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AUTHOR   Hall, Valerie; Wallace, Mike
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ABSTRACT
        The purposes of this paper are twofold: (1) to
propose a dual perspective combining cultural and political concepts
as a basis for developing sociological understanding of teamwork in
school leadership; and (2) to apply this perspective to examples from
the interim findings of the research into senior management teams
(SMT) in English secondary schools. There is widespread rhetoric
about the value of team approaches to secondary school management.
Much of North American research on secondary school improvement and
effectiveness has tended to highlight the key role of the principal.
British studies have generally acknowledged that while many
headteachers and senior staff perceive themselves to work in a team,
there is wide variation in their practice and in the evolving
relationships among SMT members. An observational study was conducted
of six schools, two of which were selected for more detailed study.
Outlined is the rationale for a cultural and political perspective on
interaction and their central concepts, which are applied to selected
incidents and the issues they reflect. In conclusion, the paper
indicates how the dual perspective may be employed to interpret other
areas of their research findings. (Contains 28 references.) (RR)

Shared Leadership through Teamwork: a Cultural and Political Perspective

Valerie Hall and Mike Wallace

National Development Centre for
Educational Management and Policy,
School of Education,
University of Bristol,
35 Berkeley Square,
Bristol,
BS8 1JA,
England

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Our research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council for two years from January 1991. Initial case studies were carried out in six schools within two county LEAs. LEA staff were asked to identify schools where they believed all members of the SMT were committed to teamwork. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with SMT members, the chair of governors and a small sample of other staff, and at least one of the regular SMT meetings was observed in each school. The findings from this first phase of the fieldwork indicated a range of SMT structures and approaches to teamwork.

Two of these schools were selected for more detailed observational study over the academic year 1991/92. The SMT of one school, in a small town, has evolved over the last five years. There are five members including a recently appointed deputy head whose responsibility includes staff and management development. This SMT is seeking to develop and consolidate its approach to teamwork through the use of distance learning teambuilding materials. In contrast the SMT of the other school, in an inner city area, is a more established team. All six of its members have worked together for at least three years. Both SMTs include the headteacher, deputy heads and senior teachers.

Rationale for a Cultural and Political Perspective

We agree with Morgan (1986) that any theoretical perspective on organisations constitutes a metaphor which directs attention to some aspects of phenomena under investigation, to the neglect of others. It is probably beyond human intellectual capacity to develop a single, comprehensive metaphor that provides an all embracing explanation of social life. However, it seems plausible to combine two widely adopted perspectives in order to focus upon the different aspects of phenomena highlighted by each theoretical orientation: they need not be mutually exclusive.

Some researchers into school leadership in the U.K. and North America have adopted either a cultural perspective (e.g. Nias *et al* 1989; Sergiovanni and Corbally 1984; Deal 1985) or a political perspective (e.g. Ball 1987; Blase 1991). Both approaches offer valuable insights but, in focusing the collection of research data and interpreting findings, each is constrained by its emphasis upon one set of concepts at the expense of the other. This point may be illustrated by examining how exponents of the two perspectives interpret the way headteachers interact with other staff in managing schools.

The analysis of primary school staff relationships carried out by Nias and her colleagues employs the notion of organisational culture to explain the evolving pattern of interaction between staff that they observed. They portray how staff develop and sustain a shared set of values about 'the way we do things here'. The key concepts employed in their analysis are listed in Table I below. Conflicts between staff are interpreted as being addressed or avoided according to shared values about, for example, the appropriateness of working towards compromise solutions (p161). For Nias *et al*, conflicts give rise to the expression of underlying value consensus about how conflicts should be avoided or resolved: conflict on the surface masks consensus at a more implicit level.

(INSERT TABLE I)

However, even in schools with a strong staff 'culture of collaboration', they accept that:

> ...normative *control* was so pervasive that it is easy to lose sight of the fact that it too was the product of a *power differential*. Each school had a head with a strong 'mission' and well developed *political skills* who had been in post for at least ten years and to whom had accrued during that time a considerable amount of *personal authority*.
>
> (p15, our italics).

Introduction

The purposes of this paper are twofold: first, to propose a dual perspective combining cultural and political concepts as a basis for developing a sociological understanding of teamwork in school leadership; second, to apply this perspective to examples from the interim findings of our research into senior management teams (SMTs) in English secondary schools.

The context for the study is the establishment in most secondary schools in England of a senior management team consisting of the headteacher (principal), two or three deputy headteachers and sometimes one or more staff with senior management responsibility. Team members are drawn from staff on the highest salaries within a hierarchy of six or seven scales ranging from the class teacher to the head. The higher salary scales are generally connected with a substantial level of management responsibility. While such a hierarchy has existed for many years (Wallace 1986), the spread of SMTs appears to be a phenomenon of the last decade or so.

There is widespread rhetoric about the value of team approaches to secondary school management. Informed professionals such as central government inspectors have advocated that leadership of secondary schools should be shared (e.g. Department of Education and Science 1979; Scottish Education Department 1988). This rhetoric is supported by British studies of effective schools which confirm that the joint actions of senior staff are an important factor in promoting effectiveness (Rutter 1979; Reynolds 1985). However, since these studies did not include a substantial focus upon the process of leadership they do not indicate how joint tasks such as strategic decision-making are actually carried out.

Senior staff in secondary schools are having to coordinate their work closely in order to cope with the multiplicity of major innovations following from the extensive programme of educational reforms currently being introduced by central government. These innovations, most of which have been externally imposed on schools, include a national curriculum and arrangements for its assessment; local (site-based) management; vocational education and training; open enrolment of pupils; increased powers for school governors, and staff evaluation. In addition, local education authorities (LEAs) are introducing innovations including school development plans which are intended to facilitate the implementation of the national initiatives. It is therefore important to understand how shared leadership may be expressed in practice as it may constitute one strategy for orchestrating the implementation of multiple innovations (Wallace 1991a).

North American research on secondary school improvement and effectiveness (Louis and Miles 1990; Fullan 1991) has tended to highlight the key role of the principal, although the study by Wilson and Corcoran (1988) showed that leadership in successful schools was shared amongst senior staff in a variety of roles including assistant principals and senior teachers. British studies have generally acknowledged that while many headteachers and senior staff perceive themselves to work as a team, there is wide variation in their practice and in the evolving relationships among SMT members (e.g. Hall et al 1986; Weindling and Earley 1987; Torrington and Weightman 1989). There have been few major observational studies of secondary school management in the U.K. in recent years and none have taken the operation of SMTs as their primary focus. Our research is designed to contribute to filling this gap in research knowledge by studying, in the context of educational reform, the nature of teamwork within SMTs where all members perceive themselves to be committed to a team approach to managing the school.

The concepts we have italicised are pushed into the background in the analysis, yet offer considerable explanatory force in grasping how headteachers were in a uniquely strong position to persuade other staff to adopt their managerial values and so obtain value consensus through continual negotiation.

By contrast, Ball (1987) analyses interaction amongst staff in secondary schools in terms of conflict:

> I take schools, in common with virtually all other organisations, to be *arenas of struggle*; to be riven with actual or potential conflict between members; to be poorly coordinated; to be ideologically diverse.
>
> (p19, author's italics)

While Ball accepts that, overtly, much interaction is marked by apparent acceptance of a normative consensus amongst staff, he argues that beneath it lurks implicit conflict:

> ...interaction is centred upon the *routine*, mundane and, for the most part, uncontroversial running of the institution...routine organisational life is set within the *'negotiated order'*...a patterned construct of contrasts, *understandings, agreements and 'rules'* which provides the basis of concerted action...In this way conflicts may remain normally implicit and subterranean, only occasionally bursting into full view.
>
> (p20, our italics)

Thus for Ball, consensus on the surface masks conflict at a more implicit level. The main concepts he employs are listed in Table I. Headteachers are interpreted as using a range of overt and covert strategies based upon their unique access to power to realise their interest in retaining control over other staff in the management of schools. It is notable that the concepts we have italicised in the quotation above are underplayed in his analysis, but relate closely to that of Nias *et al.*

The limitations of a single perspective are not confined to studies in the U.K. For example, a recent cultural analysis of the role of principals in Canadian schools suggests that principals may play a key part in promoting a collaborative professional culture amongst their staff which is supportive of efforts to improve their schools (Leithwood and Jantzi 1990). While this work reveals that certain principals share power with others, it is not clear how principals use their power to develop and sustain such a shared approach to leadership.

So, is interaction between members of a group and across groups best conceived as the cosy expression of shared values where conflict is bounded by underlying consensus on its resolution? Or is it a fierce struggle between conflicting interests where apparent consensus masks suppressed conflict? Surely interaction may be an expression of *both* the shared values of a culture and the differential use of power to realise particular interests. In the U.K. context, the position of authority in which secondary school headteachers are placed appears to give them more power than teachers to shape the SMT culture of teamwork and so, indirectly, the staff professional culture. We suggest that a synthesis of the cultural and political perspectives into a more comprehensive framework may offer greater potential for explaining how and by whom the culture of teamwork at senior level is developed, maintained, threatened or destroyed than either a cultural or a political perspective alone.

In the remaining sections we will set out some of the central concepts of the cultural and perspective outlined in Table I; apply them to selected incidents and the issues they reflect; and, in conclusion, indicate how the dual perspective may be employed to interpret other areas of our research findings.

A Cultural and Political Perspective on Interaction

Our starting point is the assumption that actors make differential use of resources to achieve desired goals through interaction according to their beliefs and values which they share to a greater or lesser extent with others, and of which they have only partial awareness. Both culture and power are integral elements of interaction. This conception follows the analysis offered by Giddens (1976), who argues that actors communicate meaning within the context of normative sanctions and relationships of power. All three elements are intrinsic to interaction and empirically inseparable although they may be distinguished analytically.

Meanings and norms may be subsumed within the notion of *culture*: a set of shared or complementary symbols, beliefs and values expressed in interaction. Beliefs and values include those relating to *norms*, or rules of behaviour. *Symbolic elements* of culture are those where patterns of action represent something else, typically a shared value. Such patterns include *rituals* - regularised and often habitual sequences of action - and, within this category, *ceremonies* which imply some form of celebration. Hoyle (1986) suggests that much interaction amongst staff in schools is symbolic in that actions may have both an explicit managerial purpose and a role in signifying a shared value. For example, headteachers may attempt to demonstrate values about being fair in dealings with colleagues through the procedures they adopt for chairing staff meetings. A variety of *subcultures* may coexist in an organisation, defined as sets of partially overlapping and partially distinct beliefs and values. Individuals may hold several sets of beliefs and values which they share with different groups within the organisation.

Power refers to the capability of actors to intervene in a series of events so as to alter their course, and is defined by Giddens (1984) as a 'transformative capacity': the use of resources of whatever kind to secure desired outcomes. These *resources* vary widely, including sanctions, rewards, reference to norms of behaviour, and various kinds of knowledge. Power may be manifested in interaction yet may also remain latent, since resources may still exist when they are not in use. Within interaction power may be regarded as a relationship, since action intended to secure particular outcomes involves the responses or potential to act of others.

Power does not necessarily imply conflict. This conception contrasts with the 'zero-sum' formulation of Weber (1947) and Dahl (1957), the latter defining power as 'the ability to get someone to do something that he or she would not otherwise do'. Where there is consensus, actors may have great capacity for working together to bring about change or to maintain the status quo.

It is possible to distinguish two types of power (Bacharach and Lawler 1980). *Authority* implies the use of resources to achieve desired ends which is perceived by an actor as legitimated by beliefs and values associated with formal status and potentially backed by sanctions. *Influence*, in comparison, is the informal use of resources to achieve desired ends where actors perceive that there is no recourse to sanctions linked to formal status.

Actors attempt to realise their *interests*, seen as outcomes that facilitate the fulfilment of actors' wants. In other words, use of resources in action to realise interests reflects actors' efforts to give expression to their values which, in turn, are framed by their beliefs. However they may not be fully aware of the interests and the associated values affecting their actions. Actors in a relationship of power are each partly autonomous and partly dependent on the other, however asymmetrical the relationship. Each actor is thus implicated in a two-way '*dialectic of control*' (Giddens 1984) manifested in interaction between individuals or groups. Two or more actors may form a *coalition*, intentionally cooperating in seeking to realise a common interest according to shared values.

The relationship between power and conflict is contingent upon actors attempting to realise different and irreconcilable interests. *Conflict* refers to struggle between actors expressed through their interaction. However conflict does not necessarily arise when actions are taken to realise *contradictory interests* as long as action according to one interest is separated from action according to the contradictory interest (Wallace 1987, 1991b). Contradiction between interests may be an enduring feature of social life and may not breed conflict where actors are either unaware of their interests or the consequences of their actions, or are unwilling or unable to act on these interests.

Application of the Perspective to Teamwork within SMTs

The focus of our research is upon the attempt made by members of SMTs to work together within their conception of teamwork. The concepts outlined above constitute the framework for analysing how senior staff who claim a commitment to shared leadership actually work together. We have followed Larson and LaFasto (1989) in adopting a broad initial definition of a team:

> A team has two or more people; it has a specific performance objective or recognisable goal to be attained; and coordination of activity among the members of the team is required for the attainment of the team goal or objective.
>
> (p19)

We are exploring how SMTs in secondary schools develop different approaches to carrying out their work and seeking to identify factors which affect teamwork within their particular contexts. In the examples which follow, we have confined our analysis to the expression of culture and power in interaction within the two SMTs that we are studying in depth.

The First Incident: an Attempt to Negotiate a Preferred Role in the Small Town School

The first incident involved the attempt of a deputy head in the small town school to change her job description. She had been appointed to the school eighteen months before whereas the first deputy had been in post for four years. Her job description specified responsibility for staffing and staff development, community and public relations. It included making the necessary daily arrangements for staff cover when staff were absent from school. The departure of her predecessor had led to a revision of the roles and responsibilites of each team member. The criteria for allocation of responsibilities agreed by the SMT at this point were the jobs to be done, the particular skills of individual SMT members, and the need to match members' status to their level of responsibility. The headteacher was responsible for finance and the environment; the first deputy for academic and pastoral curriculum and timetabling; one senior teacher for information technology, resources and the 'Technical and Vocational Education Initiative'; the other senior teacher for records of achievement and evaluation.

This allocation of jobs reflected the headteacher's commitment to an integrated approach to the curriculum (combining pastoral and academic aspects) and her assessment of the specific skills of each team member. Two members of the SMT would have preferred curriculum and pastoral responsibilities to have been separated rather than both being allocated to one person. In this case the head's values were consistent with the first deputy's preference for having both responsibilities. The head was guided by the belief that the SMT should be created around people and their personal capabilities rather than specific roles. The incident highlights how this approach can be problematic when a team member becomes personally dissatisfied with her or his role.

The head attempted to persuade her colleagues to accept a solution that would serve the personal interests of at least two team members without working against the interests of the others. She acted according to her perception that her primary responsibility was to shape the joint work of the team within a culture that requires conflict to be dealt with outside SMT meetings, rather than addressed openly in the group.

The opportunity to review jobs came from the team's participation in a distance learning teambuilding programme, led by the new deputy. The ostensible reason, recognised by all team members as legitimate, was the disappearance of a major part of the senior teacher's job and the need to find him new responsibilities if he was to remain a team member. There was consensus on the desirability of him continuing to be in the SMT although his role had changed. An additional stimulus was provided by the newer deputy's discontent with her current responsibilities and strongly expressed desire to change them. This view was interpreted by her colleagues as a personal whim rather than a professional concern. It did not have the same legitimacy for them as the senior teacher's need for a job review. They appeared to subscribe to a hierarchy of values: professional duty to carry out individual responsibilities was more important than personal concern for job satisfaction. Interaction according to the discrepant values held by the new deputy and her colleagues resulted on this occasion in a schism amongst SMT members.

SMT members' responses were influenced by the personal values that they brought to the issue of sharing responsibilities within the team. The issue brought out differences between individual interests and coalitions were formed where individuals' interests and values were shared. These coalitions were one of a range of resources that each team member brought to bear in attempting to secure a resolution of the issue. Other uses of resources included reference to the formal status hierarchy - senior staff had a right to continue in their present role, a claim supported by the first deputy and the headteacher; and opportunities taken by the newer deputy to present her case forcibly.

This SMT had only recently begun working on joint development and had done relatively little about clarifying values and the extent to which they were shared. The surface consensus which characterised their usual working style was not just a way of obscuring conflict, as Ball (1987) might have suggested, but an integral part of the team's commitment to 'the way we do things' in the team. Reflecting the analysis offered by Nias et al, the conflict that arose here masked consensus at a more implicit level. It revealed a gap between the newer deputy's priority for furthering her career (and therefore needing a broad range of experience) and the belief of the other SMT members that each person should accept the team role which he or she had been assigned.

Within her beliefs and values relating to staff development the newer deputy accorded a high priority to creating opportunities for job satisfaction through the tasks people were expected to do. Her desire to drop the responsibility for cover and to expand her involvement in curriculum reflected her frustration at a tedious job as well as seeking opportunities for development. No other member of the team was currently applying for headships, although they understood her different ambition. Each perceived themselves as having some tedious aspects to their job but acceptable as part of a team agreement that the tedious jobs should be shared out. Additionally they all considered that the same qualities which the deputy brought successfully to her staff development role (and for which she was appointed to the team) were required in finding cover for staff absences, where considerable familiarity with the circumstances of individual teachers was necessary.

Initially the new deputy sought advantage within the dialectic of control by attempting to develop a coalition with the headteacher by persuading her to consider the possibility of a change. They each held strongly strongly contrasting values related to their management styles, including the headteacher's preference for caution and the deputy's commitment to risk taking. It was in the headteacher's interest as the team's overall manager to organise the division of tasks so that each individual team member was satisfied with her or his role and thus performed to full capacity. Her individual preference was for regularly rotating responsibilities, yet her perception of individual capacities and wants made this strategy appear inappropriate to her in the present circumstances. She did not consider each team member equally capable in each of the task areas. In contrast, the new deputy supported challenges and change as essential for individual development. For her, taking on unfamiliar tasks and learning the necessary skills was an essential component of professional development. In this case her

professional values (for giving people challenges) matched her personal interest. The head, in not openly supporting the new deputy's case, demonstrated her power to shape how the team allocated responsibilities, in a way that conformed with her assessment of what the team needed. She was, however, willing to create the open forum for the discussion (thereby demonstrating the team's commitment to sharing concerns) without giving the deputy her support. She always took great pains never to be an advocate for the interests of one or other team member but expected them to argue their own case. She valued working through and with the team rather than on her own. This made it difficult for individual team members to seek coalitions with her.

A coalition did emerge between the newer deputy and the senior teacher whose job was threatened. It was in his personal interest to support her case. His current responsibilities were disappearing, which left him feeling agitated and insecure. He wanted to remain a member of the team but realised that to do so he would have to carve out a distinctive role. He relished the challenge of expanding the school's marketing activities and was willing to take over the deputy's cover responsibilities, to extend his professional experience. The new deputy canvassed his views prior to the job review meeting, to assess what he would find acceptable as a new job description and to persuade him to take on areas she wanted to lose. The headteacher supported this coalition by joining the discussions so that the ground was cleared between the three of them prior to the meeting. Separately, the head also checked that the first deputy did not feel threatened by the new deputy's proposals to add some curriculum areas to her repsonsibilities. There was no discussion outside the team meeting with the remaining member of the team. Each had separately assumed he would not be affected by the proposed changes.

What happened in the job review meeting demonstrated the triumph of values connected with SMT members' duties towards the team over those reflecting personal career interests and those relating to job satisfaction, with compromises that aimed to leave each member individualy satisfied. The head used her authority to set the parameters for the discussion by describing it as an open-ended brainstorming session to examine their roles in the team. The intention was to ensure that they were covering all the tasks that needed doing in the school. Team members were invited to outline their perceptions of their current role and to state in what ways (if any) they would like to see it changed. The head, as usual, chaired the discussion without leading it or supporting any one case. The decisions were allowed to emerge from the debate through a consensus which relied on each team member being prepared to lose their case if necessary 'for the good of the team'.

The dominant principles which explicitly informed the process that led to the solutions were 'fitness' for the job (rather than individual preference) as a determinant of job allocation; open discussion rather than 'behind the scenes fixing'; and individual advocacy of a case rather than team sponsorship. The newer deputy was persuaded to retain cover by reference to the distinct skills and status needed and possessed by her to do it effectively. Her bid to realise her personal interest within the dialectic of control was countered by the debate resulting in her apparent acceptance of the head's beliefs and values about team roles being based upon individual capacities. However not all beliefs and values held by her colleagues were made explicit in the meeting, including the head's concerns that the senior teacher may not be ready yet for the task, and the deputy and senior teacher's concerns that the newer deputy was 'not playing the game' by challenging her job description. She was seen as 'going against the team spirit' and 'trying to roll the boundaries back too fast'. SMT members therefore appeared to hold a range of beliefs and values which guided their actions, only some of which were expressed.

The Second Incident: Setting Parameters for Teamwork in the Inner City School

The second incident relates to part of the last of the regular twice weekly SMT meetings for the term in the inner city school. The headteacher was primarily - but not exclusively - responsible for setting the parameters within which his colleagues contributed to the role of the SMT in making strategic managerial decisions. The procedural framework

for this meeting followed a routine which the head had established soon after his appointment to the school three years before. It was held during the school day in his office, all team members sitting round a low table. Earlier, the head had circulated the agenda which he had drawn up. During the previous week other SMT members were expected to put forward any items they wished to be included. He made coffee for his colleagues as they arrived and subsequently chaired the meeting. The agenda consisted of two items: to review the SMT's work during the term, including arrangements for supervising the work of teachers who specialised in supporting pupils with special educational needs; and to consider a critical path for major planning decisions that must be made the following term.

The head suggested that, prior to reviewing their work, SMT members checked out with each other any outstanding managerial issues relating to staff performance and welfare. While this item was not on the day's agenda, it normally featured each week. The SMT discussed temporary arrangements for covering the work of special needs specialists, including the leader of this group, who were to be seconded from the school for the following two terms. The issue arose over who was to take over managerial responsibility for their work while their leader was on secondment. The head suggested that an SMT member should pick up this responsibility. Each of his colleagues expressed their opinion, most agreeing with the head. One deputy head argued, however, that the SMT should ask the remaining special needs specialists how they wished their temporary leadership to be organised. Two of his colleagues spoke against this proposal but no-one offered to take up the responsibility.

At this point the head summarised each member's position on the issue and stated that the SMT must reach a decision. In order to break the deadlock, he proposed that he should take on temporary leadership of the special needs specialists as he appreciated that his SMT colleagues might be concerned about accepting any further responsibility. One SMT member expressed concern over the impact of this proposal upon the head's workload but the head argued that he was in a position to make time by reducing his effort in other areas. He stated that it would be his SMT colleagues' role to monitor him. The deputy who had argued earlier that the special needs specialists should be consulted proposed that the SMT should vote on the head's proposal. A senior teacher replied that the established working practice of the SMT was to reach consensus on decisions. Since majority decisions were not acceptable, voting would be inappropriate.

The head asked each SMT colleague, in turn, to state their view on his proposal. The deputy repeated his assertion that the special needs specialists should be consulted but accepted that he was in a minority position as the other four members had approved the proposal. The head promised that, at the first meeting with the special needs specialists, he would ask them about their concerns over temporary leadership. He later made this decision public to teachers outside the SMT by publishing it in his weekly bulletin to staff.

The routine procedures reflected a set of norms governing interaction within the SMT. The head had used his legal authority to manage the day to day running of the school (as expressed in the national conditions of service imposed by central government) in articulating and gaining acceptance of these norms from other SMT members. He had decided unilaterally to set up an SMT; taken opportunities to select new staff for the SMT (in consultation with existing members); and established working procedures.

The latter included rituals, such as making coffee and sitting in a circle away from his desk, intended to foster a favourable climate for teamwork. Other rituals, including the procedures for drawing up the agenda and for chairing, were both designed to ensure that the SMT carried out its role in strategic decision-making and to reflect the head's explicit moral values concerning the right of all SMT members to contribute equally to the work of the team. For example, at one point the head summarised the views expressed and asked each SMT member to state her or his view about the decision. Interviews conducted with other members of the SMT indicated that they very largely accepted these norms, suggesting that the head had succeeded in creating a culture of teamwork within the SMT. This high degree of consensus on working procedures

empowered the SMT to carry out its role which served the head's interest in carrying out his responsibility for managing the school with the support of a team of senior staff.

On this occasion, however, one deputy took a minority view about the decision at hand, reflecting his interest in avoiding an SMT member having to take on an additional responsibility which could rest with other staff. He was faced with a conflict of values: accepting the majority view (and so conforming with the norm about finding a working consensus on decisions) would compromise the value he had expressed in relation to consulting staff directly affected. He sought to avoid this compromise by asking for a vote on the decision which would enable him to stick to his stated view. He attempted to use the influence of his proposal for a vote to enable him to avoid compromising his view about consultation. A senior teacher rejected this proposal on the grounds that it contradicted her belief that the SMT should work towards consensus, reflecting a procedural norm which she had accepted. She thus used her delegated authority as an SMT member to remind the deputy of this norm, so promoting her previously stated interest in ensuring that an SMT member took over the temporary leadership of special needs specialists. At the same time she reinforced the boundaries of acceptable behaviour within the culture of teamwork to which she subscribed. While the head had played a major role in setting the parameters for teamwork, this interaction demonstrates that a key norm had been accepted by a colleague and employed to circumvent action to change an established working procedure. In this instance, the senior teacher had supported the headteacher against another SMT member within the dialectic of control amongst SMT members.

The hierarchy of formal status was reflected in certain of the headteacher's actions in the meeting. Although within the culture of teamwork all SMT members had equal status in contributing to decisons, the head had a unique degree of legal authority to put forward certain courses of action. Other members, appointed to the SMT to assist the head, did not have the legal authority vested in their role to make a decision about the temporary leadership of special needs specialists without the head's support. He made the initial proposal that an SMT member should be directly involved; insisted that a decision must be made during the meeting; proposed that he would take on the responsibility himself; and directed his colleagues to monitor how far he kept his workload within bounds. Sometimes the head acted as *primus inter pares*; at others his leadership role was more distinct.

An Emerging Issue: Contradiction between Equality of Contribution as SMT Members and Formal Status Hierarchy

Evidence from our observation of patterns of interaction within the SMT of both schools suggests that there is an enduring tension between the norm that the contribution of each SMT member to strategic decision-making should carry equal weight and the hierarchy of status associated with different individual roles. As we have indicated, headteachers alone have legal authority for the daily management of the school, including the authority to decide how far other senior staff are enabled to contribute as equals. Deputy heads have conditions of service which are linked closely to those of heads, including the right to take over the headteacher's authority in their absence. They may thus, on occasion, be in a position to direct the work of senior teachers. The latter are subject to legislation about the minimum number of hours that they may be directed to work each year. Salary differentials and levels of individual school-wide responsibility reflect this three level hierarchy.

Actions reflecting the contradictory norms of equal contribution to school management and a hierarchy of authority to direct the work of colleagues are kept separate for much of the time. When SMT members engage in a debate, they generally act according to the norm of contributing as equals. If, say, headteachers use their legal authority to direct their SMT colleagues, the norm that there is a legitimate hierarchy of formal status temporarily over-rides the norm of equal contribution as team members. Conflict could ensue if some members acted according to their formal status while others acted as equal contributors within the same interaction.

One expression of the tension outlined above concerns how far SMT members with different levels of formal status should give equal amounts of time to school functions outside the teaching day. Senior teachers and less senior s.aff are legally required to work for 1265 hours each year, covering the teaching day and additional times when they may be directed to attend school functions.

How the Issue was Expressed in the Small Town School

We have characterised the SMT of the small town school as a developing team, constantly exploring the boundaries of its identity and the rules governing its joint behaviour. A clash between the personal needs of one member and the professional expectations of some of his colleagues highlighted differential interpretations of the extent of equal commitment required of team members and the right to make final decisions about how individuals use their time.

As senior staff, both the senior teacher on the SMT and his wife were expected to attend a large year review meeting for parents. The senior teacher would be there as a representative of the SMT and his faculty; his wife as chair of the year group of pupils concerned. It was the first time since the birth of their baby eight months previously that they had both been required. Their joint attempts to persuade the SMT that both were not needed highlighted the hierarchy within the team as well as the different management styles of individual members.

A 'systems' solution to the problem lay in whether attendance at the meeting was a requirement of 1265 hours directed time. A 'human relations' response might have considered the balance of personal and professional needs in this particular situation. The team were divided in their responses. One deputy and the senior teacher preferred the approach that left the decision to the professional judgement of the team member concerned and took account of personal circumstances. The head and other deputy thought the request for only one of the couple to attend was inappropriate to their management positions. They saw the domestic dilemma as easily overcome by good salaries and a babysitter.

The outcome was a firm directive from the head who used her legal authority to direct that both the senior teacher and his wife should attend. This decision resulted in resentment expressed by the senior teacher and annoyance at how his wife had been treated. Predictably his allegiance to his wife was greater than his allegiance to the team. The head's decision to take a hard line rested on her belief that, in this instance, professional responsibilities had priority over personal needs.

It was also influenced by the senior teacher's status in the team. Both the senior teachers perceived themselves (and were viewed by other staff) as having less 'clout' or delegated authority within the SMT than the deputies or the head. The head did not expect them to be involved in meetings beyond those directed within the 1265 statutory hours each year. In contrast, she expected the deputies to attend a range of additional meetings, even though she did not have recourse to sanctions to force them to do so. The head was able to exert influence upon the deputies, who were not subject to statutory hours. There appeared to be a hierarchy of expectations about the extent of people's involvement in teamwork which was reinforced by formal job status. The hierarchy was further reinforced by the fact that the head and two deputies were members of the team by right as deputies and the others by invitation of their more senior colleagues. This differential basis of team membership gave more power to the inviters over the invitees who were more likely to hold back on criticism and 'do as we are told', reinforced by the head's insistence on the accountabilty of the two senior teachers to the deputies as their line managers.

Although the hierarchy was acknowledged, it came to the fore on issues where there was a conflict between values connected with personal interests and those relating to duties as members of the SMT. Then reference was made to the hierarchy by different individuals according to their own interest. In this case the senior teacher implied that he should not be expected to attend the meeting on the same basis as the deputies. The

head used her authority to direct him to contribute equally as a member of the SMT. The contradictory norms of equal contribution with the SMT and the hierarchy of authority to direct others' work produced conflict when they were brought together in interaction. The conflict was resolved in so far as the senior teacher accepted that the head's authority to direct him to attend the meeting with his wife. The formal status hierarchy thus had great potential for inducing conflict which might severely constrain the SMT's capability for joint work, if the strength of the team culture that bound them did not reassert itself.

How the Issue was Expressed in the Inner City School

Near the beginning of one SMT meeting at the inner city school, the head checked with one of the deputy heads about arrangements he had made for supervising students on a trip away from the school that morning The head stated that these arrangements did not comply with legal requirements and asked the deputy to make alternative arrangements immediately. The deputy apologised and left the room to undertake this task. The head held up the meeting until he was satisfied that adequate supervision had been given.

Here the head used his authority to monitor the work of the deputy and, further, to decide that rectifying the error that had been revealed was of higher priority than continuing with the SMT meeting. On this occasion the deputy accepted his mistake and took prompt action to make amends. Within the dialectic of control there was a complementarity of interests, both actors using their resources synergistically towards the same end. Similarly, the norms of interaction to which they adhered had switched from sharing information as equal contributors to the head monitoring a colleague as the person with ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all staff, including the deputy, acted within the law. Further, the head had directed the deputy to rectify his mistake and the deputy had accepted his right to give such direction. In this case the contradiction between contributing as equals and being members of a status hierarchy did not lead to conflict as both actors involved accepted the shift from one norm to the other.

On another occasion, this SMT reviewed the structure of the SMT, its membership, and individual SMT members' roles after one deputy announced that he was seeking early retirement and expected to leave the school at the end of the current academic year. He agreed to act in an advisory capacity to his colleagues in considering how to replace him or otherwise to cover his individual work. If he was to be replaced by the appointment of another deputy, the two senior teachers in the SMT would be eligible to apply for internal promotion to the post. In the ensuing debate, carried out over a series of specially convened meetings, the head put forward a proposal for a new SMT structure in which the deputy would be replaced by an 'assistant head' on the same salary - and thus carrying the same status - as the senior teachers. The other four SMT members who were involved in making the decision about the SMT structure were evenly divided: one deputy and senior teacher supported the proposal while the other deputy and senior teacher did not accept it. The head repeatedly asked all his SMT colleagues to make explicit all their concerns including their personal career interests.

The head referred to his personal dilemma: it was vital to reach a decision yet to break the deadlock implied that he must use his authority as head to employ his 'casting vote'. If he did so, the decision would be made by a majority of three to two, which was unacceptable within the procedures which SMT members had hitherto adopted. Debate normally continued until a working consensus was found. In the event he declined to intervene and the SMT reached consensus on temporary arrangements to cover the work of the member who was retiring. When each SMT member was interviewed afterwards all six stated that, to protect the shared commitment to teamwork which they valued so highly, it was essential that the head refrained from forcing a majority decision.

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At a subsequent meeting to decide upon a new permanent structure, unanimous agreement was reached on several courses of action. Some of individual members'

current tasks were to be given to other staff with middle management responsibilities; the SMT was to be reduced to five members; and both senior teachers were to be made permanent 'acting' deputies, with increased status and salary, to conform to a shared and explicit value of attaining parity amongst all SMT members other than the head.

Within the head's proposed new SMT structure, the two senior teachers were presented with a personal dilemma. They had responsibility as SMT members to consider what would be best for the management of the school overall. The head's proposal would block either of them from retaining the potential to realise their personal career interest in the promotion to deputy headship. Both senior teachers stated when interviewed that they had deliberately attempted to keep their career interest out of their consideration because of their over-riding duty as SMT members. Their potential conflict was resolved as far as they could by separating the two interests.

A major dilemma was posed for the head in whether to use his authority to break with accepted SMT practice and impose a majority decision. In a later interview he reported that that his paramount value had been to act in accordance with agreed procedures, even if it resulted in a delayed decision. He was very unwilling to act against his explicit moral principles and would not risk destroying the strong commitment to teamwork that he had nurtured through consensus decision-making. This judgement was supported by all other SMT members, especially those who had argued against the head's proposal, who stated when interviewed that a majority decision would have severely undermined their commitment to teamwork. Within the dialectic of control, an intervention by the head might have stimulated some SMT colleagues to use their potential influence to render the SMT less effective as a team by, for example, refusing to contribute fully to debates.

However, if the SMT had proved unable to reach consensus in subsequent debates, as a last resort the head would have been prepared to remove the decision from the jurisdiction of the SMT and make it alone. At this point his highest priority would have been to secure a decision, despite the price to be paid in weakening the culture of teamwork. The head had avoided conflict between his interest in sustaining the culture of teamwork and his interest in gaining acceptance of his proposal by sacrificing one for the sake of the other. To have used his authority as head to direct his colleagues towards a decision would have conflicted with his espoused value that SMT members should contribute to decision-making as equals.

The decision on a new permanent structure succeeded in realising a common interest in attaining greater parity between SMT members. It also served both senior teachers' interest in promotion while protecting the interest made explicit by one deputy head that he did not wish his existing status as deputy head to be lessened. Raising the formal status of both senior teachers to that of the existing deputies would result in a flatter hierarchy with just two levels which would reinforce the delegated authority of the senior teachers to make an equal contribution to decision-making. The greater status of the head remained, so retaining (to a lesser degree) some level of contradiction between the right to offer an equal contribution as SMT members and the formal status hierarchy.

Conclusion

We have offered a preliminary analysis of examples of interaction within SMTs from a cultural and political perspective. We suggest that a deeper understanding of how leadership is shared through teamwork may be gained through exploring the interplay of meanings, norms and use of resources in interaction within SMTs and between SMT members and others. We intend to use this dual metaphor to examine other areas of the research findings, including:

o   managing the boundaries of SMTs - how do SMT members work to ensure that other staff perceive them to be open and fair in consulting them and communicating about SMT decisions?

o   the accountability of the head for the work of the SMT - how does the head's

unique level of responsibility in comparison with other SMT members affect his or her willingness to enable them to contribute equally to strategic decision-making?

o   the process of decision-making - what tactics are used within the SMT and by whom to work towards major decisions?

o   developing and sustaining the culture of teamwork - what strategies do heads and their SMT colleagues employ?

o   the influence of gender on team behaviour - how far is the distribution of tasks, the nature of interaction and use of political and other strategies influenced by gender?

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TABLE 1: KEY CONCEPTS EMPLOYED IN DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

CULTURAL (Nias et al 1989)	POLITICAL (Ball 1987)	CULTURAL AND POLITICAL
Culture of Collaboration	Power	Culture of teamwork
Beliefs	Control	Subculture
Values	Goal Diversity	Beliefs
Understandings	Ideology	Values
Attitudes	Conflict	Norms
Meanings	Interests	Rituals
Norms		Consensus
Symbols		Power
Rituals		Resources
Ceremonies		Hierarchy
Negotiation		Interests
Consenus		Dialect of Control
		Authority
		Influence
		Conflict
		Contradiction
		Coalitions