategic core (to a more active change management role) resulted in enforcement of Reporting practices, and the removal of instigators to the delivery network.

Goal Incongruence within the Delivery Network

Within the delivery network the conceptual framework indicated the presence of formal - operative goal incongruence and operative - operative goal incongruence between the operative goals of different network agencies. Operative goals within the delivery network were organised around meeting operational imperatives. Individual delivery agencies were found to focus on specific operational imperatives that derive from their task and professional orientation. In that sense incongruence between operative goals in the delivery network were rooted in the differential experience of the operational imperative. Chapters five, six and seven described in detail how dissonant operative goals impeded, deflected and subverted organisational practice within the delivery network.

The delivery network also provided evidence for incongruence between formal and operative goals of different agencies. The operative goals of specific agencies focused on attaining their own formal goals and frequently bore little or no relationship to the formal goals of adjacent network agencies. The examples of operative incongruence given in the proceeding section also stand as examples for formal –operative goal incongruence within the delivery network. Of-course it can be objected that formal-operative incongruence does no more than illustrate an inevitable consequence of the functionally specialised nature of delivery network organisations. Nevertheless the case study indicated the presence of incongruence between the formal and operative goals of agencies within the delivery network.

Goal Incongruence between the Strategic Core and Delivery Network

The case study provides evidence for formal - operative and operative-operative goal incongruence between the strategic core and delivery network. The strategic core were motivated by operative goals which emphasised the need to report compliance with national policy. This would enable the creation of a plausible and desirable narrative describing progress made by the senior leadership constituency in representing the interests of victims in the Criminal Justice System. However members of the delivery network were motivated by the operational imperative of protecting victims from distress caused by encounters with the realities of the CJS.

The study found incongruence between the strategic core's goal of Reporting and the delivery network's goals of meeting operational imperatives. Participant observation demonstrated that interactions between members of the strategic core and delivery network organised around the practice of reporting were experienced as negative. In our discussion of the operative goals of the strategic core we spent some time describing the effort Headquarters staff devote to obtaining and reporting information from the delivery network. It has been argued that providing such information could be a significant task within the delivery network where the practice is perceived as a frustrating distraction from their main purpose of meeting operational imperatives.

Requests and demands for data were generally elicited minimal compliance at least effort. On some occasions demands to report data were felt to be so onerous or sensitive that they were refused. On other occasions misleading data was supplied in order to satisfy the requirements of the strategic core. It was not uncommon for staff in the delivery network to be dismissive of the accuracy of official data (although.it was common for staff within the Strategic Core to be equally dismissive). Engagement with the Headquarters reporting culture appeared to be regarded as a distraction, an occupational hazard and an unfortunate but unavoidable fact of organisational life rather than an operative goal of individuals within the delivery network.

This was incongruent with the delivery network's formal goals that focused on operational performance and were grounded in the victim's experience of the

realities of the Criminal Justice System. It is vital to stress that the experience of immersion in the work of the CJS is a sine qua non of the delivery network but is simply unavailable to staff within the strategic core. This work is not suggesting that the delivery network refrained entirely from engaging in such narrative creation practices. However the nature of their formal goals (focusing on the operational imperative) and the public scrutiny of that performance significantly reduced their ability to present legitimizing narratives at the expense of taking responsibility for operational outputs and outcomes.

Hierarchy as the Source of Goal Incongruence

Chapter six discusses how far the empirical descriptions of goal incongruence support theoretical claims that goal incongruence is caused by the nature of bureaucratic delegation.

In order to accomplish this purpose the chapter reviewed the major elements of the bureaucratic delegation model of goal incongruence. The discussion then considered whether each of the examples of incongruence identified in the case study is consistent with the bureaucratic delegation model of goal incongruence. For each relevant example of claimed goal incongruence the chapter described what might be expected to constitute criteria for identifying convincing evidence for bureaucratic delegation within hierarchical arrangements as the cause of goal incongruence.

The chapter suggested that evidence would consist in actors subverting, deflecting or contradicting practices aimed at achieving delegated formal and operative goals. The chapter finds that the data provides considerable support for vertical explanations of the sources of goal incongruence. That is downward delegation within bureaucratic hierarchies is a source of goal incongruence within network contexts. The theory provides six potential shaping influences for the production of goal incongruence. The evidence drawn from the case supports three of these influences (the bifurcation of interests, organisational segmentation and professional control models) and provides partial and qualified support for the fourth (inadequate comprehension model). The evidence does not

support two of the models (pre-occupation and compliance and the bureaucratic discretion model).

Analysis indicates that hierarchical goal incongruence arose from four of the six shaping influences. Evidence indicated that a mixture of the pre-occupation and compliance model and the bifurcation of interests model provided the most prevalent shaping influence. In the analysis evidence for the former model was described as 'equivocal'. It is worth exploring this qualification in more detail in this conclusion. While there was undoubtedly evidence that actors (particularly in the strategic core) became pre-occupied with complying with proximate goals, the pre-occupation and compliance model appeared excessively generous to those actors in ascribing an 'unintended' aspect to their actions. It presented a passive view of their behaviour that was at odds with the active and deliberate choices actors were observed to make during the research. In more technical terms, it appears to ignore the agency of organisational actors.

On the other hand the bifurcation of interests model incorporates this evidence of active shaping of the operative goals very well. Its exposition of individual's behaviour as social (and economic) actors presents an effective analytical lens and compelling explanation of why operative goals become incongruent with formal goals within hierarchical settings. The case study provided considerable evidence of individuals prioritising their interests and behaving as social actors. In the strategic core this concentrated on reducing responsibility and blame for operational outcomes in favour of constructing and presenting plausible narratives. Within the delivery network it focused on meeting operational imperatives and the inability of actors to distance themselves professionally and personally from CJS outcomes experienced by the victims of serious crime.

In addition the organisational segmentation and performance control models also explained the emergence of hierarchical goal incongruence within the delivery network. Both models acted to produce and maintain a hierarchically imposed introspection that produced goal incongruence. Members of the delivery networked were compelled to by organisational segmentation to act in the capacity of 'organisational advocates', even in circumstances where this required them to act against the overall interests of the network. Hierarchically imposed systems of professional control institutionalised a rigid goal incongruence that

was impossible to overcome by 'legitimate means'. Professionals were compelled to represent (with varying degrees of enthusiasm) contradictory organisational interests. Perhaps most powerfully professional behaviour appeared particularly susceptible to the influence of the performance control regimes to which they were subject.

However two proposed shaping influences were not supported. The case study found no evidence for inadequate comprehension model of hierarchical goal incongruence. Indeed on balance the evidence cast doubt on the explanatory value of these proposed models. The problem for them appears to be that given modern communication technology and the manner in which pervasive social and formal media can transmit information, it is difficult to sustain a belief that top-most officials can be in ignorance of events 'on the ground' or that sub-ordinates can mistake the intentions of top-most officials when the words of those officials are available verbatim.

The effect of modern communications technology on collapsing the distance between hierarchically separated organisational actors in public networks appears to mitigate against the arguments of the discretionary gap and inadequate comprehension models. With regard to the discretionary gap model, it suggests that there will be a gradual decay (an entropy) in meaning as ends are delegated downward through hierarchies. The case study found very little evidence of entropy. Instead incongruence appeared to emerge from radical discontinuities. This provides support for the bifurcation of interest model at the expense of the discretionary gap model.

In the case of incongruence between formal and operative goals within the strategic core, the plausibility of this benign explanation based on the passive forgetting of ends is undermined in empirical accounts that emphasise the way in which members of the strategic core actively rejected and problematised the xCJS efficiency programme. In addition the strategic core was able to engage with other challenging policy objectives despite the distraction of day-to-day challenges. Equally tellingly, the strategic core were able to organise a limited engagement with the xCJS efficiency programme which was sufficient to give the appearance of compliance without requiring the full operative enactment of the formal goal. Taken together, these strands of evidence tend to undermine the

argument that the xCJS efficiency programme was lost or forgotten due to a pre-occupation with day-to-day challenges and proximate goals.

The view that goal incongruence is caused by the incremental decay in meaning as means and ends are transmitted down bureaucratic hierarchies by successive delegations does not appear to correspond with empirical evidence for formal – operative goal incongruence between the strategic core and delivery network. The essential elements of the Victim Personal Statement policy appear to be transmitted accurately to the 'lowest' operational levels of the case study hierarchy. There is little evidence for the application of discretion by intermediaries operating within the chain of delegation. Instead subordinate actors at the operational level choose to implement the policy or not in ways determined most appropriate within their operational contexts.

In the case of subordinate actors from case study delivery agencies, the response to the delegated policy is not a subtle and nuanced implementation of aspects of the policy (as predicted by the 'decay' concept of the model) but by the decision to entirely reject engagement with the policy, as evidenced by the statement made by one subordinate responsible for preparing Victim Personal Statements: "I haven't written a victim report for five months" (Participant Observation). This response of subordinate staff is dissonant with the theoretical suggestion of the discretionary gap model that actors within the chain of bureaucratic command will apply a limited discretion to the implementation of delegated means and ends. As such the empirical evidence does not appear to be consistent with the discretionary gap model of the determinants of goal incongruence.

Nor does the case study support the inadequate comprehension model as an explanation for incongruence between the operative goals of the strategic core and the delivery network. This model would predict that superiors would delegate confused, inappropriate and unachievable goals on subordinates. There was little empirical evidence of this pattern of behaviour. The case study indicates that members of the strategic core were aware of the practical challenges and constraints encountered in the delivery network, but the operational areas of the delivery network were, if not actually irrelevant, then of only marginal relevance.

The Victim Personal Statement policy achieved the opposite of what it was intended to achieve. From the subordinate perspective of those implementing the policy this unsatisfactory position was compounded by the apparent refusal of top-most superiors to acknowledge and address deficiencies in the delegated policy. This refusal to engage with practice appeared to derive from a desire on the part of top-most superiors and their functionaries in the strategic core to present a positive, uncomplicated and consequently legitimising narrative account of the success of the VPS policy.

Finally, analysis of the evidence of goal incongruence produced an empirical surprise. Formal-operative goal incongruence was greater at the apex of the network than it was at the base. In other words the operative goals of the strategic core were more incongruent with the formal goals of the network than were the operative goals of the delivery network. This contradicts the established view of goal incongruence presented in the literature, that senior staff and policy makers are more 'trustworthy' in terms of commitment to achieve formal public goals than junior or operational staff. This insight problematizes the apex of networks rather than the base with regard to goal incongruence.

Professional Difference as the Source of Goal Incongruence

Chapter six presented and evaluated the theoretical argument that goal incongruence is caused by differences in the professional orientation of organisational actors. This theoretical perspective derives from conceptions of organisations as coalitions of interest (Cyert and March 1963) rather than chains of commands. Professionalization, understood as the "collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their own work" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, p.154) is taken as the predominant institutional frame for the construction of those coalitions.

This chapter has discussed three influences by which divergent professional orientations are claimed to shape goal incongruence. It evaluates the claims made by these models with regard to the production of goal incongruence by testing them against case study evidence derived from participant observation of goal incongruence within the delivery network.

What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence? This study provides accounts of practice from the delivery network included evidence of inter-professional integration within the delivery network. This represented an organic attempt to reduce goal incongruence and its negative consequences for the operational performance of the Criminal Justice System.

How can this empirical surprise be resolved? Narratives that explore the experience of inter-professional interactions emphasise the evidence for the existence of mutual obligation and dependency that exist between professional groups within the Criminal Justice System. Patterns of connection, similarity obligation and dependence emerge from analysis of the three shaping influences discussed in this chapter. The most important is the experience of work. The nature of the work of the Criminal Justice System demands extensive, sustained, complex and intense communication and exchange of information. This work has argued work acts to connect as much as to separate professional orientations. Communities of practice produced by the shared aspects of the experience of work within the delivery network are to some extent professionally inclusive and are not entirely co-terminus with professional and organisational boundaries.

The case study provides evidence that indicates that the suggested shaping influences of goal incongruence were associated with the production of goal incongruence; they also appeared to account for organic actions to limit goal incongruence by promoting inter-professional collaboration in the shape of network integration. The propensity for network integration demonstrated in the case study stands against inter-professional conflict as a cause of goal incongruence. However we suggest that the organic integration initiatives represent a tacit recognition on the part of local professionals of the negative impact that inter-professional conflict on the effectiveness of all the local Criminal Justice Agencies. It can be thought of as senior professionals in the delivery network taking steps to 'self-medicate' against the effects of inter-professional conflict and goal incongruence.

However the empirical surprise provided by the data is that local professional elites organised to reduce goal incongruence by developing practices of network integration. This work concludes that this empirical surprise, that professionals who were supposed to compete with each other in fact attempted to co-operate,

reflects the fact that shaping influences of goal incongruence were moderated and altered by perceptions of inter-professional dependency and obligation that were experienced within the delivery network. The conclusion drawn from this account is that the tendency to professional introspection and the creation of contradictory conceptions of desired ends was not the source of goal incongruence within the case study.

Network Integration and Professional Co-operation

The theory on inter-professional interaction discussed in chapter seven predicts that discrepant professional orientations will produce goal incongruence. However the case study provides evidence that the opposite is the case. Individuals from different professional orientations co-operated to integrate network practices, thereby acting to reduce goal incongruence. This empirical surprise raised three questions that were addressed in chapter eight. Does the evidence really show professionals attempting to co-operate? Why do they attempt to co-operate by integrating working practices? What modifications to we need to make to the theory of goal incongruence?

Chapter eight presented the argument that the case study provides compelling evidence for inter-professional co-operation and integration within the delivery network. We provide four examples, the IVS project, two forms of IOM project and a cluster of co-operative practices organised around the local VAWG strategy. These initiatives are examples organic and local attempts to address perceived deficiencies in the effectiveness and efficiency of the local Criminal Justice System.

Four theoretical models for professional co-operation and integration were described and evaluated. The most compelling theory of network integration is that it emerges from the connected nature of work and the similar demands that patterns of work make on professionals. The theory argues that the complex and intense interactions demanded by the work of the criminal justice system acts as a centripetal force that overcomes the barriers of professional orientation and institutional affiliation. Network integration develops from professionals' identification with and their commitments to their immediate peer group (Kidron

1965). In network contexts the immediate peer group will frequently incorporate members from a variety of professional backgrounds and network agencies.

The implication of this insight is that the professional experience of work acts to connect professionals rather then divides them. The close and meaningful interactions required by patterns of work gave rise to stable relationships that were characterised by intense collaboration and connected professionals in relationships of reciprocal obligation and dependency.

This work has argued consistently that the professional experience was one of immersion in the work of the Criminal Justice System. While we have argued that professionals are unlikely to engage with the abstract logic of co-operate to compete, the case study produced considerable evidence that professionals understood and took for granted that their performance depended on the performance of their counterparts in other network agencies. The study has also argued that the emergence of integrated organisation reflects professional's recognition that the outcomes and efficiency of their own work were dependent on the actions, behaviour and good will of other groups of professionals within the criminal justice system. In other words the experience of work created normative and cognitive systems of reciprocal obligation and dependency between professionals. These systems were reinforced by shared commitments to the overall objectives of the criminal justice system and a strong identification with the experience of the victim.

Collective commitments could not eliminate the evidence that real differences existed between the operative goals of professionals within the network. However the experience of work in the criminal justice system produced network relationships founded on mutual obligation, and inter-professional dependency. Co-operation and network integration is understood to enable professional work to be completed more efficiently and effectively. It is believed to improve the experience of the victim. It also protects professionals from the negative experience of being associated with or even held responsible for perceived failure of the criminal justice system, negative outcomes for the victims of serious crime and inefficient and unrewarding working practices.

Another approach to theorizing the development of professional co-operation and network integration is to emphasise the institutional benefits it confers to integrating agencies. We use the term 'institutional' to describe benefits that are not directly linked to service delivery. Instead they reflect improvements in the agency's ability to influence its proximate environment and maintain its network position.

Network integration is attractive because it extends the influence of agency actors beyond agency boundaries. Such boundary spanning influence may be desirable as an end in itself. It is also likely to be used to achieve particular ends. The second category of institutional benefit is that integration makes it more difficult to marginalize or replace agencies within network contexts. Integration creates shared tacit knowledge, informal structures, complex agency interfaces, collaborative relationships and, if successful, inter-agency goodwill. Together, these act as a barrier to new entrants, thereby protecting and institutionalizing the position of network incumbents. Integration therefore represents a strategy of solidarity and exclusion (Cousins 1987). It acts to exclude new entrants and marginalize existing competitors.

There was clear empirical evidence that integration was valued because it reduced the willingness and ability of agencies to be critical of their network counterparts. Professionals appeared to be particularly sensitive to criticism from network peers. This sensitivity appeared especially pronounced when was made to members of the public who experienced network services. This was because it was thought to bring the professional reputation of agencies into disrepute. Integration was felt to reduce inter-agency criticism because it was seen as a breach of good faith. It also became difficult because under integration delivering effective outcomes became a shared network responsibility.

Another theoretical explanation of their commitment is that integration provided professionals, particularly senior professionals, with an opportunity to acquire professional recognition. Network integration was an effective method of achieving professional recognition. It was viewed as a legitimate and beneficial activity by the policy community and was generally perceived to deliver positive results. Integration was therefore viewed as a good thing to do. Perhaps more importantly, integration represented a novel practice. Integration projects gave

senior professionals the opportunity to talk about themselves, their projects and their agencies and in turn to be talked about by other professionals. The case study provided considerable evidence that acquiring professional recognition was a significant factor in securing the commitment of senior professionals to integration projects. Integration projects enabled senior professionals to access professional recognition through the process of applying for prizes and awards, a discourse that appeared to enjoy a surprising currency among senior professionals.

The final explanation of professional co-operation is that it is a response to imposed systems of performance control. The most important attributes of these control systems are that they make comparisons within professions and those comparisons are made public, frequently in the form of league tables. We have argued that professionals care about their comparative performance within such systems. We have also suggested that being placed at the bottom or close to the bottom of the performance range appeared to constitute a particularly powerful motivating factor for improvement.

One of the ways in which performance can be improved is by collaborating with adjacent professional groups employed by different agencies. Institutionally bound professionals are induced to co-operate with other professional groups in their local network in order to compete more effectively with fellow professionals distributed across an organisational field. With reference to the case study, a local police service might seek co-operation with other local criminal justice agencies (Courts, CPS and Probation etc.) in order to directly or indirectly improve its performance and subsequent position in national police service league tables. The case study provides very little positive evidence for the role of performance control systems in encouraging professional co-operation. While there was certainly evidence of action taken to address unsatisfactory performance measurement outcomes, that action did not include network integration. Instead, the repertoire of responses to unsatisfactory external scrutiny tended to concentrate on three types of action. These were gaming, concentration of resources, and remedial competence building. However they did not act to promote inter-professional co-operation expressed in attempts at network integration. Therefore the study concludes that responses

to the adverse effects of performance control systems appear to lead not to integration, to organisational introspection. Institutions appeared to turn away from their network partners in order to concentrate on introspective improvement strategies.

Contribution to Theory

This study has made contributions to theory in three areas. Firstly it has developed and tested of a conceptual framework for the study of goal incongruence. Secondly it has evaluated hierarchical theories of goal incongruence. Thirdly it has evaluated and the evaluation of horizontal theories of goal incongruence. The study's theoretical contributions to in these three areas are set out in the following sub-sections.

A Conceptual Framework for the study of Goal Incongruence

This study has developed and tested a new conceptual framework of goal incongruence. It has made three specific contributions to theory in this area. In the first instance the conceptual framework rejects difference as sufficient criteria for recognising goal incongruence. Goals may be different but complimentary, that is that despite their difference they act as separate means to the attainment of a common end. The conceptual framework replaces difference with *contradiction* as the criteria for goal incongruence. This acts as a higher test for recognising goal incongruence. The study found incongruence to be present in five network contexts. However had the criteria been difference, goal incongruence would have been ubiquitous. The selection of contradiction as the marker of goal incongruence is theoretically significant. If the criteria of contradiction applied to the existing literature on goal incongruence it is reasonable to assume that the empirical findings and the theoretical conclusions derived from them would be significantly modified.

The second contribution made by the conceptual framework is that it articulates criteria for recognising contradictory goals and a methodological approach for inferring operative goals. Contradiction is indicated when there is evidence that

goal orientated behaviour acts to disrupt, impede or deflect the attainment of other formal or operative goals. Operative goals are and their consequences are inferred from observed behaviour. Operative goals are only inferred when they attain an *objective facticity* Berger and Luckman (1966, p.30). This was empirically and theoretically relevant because it ensured that the conceptual framework screened operative goals are not enacted. The conceptual framework eliminated operative goals that were aspirational or potential. For example ends that were deemed desirable but were not enacted, or self-reported goals intended to present individuals and groups in favourable terms, either to themselves or others. This grounded empirical claims within organisational practice. It allowed empirical accounts of goal incongruence to distinguish between what Richard Mitchell has referred to as "sentiments and acts" (Mitchell 2002, p.16). The author respectfully suggests that limiting the analysis of goal incongruence to enacted goal-orientated behaviours has the potential for significant influence on empirical and theoretical accounts of goal incongruence.

Thirdly, the conceptual framework takes established approaches to the description of goal incongruence – contradiction between the operative goals of different groups and between formal and operative goals – and applies them within a network context. The application to network contexts constitutes a novel contribution to a theoretical literature that has described goal incongruence within single organisations, organisational dyads and organisational fields. The ability to describe the presence and absence of goal incongruence within specific network contexts contributes to the theoretical literature on goal incongruence and to the analysis of public networks.

Testing Hierarchical theories of Goal Incongruence

The study found compelling evidence that goal incongruence was caused by the hierarchical arrangement of bureaucracies. Bureaucratic delegation was found to be responsible for goal incongruence within the strategic core, within the delivery network and between the strategic core and delivery network. To this extent the study provides empirical support for hierarchical theories of goal incongruence.

The study indicates that the bifurcation of interest model explains hierarchical goal incongruence. The necessary use of intermediaries creates a tendency to the bi-furcation of interests, in which intermediaries are concerned chiefly with their *social positions as agents*. The study presents evidence that bi-furcation of interests explains goal incongruence within the strategic core and between the strategic core and delivery network. Within the delivery network the bi-furcation of interests model is re-enforced by the hierarchical separation of professional groups by agency boundaries and the distinct and dissonant professional measurement and control systems that are applied to professional fields.

At the heart of the bi-furcation of interest model is the question of the benefits that individuals hope to acquire from their organisational associations. Empirical evidence indicates that hierarchical position influenced the uses to which groups could put the organisation and the benefits that they could hope to gain from organisational membership. The study also found that organisational segmentation and professional control systems also promoted goal incongruence within network conditions.

However the empirical evidence questions a number of the shaping influences that theory suggests are responsible for producing within hierarchies. The empirical evidence rejects the pre-occupation and compliance; the entropy; and the inadequate comprehension models of hierarchical goal incongruence. Goal incongruence was not found to be the product of passive forgetting, the decay of authority through iterated downward delegations or a lack of awareness of operational realities on the part of top-most officials. Instead the study found radical discontinuities, active non-compliance with clearly articulated instructions on the part of subordinates, and an *intended* refusal to engage with operational realities on the part of top-most officials. These findings undermined representations of means – ends chains in the bureaucratic delegation model which presents operative goals and sub-goals as being derivations and distillations of formal goals (Hall 1996).

Testing Horizontal Theories of Goal Incongruence

The second theoretical explanation tested by the study suggests that goal incongruence is determined by professional difference. The study contradicted the claims that goal incongruence was determined by difference in professional orientation. It demonstrated that professionals co-operated to integrate network practices that resulted in reductions in goal incongruence. The study revealed that not professional difference acted in subtle and complex ways. However on balance professional difference did not produce goal incongruence. On the contrary, the study provided empirical evidence that professionals overcame difference in professional orientations in order to address the negative outcomes of hierarchically produced goal incongruence by pursuing organic strategies of network integration.

The empirical evidence for inter-professional co-operation contradicts theoretical predictions that difference in professional orientation will act to increase goal incongruence within network contexts. The empirical surprise; that professionals within the case study do not behave toward each other as theory predicts they should, raised the issue of why they chose to co-operate and reduce goal incongruence.

The most important factor shaping network integration was professional's experience of work. This acted to connect individuals with different professional orientations in relationships of mutual dependency and obligation. This suggests that peer group relationships were key in promoting network integration and reducing goal incongruence. The importance of peer groups is recognised in the goal incongruence literature. The theoretical implications of the study is to focus attention on the issue that within network relationships, peer groups are likely to incorporate individuals with a range of professional orientations. Secondly, the study suggests that the role of peer group relationships (as opposed to professional and organisational affiliations) is under-theorised in the goal incongruence literature.

Implications of the findings for Practice

A certain expression of common sense, an imprecise term that has described as the existence of a: "shared imaginary universe" (Geertz 1983, p.11), assumes that bureaucratic authority decays as it is transmitted downward through a bureaucratic hierarchy. Groups close to the apex of the hierarchy can be trusted to adhere closely to the formal goals of organisation. Those who are separated from ultimate authority by successive levels of delegation will show an increasing inability to understand, share and reproduce ultimate ends. The most abject members of the bureaucratic hierarchy, those who occupy the last position in means-ends chains and lacking sub-ordinates to whom they can delegate have no alternative but to produce, are the most unreliable. That is they are the most likely to put the organisation and its resources to their own, illegitimate ends.

This mode of thought is taken for granted by managerial elites and maintained and reproduced by theorists and other commentators who adopt the perspective of those elites when they write about organisations. It is even to be found in the concept of the Street Level Bureaucrat. While Lipsky's work adopts the sub-ordinate perspective it still argues that operational employees act in their own interests rather than follow delegated instructions. The implication of this widely distributed common-sense view of hierarchy is that the 'lower orders' of organisations are untrustworthy. As they cannot be trusted they must be controlled. The controllers are to be the same managerial elites who sit at the apex of hierarchy and control the discursive agenda. In other words is employed to justify the formation and authority of controlling institutional elites.

This evidence presented in this case study suggests that this common sense conception of hierarchy has one flaw. It is wrong. The operative goals of the strategic core were more incongruent with the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice than were the operative goals of the delivery network. In other words it is managerial elites and their staffs at the apex of hierarchies who are the most likely to exhibit goal incongruence and divert the organisation to their own illegitimate purposes. Correspondingly, delivery network members who operate lower levels in the hierarchy are more likely to act in accordance with formal network goals. This study acts to falsify the common sense hypothesis that

incongruence between formal and operative goals increases as move down the hierarchy is falsified.

The evidence for this conclusion was presented in chapters five to eight. It catalogues what we have described as the strategic core's commitment to the practice of reporting. This involved members of the strategic core 'turning away' from the operational effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System, denigrating members of the delivery network as 'business as usual people' as opposed to the 'thinking people' found within the core. It described a managerial elite concerned with presentation, appearances and the construction of plausible narrative at the expense of achieving objective improvements in output and outcome. At its most extreme it was expressed in the elevation of colour schemes above content in presentations to Ministers and making sure that time wasn't naively 'wasted' delivering big improvements to the system that could be claimed by others.

On the other hand the operative goals of the delivery network were organised around meeting the operational imperatives of the Criminal Justice System. Consequently they were far more congruent with the formal goals of the Ministry of Justice. A number of practical explanations emerge for this congruence between means and ends. Members of the delivery network were immersed in the experience of work within the Criminal Justice System and appeared unable to distance themselves, professionally or personally, from the outcomes of that system. We have described this as the 'because we have to, because its right' logic.

The most powerful expression of this logic was the spontaneous attempts by delivery network professionals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the local Criminal Justice System by integrating network practice. The practical concern must be that these projects were conducted despite (and not because of) the strategic core's professed efforts to achieve the same ends.

The evidence indicates that the strategic core's methods for controlling professionals into improving performance were either counter-productive or ineffective. This finding appears to support the conclusion that: "highly centralised and vertically differentiated organisational structures are liable to have dysfunctional effects"

(Sheaff et al 2010b).

Demands for ad-hoc performance information were ignored, resisted or complied with at least effort. Financial scrutiny of the hierarchical organisations that employed professionals within the delivery network resulted in the suspension of boundary spanning activities that were vital for performance but presented accounting and budget difficulties. More formal professional measurement and control systems did have a significant influence on professionals, but those were more likely to be outright gaming, concentration of resources to avoid coming toward the bottom of the performance distribution or remedial competence building. They did not appear to be influential in encouraging inter-agency co-operation. In summary the efforts of the strategic core to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery network didn't work and actually undermined spontaneous attempts by professionals to achieve exactly the same objective.

Further Research

The themes, questions and evidence discussed in this study point to four areas for further research, these are described below:

Firstly, the present case study compared hierarchical relationships between members of the strategic core and the delivery network. It concluded that goal incongruence was produced by the nature of bureaucratic delegation within hierarchies. The work is silent on interactions between Ministers and top-most officials. Research that tests hierarchical theories of goal incongruence between these two select and elevated constituencies would comprise a logical and desirable continuation of this study.

The second theme emerges from the study's conclusion that the operative goals of members of the strategic core are the most incongruent with the formal goals of the network. This finding establishes the opportunity to develop and test theories that explain *why* the formal goals of members of the strategic core are the most incongruent with the formal goals of the network. This suggests the development of a research agenda concentrated on the need to develop a theory

capable of explaining the apparently deliberate (or at least active) institutional irresponsibility that was exhibited by organisational elites within the case study.

The third theme is one that was expressly referred to in chapter seven. It is the contention that the influence of peer group membership (as opposed to organisational and professional identities) is under-represented in theoretical and empirical accounts of the performance of public organisations and networks. The work suggested that peer group interactions within network contexts were, if not empirically invisible, then indistinct when compared to the highly visible professional and organisational interactions. Another way of articulating this argument (following Brunsen's distinction between organisational talk and organisational action) is to say that peer group interactions are under-represented in the sphere of talk. If this is the case then theory might be improved by adopting methods capable of reflecting the importance of peer groups in determining practices within the sphere of organisational action.

Finally the research has emphasised the propensity for actors with different professional orientations to organise informal co-operation aimed at reducing goal incongruence and improving the performance of public networks. These organic initiatives occur in-spite of the negative effects of inter-professional competition and the introspection caused by hierarchically imposed control systems. This points to the desirability of a research agenda intended to explain how such inter-professional co-operation and congruence can be encouraged, nurtured and sustained. Such a research agenda would focus theoretical attention on how, without abandoning performance measurement systems that ensure professional practice is not placed beyond public scrutiny, a beneficial personal and professional integrity might be encouraged to re-emerge in public networks.

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