

**WOMEN IN POLICE SERVICE: WHY DO SO FEW ACHIEVE
THE ACPO RANKS?**

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by

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ABSTRACT

Introduction

Adopting a feminist criminological perspective this study will integrate literature relating to women in management and women in criminology in order to ascertain the barriers to women's career progression in policing. There is a plethora of reasons why women are apparently unsuccessful when it comes to promotion to higher ranks within police service and these relate not only to gender and the perceived '*glass ceiling*' in society and police culture, but to the psychological and sociological barriers that women inadvertently self-impose.

Underpinned by feminist ideology a range of methodologies were used including questionnaires, focus groups and finally in-depth life history interviews with senior ranking women in order to ascertain the discursive courses in relation to power, identity and hierarchy.

Predicted societal demographic changes combining increased longevity of female survival rates will result in a gender imbalance in work forces. Inevitably numbers of working females, police service included, will naturally result in a necessity for female officers to achieve higher status reducing the divisive notion of homogenous groups. Organisational culture and behaviour implies that females in the police service are perceived as lacking commitment limiting the likelihood of progression for female officers. This research endeavours to contribute to future research and national policy to identify explicit barriers paving the way for change in the service reflecting the policing needs of 21st Century society.

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GLOSSARY

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
POLSUPERS	The Superintendents' Association
BAWP	British Association of Women in Policing
NBPA	The National Black Police Association
NGPA	The National Gay Police Association
NDPA	National Disabled Police Association
NPIA	National Police Improvement Agency
OSPRE	Objective Structured Performance Examinations
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMIC(T)	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (Training)
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRD	Human Resource Development
LAGPA	Lesbian and Gay Police Association
PNAC	Police National Assessment Centre
POLFED	Police Federation

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 The contextual scene

This thesis sets out to consider the reasons why there are so few women achieving senior positions within the United Kingdom (UK) police service. In June 1995 Pauline Clare became the first female Chief Constable of Lancashire amidst extensive media coverage heralded as the demise of one of the last bastions of male dominance in the work place. Sixteen years later women continue to be under represented within the service at senior and particularly ACPO levels despite Home Office and individual force initiatives to address this issue.

There are several academics such as Cordano, Scherer and Owen (2002) also Dick and Jankowicz (2001) currently researching and addressing issues in relation to culture and leadership within organisations. This includes the police service on both a national and international basis. Various eminent authors continue to contribute to the academic debate in subject areas such as police leadership, culture and gender differences, beginning with Martin's initial (1979), study in relation to gender and leadership issues in particular followed by later studies (1991), also by Walklate (1995), Martin and Jurik (1996), Brown (1997, 1998, 2000), Brown and Heidensohn (2000) Metcalfe and Dick (2000), Dick and Cassell (2002) and Silvestri (2003) (2007), but none of them actually asks the direct question as to why there are so few women attaining the higher ranks? Young's (2007) thesis considers the question in relation to Kent Police in particular, but her findings are limited in that she is only considering one force. As a serving officer at senior rank her findings contribute to the debate more specifically than more established academics studying the field and

offers insight from an ethnographic perspective. As such, her study is both insightful and helpful, but as she freely acknowledges a deeper study into the issue relating to women's career progression within the wider police service is long overdue. This study is set within the broader context of feminist criminology and explores the perspective that there are in existence significant differences in opportunities for career progression for females to males within the UK police service. The purpose of this study is to produce a social constructivist account of the current situation identifying potential solutions and opportunities for reviewing the status quo which has in the main been disregarded both by academics and the bodies that represent police officers, such as the Home Office and other police related agencies. This study advances existing knowledge on gender organisational analysis and feminist criminology. Significantly it contributes to the literature relating to women in the work place and specifically to the understanding of the issues affecting women within policing. Issues in relation to gender, socially constructed behaviours and attitudes in conjunction with work force planning and resourcing will be explored and lend a pragmatic view to potential solutions to the perception that there is in existence what I describe as a 'thin blue ceiling' reflecting Wertsch's (1998, p23) definition of the "*thin blue line*", the small number of females within policing, preventing females from progressing their careers effectively.

This research approach adopts a feminist criminology perspective using a multi-disciplined research approach which begins with a pilot study in one force, using questionnaires and focus groups to identify key themes which are later developed by in-depth, life-history interviews with 35 senior ranking females in 8 different forces. Analysis and discussion of the results with reference to existing studies will provide

a clearer view of the existing situation thus enabling opportunity for change at local and national levels particularly in relation to restrictive policies, customs and practice that negatively influence the current progression opportunities for women in UK policing.

1.2 Knowledge gaps and significance of research

Women in other sectors of industry have proved that they can be successful yet the current social perception that women can combine a successful career and family life seems not to be reflected in the police service. Police officers appear to have to make a direct choice between a successful career and a quality family life and this research sets out to establish whether or not this is true. It is suggested that women within the police service do have to make an informed choice as to whether or not they sacrifice a family over career and as a consequence develop personal, internal barriers to career progression, despite the efforts of the service to encourage women to take more senior roles within the 43 forces of mainland Britain. Therefore, in order to be successful women either need to make sacrifices such as not having children or family life or to choose family over a successful career. This is partly because British society still places the emphasis of child care or care of the elderly upon women, despite the apparent equality between men and women that legislation has attempted to promote. The question relating to society's perception of what women can and cannot do, particularly in the field of front line public services, needs to be fully explored. Is the view that women can only undertake certain roles and career paths still prevalent in wider society, so that when women take up what is seen as non-traditional female role, such as policing, that they become the targets of

scepticism, criticism and consequently become social misfits due to socially constructed values and beliefs? Butler (1990) (2004) identifies the significance of socially constructed paradigms highlighting the power that can be exerted in relation to gender expectations. She illustrates the influence external exponents of those traditional, socially constructed values impact upon the attitudes and behaviours of individuals and organisations. She further highlights that often being female/feminine is perceived as being troublesome, especially when challenging the traditional values and beliefs of wider society. Butler (1990) comments that society itself is gendered with the dominant gender being male and for those who diverge from that belief they are seen as deviant.

In order to answer the research question several key questions need to be addressed. One such question relates to perceptions held by women themselves prior to joining the police service. For example, do social class and or ethnic origin, social upbringing and early childhood experiences influence the attitudes of women in their adult, working lives? Are early social networks, both formal and informal, such as immediate and wider family, friends and other social groupings influential upon women's career decision-making processes? Are parental and sibling views, particularly in relation to perceptions about what are and what are not acceptable career choices for women, influential upon women's career aspirations either negatively or positively, thus reinforcing societal perceptions about capability and social fit? These initial questions may prove to be significant in terms of women's career objectives and one of the aims of this study will be to identify if there is a direct link between early experiences and career aspiration.

Upon entry into the organisation a series of different questions needs to be posed. There are several recognised features relating to women in the workplace that have apparently been overcome by women following other career pathways, such as the need to ensure an appropriate work-life balance (Tomlinson, 2007). Work-life balance may be further complicated by the so-called 'biological clock'. Many women choose to have children and so there is an apparent necessity to combine choosing an optimum time to start and manage a family along with social preconceptions as to the role of the woman as both worker and mother. Linked to the issue of family life there is an organisational cultural question relating to perceived commitment, particularly in an environment where a long-hours culture prevails and there is evidence of strong bonds of camaraderie between colleagues, particularly those who work complex shift patterns and may be reliant upon each other to achieve high performance. Does the impact of taking maternity leave and returning to work in a part time capacity impact upon the perception of colleagues in relation to commitment to the job? In conjunction with more social issues there are the operational and organisational issues such as the appropriateness of Human Resource Development (HRD) interventions relating to opportunity, duration and cost (Birzer, 2003, Prokos and Padavic, 2002). These may not be unique to women within the organisation, but may be perceived as yet another potential barrier that women in particular perceive to career progression. The police service has a strong organisational culture steeped in historical military practices from which the early service originated and can be evidenced in the modern service, for example, the current uniform originates from a 1950's army design. Many of the customs and practices evident today stem from this macho, male dominated origin and like most organisations there is a reluctance to move significantly away from its early roots.

This may be another prohibitive factor in women's career progression. As a minority group within an organisation are there sufficient networks and role models to support those women who do aspire to the higher ranks? For those who have been successful in the past, do they contribute to the continued development of female colleagues or is there an air of what Mavin (2006) describes as "*Queen Bee*" (p349) syndrome where those who have gone before "*pull up the ladder(s)* (p352) behind them? There may well be local issues in relation to organisational practice in relation to various policies and procedures. Across the 43 forces, each force is likely to adopt its own local policies and procedures relating to working conditions and practices. As officers are not employees and remain officers of the Crown, legislation relating to terms and conditions does not necessarily apply to them, although it appears that most forces try to reflect good employment practice. As an organisation required to provide a public service 365 days a year, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week can the organisation really be expected to accommodate and integrate flexible working practices that are adopted in other organisations that do not necessarily provide the same types of services? This possibly links to the issues of resourcing and work force planning. Could more effective management of existing human resources and more creative work force planning provide a more flexible solution not only for women but also for all employees?

1.3 Current issues

As society in the UK becomes increasingly diverse it is inevitable that the services representing and serving the general populace need to reflect that society. By drawing officers and support staff from diverse backgrounds the service will increase its understanding of the requirements of the population at large and perhaps develop

a style of policing that engenders harmony and respect. There will always be a requirement for a police service as there will always be an element of society that will break the established rules and laws that maintain a healthy, respectful and productive society. The police service was established to protect the general public and to provide a reassurance to them that misdemeanours would be dealt with and that individuals would be treated in a fair and just manner.

However, in order to break free from the historical white, male-dominated culture the service needs to truly accept the fact that the community at large is diverse and as it draws its work force from the community at large it is natural that the existing culture will be required to change. The establishment and growth of the various staff associations in some ways seeks to address the changes required, but there needs to be further integration and cultural acceptance of these organisations is required to ensure that this occurs. There appears to be a growing swell of acceptance of diversity as being the norm, but there are still pockets of resistance as can be illustrated by documented experiences of those who have suffered victimisation or harassment and those anecdotal references that are made in conversations with officers across the country.

Perhaps the most likely change to occur in the future is one that will be forced by demographic changes in society. The increasing ratio of female to male workers and the growth of ethnic minority communities in the UK may well force out the white, dominant, macho–male from the Service. It can be suggested that there is evidence to support this change, especially when taking into consideration the change in the style of policing in the current day in comparison to the style employed some thirty

years ago. There is now greater emphasis in police training on using less direct and aggressive tactics, with increasing emphasis being placed upon negotiation and defusing potentially violent situations. Many of the training models used to train both probationary and long serving officers now include significant aspects of negotiation and education in relation to diversity. Diversity training runs as a 'golden thread' throughout all aspects of current training programmes. Organisational culture tends to mutate slowly and so the various staff associations will need to continue to influence the service and the Government in order to establish true integration in the future.

1.4 Aims and objectives

This thesis will focus upon the barriers, perceived or real, in relation to career progression for females within the service and attempt to establish if the true barriers are created by women themselves. There is some evidence to suggest that despite every attempt to reduce bias on the part of the service itself by the introduction of competency based frameworks in relation to recruitment and selection and to an extent within the internal promotion processes adopted by forces, women still continue to be under-represented at the higher ranks and in particular at ACPO level. This study sets out to prove that there are in fact few, if any, real barriers to women's progression within police service other than perceptions held by women themselves and the fact that women who have already become successful within the service guard their positions and fail to offer the support and encouragement for those who aspire to the higher ranks by adopting the behaviour of negative role models. The specified aims of this study are:-

- To explore if early social interactions impact upon women's career choices
- To identify if socially constructed paradigms relating to women's roles in society affect women's career success within the police service
- To consider the current and future position and representation of women officers within the police service
- To examine if organisational culture, policy and practice reduces the likelihood of women achieving success in a male dominated environment
- To consider if the so called '*glass ceiling*' really exists or whether women officers self-impose barriers to career progression relating to making direct choices of career over family life and vice versa
- To clarify whether or not success is linked to membership of established networks and support mechanisms as well as influence by effective role models

1.5 Outline Structure

Chapter 2 explores gender and inequality in employment discussing the emergence of glass ceilings, walls and escalators, amongst other epithets, in relation to gender and employment. Following this I will consider the impact of women's leadership, emotions, biological and psychological factors that appear to affect women's ability to attain senior positions in organisations. Issues relating to police leadership and culture will be explored, identifying if the leadership styles and culture are unique to the service and so women entering this profession are breaking with those traditions and cultures that have been in place since the origins of the service. Role models linked to a performance culture and the burden of gender stereotyping will also

provide a platform for the development of positive action initiatives and the exploration of the notion that women are placed into precarious positions or have to manoeuvre through a myriad of organisational beliefs and values. Gender in organisations appears to be a complex relationship between androgyny and homogeneity, with masculinity and femininity being clearly defined resulting in a battle between the sexes. Career choice seems to be gender specific according to the view of wider society, with those who choose to challenge the status quo being identified as deviant by both sexes. This Chapter also explores the isolation of such women and considers the necessity to develop strong, supportive networks and identifies their exclusion from existing male networks and how this affects their career paths.

The chapter analyses in depth aspects of gendered organisations and culture and defines how this is reflected within organisations, and the tokenism attributed to minority groups. The long-hours culture and the notion of commitment to the role is further explored offering insight into how organisations influence the structure of the workforce, particularly in relation to gender.

As Chapter 2 draws to a conclusion the issue of gender and family, career choice and control of destiny is defined. In this Chapter I discuss whether lifestyle choices become the only option for women in policing, thus restricting their opportunity to fully develop their careers.

Building upon the analysis of gendered organisational cultures Chapter 3 critically examines women and policing specifically. This Chapter reviews the interlinking connections between power and gender and how this pervades the criminal justice

sector. This Chapter further focuses upon the need for aspiring senior police women to be well educated and identifies the prejudices and language associated with a cult of masculinity. Drawing upon the wider literature sources of Chapter 2 this Chapter focuses specifically upon how family life, work place practices and a culture of performance appears to be detrimental to women's career progression exploring the importance of leadership, sponsorship and mentors.

Chapter 4 identifies the diversity of the police sector commenting upon the various staff associations that have developed over recent times to represent the minority groups of society that are now being recruited into the Police. The service aspires to represent wider society and by establishing support networks for such groups attempts to engender cultural acceptance. This Chapter provides a historical account of the development of such groups and identifies their importance in the evolution of the culture within policing.

Chapter 5 identifies and justifies the mixed methodologies adopted to conduct the empirical research. By utilising a mixed methodological approach there is opportunity to produce both quantitative and qualitative data providing both debate and justification for utilising both types of data enabling the capturing of a richness of data that satisfies both the scientific and social research paradigms.

Data gathered in this study will then be analysed throughout the next three Chapters and a discussion developed linking back to the original literature review to establish the significance between academic interpretation and operational practice. Chapter 6 explores the emergent themes derived from the pilot study forming the platform for

Chapter 7 where the gender, culture and the barriers to women's career development can be clearly identified. These two Chapters relate to the lower ranking officers from Police Constable to Inspector level. Chapter 8 relates to the various discourse identified by senior ranking officers, Chief Inspector to ACPO ranks and from this two significant career points can be identified. The leap from Inspector to Chief Inspector and the chasm between Chief Superintendent and ACPO ranks. The significance of these two key career milestones seems to be pivotal in a woman's ability to achieve career success.

Chapters 9 and 10 develop conclusions and recommendations and draw together the questions posed by the aims and objectives establishing some of the reasons why so few women achieve the ACPO ranks. This unique study will add to the on-going debate in relation to equality of opportunity and parity for women within the work environment and policing in particular.

1.6 Conclusion and significance of research

This thesis is highly original in that it reviews the role of senior women in policing addressing a significant research gap in relation to the roles of women within the police service by directly engaging with women officers currently serving within some of the 43 mainland UK forces. Due to the noteworthy lack of women holding senior positions within the service nationally individual officers will remain anonymous by rank, name and force in order to protect their identities and to enable an accurate reflection of the current situation to be established. For the purpose of this study women are defined as a homogenous group within the police service, with little distinction between class, race, sexuality or any other heterogeneous aspect of

female diversity. To dissect the participants of this study further into the range of diverse groups that females occupy would detract from gaining an overview into the reasons why women attain the higher ranks, especially in relation to work practices and policy. This thesis does not seek to address issues of diversity between women within the service, but to explore the positioning of all women in the service regardless of their individual differences. There can be little doubt that future research might benefit from regarding women as a heterogeneous group and exploring more deeply the differences between women and their career aspirations according to their race, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation and any other distinction between them, but the limitation of this study regards women as an homogenous group.

This study seeks to identify the perceived barriers to women's career progression specifically within the senior ranks in the UK police service and to challenge those perceptions that in order to be successful in a male dominated environment women have to betray their feminine origins and adopt male traits in order to gain promotion. The thesis will aim to question the nature of barriers in relation to women's self-perception and explore if they are self-imposed due to social expectations, family origins and inability to make clear choices based upon culture and local custom and practice. By exposing some of these misconceptions it is anticipated that women will be enabled to develop the freedom and courage to make informed choices about progressing their careers within the UK police service and so redress the current state of affairs where women remain a minority group within an organisation that proclaims to be an advocate of equal opportunity by adopting a competency based approach to promotion. This study differs from previous research in that the

contributors are all currently serving officers across a range of different forces within the UK, offering insightful evidence as to the situation faced by middle and senior ranking women in between the years of 2005 and 2010. It advances the existing literature relating to women in policing and highlights policy implications for the existing police agencies enabling them to review current systems and processes which are embedded in an archaic and out-dated philosophy. This unique study begins to bridge the gap relating to the study of women in police service and provides a platform for the future in relation to this under represented area of research.

Chapter 2.1 Gender and inequality in employment

2.1.1 Introduction

This Chapter aims to outline the historic and persistent lack of equity that women experience in the wider workplace exploring the origins of, and labelling of, real and perceived barriers experienced by women. The application and recognition of metaphors by authors in relation to the lack of women's career progression across all sectors suggests that there is significance in relation to the issue, which is extensively researched by feminist academics, covering a range of occupational disciplines. In this Chapter I will draw upon a variety of feminist authors' work that relates to women's employment generally, developing the themes that relate to gender differences in leadership style and the influences of organisational culture which fuels the perceptions held by both males and females in relation to senior women.

I will also explore the social constructionist viewpoint and the influence of early social experiences upon women's career choices and their perception in relation to capability and competence and how this impacts upon career choice and their seizure or non-seizure of opportunities to progress their careers. There is a notion of normality in relation to career choice which is particularly gendered and deviation from traditional, female roles is deemed abnormal by traditionalists. The feminist viewpoint challenges this notion of deviant behaviour and perceives women who do challenge the accepted norm as champions and role models. The support mechanisms that are available to senior men differ to those for senior women. Opportunities to establish both social and work-related networks appear to be more

frequently and widely accepted in male circles, whereas women's networks are viewed with suspicion by both genders.

Finally, I will identify the complexities of family life and how this influences women's career choice as well as their progression within their chosen field. Despite legislative change and the adoption by organisations of more family-friendly policies, the role of women as carer and nurturer is firmly embedded within UK culture, thus rendering senior roles beyond the reach of some women due to social and cultural influence.

2.1.2 The emergence of the 'glass ceiling, walls, lifts, escalators, hurdles and cliffs

With its origins in the mid-1980s the term 'glass ceiling' Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986, pA8) is now commonly recognised as a term referring to 'invisible barriers' to women's upward progression within the workplace. This Chapter will review the literature relating to women in the workplace generally focussing upon the relationships between gender, employment and family. As the academic debate relating to the career progression of women in industry and the public service sector continues, a plethora of other terms has developed in order to explain this phenomenon as well as lateral development opportunities. Meyerson and Fletcher (2000) and Edwards et al (1996) identify the inequality of career progression for women with which Cornelius and Skinner agree stating:

"Despite the increased numbers of women both participating in the workforce and achieving management positions the evidence is that, for the

majority, advancement to the very highest levels is rare and that the "glass ceiling" still exists" (2005, p596)

The view that women frequently fail to progress beyond 'middle management' is well supported and documented. According to Vinnecombe and Singh (2002) middle management is where the notion of a 'glass ceiling' is suspended. Manning (2002) agrees suggesting that men and women's perception of leadership, especially transformational leadership, reflects their capabilities in relation to career progression. She suggests that many women have "*difficulty in seeing themselves as leaders based upon the masculine stereotypes of leadership*" (p214) and argues that it is a perceived difference that contributes to the effects of the 'glass ceiling' and fewer women progress beyond middle management as a direct result.

Vinnecombe and Singh (2002) imply that the glass ceiling has heightened, yet still affects women's rise to senior positions. Manning (2002) also identifies the need for women to feel satisfied in their work before seeing opportunity to progress. She concludes that there is a definite difference in perception of good leadership between the genders which may impact significantly upon the numbers of women considering leadership positions, particularly in a command and control organisation that fits all of the stereotypes associated with a dominant male culture. There is an assumption both anecdotally and empirically that transformational leadership, often associated with female leaders, is directly related to an ability to express emotion, to be emotionally intelligent.

Yim and Bond (2002) agree with Manning's (2002) opinion suggesting that women managers tend to possess differences in their self-concept and so impose a '*glass hurdle*' themselves perpetuating the myth that there is a gender difference between managers style and capability, yet there appears to be little empirical evidence to suggest this is the case. Yim and Bond (2002) imply that this gender difference begins in early education and persists through to adulthood affecting women's perceptions as to their ability to achieve senior positions. Their research was based upon eight personality characteristics, openness, emotional stability, extraversion, application, intellect, helpfulness, restraint and assertiveness. Male and female participants in the study ranked their perceived status in relation to each of the eight characteristics and these appeared to reflect outcomes from previous gender research by Schein (1973) (1975). Interestingly in this study the previously well demarcated differences between the genders was narrowed, possibly due to the more androgynous stereotypes relating to managers. Yim and Bond's conclusion was that there appeared to be less social stereotyping in relation to the gender differences between managers and that self-imposed personal '*glass hurdles*' were of greater influence.

2.1.3 Gender and leadership, emotional, biological and psychological factors

There are clear divisions between the concepts of sex and gender with sex relating to the physical and genetic attributes suggested by Patterson (2011) and Messerschmidt (2009) which defines individuals of being either male or female. Yet there is sex blurring due to various gender attributed behaviours that are deemed either feminine or masculine and it is perhaps this blurring that causes confusion and what Butler

(2004) defines as the undoing of gender. Both genders may display both masculine and feminine attributes in response to specific discourses. Eagly and Carli (2007) comment that women are expected to convey communal (female) attributes rather than agentic (male) attributes when in leadership positions, yet they identify that agentic behaviour tends to be considered as *“effective leadership”* (p66). They further note that women who associate themselves with more agentic behaviours tend to be ostracised by both genders, thus rendering them in what Eagly and Carli (2007, p66) term a *“double bind”*, that of being female and displaying effective leadership behaviours which society deems inappropriate. The association of agentic behaviour with maleness, therefore, positions women into a complex situation, they are biologically female, yet in order to be effective leaders are required to adopt agentic behaviours. It seems that the traditional, simplistic view of the distinction between maleness and femaleness no longer prevails and the clear definition of male or female ascribed roles can no longer be expected or sustained. Patterson (2011) clarifies that the notion of designated roles for males and females is, however, one that society appears to cling to, particularly in relation to leadership. She comments that the concept of masculinity and leadership are *“so deeply intertwined that the language of leadership and language of masculinity have become synonymous”* (p58).

Callahan, Hasler and Tolson (2005) challenge the view suggested by Yim and Bond (2002) that social stereotyping is diminishing indicating that senior male executives purport to be more emotionally expressive than their female counterparts. They suggest that *“women who have been so successful in a male dominated environment which traditionally does not value emotional expression have learned to suppress*

their expressiveness" (p521). They argue that women choose to adopt male traits in order to gain acceptance. The suggestion is that women 'manage' their sexuality according to the role and environment they find themselves operating in. Interestingly Oshagbemi and Gill (2003) agree that the difference in leadership style between the genders is significant with women tending to adopt more collaborative and adaptive styles of leadership whereas men tend to be more autocratic. Surprisingly, their study indicated that women were less likely to delegate important activities preferring to ensure that they maintained control, perhaps this is a form of self-preservation, particularly if indeed women are scrutinised as closely as the literature suggests. However, their research found that once women had achieved a certain level and broken through the 'glass ceiling' they adopt different management strategies, particularly in relation to risk taking. It is almost as if once through the ceiling, women gain in confidence and the fear of failure diminishes. The point at which this occurs may well vary according to the individual in question and their situation along with their social, cultural and societal influences.

This view challenges previous leadership literature and identifies that the gender gap is diminishing particularly in relation to leadership style and offers hope to women who aspire to achieve a senior position. Lawrence (2000) highlights the necessity for equality between the genders to be reflected by the senior management teams and indicates that without that commitment to gender diversity there appears to be little opportunity for women to progress to the higher levels due to the cultural focus of male domination. Simpson and Altman's (2000) study suggest that younger women fare better than more mature women, yet these younger women "*appear to suffer a crisis of confidence in their own abilities*" (p193) which can impede their desire to

gain promotion. It seems that younger women can progress their careers if they choose, but their emotional perceptions in relation to their status and ability to perform frequently inhibit real progress.

2.1.4 Physiology versus psychology

Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997a) (1997b) emphasise the existence of the 'glass' and even 'concrete' ceilings implying that the barriers to women's progression are not only psychological but physiological; that being female is a real impediment to career progression due to a variety of values, beliefs and assumptions that are widely held across societies. They suggest that there is evidence provided by behavioural scientists that shows that gender based behaviour can be linked to genetic or hormone based exposure of foetuses during a woman's pregnancy and this can affect the child's perception relating to gender and 'normal' behaviours. They explore the concept of androgynous leadership and imply that male managers might display a predominantly masculine gender role, whereas women in senior positions might favour the androgynous-masculine role in order to appear credible. This apparent abandonment of their natural feminine tendencies seems to give women a degree of acceptance within managerial roles and is almost an expectation in some organisations.

Jackson (2001) agrees indicating that society does not perceive women as leaders and adverse organisational culture, usually male dominated, reinforces the presence of the 'glass ceiling'. Simpson and Altman (2000) suggest that rather than 'smashed' the glass ceiling is merely 'punctured' enabling the more determined female to force

her way through. The impediment is further exacerbated when women enter professions that are regarded as 'male'.

2.1.5 Role models and the perception of performance

The lack of female role models contributes to the complexity and inhibits women's self-perception and esteem thus subconsciously imposing a barrier. Belle (2002) supports the existence of the glass ceiling identifying women's priority in relation to family issues whereas men tend to focus upon career opportunities. She comments that women seem less competitive than men when considering career progression and supports the notion of "*external constraints; social values, choice of training and family life-styles*" (p152). Aligned with the distinct lack of female role models Belle suggests that women also tend to be over self-critical and inhibit their ability to undertake senior roles in organisations principally due to their own perceptions relating to roles of women both in society and organisations. For those determined individuals who 'puncture' the glass ceiling, Simpson and Altman (2000) imply that their 'survival' rate having broken through the glass ceiling is enhanced enabling significant progression to be achieved providing the 'survivors' do not fall at the next hurdle, usually relating to family responsibilities or time related factors.

2.1.6 The burden of gender stereotyping

Weyer (2006) discounts '*biological explanations*' for the existence of the glass ceiling suggesting that social, cultural and structural explanations have far more significance. She refers to the expectations society places upon women which are

bound by gender stereotypes and link to beliefs about competence and suitability. In addition, male's performance in the work place is often evaluated more favourably than women's even though their performance may be equal to, or that the woman's performance exceeds that of her male competitor. There appears to be a significant gender bias particularly when linked to leadership. Vilkinas' (2000) study appears to contradict Weyer's (2006) later findings and suggests that the gender of managers has little significance upon those who work closely with or are managed by them and there is a tendency to consider competence and reliability in the role, rather than gender difference. What she suggests is that it is the language used to describe female managers, built upon cultural, historical and social attitudes that imply the competence (or otherwise) of the female manager and that this in itself causes barriers for women's progression.

Fondas (1997) attributes the concept of '*feminization*' to aspects of management activity regardless of individual gender. She suggests that certain behaviours, either inherent or socially constructed are deemed '*feminine*', the so called 'softer' management skills. Yet she too identifies that feminine traits are considered undesirable in managers and are subordinate to the masculine managerial traits or characteristics, particularly in male dominated environments.

Anon (2006) highlights the attempts by large organisations, such as International Business Machines (IBM) and British Petroleum (BP), to increase the prevalence of senior women within their work forces, yet the impact has been insignificant. It appears that male senior managers still prefer to work with other males, reinforcing the traditional notion of homophily within male dominant organisations. Ambitious

women attract unsympathetic epithets such as "*Rottweiler with lipstick*" (p20) indicating not only a dislike of senior women, but implying their aggression and uncharacteristically 'male' behaviour. Equally, this article recognises that biologically women are disadvantaged due to family commitments and life style choices and suggests that for many women to sacrifice family over the corporate life style is an unequal balance with many women favouring family over work. Vinnecombe and Singh (2002) indicate that many senior women adapt their management style to make men feel more 'comfortable' suggesting female deference to male management styles.

2.1.7 Positive action, minority representation and precarious positions

Maume Jnr (1999) considers that it is not only ceilings that women are subjected to, but also 'glass escalators' where women, especially black women, tend to be 'victims' to the rapid promotion of their male counterparts over them, giving rise to even greater inequality. There is the counter debate that due to some organisations adopting a positive action approach to the issue some men in traditionally female dominated professions, such as nursing, are themselves falling foul of 'glass escalators' or 'glass elevators' and finding that women are being rapidly promoted in such organisations.

Jackson (2001) and Sneed (2007) suggest the existence of 'glass walls' particularly in state bureaucracies, preventing lateral developmental movement of women into roles which are traditionally occupied by males. Sneed identifies the lack of ability to achieve equal representation of both males and females due to occupational

segregation, particularly in departments that have distributive functions. Such corporate practices are prohibitive to women's progression reducing the likelihood of their selection for assignments or specialist roles purely because of their gender.

Ryan and Haslam (2005) developed the notion of the glass cliff suggesting that successful women are placed in what they term "*precarious leadership positions*" (p81). They suggest that at times of crisis organisations will promote women with the intention of them becoming signatories of radical change or sacrificial lambs. It seems that successful women are often utilised to address difficult corporate issues and that if they are successful then they are moved onto the next precarious position to fulfil a similar role. If unsuccessful, then women in these leadership positions are deemed incompetent and so fall to their corporate death with the failure attributed to their gender. They argue that this practice is widespread across all industry sectors with particular prevalence in male dominated industries.

2.1.8 Lateral thinking and lateral manoeuvres

O'Connor (2001) adds a new dimension to the debate in relation to the glass ceiling suggesting that many women simply choose not to break through it. She argues that the feminist perception that women should desire to emulate men seems ludicrous. She challenges the view that success is measured by being at the top of an organisation and implies that the values men and women place upon their position within organisations differs. O'Connor suggests women gain career satisfaction by making lateral moves based upon their desire to maintain work-life balance. O'Connor further postulates that women's concept of power lies in their ability to

control their own destiny rather than being in control of the destiny of others and so implies that a significant proportion of women have lower expectations of career success than men.

Combined with these metaphorical barriers for equal representation of skills there are practical issues, for example, work-life balance, long-hours culture, issues for single parents and organisational culture. These key themes, which will be explored in this Chapter, will begin to identify the specific literature that relates to the role of female officers within the police service offering a range of alternative views regarding the role of women. Whilst comparisons can be drawn between women working in other sectors of industry, the multi-faceted role of police officers and the associated preconceptions held by some members of society, both internal and external to the service remains, especially the view of homogenizing women and the apparent adoption of dominant male traits by some successful female officers. Police Service recruitment and promotion follows a competency based framework, therefore, in principle, there should be no distinction between males and females in terms of recruitment, selection and progression. It seems reasonable to assume that the competency based approach, particularly in respect of career progression, should in many cases favour women as they appear to out-perform their male counterparts in the national examinations for Sergeants and Inspectors. Several forces and the British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP) comment in their annual reviews that women fare better in the OSPRE (Objective Structured Performance Examinations) examinations than men. (<http://www.npia.police.uk> last accessed 21/04/10) and (<http://www.bawp.org/assets/file/Grapevine%20Spring%202010.pdf> last accessed 21/04/10).

2.2 Gender and employment

2.2.1 Gender and work

Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Powell and Butterfield (2003) suggest that from the outset women are strongly influenced in their career choice by early social learning interactions as well as psychological, environmental and cultural influences. They infer that men and women are attracted to gender specific roles and have differing aspirations in terms of where they see their careers progressing. However, they accept that more recently there has been a reduction in this clear segregation of the genders, with a blurring into a more homogenous mix in certain occupations. These social changes have had a positive impact upon women's ability to achieve more senior roles yet their research suggests that women still do have lower aspirations than their male counterparts.

Due Billing and Alvesson (2000) challenge the clear distinctions between feminine and masculine leadership traits and highlight that for both genders there is a blurring of what are traditionally deemed 'male' or 'female' behaviours or characteristics. They suggest that the binary divide between the genders is less distinct, with both males and females exhibiting masculine and feminine leadership traits. Culturally within the UK biological sex and gender has in the past been inextricably linked, but in leadership terms the differences are now less clear with some females assuming more 'masculine' behaviours in the work place and some males assuming more 'feminine' behaviours.

Where a difference was detected Powell and Butterfield (2003) found that those women who aspired to more senior roles tended to display a higher level of 'masculine' traits displaying a lower level of feminine attributes. It appears that career aspiration forces women to disassociate with their biological gender requiring them to deal with "*the perceived incongruity between the managerial role and their gender*" (p94) placing them into a discriminatory position at the outset. As a result, Powell and Butterfield suggest that women opt out of the challenge and either accept their fate and remain in the lower management levels or they set up their own businesses. They recognise that men and women measure success differently and place different emphasis on the meaning of what success actually is. This seems to contradict the views of Due Billing and Alvesson (2000) who define the labelling of management and leadership as masculine or feminine as unhelpful reinforcing gender stereotypes and perpetuating traditional gender divisions in management.

2.2.2 Androgyny versus homogeny and sex role stereotyping

Vinnecombe and Singh (2002) comment "*Female managers... see themselves as androgynous or feminine but they see top managers as significantly more masculine than themselves*" (p129). This may well link directly to the traditional roles for women, that of mother, carer and home maker. British society imposes this narrow ideal upon women from the moment of birth with any challenge to these stereotypes being seen as deviant. Powell and Butterfield concur that "*as long as high masculinity is associated with high aspiration to top management*" (2003, p95) senior roles will mainly be dominated and mainly occupied by males. Christopher and Wojda (2008) evidence direct sexism and prejudice in relation to women in the

workplace such as highly qualified women being "*passed over for promotion in favour of a less qualified man*" (p71).

Wilson (2003) also considers that gender stereotyping occurs in childhood and latterly in employment. She identifies that

"Women may perceive themselves less favourably than they would perceive men. (2003, p45).

She continues to suggest that women themselves self-impose pay restraint and suffer longer working hours in order to appear more competitive with men.

Wilson (2003, p56) refers to '*job role stereotyping*' and the constant pressure upon women and men to conform to that stereotypical image. This is often manifested in the adoption of 'male' traits by women managers or the adoption of clothing such as trouser suits which emphasises the societal view that men are more competent leaders and senior managers. In debating the traits female managers appear to display, she concurs that women are perceived as having 'softer' skills which tend to be less associated with the transactional command and control leadership that men tend to adopt.

2.2.3 Femininity and masculinity- diametric opposites?

Connell (1987) proposes three distinct definitions when discussing the differences between femininity and masculinity which perhaps helps to define the generic

understanding of differences in the power relationship between men and women. These definitions suggest that by manipulating the roles the perception and traditional power base of male dominance over women can be maintained, both in the work place and in general life. Connell identifies a state of "*emphasised femininity*" (1987, p183) where women's deference to men's desires are absolute although this tends to be consensual rather than coercive submission where women accept that their position is and should be subservient. This echoes the 'traditional' values of British society where men go out to work and women care and nurture in the home. Clearly in this state, women have no power over their male counterparts and adopt a subservient position either physically, emotionally or mentally. He also identifies the state of "*subordinated masculinity*" (p183) where mature males maintain dominance over younger men, perhaps aligning some of the more female deferent traits to their behaviour by using power as a method of maintaining control. Both of these states can be evident in work place relationships where dominant males assert their authority through aggressive and potentially bullying behaviour. The final state of "*hegemonic masculinity*" (p183) suggests that male dominance is expressed through both physical and material power resulting in female compliance. In a command and control environment such as the police service where male officers outnumber females significantly, the so called hegemonic struggle is likely to be more obvious due to the imbalance in gender.

2.2.4 The battle of the sexes

Morgan (1981) identifies two further definitions in relation to male behaviour that of "*academic machismo*" the competitive display of masculine skills and "*male*

homosociability” the processes of discrimination against and exclusion of women. Both of these traits can be observed relatively overtly within the criminal justice system and within police culture in particular. This gives rise to the view that women police officers are merely tolerated rather than valued for the work that they do and any attempt on their part to progress seems to require them to adopt some of the male traits of utilising power and strength to claw their way up the promotional ladder gaining a reputation of being ‘masculine’ in their approach and so gaining derision from both sexes.

These two definitions are identified as the ‘twin pillars’ defending the masculine view point and identifying the emergence of feminism and feminist women in the world of work as the ‘enemy’. It seems that women in the work place, especially one that is traditionally male dominated, face a continuous battle in relation to the concept of their gender. It appears that in general heterosexual males may well like and even love women in terms of their ability to provide sexual pleasure and the nurture of their families yet still resist their contribution in the work place. It appears that within the work environment there is an unwritten necessity for males to dominate females and subordinate males despite there often being a degree of role reversal within the privacy of the home where there is a suggestion that males are beginning to share some of the traditional nurturing and family activities. This is even reflected in changes in legislation in relation to paternity leave with the societal recognition and acceptance that family life is just as important to men as it is to women.

Gelsthorpe and Morris (1990, p20) comment "*There is a long-held connection between patriarchy and power – with a view that feminism is radical and undesirable.*" Traditionally within all aspects of working within a criminological environment the roles have been traditionally occupied in the majority by men. Gelsthorpe and Morris suggest that criminology is '*gender blind*' and there is still a significant refusal on the part of society to accept the contribution that women can bring to the role, especially in relation to police officers. Scraton (1990, p22), Gelsthorpe & Morris (eds) disputes the traditional academic view in relation to feminism suggesting it is "*concerning the naturalness of gender divisions and heterosexuality*". He comments that politically the notion of 'hegemonic masculinity' as defined by Connell (1987) is constantly reinforced, this is perhaps reflected by the limited number of women in political positions of power and this is further compounded by the patriarchal policies and practices thus reducing the feminist impact.

2.2.5 From gender battle to diversity wars

There is significant evidence from authors such as Lawrence (2000), Sinclair (2000) and Olsson (2000) that there is a powerful business case for employing a diverse workforce and that includes a gender balance. By creating a diverse workforce organisations not only reflect wider society, but also draw from a greater pool of talent enabling them to engage the most appropriate and qualified individuals for the role. Despite this fact, Christopher and Wojda (2008) suggest that there still appears to be a degree of resistance to women in senior roles within certain types of organisation, particularly those that are male dominated with there being less

resistance in those occupations which are traditionally viewed as female. Liu and Wilson (2001) comment upon the male constructed learning in relation to women in the work place and comment how women are viewed as 'curiosities'.

Olsson (2000, p298) refers to women operating within "*battlefields*" likening the roles of women in leadership positions to that of "*Xena, Warrior princess*". Competence is not the issue, neither is the task or role allocated, but despite this women still carry the mantle of being 'victims' of their own success and there is evidence of both direct and indirect discrimination in relation to female career progression based solely upon gender. Even though the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and subsequent gender related legislation has been introduced into the UK there still appears to be a cavernous divide between the acceptance of men and women in senior positions in many organisations, and this appears to be the case within the UK police service.

Sinclair (2000) questions whether gender and race are appropriate categories of difference in diversity management within organisations and suggests that more enlightened organisations tend to disregard external or visible differences and place increased emphasis upon the benefits of a range of diversity initiatives. She comments that by changing the focus from 'women' to 'diversity' there is a veiling of the issues relating to women in particular and that by doing so there is a 'collapsing' of the real issues relating to women at work.

2.2.6 The trouble with powerful women

Olsson (2000) comments that as a result of stereotyping strong female leaders are seen by some as “*troublesome, unreasonable, unnecessarily aggressive and even unfathomable*” (p300). McGregor (2000) draws parallels in the way women are treated within journalism identifying that senior and powerful women’s successes are often denied, or even misrepresented resulting in ‘*gender discrimination*’ (p294). She comments that when being interviewed women tend to be asked banal, trivial and non-work related questions focussing upon their subservient, stereotypical sex role ridiculing their achievements.

Rajan and Krishnan (2002) identify that in power relationships gender does have negative connotations for women, particularly when related to authority. Their study indicated that authority and power for male managers was seen as a positive indicator with coerciveness and bargaining being seen as a weaker trait for male managers. Conversely, female managers tended to retain their ability to coerce yet when adopting assertive strategies they were regarded as ‘unfriendly’, a factor not associated with powerful, assertive men. A criticism of Rajan and Krishnan’s study is that despite its attempt to reflect the impact of gender upon authority their study is clearly biased in relation to males. Their concluding paragraph focuses predominantly on the power/authority qualities of male managers with just a cursory reference to the findings in relation to female managers. It may be that their research was deeply influenced by two factors; that the research was conducted in India and so would not necessarily reflect the culture in the UK and Rajan is based within the banking sector, a notoriously male dominated environment. Therefore, the reliability

of their research can be questioned and needs to be considered within its own context.

2.2.7 Education, family and career development

Liu and Wilson (2001, p168) cite three key reasons for the “*obstacles to women’s development and career progression*” as age, gender and family responsibility. Although they acknowledge that there has been steady growth of women in the workplace, their research suggested that many women are less well educated than their male counterparts and have fewer qualifications. They also identify a difference in remuneration identifying a North/South divide within the UK with many respondents stating that “*women still live and work in a man’s world*” (p168). This perception, Liu and Wilson claim, is widely held, not only by males, but by females and perpetuates the ‘male breadwinner model’ clinging to the traditional values of women being the nurturers of family and providing a supporting role to their husbands. Perhaps this clinging to traditional values by society is an aspiration rather than reality with the current divorce rate being 11.2 people per 1,000 in 2008. (Source <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=170>, accessed 12 April 2010).

When considering children and family life, Eagly and Carli (2007) describe women’s pathways as being labyrinthine with choices or “*turns*” being “*fateful*” (p68) in determining their career opportunities. Women appear to have more complex lives than their male counterparts, juxtaposing a vast range of pressures and expectations based upon their sex and society’s expectations of their roles based upon their

biological gender. This impinges upon their ability to attain more senior positions as women have to navigate their way through the labyrinth described by Eagly and Carli without the benefits of being able to see the larger picture. They argue that the career trajectories of males are clearer and straighter, with less social expectation of their gender affording them greater opportunity for career enhancement.

However, there continues to be a significant proportion of working women who are neither married, nor have children. Hamilton, Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2006) comment that these women constitute not only a significant proportion of many workforces, but are also a powerful consumer group who defy the previous images of single women being 'deviant'. They suggest that this category of women also suffers from the work-life conflict issues that many married women do, but they are perceived by managers and peers as having less responsibility outside of the workplace and therefore, assumptions are made that they are able to commit to longer and more anti-social hours in the work environment. This perception is held by both genders, thus rendering this particular group of working women into a difficult position as neither males nor married females understand their particular work-life conflict issues.

Mavin (2000), (2001) challenges the traditional approach to career development for women stating that preparing, entering and finally exiting the work environment is specifically male orientated. The sequential approach to 'climbing the career ladder' is often impeded for women due to their additional caring responsibility resulting in an incompatible dilemma, where women have to make direct life choices, often at the expense of their own career aspirations. She highlights that for many women, this

results in highly emotive feelings, on the one hand if women choose family over work there is regret and sometimes resentment, on the other hand if women choose work over family there are often feelings of guilt and betrayal.

This conflict must impact upon women's decision making when considering career prospects and in many cases even career type, particularly when entering a profession that provides continuous public service. The term 'superwoman' is applied to those women who appear to combine family and careers successfully, but Mavin suggests that the emotional cost in many cases is prohibitive to women achieving their true potential. The frequent result is that women move laterally within organisations rather than vertically and often those who are either married, or in a long term relationship, sacrifice their own careers for those of their partner. It seems that there is a need for organisations to bring gender to the fore and to consider the opportunities for career development with it specifically in mind rather than adopting the traditional, male pattern and Mavin (2000) refers to such organisations as '*new*' (p18). She challenges the traditional concepts relating to career pathways highlighting that gender role differences severely impacts upon women's abilities to climb the corporate ladder in terms of discrimination as well as "*fewer opportunities and slower progress, making other alternatives more attractive*" (2001, p185). Interestingly Mavin (2001) identifies that marital status has a significant impact upon women's career development reinforcing stereotypical images of married women and family life. It seems that marriage and family are inextricably linked yet women now have a far greater choice in relation to not only whether they choose to have a family but also have more control over when to start a family. This factor seems to be overlooked by society which clings to the traditional

misogynist view that women should be home and family orientated rather than aspire to corporate success.

2.2.8 The dilemma of visibility and female misogyny

Kelan (2009a) suggests that discrimination tends to be aimed at those women in higher positions because they become more visible, therefore becoming almost a legitimate target for both male and female critics. However, her research suggests that discrimination against women is perceived by both genders to be 'rare' and tends to be dismissed and as she puts it, 'downgraded'. This is similar to personal accounts of female police officers. Kelan appears to suggest that men compare women to male values to become socially accepted yet women tend to take the gender neutral ideology at work. In Kelan's research both sexes appear to suggest that women 'provoke' discussion in relation to their sex by either being too masculine or too feminine yet both genders seem to dislike gender neutrality. She argues that there is a dilemma, in that there seems to be conflict in relation to whether or not gender at work matters by commenting that "*gender is invoked and ignored*" (p181). She refers to either 'doing' or 'undoing' gender, suggesting that there might be situations in which females reflected male traits and behaviours and vice versa in order to gain acceptance.

Collinson (2003) highlights the precariousness of visibility where individuals may feel threatened by their position and status resulting in what he terms as a "*dramaturgical self*" (p532). The result, he argues, is that such visibility renders the individual defensive and insecure in their positions.

Mavin (2006a) highlights the dilemma for senior women in organisations is that there is an expectation that they will, somehow, ease the transition to higher status for those who follow them and aspire to senior positions. Yet her research suggests that

“There is evidence to show that women in organization find it difficult to relate to women in senior management and that their reactions to senior women (and vice versa) perpetuate divisions between them” (p267)

She continues to suggest that women who work in male dominated professions are accused of abandoning their sisters by not acknowledging the difficulties faced by women in such organisations branding them as ‘disloyal’ (p267) to their sex. If they adopt male traits and behaviours thus rendering them “*more male than men*” (p269) they are perceived as hostile towards other women, partly due to the precariousness of their positions and the likelihood of competition from other females. This gives rise to the labelling of such women as ‘*Queen Bees*’ and the notion of what Mavin terms “*female misogyny*” (p273). So it appears that senior women are ostracised by both males and females alike and their intentions often misunderstood due to the complexity of the relationships between opposite and like genders in the work context. Mavin (2006a) comments that labelling women as ‘*Queen Bees*’ is unhelpful and unfair, as is the expectation that women in senior management positions are in a situation to adopt what she terms as solidarity or sisterhood. It seems that there is an expectation that women in management will pave the way for others, yet this seems an unjust and unrealistic expectation which is not equally attributed to male senior managers. Mavin comments that;

“an assumption of solidarity behaviour contends that women will support and align themselves with other women” (2006b,p350)

It seems that the dilemma for senior women is that their gendered status places them in an invidious position where, no matter what action they take, either assisting other women, or being seen to betray the solidarity of the sisterhood (by not helping other women to gain promotion), renders them either *‘Queen Bees’* or *‘Bitches’*. This results in negative relationships between women in senior positions and those who aspire to higher ranks.

In a service that is perceived by the public to perform a role of ‘command and control’, maintaining law and order, it can arguably be regarded by those external to its activity that it is a masculine environment. Therefore, the concept of women becoming leaders and occupying senior ranks within it may seem to be alien to some members of society for a variety of reasons, be it from a social or cultural perspective. Acker (2000c, p205) identifies that women are consigned to jobs that are traditionally viewed as female roles and considers that within certain industry sectors, gender plays a specific role in the ability either to achieve or not to achieve success. Crotty (2005) comments that the debate between feminist writers and the acknowledgement that feminism does not necessarily imply gender fuels the debate further and thus the adoption of a ‘feminist viewpoint’ does not necessarily refer to sex. There is no doubt that traditionally the role of police officer has been dominated by men from the origins of the service continuously until current times. Women’s full integration into the service as officers with equal powers to their male counterparts only occurred within the 1970s. Therefore, in terms of evolutionary

time the concept of women police officers, especially senior women officers, is a relatively new concept.

2.2.9 Walk like a man, talk like a woman

Walby's (1989) definition of the patriarchal state identifies that women have less influence and are frequently less well represented in organisations such as the judiciary and the police service in particular, both of which are traditionally male-dominated. In order to become more accepted into such patriarchal cultures, some women may well display what are considered more male traits in order to become more socially accepted. Daly and Chesney-Lind (1988) comment that:

"when women become less feminine in outlook or enter roles previously occupied by men, they will begin to think and act like men". (P511)

Klenke (2003) identifies that despite significant research into the subject the debate in relation to *"gender differences in managerial decision-making continues to be inconclusive"* (p1025) and identifies that males and females place different emphasis on management decision-making. She argues that women place increased importance upon the 'softer' aspects of management, such as interpersonal relationships, reliability, fairness, etc. and that as a result of exhibiting what is perceived by some as a less powerful stance when decision-making, so reduces the likelihood of their achieving high status as a manager. The debate around sex gender stereotyping is further fuelled by the concept of power, including the ability to be politically astute within the work environment and the whole issue about the

different approaches to strategic decision-making appears to influence the likelihood, or lack of it, to women's inclusion in a senior management team.

2.2.10 Old boys and networks

Klenke's (2003) model relating to gender differences in decision-making implies that the relationship between gender, sex and power is the key to success within top performing teams. She notes the importance of networking at high levels and identifies that men in power naturally engage in this activity by membership of clubs and associations, a factor that seems to impede women as they do not appear to possess either the desire or the ability to network in such a way.

Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997a) and Wood and Lindorff (2001) previously identified the significance of women creating solid, mutual relationships within the work environment and emphasise the need for women's networks and social circles in order to gain career progression.

Linehan (2001) comments that the prevalence of existence of the '*old boy networks*' continues to impede women's ability to progress their careers suggesting that covert barriers are positioned thus blocking women's attempts to climb the ladder. She comments that lack of access to male dominated networks is singularly the most prohibitive barrier to women, especially those who work in a male-dominated environment. Female networks are often established to counteract the '*old boy network*' but their effects are limited, particularly at senior levels. Rindfleish and Sheridan (2002) observe that many senior women opt out of the female networks and

fail to counteract the barrier imposed by the male networks despite their acknowledgment that there needs to be a collective intervention in order to change the existing culture. Rindfleish and Sheridan criticise senior female managers commenting upon their relative inaction in relation to furthering the advancement of other females who follow in their footsteps. They suggest an apathetic approach from those who have already achieved senior status with few actively participating in developing appropriate challenges or solutions to the existing situation. Instead, they suggest that women seek individual options disregarding those who may even regard them as pioneers and/or role models.

Klenke (2003) identifies the symbiotic relationship between "*politics and corporate life*" (p1027) and comments that the difficulty for women is that their astuteness and toughness is sometimes misinterpreted as dominant aggression, thus undermining any power base that they might operate from. The ability of women to manage conflict seems to be a pivotal aspect relating to the perception of whether or not they are aggressive or indeed trustworthy. He, Zhao and Archbold (2002) also recognise the significance of "*having a strong work-related peer support system*" (p690) as an essential factor in successful career progression for either gender. Kurtz (2008) comments that this is particularly true in the case of police officers whose work may expose them to dangerous situations where reliance upon fellow officers, either male or female, can be essential to survival. He suggests that a mutual understanding of the stressors that police officers face provides an understanding as to how other officers behave, but interestingly also cites such understanding as being a component of police stress and burnout.

Liff and Ward (2001) comment on the necessity for strong networks when considering career development but they also note that for women with family commitments the ability to formulate such networks may be limited a view shared by Ramaswami et al (2010). Networks need not necessarily be formal but provide an important point of contact with the activity within the work place and for women with family or caring responsibility the opportunity to engage in such activity is limited.

“drinking with the boys was recognised by men and women as an important way of being part of the informal network; it was during these sessions that “meaningful” social chit chat (who’s doing what, who’s likely to get that job, what’s going to happen in terms of re-organisation) took place”

Liu and Wilson (2001, p171).

Rutherford (2001) emphasises the exclusionary nature of the existence of ‘men’s clubs’ which are often informal networks both within and external to the workplace. Often, within these male networks conversation revolves around sporting activity and other social events providing a barrier to women on several counts, not least the language used, but also the social responsibilities women have outside of the workplace. Collinson (2003) refers to such activity as “*resistant*” (p540) implying that by using exclusionary and derisory language the mantle of dominance, particularly in relation to gender, is successfully maintained.

2.2.11 The isolation of senior positions

Interestingly, Liff and Ward (2001, p29) identify the '*loneliness*' experienced by senior women managers as a result of not having such strong bonds with their peers. Their research also indicated the impact upon individuals that immediate line management support might have and identified two differing types of characteristic that managers display towards ambitious individuals. The first type tended to be technically competent with good interpersonal skills engendering respect and support from colleagues. The second type displayed those aggressive and selfish traits that some managers appear to adopt. In their research the language used indicates some of the perceptions held by employees and managers when referring to women in senior positions. The use of words like '*tough*', '*loss of femininity*', '*cut-throat*', '*ruthless and thrusting*' (p26) apparently suggest negative imagery, especially when applied to women.

Klenke (2003) explores the concept of '*sex role congruence*' (p1031) concluding that there is an expectation for men and women to behave differently in similar situations linked directly to their gender. She comments that when women adopt male traits, especially in relation to strategic decision making, they can be perceived, even by their own kind, as undesirable.

This further increases the likelihood of women being excluded from senior positions. She states that there is evidence to suggest that it is the women themselves who adopt the male traits that perceive other women who are climbing the seniority ladder as a threat and so tend not to support and encourage their female aspirers, thus adding a

further complication to the progression routes that some women attempt to achieve. Mavin (2006b) offers an opposing view suggesting the “*manifestation of female misogyny, demonstrating women’s prejudice and antagonism towards other women*”. (p359) is often exhibited at senior levels, particularly if they fail to conform to women’s expectations of solidarity and sisterhood. Such women become objects to blame for the lack of women’s career progression. Klenke’s (2003) conclusion indicates that whilst male CEO’s (Chief Executive Officers) may well surround themselves with other men, their women counterparts tend to be viewed with suspicion when adopting a similar strategy and this compounds the difficulties faced by women aspiring to senior positions and increases the likelihood that the status quo in relation to relatively few women CEO’s remains. Mavin (2006b) comments, that frequently senior women have little desire to be seen to be promoting the gender mantle for a variety of reasons. Not least the desire to fit into their peer group, but also because of their dilemma in relation to promoting gender issues. Both males and females regard them as lacking solidarity with their sisters, and they are not being admitted to the male networks that exist at senior levels within organisations.

2.2.12 Types, traits and intuition

There is an implication that women exhibit certain ‘traits’ particularly when dealing with conflict. Klenke (2003) comments that women leaders tend to adopt a style of leadership that is “*congruent with socially accepted gender expectations*” (p1031). This view is shared by Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997a) and is further acknowledged by Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Cordano, Scherer and Owen (2002) who explore the sex stereotyping of women managers.

Valentine and Godkin (2000) also comment that women managers tend to be perceived by their subordinates as exhibiting greater interpersonal skills and they question the perception that leadership tends to be regarded as a masculine trait whilst relationship building is perceived as a more feminine trait. This then sparks further debate as to the differences between men and women and they too identify negative preconceptions about women in managerial or leadership positions. It is interesting to note that Liff and Ward (2001), Valentine and Godkin (2000) and Hakim (1996) identify that managers of either sex tend to view their roles as gender neutral. There is some debate as to whether male managers in traditionally female roles, such as nursing, adopt some of the feminine traits and that female managers, in traditionally male dominated roles, adopt male traits thus countering the argument put forward by these authors that managers are in fact gender neutral.

Hayes and Allinson (2004) suggest that women are more 'intuitive' than men especially in positions of leadership. According to their study women tend to be more co-operative, thus giving the impression that they are less dominant, therefore, reinforcing the socially constructed widely held perception relating to gender and management that women are less controlling and commanding. This fuels the concept that women are less managerially competent, yet Hayes and Allinson comment that women appear to be more motivational. Perhaps this preconception is one of the factors that limit the career progression of women beyond a certain level within organisations. They too suggest that in order for a woman to become successful, particularly in a male dominated environment, women need to, or appear to, adopt masculine traits in order to be successful.

2.2.13 Symbols and beneficial associations

McGregor (2000) considers that many women are subject to “*symbolic annihilation*” by journalists indicating that women place themselves in a precarious position by their attempts to gain senior positions. She suggests that the cultural preconception relating to women in management, particularly senior women, in roles traditionally regarded as a male stronghold, are constantly fuelled by negative comments, thus encouraging the public and perhaps the perception of women themselves, to be tainted as a result. Holmes et al (2003) agree that the stereotyping of women managers can have a negative impact especially due to the persistence and perpetuation of the myth that women managers somehow lack competence due to their gender, a view echoed by Hayes and Allinson (2004). They suggest that this disempowering of women managers can prove problematic especially when in a position of command and control, as is the case within the police service. This may be a significant difference between the police service and commercial organisations.

Godwin, Stevens and Brenner (2006) suggest that in order to progress within a male-dominated culture women managers benefit from partnering with a man, and thus enables these women to learn and adopt some of the male traits. They comment that “*sex-based stereotypes, while remaining a persistent reality, may be quite inaccurate*” (p628). They consider that in many cases women are in fact greater risk takers than their male counterparts due to the hostility and prejudice they face in the work environment. They also comment that masculinity in particular is not related to sex and that gender traits are more attributable to psychological attributes rather than gender.

Korac-Kakbadse and Kouzmin (1997a) comment that the under representation of women generally in senior roles relates not to their lack of desire or achievement, but rather due to “*a consequence of structural and sociological barriers erected through forms of direct and indirect interaction*” (p182). Their view implies that the success of ethnic minority women in particular, in relation to senior roles in organisations, is further impeded due to ethnic prejudice, which, when linked to sexual role stereotyping, the issue is compounded, making career progression for this group of females particularly difficult. They too endorse the view that in order to be successful women have to sacrifice their ‘femininity’, a view shared and developed by Klenke (2003)

Liff and Ward (2001) state that the arguments relating to psychological traits and role expectation combined with certain recruitment processes might have a negative impact upon women seeking promotion or career development. They acknowledge Hakim’s (1996) view that women who are competent and determined can become successful in certain circumstances, but they do not fully endorse Hakim’s view in all cases.

2.2.14 Corporate elites

Pettigrew (1992) highlights that the study of corporate elites is an under-represented area of academic discussion and identifies the key aspects of power relationships in relation to both societal and institutional settings. Haynes (2008) refers to the influence of power, indicating that previous feminist research has tended to avoid challenging the status quo of power and politics within organisations. Pettigrew

indicates the importance of strong networks as a source of power base, and how the very structure of a top team can be affected by the positioning and perceptions held by subordinates and peers in relation to the authority of individual team members. He also suggests that the context in which society views the holders of power within an organisation also impacts upon that acceptance of power by individuals, both externally and internally to the organisation. This view suggests that socially constructed viewpoints in relation to gender might impact upon the potential for women to gain senior positions. Welch et al (2002) agree with the view that the perceived position of managerial elites does impact upon not only individuals internal or external to the organisation but that it similarly affects the researcher/subject relationship. There is also a suggestion that the more senior the position held, the more reliable and valid the data gleaned is likely to be. In this thesis all of the participants are female, therefore offering a unique contribution in relation to the study of elites in the police service in particular.

2.3 Gender and organisational culture

2.3.1 Gender awareness and tokenism

How an organisation interprets gender can have a significant influence upon its culture. Rutherford (2001) suggests that organisations are either gender aware, or gender unaware. Where organisations are gender aware they recognise the unique contributions from both genders and the language and actions of people within such organisations differ to those organisations that are gender unaware.

Rutherford (2001) argues that gender unaware organisations are those which are paternalistic and male dominant and these organisations tend to “*mask gender inequality and (is) exclusionary to women*” (p376). This links to the style and language adopted by managers and Rutherford continues that in order for women to be successful organisations need to adopt a culture that “*nurtures women in their careers*” (p376) a view shared by Cortis and Cassar (2005). She further suggests that language can be divided into three exclusionary categories of military language, sports language and sexual language, none of which are female orientated. As a result social exchanges prior to and during business meetings may well exclude females, particularly if they are in the minority by focussing upon these three areas thus marginalising women.

There can be no doubt that an organisation’s culture plays a significant part in how women are integrated into, or excluded from the work force and at what level. Simpson’s (2000) research suggests that although there is little inequality at lower

levels within organisations, once females begin to seek more senior positions then they become less well represented and can be identified as '*tokens*' a view shared by Brown (2000), Liu and Wilson (2001), Cortis and Cassar (2005) thus subjecting them to greater visibility and scrutiny both internally and externally to the organisation. She too suggests that women begin to act and behave like men in order to become accepted as leaders, a view supported by Klenke (2003) and Hayes and Allinson (2004). Such views draw upon Kanter's (1975) (1997a) (1997b) studies which clearly identify the issues for women who perceive themselves as '*tokens*' as having an inability to gain upward mobility within organisations, particularly those that are male-dominated. Within such organisations women are highly visible and subjected to close scrutiny by both genders which results in a dysfunctional level of performance based upon pressure by peers and superiors alongside their own, in some cases excessive, expectations of their ability to perform within a particular role. Kanter (1997a) (1997b) suggests that where women number 15% or less within an organisation their token status is emphasised generating feelings of isolation from their peers. Such women tend to fulfil roles which are stereotypically female perpetuating their token status or feel such depths of stress and frustration that they withdraw and drop out fuelling the idea that women are less capable than men in certain roles (Wertsch 1998).

Simpson (2000) further suggests that the interaction between men and women at work can become strained resulting in the isolation of women particularly due to the existence of a "*men's club*" (p8) leading to the overt/inadvertent formation of a male group culture which is exclusionary to women. It is suggested that the so called '*club*' is rife with internal political manoeuvring to which women have no access,

thus limiting their ability to achieve the next level within such a culture. Simpson (2000) implies that the oppressive nature of such cultures contributes to the minority status of women within such organisations.

Within these organisations both genders regard the women who have achieved hierarchical status as '*tokens*' and successful women are equally alienated by both genders. Informal networking within such organisations and the prevalence of exclusive groups such as "*drinking with the boys*" Simpson (2000, p10) further isolates women and enables men to either consciously or subconsciously create a hostile environment for career minded women.

2.3.2 Language, long hours and the notion of commitment

Conversation within such organisations that frequently refer to sport and masculinity can, in some cases, lead to inappropriate sexual innuendo and language which are discriminatory. Simpson's (2000) study also indicates the development and acceptance of the (exclusionary) long-hours culture with the growth of the perception of 'commitment' associated with the length of time spent in the work place, a view shared by Rutherford (2001) and Jackson (2001). Collinson (2003) identifies such activity as conformist. By creating such a culture Simpson (2000) suggests that women appear not to 'fit' into such male dominated cultures and where they do achieve career progression they become isolated as they climb the hierarchical ladder. She stresses the importance of an equal gender balance at the most senior organisational level in order to achieve true gender equality stating that without such equality then the minority gender appears to suffer exclusion and isolation at the

higher levels. Rutherford (2001) refers to such practices as expected long-hours and the presenteeism culture as exclusionary, therefore becoming a 'closed' organisation to women, particularly at senior management levels.

Bradley (1999, p28-29) suggests five key changes occurring within organisations in relation to the shift of power between genders. She suggests that segmentation of roles and tasks has led to the phenomenon of a "genderquake". The second stage being '*fragmentation*' followed by '*feminization*' of employment', '*polarization*' and finally the '*homogenizing and blurring of gendered boundaries*'. Her view implies that the shift in the balance of power in organisations is also reflected in the shift of power within the domestic situation and this is linked to demographic changes in society. Bradley also suggests that Hakim's (1996) identification of *pyramidal*, *vertical* and *horizontal* segregation is too simplistic and that the relationship between gender and power in organisations is far more complex. She acknowledges that Hakim's earlier contribution does provide a basis of a structure enabling a degree of understanding of the feminist viewpoint in relation to the work place. Despite this, there still is a perception within certain industries of gender stereotypes, where males continue to be dominant and there is evidence of vertical segmentation with males occupying the more senior positions. This notion seems to parallel the current situation within police service, with the majority of senior positions being held by men.

2.3.3 Cultural behaviour and positive action

Liff and Cameron (2007) identify several recurrent themes, including male exclusionary behaviour, that are often linked to recruitment practices and information sharing. They further suggest that men who accept and advocate the concept of equality appear to be resentful and critical of any positive action initiatives relating to women's career progression. This is due in part to wider societal influences linked to the organisation's perceived culture. Where organisations express a desire to change their culture Liff and Cameron (2007) comment that this needs to be developed at the most senior levels of the organisation, but this commitment to change is often poorly managed by '*personnel*' (p39) by implementing change initiatives clumsily.

In their research they recognise the need for equality and diversity to be inclusive of both genders rather than singling out one gender over another for positive action initiatives creating a more inclusive culture with less distinction between the genders. They stress the need for individuals to be able to '*progress on their own merits*'. (p44). Eriksson-Zetterquist and Styhre (2007) suggest that the greater the emphasis organisations place upon gender difference the less probable gender equality is likely to occur.

They appear to reject the notion of positive action considering it to be divisive. Whilst organisations might aspire to change their culture to a more equitable (gender) status, in reality and practice the emotions such initiatives stir often have a negative impact upon the very group the action aspires to assist. They appear critical of positive action initiatives suggesting that although short-term gains can be made

the longevity of their success is frequently limited. Eriksson-Zetterquist and Styhre's (2007) sceptical view of particularly gendered positive action initiatives appear to reflect society's ethos to strive for gender equality, yet in practice apathy abounds. This seems to contradict the findings of Zhao et al (2006) whose research suggests that positive or affirmative action does have a positive influence upon women's recruitment. They suggest that where local government also has a higher proportion of females within it this is reflected in the recruitment statistics into the police service in that particular area, implying that where wider society accepts women in a position of authority then this is mirrored within local organisations.

2.4 Gender and family

2.4.1 Domesticity and family commitments

Liu and Wilson (2001) provide evidence to suggest that for the majority of working women, especially those who have dependent relatives, whether they are children, siblings or elderly parents, there is the continuous struggle to balance the need to work and to maintain family life. Traditionally women have been viewed as the mainstay of family life and there is a wide range of literature that relates to the issues associated with the increased employment of women and the difficulties associated with domestic pressures. Burnett et al (2010) raise the issue that parenting is not gender neutral and that work life balance policies and practices within organisations are distinctly gendered despite organisational aspirations for such policies to be gender neutral. They argue that even where male and female parents have equally responsible roles at work the burden of caring still predominantly falls to the woman.

Hakim (1996), De Grip et al (1997), Ginn and Sandall (1997) and Sly et al (1997) share the view that for many women the opportunity to work part time enables, as Edwards and Robinson state (2001), the ability "*to combine paid employment with caring commitments*" (p438). However, they recognise the assumption that part time work generally tends to be underpaid and frequently involves inferior, low status roles, can be a view that is legitimately challenged.

Edwards and Robinson (2001) state that there is evidence within organisations that this assumption can be incorrect and that it is this incorrect assumption relating to the

commitment of part time workers that brands the part time worker as 'inferior'. This view is echoed within the police service as there is a perception that commitment involves full time working especially within 'shifts' or departments. Edwards and Robinson dispute the concept that part time work is 'women's work' stating "*Part time working is now expanding into better paid jobs and beginning to appear in occupations dominated by men*" (p439) and identify that increasing numbers of employees of both genders are engaging in part time work. They comment that where organisations have made significant investment, particularly in terms of training and development of individuals, part time workers can provide a significant proportion of highly skilled workers with unique bargaining power relating to their terms and conditions of employment providing employers with increased flexibility.

2.4.2 Flexibility and workforce planning

Jackson (2001) highlights the need for organisations to increase their flexibility by altering work patterns to accommodate family life. This is one of the dilemmas faced by the police service due to the nature of the work. There is no doubt that the service must provide a 24 hour per day and 365 day per year service and police officers accept this requirement regardless of their gender. Despite the recognised business case for increased flexibility, particularly in relation to part time workers and the maintenance of a career structure, in practice this still appears to be problematic for many organisations, the police service included.

Tomlinson (2006) suggests that women tend to offer organisations numerical flexibility whilst men tend to perform functional flexibility. This distinction in itself

is gender divisive yet is adopted by most large organisations. She agrees that the gender pay gap is also a key issue with women usually occupying more poorly paid part-time roles or lower status roles. Cortis and Cassar (2005) identify that inflexible working practices continue to indirectly discriminate women's career progression, especially those occupying non-traditional female roles. Frequently terms and conditions change for workers who elect to go part time following a period of maternity leave and Tomlinson (2004) identifies the implications for both employer and employee. She indicates that the options for many women are to downgrade, lose skills or to compromise upon work-life balance. The majority of employers have in place well written policies in relation to maternity and part time working, but the implementation of such policies appears to be less simplistic. Whilst there appears to be a collective will to support part time working, local custom and practices often inhibit the part time worker's ability to progress at lower levels. Tomlinson's (2004) (2007) studies indicate however, that more senior women do appear to have fewer barriers and are often in a position to 'negotiate' their return to work from maternity leave, or part time working arrangements perhaps due to their existing status within the organisation.

2.4.3 Midlife crisis or midlife opportunity?

Gordon, Beatty and Whelan-Berry (2002) highlight the influence of both age and family life upon the careers of working women. They define the current meaning of the term 'midlife' suggesting that this has shifted from previous definitions according to the location of individuals within the age ranges. They identify that chronological age often is not the best indicator with many women choosing to have children later

in life than in previous decades as a result of the increased numbers of women in full time employment. The importance of marital status and parenting is a key factor in relation to women's perceptions and behaviours and the suggestion is that women with children behave differently to those who do not have children. However, their research indicates that work plays an important factor in all women's lives and that reduction in working hours for some women can cause increase distress, symbolising a loss of status, achievement and self-esteem.

Professional women appear to require the stimulation of responsible work to retain cognitive function, thus requiring them to balance the needs of work and family in order to retain their individuality. Therefore work seems to be an essential factor in both the mental and physical health of professional women and organisations should endeavour to create positive environments for women enabling them to perform both the roles of mother and worker.

2.4.4 Biology, lifestyle and choices

Belle (2002) identifies the complexity of balancing professional and family life for senior women and comments that many females internalise the psychological conflict they may feel when making that lifestyle choice of career over family life. This is often manifested in feelings of guilt and in order to give credence to their decision to progress their careers women self-impose that they "*must outperform their male counterparts to prove their worth in the eyes of themselves and others*" (p154) a similar view to the women studied by Liu and Wilson (2001). She indicates that for many women in senior positions they adopt an androgynous status,

transcending any gendered role, becoming isolated from both males and females in the work environment and thus adding to their own mental burden. For other women the pressures relating to the 'biological clock' also appear to be a contributory factor with those in their late twenties, early thirties feeling "*anxious about their future, their job, lasting relationships, and the need to settle down and raise a family*" Liu and Wilson (2001, p170).

Kelan (2009a) introduces the concept of being 'biologically disadvantaged' due to the issues relating to child care and identifies that if there is a role reversal between the genders and men have to become 'househusbands' then "*neither of the parents in this case can have a 'proper career', as bringing up children takes time*" (p151). "*This resonates with the ideas of the unnatural mother*" (p152) and increases the pressures placed upon working women, especially those in middle or senior management positions. She continues that women working in the IT sector consider themselves to be different to other women due to the nature of their role, perhaps this parallel can be drawn by other women in traditionally male dominated environments, such as the police. It is interesting to note that each sector considers its situation to be unique, yet it appears that there are several similarities when comparing women from different sectors. Kelan (2009b) suggests that there should be no restrictions to people entering jobs based upon their gender, but in practice, there appears to be evidence that suggests this view might not be the case. Whilst legislation and organisational policies might strive to achieve this aim, personal prejudice will continue to prevail based upon individual values, beliefs and socially constructed paradigms. Kelan (2009a) argues that by avoiding the debate in relation to gender affecting work and employment individuals effectively select their position in

relation to gender by deeming themselves “*incompetent to interpret gender*” (p156) and this affects their perceptions in relation to the role of women in certain occupations and in particular women in policing. Kelan discusses the language of male dominant organisations and how it can be ‘sexist’ when there are few or no women in the workforce. This tends to change and modify when women enter these groups, yet this modification appears to be superficial and does not reflect the underlying culture of such organisations.

2.4.5 Pregnancy, promotion and lone parents

Taking maternity leave appears to be another obstacle to women’s ability to progress their careers. Liu and Wilson (2001) in particular document the issues women face in relation to becoming pregnant, for example being passed over for promotion, or unable to take on certain roles or assignments due to family commitments, being treated differently by supervisors and team members and even being ‘sent to Coventry’. Gatrell (2011) identifies how women face pressures at work to deny their pregnancy and to shroud their early stages of pregnancy beneath a veil of “*secrecy and silence*” (p159). Legislation has impacted upon the policies and procedures that organisations are required to adopt in relation to maternity leave and women returning to work, but this cannot address actions by individuals who may discriminate against women who are pregnant or attempting to return to work following maternity breaks. Yet in many organisations the notion that work is associated with healthy, white males Gatrell (2011) and that pregnancy renders women incapable and unreliable is predominant. Gatrell implies that the very process of pregnancy is repulsive to male dominated cultures and as the pregnant

body becomes more visible there is an increased view that women in this state are problematic and incapable of continuing their existing duties. At best pregnant women are ignored until the organisation has to acknowledge the needs of the mother to be, then she is side-lined or open to hostility by her peers. The result is that women feel ostracised, losing self-confidence and begin to question their position. The dilemma of job over family life is brought to the forefront of their decisions with little organisational policy or practice to support them. In some cases Gatrell (2011) comments that women go into what she defines as "*supra performance*" (p173) forcing themselves to out-perform their counterparts, working long hours and so defying the accusations of under-performance that is levelled at the pregnant worker.

The situation can be further compounded, especially in the case of lone mothers. Women may find themselves alone for a variety of reasons, choosing to be a lone parent, breakdown of a relationship or the death of a partner. There can be no doubt that lone parents of either gender are placed into a more precarious position than those families that retain both parents. Even with the improved child care arrangements that exist within the UK and the ability of lone parents who are middle/senior managers with a salary that can support such child care, there are still significant pressures faced by the lone parent and women in particular.

Gill and Davidson (2001) recognise that the difficulties are more than just the long and erratic hours that many managers work and their study indicates that lone parents appear to have a higher stress threshold than their married counterparts. They partially attribute this to the fact that the lone parent is in complete control of their situation and so manage it more effectively. Lone mothers indicated that their job

was eminently important to them offering respite from the burden of family life as well as imposing difficulties such as managing long hours, weekend working and travel. Cortis and Cassar (2005) suggest that for some women the ability to commit to extensive job involvement can be limited by family life, particularly for lone parents, and this affects the self-esteem of the individual in relation to their ability to perform effectively.

Extended families were cited as being extremely important in enabling lone mothers to fulfil their work commitments. However, for many of the respondents in Gill and Davidson's (2001) study it seemed that the desire to reduce hours was a common factor with many of the research subjects indicating that such a step would be likely to have a negative impact upon their career aspirations. Lack of time and energy became the major influencing factor where lone parents had to make the choice between work and family life. Another stressful factor that emerged from this study was that lone parents are often excluded from social activity as other women in 'couples' relationships saw lone women as predatory and a threat. Along with a lack of flexibility in many organisations and a lack of creativity of work force planning it seems that lone parents are disadvantaged from every angle.

2.4.6 Control of destiny

Tomlinson (2007) establishes that women utilise "*variant forms of transitions*" (p373) throughout their careers and identifies three specific categories of strategic, reactive and compromised. Tomlinson suggests that the more senior the woman is within the organisation the more control she is likely to have over her own destiny.

Ideally the strategic variant will result in the preferred outcome in relation to change in the work environment, such as planned promotion with reactive relating to unplanned changes, such as loss of networks, enforced change in employment status or other unforeseen factors. She implies that compromised transitions, which may be resultant of early pregnancy or lack of qualifications, are the least preferred option for women seeking to upwardly develop their career path. Tomlinson's (2007) research establishes four clear '*trajectories*' (p379) which impact upon women's ability to compete with their male counterparts, primarily due to traditional family roles. She identifies the importance of networks in supporting women's desire to progress but also suggests that the financial costs in relation to caring for children or dependent relatives is often a prohibiting factor in women's career choices.

2.4.7 Conclusion

This Chapter has explored the range of complex issues that dominate the academic debate relating to women's career choice, career progression and the factors that influence them. I have navigated the literature that relates to gender in employment and although this Chapter has started to elucidate some of the generic issues that women in employment experience, such as leadership, culture, networks and family life, it does not sufficiently cover the specific issues that relate to policing in particular. The literature reviewed has no specific application to policing, which by its very nature has its own inherent and unique difficulties that aspiring women are required to negotiate. Literature relating to the experiences of police women is limited solely to leadership and fails to explore their specific glass ceilings, walls or escalators.

The following Chapter provides an overview of how the police service has changed and charts the development of organisations that have been created to represent and address issues highlighted by the integration of different specific groups that previously were not included within the police structure. As society has evolved, there has been a necessity for the service to reflect that changing society and to embrace the diversity that exists within the communities from which police officers are now being recruited. The resultant change has seen an increase in police officer diversity and the formation of staff support groups. However, the influence of such groups upon the police service culture seems limited and this is explored in depth.

Chapter 3 Gender, organisation and policing

3.1 Introduction

The previous Chapter explored gender and diversity issues in organisations but they are very different to the dynamics of gender relations within police forces. This Chapter examines the field of gender and policing and considers the perspective of feminist criminology rather than a purely feminist perspective. There are significant differences between the views of traditional feminist authors and feminist criminologists, such as Martin (1979) (1991) and Walklate (1995) (2004) both of whom offer specific definitions of feminism within the criminological setting. Early studies suggest that the role of women within the criminal justice system and policing in particular were limited offering little real contribution to the nature of the work in hand. Criminology is intrinsically male dominated where women are regarded as peripheral and viewed as objects controlled by men. As such criminology is a male power base where men shape and define the actions and interactions that occur. Feminist criminologists oppose this entrenched view and defy the concept that criminology is viewed solely from the male perspective as not all perpetrators of crime or workers within the criminal justice system are male. Therefore, a female perspective is essential to gain a balance between the views of the sexes with both the male and female perspectives being represented. By its aggressive nature, crime is deemed masculine, so any association with it is frequently considered masculine.

The following literature explores the development of the role of women within this sector identifying the key blockages to female career progression and considers the links between gender, work and police culture. It appears that in many instances those authors whose intentions were to champion the cause of women working within the criminal justice system have in fact been detrimental to women's career opportunities and have compounded the concept of policing being a male dominated culture. Following a generic overview of women in criminology this Chapter will focus upon women in policing and police culture in particular. I will explore how culture continues to significantly impact upon the attitudes of both genders to career and personal development and how the gendered and masculine culture impacts upon marginalised men too.

Thomas and Davies (2002) consider the implications of the re-branding and restructuring of the service during the 1980s and 1990s in particular paying attention to the increasing focus of importance in relation to the prominence of female managers and their professional identities. They too, acknowledge the cultural norms within the service in relation to commitment and long-hours culture and the willingness of both genders to sacrifice private life to satisfy the needs of the organisation. Despite a move to a more 'soft' HRM approach to managing its workforce according to Thomas and Davies (2002) the service still continues to be dogged by the masculine culture which impacts upon the discourse utilised within the organisation in relation to gender roles both internal and external to it. The family unfriendly image of the service is perpetuated by their study identifying dissatisfaction between both genders in relation to their treatment and conditions when comparing work-life balance. They also note the changing nature of the

workforce by the inclusion of more civilian managers, which also contributes to the changing nature of the organisation's culture, with the increase in female staff, usually in administrative roles, which has changed the gender ratio to an extent. However, civilian staff are regarded differently to police officers and the discriminatory language and practices in relation to police women in some cases appears to continue, although perhaps more covertly than in previous decades. These themes are developed throughout this Chapter.

3.2 Gender and police research

Anecdotal references imply that the police profession is still 'male dominated' a view substantiated by Lord and Friday (2003) who comment that "*police work has traditionally been defined as a male occupation*" (p63). Rabe-Hemp comments that policing is "*masculine by social construction*" (2009, p116) due to the nature and type of work implying that generally it is viewed as being physical and aggressive in nature.

In addition, successive annual Home Office statistics indicate that the retention rate of women police officers is lower than that of their male counterparts. This research considers some the reasons why women leave police service and why so few achieve the upper echelons. Whilst there is significant research and literature relating to the role of women managers in general industry, there appears to be little or no specific research within police service. In May 2004 Chief Inspector Kevin Bowsher from Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (Training) (HMIC(T)) made the following comment in an e-mail to the author:

"I have looked at the scope of your work and feel that the progression of all females in the service is worthy of scrutiny".

The HMIC (T)'s comments are substantiated by an earlier thematic inspection report, entitled "Developing Diversity in the Police Service" (1995) where the following recommendation was made:

"Research should be carried out to probe more widely and deeply into the reasons why women and ethnic minority officers are under-represented in specialist posts and in the supervisory rank structure". (p15).

The British Association of Women in Police Service (BAWP) also supported this area of research. As a consequence I established a link with BAWP and the general consensus from several members was that this research would be a contributory factor to the development of women's careers in future policing.

The HMIC(T)) further comments:

"The Service needs to recognise that the mechanisms designed to improve equality of opportunity and the efforts of individuals to promote them will be ineffective in the long term without an accompanying shift in general attitudes and culture. Lip service and tokenism can mask continuing, albeit more subtle, discriminatory behaviour and practices". (1995, p11)

Whilst this refers to diversity of employees across all categories including ethnic minorities, sexual orientation, gender, etc. this sentiment can be applied to the questions posed in respect of the role of women. The HMIC(T)) appears to recognise that there is a need for significant cultural and organisational change in order to truly reap the benefits of a diverse work force, which of course will include women at all ranks within the organisation. The report goes on to comment:

“A workforce which reflects the society it serves provides an unrivalled source of accurate, unbiased management information, and helps make policing the community more responsive and appropriate”. (1995, p12)

Demographic change in our society indicates that there is a likely significant increase of women at work and occupying senior roles generally and if the police service is to reflect society at large, then the service needs to culturally shift to see senior women officers as the ‘norm’ rather than as the exception. Brown (1997) suggests that the point at which representation of women in the police service can be regarded as ‘normal’ (p15) is 25%.

Therefore, this research will engage with the identified gap in current knowledge, following upon the recommendations that further understanding of the reasons women and ethnic minority officers are underrepresented.

3.3 Power and culture

Sumner (1990) suggests that a disparaging view of the roles of women at work fuels the hegemonic ideology and censures femininity. Sumner (1990) comments that this is detrimental to the development of studies relating to gender, in particular females, and even develops 'blockages' thus indicating a preference to studies relating to males. He is critical of the androcentric and gender blind positioning in relation to women at work.

With regard to women within the criminal justice system the masculine view can appear to be evident in particular. The police service does still tend to cling to its military origins, thus adopting the traits of a male dominated organisation. Sumner also suggests that the link between male dominance and the 'patriarchal state' is a common theme suggesting that there is an assumption that the constitution is by its very nature, male. This, arguably, is an interesting concept in a country that currently is and in several past historical periods has been ruled by a female monarch. Perhaps it is that male writers skew the viewpoint away from the feminist perspective by ignoring the existence of women in positions of power. Sumner (1990) further suggests that the "*reproduction of hegemonic masculinity*" (p36) is a vital process at the heart of the capitalist state. By this it can be assumed that he links political power with male and paternalistic tendencies. Walby (1989, p214) comments that patriarchy (*needs to be conceptualised at different levels of abstraction*) implying that the simplistic view of patriarchy of being male domination over women is much more complex and relates to a range of social relationships. Breaking the concept into distinct categories Walby (1989) identifies patriarchal

relationships in the workplace “*as the closure of access by men against women*” (p223) with vertical and horizontal segregation of women, particularly those women who choose to work part-time. Walby further concurs that although patriarchy is still prevalent in Britain today, this does not preclude women from entering traditionally male dominated jobs, yet there still remains exclusionary practices, either overtly or inadvertently due to the culture and practices within organisations resulting in gender inequality.

Grisoni and Beeby (2007) develop the three differing types of power relations, ‘power over’ a definitive masculine trait, ‘power through’ and ‘power with’ (p195) both arguably more feminine approaches as they tend to involve facilitation, negotiation and the development of strong social relationships which arguably can be attributed to women. Wood and Lindorff (2001) identify that many women managers fail to accurately interpret organisational political power which is disadvantageous and potentially prohibiting their ability to rise through the ranks. Jessop’s (1982) view appears to endorse this view. Grisoni and Beeby (2007) suggest that in certain situations the impact of gender within power relationships is minimised due to the cultural focus upon achievement of the task, this may in itself be a beneficial factor for women within the police service as the culture of the service is particularly task focussed. Sumner (1990) directly associates censure of feminist tendencies through social constructs linked to the political state and especially with capitalism and bourgeoisie. He goes on to suggest that in modern society women who tend to adopt a more ‘masculine expression’ are equally censured as deviant, suggesting that women who are successful in traditionally male dominated roles fall within this category.

Edwards and Robinson (2001) further develop the views held by Lewis and Cooper (1995) and Graef (1989) who all identify the link between strong occupational cultures linked to long hours culture, a perception of public duty and comment that there can be a 'risk' relating to perceived dedication of part time employees in vocational employment sectors. They identify that their research indicated that equality between full time and part time workers, particularly in the case of both nurses and police officers has yet to be achieved and that there is evidence of an associated stigma with part time working.

The culture of command and control, therefore, by its very nature appears to be diametrically opposed to the concept of part time work. Dick (2004) comments upon the emphasis that managers within police service place upon '*behaving equitably towards staff*' (p314) especially when considering hours, pay, pension and that the benefits afforded to full time officers and part time officers appear disproportionate in some instances, for example, increased payments for anti-social hours and shift working. Therefore, when major incidents occur requiring deployment of officers for long hours there is a reluctance to deploy part time officers rendering them to a desk based role which tends to breed cynicism and resentment amongst full time officers. Dick (2004) identifies the future implications for management of part time workers within the command and control environment commenting upon the need to reconcile both the needs of organisations and individuals. She recognises that in order for this to be achieved there needs to be a significant cultural shift in police HR (Human Resources) management and a more flexible approach adopted. She suggests the identification of specific roles that might be perceived more suitable for part time working, yet equally recognises that this may cause further segregation and

gender stereotyping. It remains to be seen what effect the current proposals for changes to policing will have and how the recommendations for “fairer remuneration” will fare in the long term.

There is no doubt that there is a unique culture within policing which attracts individuals with particular characteristics and traits. Haar’s (2005) study relating to recruit drop-out rates alludes to this indicating that the attitudes, values and beliefs within the organisation are frequently different to those held by individuals who choose to adopt a career in policing. There appears to be a turning point during their probation at which entrants to the service switch from being a civilian and become a police officer. This is often reflected in language, custom and practice and ego. There is no question that the continued historical military links to the service influence these factors and this is reinforced by the stringent physical fitness programme that aligns to the legislative knowledge and disciplined practices associated with the service.

Police probation is a two year test where the human body is pushed to its limits physically, emotionally and psychologically. According to Haar (2005) some recruits, many of whom are female, find that the probationary process “*caused them stress and conflict*” (p443) making their position within the service untenable resulting in their resignation. Haar suggests that a transformation occurs between entering the service and completing the probationary period. Initial entrants join the service with intentions of upholding justice, honesty and integrity. He suggests that long serving officers develop a cynicism, perhaps as a result of their experiences, that

result in a difference between the new entrants ideology of what policing is and the reality on the streets.

Haar (2005) implies that the reason for recruit drop-out is usually due to a conglomeration of factors; some gender related, such as sexual harassment, utopian expectations of what policing actually is and often a misalignment of personal and organisational values. Interestingly, Sims, Scarborough and Ahmed (2003) and Haar's (2005) research identifies that females whose partners are also serving officers, particularly within the same force, tend to fare better than their solitary sisters lending weight to the premise that male officers who have greater contact with female officers are more likely to accept them.

Burke and Mikkelsen (2005) comment upon the '*macho*' (p425) image of policing identified by Fielding (1993) and relates this to the difficulties faced by women working within the police environment, particularly at senior levels. Despite the apparent transparency in recruitment and promotion practices within the service, they comment that there are concerns relating to equal opportunities, discrimination and sexual harassment and this significantly impacts upon the role of women. Brown and Heidesohn (2000) and Burke and Mikkelsen (2005) further comment that women are less likely to be exposed to violence within their role as police officers, yet are more likely to experience sexual harassment from their colleagues as well as the public at large.

3.4 Criminal justice work and biology

Brown (1990) introduces the concept of 'biologism' suggesting that women are "*inherently maternal, passive and domestic*" (p41). She argues that 'biologism' fuels the stereotyping of women, thus influencing society's preconceptions about the roles women play, or should play, within the criminal justice system. This is a view purported by Heidensohn (1985). Brown (1990) suggests that various connotations are associated with 'biologism' such as "*irrational, pathological and emotional behaviour*" (p47). Brown refers to Gelsthorpe's (1990) work in relation to police activity wherein there is recognition of the desire for women to undertake "*real police work*" (p48). She also implies that there are two major problems relating to 'biologism'. She identifies the notion of 'foundationalism' which implies some generalist views about women and "*borrowing from the boys*" (p55) further commenting that feminist authors adopt this stance and construct a variety of "*discursive constructions*" (p55) in relation to women in criminology. Thus feminist criminology writers themselves continue to fuel the conventional approach when referring to women undertaking what is perceived by society as occupying a male role.

Smart (1990) develops the theme of "feminist empiricism" stating:

"What has passed for science is in fact the world perceived from the perspective of men, what looks like objectivity is really sexism and that the kinds of questions social science has traditionally asked have systematically excluded women". (p77-78)

She comments that authors such as Mackinnon (1987) focuses upon the equality debate, yet still assumes that the norm in the work environment is male. She comments that the move towards what she calls '*genderlessness*' or "*gender blindness*" (p80) is an equally dangerous position to adopt. Yet quite clearly this is practised within the police service with the emasculation of both genders referring to both males and females as officers. This is further compounded by the adoption of uniforms that are based upon 1950s military designs and take no account of the requirements of modern policing and has seen the demise of the wearing of skirts for female officers, apart from ceremonial duties, thus compounding the situation. The police service itself complicates this further by its approach to women in the work place and this is explored further throughout this Chapter.

As I have outlined in earlier Chapters, other gender critiques are not about women, but the way in which men and women are ascribed particular competences and of power relations and gender hierarchies in organisations. Given that much policing literature explicitly focuses upon women, for example many Home Office documents in particular focus upon women and the need to increase their numbers, I now begin to develop the specific issues that impact upon women in policing.

In 2009 the Fawcett Society produced a commissioned report reviewing women and the criminal justice sector. A specific aspect of the report focussed upon women in policing and identified several key issues relating to potential barriers to women entering the service, not least the long-hours culture, inequity in promotion prospects and stereotyping of female roles. The report identified that the criminal justice system remains a challenging environment for women across the full range of

occupations within the sector. The recommendations identified by the commission in relation to policing are as follows:-

- *All line managers must be trained in responding to the needs of individuals with childcare obligations.*
- *Women returning from maternity leave must be provided with appropriate training and flexible working support.*
- *A communication strategy should be developed within all police forces to educate staff and officers as to the benefits of initiatives such as flexible working. The option of flexible working should also be actively promoted among male and female staff.*
- *Research should be conducted into the feasibility of establishing a 'bank' of skilled officers who could be deployed nationally to assist in time of staff shortage, due to maternity leave or gaps due to part-time working.*
- *A police uniform designed for female officers should be introduced, in consultation with the British Association of Women in Policing.*
- *The selection process for promotion to Sergeant should be reviewed to ensure it is not disadvantaging women or part-time workers.*

- *A review should be conducted on the opportunity for career progression and development for police staff in order to ensure consistency with opportunities available for police officers.*

- *Women should be included on the selection panel for specialist roles.*

- *Fitness tests should be designed according to the actual tasks required for the role.*

Fawcett Society (2009, p106)

This report reviewed the situation in relation to women within the range the criminal justice occupations but I now turn my attention to the unique environment of the police service in particular.

3.5 Women in policing

Martin's (1979) classic account of women in policing still forms the foundation for studies into women within the service. Martin identified two distinct categories of women in policing, '*Policewomen*' and '*policeWomen*' (p314). Martin's definitions of the two differing types of police women might seem to be caricatures from a previous era, yet there are some significant similarities in the behaviours and attitudes of currently serving women. Martin (1979) describes how '*Policewomen*' perceive the need to out-perform their male counterparts, evidencing strong professional characteristics with aggressive and male tendencies in relation to their patrol work. She evidences their desire to become accepted into the male culture,

their de-feminization and abhorrence of women in the service who retain their natural femininity. They use derogatory terms in relation to their less macho sisters such as *'Barbie doll'* (p317) and refer to those who prefer less active roles as *'feeble women out there where they shouldn't be'* (p318). It appears therefore, that women within the service contribute to the vilification and criticism of other women in the service who do not match their policing ideal, inadvertently reinforcing the male dominant culture. They apportion blame to their *'Policewomen'* sisters for the discrimination and harassment they face from male colleagues citing the attempts by some women to gain equality and the recognition for their female contribution to the service. Martin (1979) draws a distinction between the career aspirations of the two differing types of women. She implies that the more feminine women are less inclined to pursue a career within the service indicating that their preferred roles lie within administration and those traditionally associated with women. Conversely, she recognises the pressures placed upon the *'Policewomen'* by being subjected to close scrutiny in terms of their performance and having to endure "*such labels as 'bitch' and 'lesbian' for failure to act in stereotypical ways*" (p322). Such labels and unsavoury epithets are attributed to these women by both genders. Martin rightly refers to the political dilemma relating to women operating on the front line and identifies that the simple solution of increasing the numerical representation of women on patrol is unfeasible. She concludes that women appear to be required to adopt male thinking, outperform their male counterparts, yet still maintain their female attributes in order to become accepted into the cultural norm.

Reiner (1992) similarly comments on the integration difficulties by women into police service due to what he describes as *'machismo'* (p124). His account of

policing highlights the characteristics associated with police culture, that of working hard and playing hard, in a heterosexual, drinking and gambling society that by its very nature is exclusionary to women. His account of policing paints a dark picture of political posturing, malpractice and of a closed culture.

As the levels of women in policing slowly begin to increase within the UK the range of academic ability in society would be anticipated to be reflected by female (and male) entrants to the service.

The Home Office Statistical Bulletin relating to police service strength produced on 31st March 2010 regarding gender is as follows:

“37,066 of the 144,235 officers in England and Wales (including Central Service secondments) were female, representing 25.7 per cent of the total, compared with 25.1 per cent in March 2009. The proportion of women in the more senior ranks of Chief Inspector and above was 14.3 per cent (up from 13.0%), compared with 28.6 per cent of women at constable rank (up from 27.9%)”

(Source: <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/hosb1410.pdf> (p5) accessed 10/09/10).

In August 2010 according to BAWP the numbers of women holding ACPO ranks in 28 of the 43 forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland were:

Table 1 ACPO ranks in August 2010

Chief Constable	6
Acting Chief Constable	1
Deputy Chief Constable	7
Assistant Chief Constable	22
Acting Assistant Chief Constable	1
Assistant Commissioner	1
Deputy Assistant Commissioner	4

(Source <http://www.bawp.org/ACPOWomen.php> accessed 10/09/10)

Whilst there is a finite number of 43 Chief Constable roles available, the numbers of Acting, Deputy and Assistant Chief Constable posts varies according to individual forces. Some forces only have one Assistant or Deputy Chief Constable, with others having several. Similarly with Commissioner roles there is a variant number. However, the representation of women within these senior ranks is still relatively few in comparison to male occupiers of ACPO roles.

3.6 Police women and education

As policing has become more intelligence led in recent times, it can be argued that out of necessity, those who aspire to senior positions should be required to be educated to a high standard in order to enable them to make informed, competent decisions in relation to leadership and management of the officers on the front line. Policing has become more strategic with senior officers having responsibility not only for operational activity but for budgetary control, leadership and other skills associated with complex organisational management. Bryett (1999) indicates the need for a more educated workforce with the change of emphasis from 'brawn' to 'brains' due to the changing nature of criminal activity within the UK.

Decker and Huckabee (2002) considered the effects of increasing educational requirements and the impact this may have on women and ethnic minority candidates. Recognising that currently senior managers are promoted from the rank and file with no direct entry into middle or senior management they refer to "*a specific need for educated persons who will someday rise to the top*"(p791). Their conclusion was that by targeting academically educated individuals the service could identify potential leaders and thus reduce recruitment costs. This is likely to change the composition of the probationary intake by increasing the age of entry, thus likely to impinge upon the numbers of females entering the service as this might coincide with family commitments and or marriage for some individuals. Their view was this practice might be detrimental to the numbers of women considering entry to the service, but they appear to offer little concrete evidence to support this view.

White (2006) is critical of the existing methods of police training implying that the over reliance on National Standards and a competency based framework is a discredited methodology taking no cognisance of the ethical concepts of policing, reducing human interactions to benchmarked activities. He considers such a mechanistic approach to training officers in itself is off putting due to the fact that *“methods have become separated from its purposes”* (p386). This lends weight to the argument that more educated entrants to the service, which most women appear to be, may well discover that the intrinsic values of the organisation fail to match their aspirations resulting in women seeing the service as a hostile place of employment for their gender.

Similarly, Roberg and Bonn (2004) concluded that with the rise in intelligence led policing and the continuous move towards community led and anti-terrorism policing, the need for officers of middle and senior rank to be more highly educated is justifiable and would be beneficial to the service. However, they too recognised that this might prejudice opportunities for minority groups who may have less access to higher education and thus be excluded from the high potential development schemes that currently exist within forces.

3.7 Prejudice, language and the cult of masculinity

Brown (1997) (2000) identifies the early historical prejudices both internally and external to the service in relation to women and their roles documenting in particular the stereotypical views that women perform administrative roles. She highlights in particular, the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) Chief Constable's view in 1986 in

relation to women not being issued with firearms. This view was sustained by John Hermon the RUC Chief Constable throughout the late 1980's and was only changed in 1993 after he relinquished the role of Chief Constable. This action meant women on the front line in Northern Ireland were in an invidious position as they were allegedly fully operational at the height of 'the troubles' yet ill equipped and reliant upon their male counterparts if placed in a confrontational position. His policy further reinforced the male dominant culture rendering women officers to being powerless companions requiring protection if the requirement to utilise firearms became necessary undermining their roles and status.

Brown (1997) refers to the derisory language used to describe women engaged in certain aspects of police work, particularly roles traditionally occupied by female officers, those relating to crimes against women and children. Brown (2000) further identifies the concept of women being the 'weak link' which fuelled the "*cult of masculinity*" (p98) and confined women to stereotypical female roles, for example, women and child related incidents. She also identifies the derogatory language and terms used in relation to female officers by their male counterparts and evidences that throughout the 1980s and 1990s this unacceptable behaviour perpetuated and probably contributed to the numbers of women who either chose to leave the service during this time or remained in lower ranks rather than challenging the status quo. Brown (2000) raises several key issues that continue to prevail, such as the perception that women gain promotion due to their gender rather than by merit and that the '*old boys network*' (p105) continues to exist. She documents how in more recent times probationary constables are less tolerant of the so called 'canteen culture' and suggests that the culture of the service is gradually mutating.

Lord and Friday (2003) acknowledge both the attempts of the service and the need to statistically increase the number of female officers, as women continue to be a minority group, particularly in the higher ranks. They cite the 'problem' as being actually getting more women to apply to become serving officers and suggest that the nature of police work may in itself be prohibitive to some females based upon their perception of what police work is. Other potential influences and barriers to women joining the service may be related to the lack of role models as suggested by Morash and Haarr, (1995) and Lord and Friday (2003) along with personality types, self-efficacy and gender role socialization. They question the influence of gender upon occupation choice and suggest that "*the more androgynous an individual, the less attuned to (these) cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity*" (p67).

It seems that they are suggesting that women who enter male-dominated professions are a 'type' that is attracted to more traditionally male occupied roles. Their research suggests that influences from families and friends are not significant to such women when they are choosing policing as a career choice. Interestingly, they find males are far more influenced by these factors. Lord and Friday (2003) further comment that women are more likely to see entry into non-traditional gender occupations as a potential barrier with shift work being highlighted as an issue. Women in their study also commented upon fear of potential harassment and discrimination possibly due to documented cases that have occurred in the past. Brown's (1997) research identifies that sexual harassment was still prevalent across the European police service in the 1990s.

Rabe-Hemp (2009) refers to police women reinforcing the cult of masculinity by exhibiting what she describes as "*prescribed female officer behaviours*" (p124). She suggests that by taking on female ascribed roles, such as family related crime investigation and victim support roles, females signal their femininity thus strengthening stereotypical images and giving justification to gender divisions.

3.8 Working practices and family flexibility

Edwards and Robinson (2001) focussed upon the increasing numbers of part time workers employed within the Metropolitan Police Service. Their field research indicated that part time work within the service was viewed as a 'concession' implying that the concept of part time working was not necessarily one that is favoured within this particular employment sector. They comment upon the varying successes of individuals in relation to achieving part time work, especially when related to shift work and some managers' negative views linked to the concept of a service 'suffering' as a result of accommodating part time workers. Edwards & Robinson (2001) indicate that there is evidence of discriminatory practice in relation to part time workers within police service when attempting to gain places on '*elite training courses*' (p444-5) or when attempting promotion to the next rank.

Dick (2004) agrees with Edwards and Robinson (2001) that the issues relating to employing part timers within police service has its unique, inherent difficulties due to the nature of the work involved and comments upon the conflict between expectations of managers and workers and their apparently irreconcilable differences. The concept of flexibility may be difficult in practice to accommodate

by a service which by the nature of its service provision requires a workforce that is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week for three hundred and sixty five days of the year. Dick (2004) suggests that despite offering part time employment opportunities, the reality for police officers is that they are marginalised when working part time directly as a result of their perceived lack of ability to be deployed operationally on the front line. Operational requirements might impinge upon an individual's ability to be deployed, especially if they are fulfilling the role of carer and so are not able to be allocated to operations that may extend beyond the part time hours they have negotiated or during anti-social hours. As a consequence, their status is perceived as diminished and their value is perceived to be limited by both managers and peers alike.

It seems that there can frequently be a degree of ostracising of individuals by their peers and in some cases, managers. Dick (2004) argues that this is directly linked to the cultural and institutional frameworks within which the service operates. She also identifies that although there is an apparent expression of acceptance in relation to part time working, the reality is that the service lacks any co-ordinated, strategic direction in relation to part time working or job sharing. The Home Office implies that any job within the service has the potential to be considered for part time work, yet in practice this seems to be not so easy to implement. The dilemma revolves around the fact that when an officer reduces working hours they are still classed as being a fully established uniformed officer and thus considered as an available resource in HRM (Human Resource Management) terms, yet they are unable to fulfil the occupational duties associated with their full time counterparts. This factor combined with unprecedented and unscheduled events, such as major incidents, Dick

(2004) identifies as being a key factor in the belief by other officers and managers, that part time officers are detrimental to the service. It is this situation that puts police managers in the unenviable position of having to demand that part time workers exceed their agreed working hours in certain instances or fail to deploy part time officers and then suffer the backlash of dissatisfaction expressed by peer officers who have to 'cover' that role.

Dick (2004) suggests that the request for part time work in police service relates directly to an individual's specific request to reduce hours to accommodate family commitments and as such believes it to be "*supply led*" (p308) implying that organisationally the concept of part time work is merely tolerated rather than promoted. She identifies the national and European legislative framework that has developed in recent years that relates to part time workers. However, as police officers are not 'employees' they are 'officers of the Crown', this legislation does not apply to them in the same way as it does to individuals employed by commercial organisations because the police operate under 'Queens Regulations'.

Dick (2004) identifies another facet of police officer employment that impacts upon family life. Many police officers are either married to, or cohabit with other police officers, thus increasing the impact of working parents or carers. This can be problematic for employers when considering requests for part time working arrangements, especially when the scheduling of the hours relates to more than one individual. This can be particularly problematic if both officers are on operational shifts.

Burke and Mikkelson (2005) reviewed the preferences expressed by the public relating to officers attending incidents and found there is little or no preference for either male or female officers, which builds upon the earlier study by Kerber et al (1977). That study was conducted only four years after women police officers undertook the roles they currently hold (with full police powers) and it may well be that public perception during the 1970s was that policing was only a male orientated role. Traditionally women officers had dealt with crimes relating to women and children and so the attendance of female officers at incidents that had previously usually been attended by male officers may have still been relatively uncommon at this point in time. Dick and Cassell (2002) and Metcalfe and Dick (2002) identify the commitment that women officers exhibit in relation to performing similarly to their male counterparts, yet they recognise that the challenges faced by women are far greater than those of men. Burke and Mikkelson (2005) identify three key aspects that may well impact upon women's experience in policing. They identify that:

“Women officers reported greater inequality for women ...more differential treatment..., particularly discrimination and female officers reported more sexual harassment from work colleagues and the public”. (p431).

Interestingly Burke and Mikkelsen (2005) comment that psychologically women appear to fare better than their male counterparts; their research indicates that male officers tended to be more cynical, had a propensity to drink more than their female equivalents and had a higher rate of job related suicide. They clearly identify that despite anticipating significant differences between the two genders there appear to

be few differences between them in relation to job role and performance. Martin and Jurik (1996), Gaston and Alexander and (1997) Brown et al (1999), have all indicated similar findings. Burke and Mikkelsen (2005) conclude that despite the apparent change in police culture and the public perception of female police officers, it still remains that a relative minority of women attain the higher ranks. It seems that the inherent difficulties associated with work-life balance in modern society is further reinforced in the criminologist's studies of police culture and fundamental to these barriers is the 'cop canteen culture' identified by authors such as Holdaway (1984), Walklate (1995) and Brown (1998).

3.9 Gender and stress

Rutherford (2001) discusses the importance of sexuality in relation to culture and how an apparently strong, heterosexual male culture may be prohibitive to women in particular, due to the nature of the behaviours and utilisation of offensive language, which may include harassment of minority groups of either gender. Police culture has traditionally been predominantly male and heterosexual and this prevails to the present day. The introduction of policies relating to equality and diversity may well have superficially impacted upon the service, yet there still appears to be a remaining undercurrent of previously unacceptable behaviours and language. This sub-culture may well add to the stresses placed upon females who aspire to more senior positions within the service and even prohibit some from considering promotion to the higher ranks.

Earlier studies by Morash and Haarr (1995) cite that women in policing tend to suffer more stress related to their working relationships with men due to offensive language or inappropriate behaviour than stress associated with work activity. They further suggest that the importance of support from colleagues, superiors and the lack of prominence of appropriate role models have had a negative impact upon the stress levels of women.

He, Zhao and Archbold (2002) acknowledge "*the unique nature of police work*" (p691) and comment that there are significant demands placed upon female officers that are greater than for women in other occupations. Despite acknowledging this issue, they tend not to concentrate upon this as being a major source of police stress as their research tends to consider police officer stress per se and so does not specifically concentrate on the issues related to the female gender. However, they further comment:

"that there could be increased efforts by management within the service police officer's professional, personal and family needs". (p699).

When commenting upon police stress He, Zhao and Archbold (2002) identify that:

"female police officers experience stress derived from sources that are different from male police officers" (p688).

They further comment that the genders actually deal with stress differently as a result of their specific stress coping mechanisms. Their study related to the psychological

and physical manifestations of stress utilising a variety of stress measures and explanatory variables to predict stress levels of both genders in relation to work/family conflict, work environment, coping mechanisms and demographic variables.

Previous studies by Derogatis and Savitz (1999) and more recently by He, Zhao and Archbold (2002) and Kurtz (2008) indicate that females have significantly higher levels of psychological and physical stress than their male counterparts. This seems to conflict with the research conducted by Burke and Mikkelsen (2005) who state that women fared better than their male counterparts when dealing with psychological and physical stresses. He, Zhao and Archbold (2002) comment that women tend to attribute emotional responses to stressful incidents whereas men tend to focus upon problem solving methods and as such draw the conclusion that the organizational culture and type of police work is less suited to females. They further discuss the factors that may cause stress, such as death of a partner, violence and *'gruesome crime scenes'*.

However, research undertaken by Alexander (1995), still a currently serving senior female police officer, disputes this fact. Alexander (1995) suggests that in cases that involve children, such as paedophilia and child grooming, it is male police officers in particular who find this facet of their work more stressful. This appears to contradict the findings of He, Zhao and Archbold (2002). They do support the view, which appears to be shared by several authors, including Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997b) and Cortis and Cassar (2005) that the development of strong, peer support networks alleviates stress and encourages a close-knit culture within the service. It is

interesting to note that although the findings relating to stress levels between the two genders are similar, it is male officers who appear to be most affected by work environment.

Kurtz (2008) refers to how "*interpersonal relationships also have a significant influence on the development of stress and burnout*" (p218) concurring with Reiner's (1992) account of how police officers frequently intermarry, divorce and remarry within the service. Kurtz continues to identify the stresses faced by both genders in relation to work and family conflict and work pressures. He suggests that this stress is elevated for women who may perform several roles, wife, mother, daughter and police officer.

3.10 Personality, policing and performance

The relative status between male and female police officers and that the existence of a "*police personality*" particularly in relation to cultural norms and gender stereotyping within the service is observed by Gerber (2001). Her research was undertaken within the New York Police Department and therefore there is possibly a further difference between male and female police officers within the UK as the national culture between the USA and the UK differs as well as the culture within police service.

Gerber (2001) endorses the view that the beliefs in relation to police women's competence is still largely linked to gender stereotyping and despite improvements in the perception of women's ability to perform increasingly diverse roles, the role of police officer still falls into the category of one of the 'taboo' jobs. However, she

comments that junior ranking male officers also have similar experiences to their female counterparts and identifies that there is an unwritten code of conduct in relation to power, longevity and status within the service. This may be dependent upon rank, length of service or newly formed partnerships. Even so, her research suggests that where men and women are of equal rank there is still a tendency for the women to be perceived (especially by the public) as the subordinate officer. She states

“Policing is an extremely masculine-typed occupation and so when a male and a female officer work together; the man would be expected to outperform the woman regardless of seniority”. (2001, p19)

Gerber (2001) observes that there is a tendency to attach bipolar traits in relation to gender and so identifies that masculinity and femininity appear to be at opposite ends of the scale. This general assumption is fuelled by behaviours exhibited by senior female officers in some instances, where women appear to adopt similar ‘masculine’ behaviour such as dominance, aggression (verbal or physical) and other behavioural styles which tend to be associated with men. She concludes that there is a definite association of dominant and aggressive personality traits linked directly to rank and status within the police service suggesting that successful women in police service become a ‘type’.

She further comments that all-female policing teams are perceived to have *“lower group status than a male-female team”* (2001, p24) and probably even less status than an all male team by both serving officers and the public at large. Yet

surprisingly she notes that *“Most studies find that men and women are very similar in their level of self-esteem”*. (2001, p13)

Yet within the service, regardless of gender, there is emphasis upon creating a ‘bond’ and the necessity for implicit trust between officers, particularly when ‘crewed’ together for operational activity. This is anecdotally referred to by officers and Gerber (2001) endorses this view. She identifies that the relationship between male-male, male-female and female-female partnerships and the associated differing behaviours within each type of partnership, are directly linked to the socially constructed gender stereotyping norms and reflects the traditional views held by society in general. The language that Gerber uses in relation to gender stereotyped personality traits indicates the ever present gap in relation to the working relationship between men and women. She uses words like, dominating, expressive, submissive and bipolar indicating opposite extremes of behaviour and characteristics.

Gerber (2001, p44) identifies that *“members of all female teams try to “prove” themselves by acting aggressively at times”* and that female officers of senior status tend to *“violate gender norms”* (p70) and adopt the behaviours normally characteristic of male supervisors and so become *“masculine typed”* (p70). She considers there to be direct links between high status and masculine behaviour traits.

She further suggests that male officers with low self-esteem tend to *“derogate women officers, resulting in his own self-perceived problems in working with women”* (p71) and in some instances other minority groups within the service. Arguably it can be suggested that black and ethnic minority, gay, lesbian and

transgender, disabled and other minority groups might be treated equally badly by such officers with low self-esteem. She implies that women officers with low self-esteem and usually low status or rank adopt typically feminine traits such as crying or submissive behaviour. This in turn is perpetuated by both male and female colleagues in terms of their behaviour and attitude towards them, thus maintaining and developing the individuals' perception of low self-esteem and therefore encouraging such behaviour.

Gerber concludes that gender stereotyped personality traits are not gender related "*these traits relate directly to status*" (2001, p133). However, to the external observer the differences between men and women in the service do seem to be a significant factor regardless of competence and so link back to social stereotyping.

The service has instigated several attempts to redress the balance in relation to gender imbalance, with early attempts of affirmative or positive action being documented by Martin as early as (1991). Although still underrepresented, women are being increasingly attracted into the service and the reduction in restrictions according to height; age and physical capability have been relaxed with more appropriate tests being implemented to ascertain an individual's suitability for employment as a police officer. Although Martin's (1991) study relates to American female officers, parallels can be drawn between the situation in the USA and in the UK with females having faced opposition and discrimination to their entry into the service and perhaps even greater resistance to their career progression.

3.11 Women's leadership in policing

Silvestri (2007) notes that the public knowledge and understanding of women in policing is limited and the perpetuation of considering policing as being a closet service is prevalent rendering a uniqueness about the role of leaders within it. There is no doubt that strong feelings of loyalty and belonging are generated within the service requiring leaders that command respect, which is usually earned by longevity of service and experience of front line, operational activity. Unlike most organisations, police leaders are generated from the rank and file with no direct entry into management positions regardless of education or experience in other organisations. The service has gradually moved from the dictatorial, authoritarian, militaristic style of leadership established at the origins of the service gradually moving towards a more transformational style, yet there still remains an intense reference to a disciplined service in which the majority of officers take great pride. This move to a greater acceptance of transformational leadership has opened doors for women resulting in, albeit a small number, of women entering the higher ranks. Silvestri (2007) suggests that there is now a greater acceptance that women do things differently. She evidences that women tend to delegate projects whilst maintaining a guiding role and that they develop a unique style utilising their feminine intuition rather than relying on command and control. Women's ability to encourage participation and team working using those feminine techniques such as negotiation and conflict management give them a different leadership perspective, which is able to be respected by the lower ranks. Silvestri indicates that although this subtle move to a more flexible style of leadership is welcomed in principle, there is a tendency, in times of crisis, for the traditional, male-dominant tactics to be re-employed. It is

almost as if the service dare not move forward from its entrenched position on leadership. Positive outcomes of the new style of leadership have led to a more performance driven culture in which both genders can evidence success.

Silvestri's (2007) account does acknowledge that there is still a significant need for determination in order for women to gain senior ranks. It appears that women can empathise with issues relating to family and child care more closely and so are increasingly emotionally intelligent when managing their relationships with others. Women's professionalism at the higher ranks is unequivocal. Silvestri documents how women adopt a different strategy at work to home. It is as if by adopting the uniform women become neither female, nor male, but androgynous officers. She suggests this temporary loss of femininity and the suppression of natural emotion, a sign of weakness, is the key to their success. Another aspect Silvestri (2007) raises is how males fear the dominant female, either because of her natural dominance or her dominance by her rank and position within the organisation. This links back to the debate in Chapter 3 in relation to the 'cult of masculinity', so prevalent within the service. She comments that the non-physical attributes of women are often misconstrued as being an inability to perform a senior role with emphasis being placed upon strength and masculinity. Silvestri comments that the overt references to the physical aspects of leaders diminish with rank and a more subversive challenge to senior females begins. This results in political posturing and undermining of female achievement by some male officers of rank. It appears that senior ranking male officers pay lip-service to welcoming their female counterparts, possibly due to the fact that legislation and Government policy require them to do so, yet there remains an undercurrent of non-acceptance of senior ranking females.

Walklate (2004) questions the necessity to retain the historical source of the service itself. She implies that by retaining its militaristic origins policing fails to meet the needs of modern society and creates a gendered detriment to women entering the profession. She refers to the attempts by BAWP to raise the profile of women in the service via the Gender Agenda (originally launched in 2001) and their campaign to gain recognition for the contribution women bring to policing as well as attempting to address the inconsistencies and discriminatory practices that persist within the service currently.

3.12 Barriers and obstacles to women in policing

The question as to whether barriers are real or perceived continues to be debated with Lord and Friday (2003) suggesting that women themselves self-impose certain barriers either consciously or subconsciously. In particular these relate to non-tangible issues such as self-efficacy and compromising their femininity to operational barriers such as shift work, anti-social hours and physical requirements to undertake specific roles, such as public order, firearms, road policing amongst other specialist activity. Additional barriers link to the public perception of what roles are fitting for women. These may well link to wider social and religious cultures that exist within multi-cultural Britain. Walklate (2004) comments that progression within the police service is both vertically and horizontally segregated, with fewer women in the higher ranks and specific specialist roles allocated to women. However, this might equally apply to male officers who adopt a non-traditional male officer role. Walklate is in no doubt that the criminal justice system, and policing in

particular, is gender orientated and this continues to be perpetuated, despite efforts to overcome gender stereotyping. With regard to women undertaking specific roles within policing, Walklate presents evidence to suggest that female victims of crime in some cases prefer to be assisted by female officers, particularly in incidences of domestic violence, rape or sexual assault. She further suggests that the media plays its part in reinforcing the gender stereotypes both in newspapers and popular television shows such as 'The Bill'. This '*feminising*' (p161) of policing she argues undermines the male concept of '*proper policing*' (p161).

3.13 Training within the service

At the lower ranks, as previously indicated, the OSPRE system of promotion via an examination followed by competency based scenarios enable officers to compete (allegedly) on a 'level playing field'. Above the rank of Inspector officers' promotion is usually by a 'board' or panel of senior officers from within the individual's own force. Officers who have entered the service via the High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS) are usually groomed and mentored to enable them to rapidly rise through the ranks, although it seems that the HPDS scheme itself is discredited by many officers who view it as an opportunity for intellectually bright individuals to accelerate through the ranks without gaining the rite of passage via experience on the beat. This is a much favoured negative perception of currently serving officers and deeply embedded within police culture. Part of the HPDS process includes the allocation of a mentor. Ramaswami et al (2010) identify the importance for elite individuals to participate in mentoring relationships, a view previously expressed by Jackson (2001) and Limerick and O'Leary (2006) and they

suggest that in male dominated organisations the effect of protégé, sex and organisational context is paramount in ascertaining the success or otherwise of the career progression of individuals. They argue that females seeking senior roles in male dominated environments must have a credible and highly visible male mentor in order to gain a foothold on the career ladder. It seems in their study that the ‘visibility’ of the mentor is the most important factor and they emphasize the role played by such mentors in enabling women to progress. Ramaswami et al (2010) state:

“Senior-male mentors are the levers of power, embedded in networks to which female or junior-male mentors may not have similar access” (p390)

Limerick and O’Leary (2006) also identify that women who gain prominent male mentors also appear to fare better in their development. In their study they noted that women who resist the *“feminist framing of their experience”* (p107) deny lack of parity with their male counterparts yet when expressing their experiences present an opposing view in relation to their previously stated beliefs.

Ramaswami et al’s (2010) research experiences links to the issues relating to access as identified by Pettigrew (1992), Brown (1997) and Welch et al (2002) who specify that access to networks for women can be limited due to a variety of reasons, not least because they do not have the right associations with men in a position of perceived and often real power. The issue relating to researcher access impinged upon Ramaswami et al’s (2010) study and their research remains inconclusive in relation to the exact implications of *‘protégé by sex mentoring interactions,* (p403)

and women's' career progression, but it seems reasonable to concur with their view that in certain organisations, the culture suggests that this can be a pivotal aspect for some individuals in relation to their ability to gain access to elite status.

3.14 Ladders, access and the importance of mentors

It seems that a key factor in gaining access to the promotion ladder within the police service is the strong link between mentors and access. Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008) findings suggest that both aspects are controlled and dominated by men. Women are given a rite of passage into the promotion stakes by gaining a male sponsor early in their careers who is seen to encourage their attempts at gaining rank. The issue of numerical representation of women can be partly attributed to this activity in that quotas are set by successive Governments via the Home Office in relation to various under-represented groups, such as ethnic minorities and women, in relation to UK policing. Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008) draw upon Martin's (1979) early study into women in policing where Martin identified two clearly different categories of women in the service. She identified women who accepted they were entering a male dominated environment who desired to be treated as their male counterparts and those women who sought to be recognised as women in a policing role.

Martin's (1979) views of women's attitudes and behaviours could arguably now be seen as out-dated, as during the past thirty years, society and organisations have radically changed their views in relation to the expectation that women can or cannot achieve high rank, particularly in the field of policing. Additionally, her study, as

does that of Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008), relates to women officers in the USA which has a different national culture as well as significant differences in policing activities. Archbold and Moses Schulz highlight several key aspects such as women appearing as '*tokens*' (2008, p52) when attempting to gain promotion due to the continued lack of numbers of women even attempting climbing the promotion ladder.

This links to the discussion in Chapter 2 where comparators can be drawn in other industries by authors such as Simpson (2000), Brown (2000), Liu and Wilson (2001) and Cortis and Cassar (2005). Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008) also raise the feelings of '*isolation*', '*frustration*' and '*disrespect*' (p63) women experience when working with male colleagues. However, they suggest that this is not purely on the basis of their sex but a more complex set of interrelating unspoken values such as camaraderie, length of service, experience and proving ability. Proving ability may not directly relate to the competency framework that defines the job role a particular officer fulfils, but proven in terms of when colleagues, both male and female, consider an individual has fulfilled a rite of passage into the team. Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008) state that by being a minority in the promotion stakes this exposes women to intense scrutiny, more so than for men, placing them in an invidious position where they are highly criticised by both males and females who observe their attempts at promotion, making individuals apprehensive of raising their heads above the parapet. Therefore, in order to avoid such critical scrutiny, few women expose themselves to the process, reinforcing the barriers to progression with many officers remaining within the lower ranks. There is no doubt that some parallels can be drawn between women officers in the UK and those featured in the

studies in the USA, but there also needs to be acknowledgment of the differences in relation to wider societal values, beliefs and culture which may well impact upon the experiences of women police officers in the two respective countries, a view expressed by Brown (1997).

Brown (1997) acknowledges the different strategies utilised by females in policing and implies that their less aggressive response to volatile situations results in a '*feminizing influence*' (p9) upon police activity. Linked to a reduction in the overt, traditional canteen culture associated in the past with policing Brown suggests that women are more likely to fulfil the 'softer,' more administrative, roles rather than the high profile, high prestige functions. Yet Brown's view can be challenged as many women officers currently perform equally masculine roles such as firearms, road policing, tactical and criminal investigation work. Perhaps Brown's view was limited due to issues of access to officers fulfilling these roles and are which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Studies into women in policing have been limited to date. Those studies that have been conducted so far tend to relate to the USA or Australia, with little pragmatic research occurring within the UK. Consequently, the existing literature can only draw parallels with the state that currently exists here, with assumptions and attributes of those studies being aligned to the UK police service. Although there are certain similarities there are significant differences that need to be taken into account, primarily the societal culture of a small, multi-cultural island that retains its unique characteristics in the shape of 43 forces rather than a federal police service. Arguably, the parochial idiosyncrasies of our counties will impact upon the face of

front line policing influencing attitudes and behaviours towards women and other minority groups. Such parallels exist in the work of Moses Schulz (2003) whose research identifies some common themes relating to women in policing, such as lack of self-confidence, work-family conflict and women's tendency to be risk averse. She too cites that women attempting promotion frequently doubt their own ability and are impacted by negative responses from colleagues. Moses Schulz comments on the significant lack of numerical representation of women in senior positions and documents the battle of those who do achieve senior rank evidencing their discrimination and obstacles and highlighting their determination to succeed. Moses Schulz (2003) documents that mobility is a key factor in gaining senior rank along with higher levels of education and she makes reference to the fact that most senior women are either single or currently have, or have had, a partner who also served within the police service.

Limerick and O'Leary (2006) imply that qualitative feminist research challenges the traditional masculine male models in work places by the very fact that women are empowered to voice their opinions in relation to their achievements and to existing management practices. They argue that feminist research has gone beyond what they describe as the 'wallflower' image indicating the prominence and frequency of research being published in relation to women's experiences at work. The aim of this research falls fairly and squarely into that category. This study seeks to bring about change in an archaic, stifling and out-dated regime recognising that both genders can offer different approaches to policing which results in benefits not only for those who are engaged within the service, but also the communities that they serve.

3.15 Conclusion to the literature review

This research is the most comprehensive study to date of female UK police officers and will provide not only an academic account of the current situation but also inform the various police agencies that have been developed in recent times to improve working conditions. So far this study has highlighted that police agencies have tried, to an extent, to tackle some of the issues relating to career progression for female officers through a number of initiatives and policies.

However, there are still glaring omissions as to how women can overcome barriers to promotion and these need to be addressed requiring significant cultural change both within the service and by wider society. This purpose of this thesis is to address criticism that academic research fails to impact upon the real world and in the following Chapter my research strategy is outlined enabling me to discover what the current barriers to senior police women's progression truly are and to suggest how they might be overcome resulting in improvements in the service offering opportunities for change in the current practices and opening doors for women in policing.

The focus of this Chapter has related to the gendered aspects of police culture and how this influences career progression of female officers. There is no doubt that the present culture can be stifling for women who aspire to senior rank and that the swelling numbers of females entering the service will force the service to review its current practices, particularly in relation to training, promotion and career development.

Despite several authors' attempts to consider the roles of women in policing there still appears to be a significant dearth of empirical evidence to identify the key issues that women continue to face. This is probably due in part to the fact that due to several high profile negative reports relating to policing and gender including widely reported employment tribunals relating to issues such as sexual harassment and discrimination, police officers tend to 'close ranks' and limit their contact with 'outsiders'. The issue of researcher access may also have contributed to the lack of research into senior women's progression in the past, but in my case no access issues occurred, possibly due to the perception that as a former member of civilian staff within the service, I was considered to be an insider and I will elaborate upon this in the methodology Chapter. My research will attempt to address these shortcomings by analysing the work experiences of currently serving officers at all ranks from Police Constable to ACPO ranks across a range of differing forces representing the diverse families of forces that exist within the UK mainland. Significantly my research includes a large number of women in senior ranks, which remains uncharted in the existing literature.

Chapter 4 Diversity, employment and police organisations

4.1 Introduction to policing in Britain

This Chapter attempts to provide the background to current levels of diversity within the police service in England and Wales. It will explore the different diversity dimensions as they are currently represented within the police service. It gives a brief historical account of the attempted 'move' from the well documented 'macho, male dominated' service in the 1970s to the current position. Significant efforts to incorporate different social groups including ethnic minorities and those with different religious beliefs, sexual orientation or genders have occurred during the past thirty-five years. Documented within this Chapter are the development and establishment of various organisations that work within the service to represent the minority categories and indicates their success or otherwise in establishing a truly integrated and diverse workforce as well as attempting to identify their continued role within the service. This exploration of the move from an exclusive culture to a more integrated and representative societal culture indicates that there is still significant work to be done in this area and that the concept of a truly diverse workforce is currently still an issue for the service.

4.2 Diversity and culture within the service

As with any collection of people within the work place, the cross cultural and diverse nature of the police service in England and Wales continues to develop and change to reflect the changing nature of society at large. Historically, the police service has not been noted for its acceptance of the concept of diversity in the widest sense. Over

the past thirty years there have been significant and noticeable changes relating to the diversity of people recruited into the service. Forces in England and Wales are currently experiencing a significant loss of long serving officers due to the thirty-year cycle of an officer's service. The mid seventies saw an increase in recruitment of officers to the service with a peak during 1975-1976. As a consequence, significant numbers of senior officers are approaching retirement and this loss of 'manpower' (as most of these officers tend to be) will give the service the greatest opportunity to develop a more diverse and culturally aware work force than it has ever been able to in the recent past. Most officers are recruited as probationary officers and can be expected to remain with the service for a period of thirty years; a job for 'life', before retiring with all the benefits associated with the police pension scheme currently in place. The Home Office is committed to recruiting officers and civilian staff to reflect current and future societal trends and the author's experience within one of the northern forces of England endorses that existing local recruitment practices tend to support this intention. The national recruitment campaign, "Could you?", which included television recruitment advertising attempted to focus upon people from a wide background, including different social and educational backgrounds, religions and nationalities. This further extends into the recruitment of the wider police family of Special Constables and Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) a recently established 'arm' of the police family to increase public reassurance by providing a uniformed presence on the streets of the United Kingdom. All of the Staff Associations mentioned in this document are accessible to any serving member of the police family whether employed as a uniformed officer or in a support staff role.

During the mid-seventies, according to Home Office statistics, the majority of officers recruited to the service tended to be white, 'middle-class' males. This view is supported by Fairclough (1992) and Dick and Cassell (2002) further concur that the "hegemonic struggle" within a male dominated culture is far from being resolved and continues to be an issue for the service. As time has progressed there has been increased recruitment of a more diverse workforce despite an allegedly significant degree of resistance from the traditionally heterosexual, white male officer.

4.3 Women

Females who did join the service in the past tended to be regarded as recruited to perform particular functions such as dealing with domestic violence issues and crimes associated with women and children. The original Women's Police Service established in 1914 through the campaigning of Nina Boyle was in answer to the regulation of prostitution and women's welfare. They had no police powers between 1920-1930 when they were attested and awarded limited police powers. It was not until 1973 that women were fully integrated into full service with the full police powers, but even then there were significant cultural and social barriers to their fulfilling the role that they do today and the potential role(s) that they might perform in the future. Holdaway and Parker (1998) and Dick and Jankowicz (2001) further substantiate this viewpoint and comment that

"societal beliefs and attitudes towards women and their role..., constrains and marginalizes Policewomen by, for example, influencing the type of occupational role for which they are perceived to be most suited".(p184).

The fact that in 2001 Dick and Jankowicz refer to women officers as 'Policewomen' in itself is telling as this title is frowned upon by some serving officers today, but may well have been commonly used in 2001. In the current police service all officers regardless of gender are referred to as 'Police Officers' and this practice is endorsed in all police training activity with police trainers, both civilian and serving officers. Many 'hard core' traditional male officers resist this phraseology in what might be perceived as being an attempt to continue to perpetuate the myth of the requirement of male dominance within police service. Dick and Cassell (2002) suggest "*that one of the risks with diversity initiatives is the white male backlash*" (p954). These authors suggest that this reaction is not unique to the police service within the United Kingdom, and comment upon the similar culture that exists within North America. Miller et al (2003) develop this argument further and concur that culturally the service has "*been associated with images of working class masculinity that emphasize physical strength and aggressiveness*". p358).

There are many documented accounts of police service culture being white, macho-male dominated and the persistent presence of 'canteen culture' continues to perpetuate some of the less desirable attributes associated with the Service. Dick and Cassell (2002) consolidate this viewpoint citing Waddington (1999) who refers to the '*cult of masculinity*' (p294) wherein he argues that masculine values and attitudes engender a stereotypical viewpoint of women within the service implying that females are assigned to less violent or dangerous incidents as a result. He endorses the viewpoint that 'canteen culture' is utilised to "*give meaning and purpose to an inherently problematic occupational experience*" (p287) namely those who are perceived not to conform to the white, heterosexual male norm. On occasions this

includes the vilification of women, racist and homophobic comments and inappropriate jokes or story telling often linked to their recent experiences and may be used as an 'excuse' to 'deal' with a traumatic event. As with some people within British society, from the author's observations, some officers continue to engage in using inappropriate language and so called 'humour' to 'bond' with colleagues and ridicule those that are perceived to be different to them. In fact, many officers publicly acknowledge the existence of 'canteen culture', some engaging in it, whilst others evade it, but many agree they may observe colleagues participating in it, but they resist challenging it. HMIC comments in the document *Winning the Race Revisited* (1999):-

"The blanket use of the expression "canteen culture" is as misleading as it is mischievous. Expressions and labels, which may be seen as discriminatory since they are perceived to taint all, will not move an organisation forward".
(p9).

This has meant that historically it could be argued that women, ethnic minorities and those perceived to be 'different' as a result of their sexual orientation, gender or religious beliefs tended to have been less likely to have been recruited in the past.

Silvestri (2003) comments on the interactions between superior and subordinate officers during the 1970s and identifies that the language used might be indicative of the general culture within police service at that time. She suggests that female officers utilise specific 'scripts' to enable them to 'fit in' to the culture of the service and therefore resist the opportunity to challenge and change the organisational

culture. They adopt the use of language and actions that are not naturally female, for example, by the use of common swear words to emphasize a point or the adoption of more aggressive behaviours rather than the negotiating and communicative styles normally associated with female interactions.

It is well documented that women in particular suffer from harassment within the service, often sexual harassment, with several high-profile cases in the 1990s that resulted in landmark tribunal cases with record awards of damages to the complainants. Dick and Cassell (2002) comment that these incidents tend to be relatively few and far between. In their research they identify that many women acknowledge a degree of sexual 'banter' and innuendo but they regard this as insignificant and not necessarily peculiar to police service. One of the female officers interviewed by Dick and Cassell (2002) states quite clearly that she 'suffered' similar sexual innuendo and comment whilst working as a civil servant prior to her career in the police and saw that a certain level of discourse of this type as 'normal' in any job role where there is a mix of male and female personnel. Whilst Dick and Cassell might comment that the incidence of high awards of damages at court might be few and far between, it appears that the incidents of sexual harassment, whether in major or minor form, continue to play a significant part in the working lives of many women serving within the force.

4.4 Ethnic minority groups

There were few black or Asian officers recruited to the service during the past thirty years and this can be reflected by the recommendations identified in the Scarman

Report 1981 which inquired into the Brixton Disorders. Following the civil disturbances in Brixton the report found that the lack of ethnic minority officers and a general lack of understanding on the part of the police of ethnic minority groups contributed to the ferocity and scale of public disorder culminating in the severe injury of several officers. It appears that this situation had not improved by 1985 which saw further civil unrest in the Broadwater Farm riots that led the death of PC Keith Blakelock. Recommendations were made to increase the recruitment of officers from more diverse nationalities and ethnic backgrounds together with the recommendation that training interventions to improve the level of understanding of officers to the requirements and customs of people from differing ethnic backgrounds. A series of diversity initiatives were developed throughout the following years, up to and including current times, following extensive research by HMIC (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary), with recommendations for constant revision of the attitude and culture of the service in relation to the policing of ethnic minority groups and their integration into the service. The police service does, in fact, reflect society at large to an extent and consequently has its share of racists, homophobes, sexists and other groups of like-minded people who might be classed as 'culturally unaware' or 'resistant'. By recommending the education and training of officers in cultural differences it was hoped that similar events to the range of civil disorders in the early eighties might be minimised if not totally prevented.

It can probably be argued that the collective attitude of the service relating to different religious beliefs during this time also contributed to the lack of recruitment from the ethnic minorities. The nature of the work being a twenty-four hour a day,

seven days a week 'blue light' service may also have been perceived by some as prohibitive to those who had, what might be seen by some as rigid religious beliefs and specific requirements to adhere to certain religious customs and practices. For example, the argument has been made by some (unenlightened) serving officers that Muslim officers might be a potential risk during periods of fasting such as Ramadan as their custom and practice requires them not to consume food or drink during daylight hours, thus reducing blood sugar levels and potentially the ability to concentrate. Previously the culture within the service would not have readily accepted such religious differences. From the author's own experience of working within the service the recruitment of officers from the Muslim faith was a topic of debate during diversity training sessions, as some officers felt that if they were crewed with a Muslim officer during a fasting period and they were called to an incident where they might be required to use physical force or restraint techniques, they commented that in such a situation they felt vulnerable and that their colleague may not be able to perform adequately putting themselves and their colleagues at risk. Comments such as these were made by officers who were not in principle against the recruitment of officers from different faiths and ethnicity, but indicate limited understanding of the needs of these particular individuals.

The police service in general has acknowledged that there is a requirement to develop a more diverse approach to both its recruitment practices and its interaction with the public at large. Several significant documents have been produced within the last ten years or so challenging the service and those within it to attempt to develop an increasingly accepting society within the service. Attitudes to policing ethnic minority communities and the ethics relating to police practice 'on the streets'

was further addressed by HMIC in the two reports 'Winning the Race' (1997) and 'Winning the Race Revisited' (1999). Within these documents HMIC identified several specific areas for improvement and made recommendations that forces should see diversity as a key issue for development within the service. These documents pre-empted the most significant and publicly known document relating to the change in attitude and culture within the service following the horrific death of Stephen Lawrence in April 1993. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report was published in 1999 following five years of research into the events leading up to Stephen's death and the subsequent Metropolitan Police Force investigation to his murder. MacPherson's (1999) comprehensive report into the chilling account of the circumstances that led to the death of Stephen Lawrence and the subsequently mismanaged investigation by the Metropolitan Police Force caused both the general public and the service itself to question the inherent problems. January 2002 saw the publication of the document "Training Matters", researched and produced by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (Training) (HMICT). This was a key document that focussed upon the future requirements for training officers to perform in modern society and to address the needs of that society. Within this document significant emphasis was placed upon the need to integrate diversity training into the core curriculum of an officer's initial training and ongoing training programme with that training to continue as a 'golden thread' throughout an officer's career. The production of the follow-up document, "Diversity Matters", following a long-term inspection by HMIC across a range of forces in 2003 indicated the continued need to concentrate on diversity as an issue within the service.

4.5 Disabled people

The perception of the role that disabled or less-able people could perform effectively within the service can also arguably have been described in the past as discriminatory and prior to legislative changes the police service tended to use 'Crown Exemption', the fact that officers are employed directly by the Crown and therefore, not employees, as a strategy for non-employment of this particular section of society. The implications to the service with the arrival of the Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment) Regulations (2003) which extended the application of the 1995 Act to include police service required review of previous service practices. The key areas to be reviewed related to recruitment, pensions, training and the education of serving officers. In 2004 the Home Office produced a guiding document issued to all Forces, "Disability and the Police: The Complete Works". This document gave guidance relating to the code of practice relating to employment and occupation within the service including Special Constables and Cadets. Further advice relating to the interaction between officers and the public was also identified in this document. This enabled forces to re-examine their policies and practices relating to the employment of people with disabilities and significantly raised the profile of people who came into the categories defined by the Act. The requirement to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable a disabled officer to work within the service ensured that those officers who may have previously been 'pensioned off' due to their disability (which may have been caused through injury on duty in some cases) to continue working in an appropriate role. There seems to be little evidence to suggest that culturally this sector of the community achieves the same level of discrimination as do women and ethnic minorities within the service, but equally from the author's own experience of recruitment within the service, it appears that

few disabled people directly apply to work within the service as an officer and only a limited number of civilian or support staff apply for administrative roles.

4.6 Gay and transgender

The concept of gay or transgender people working within an organisation that is so culturally heterosexual male-dominant might appear to be an anomaly. However, there are significant numbers of gay and (less so, although steadily increasing) transgender officers employed within the service. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003) perhaps forced the service to formally make provision to attempt to eradicate discrimination against officers within these categories. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) produced guidance documents to each force to ensure compliance with the new regulations and worked with the National Police Gay Association (NPGA), formerly the Lesbian and Gay Police Association (LAGPA) to undertake sexual orientation monitoring in an attempt to ensure the equitable treatment and representation of this sector of the police community. Most gay officers have in the past tended to keep their sexual orientation private in order to prevent any backlash from their heterosexual, macho-male colleagues. It is only in fairly recent times that some have chosen to be more open about their personal sexual orientation and this can arguably be said to reflect society's more relaxed attitude and approach generally to the subject. There tends to be greater acceptance in modern society of wider sexual orientation than the traditional heterosexual relationship, however this cannot yet be said in relation to society's attitude to gender reassigned individuals. Even in wider society gender reassignment still appears to be regarded with a degree of prurient curiosity rather

than acceptance. This can be reflected in both the service and the attitudes of society at large to the recruitment of the first transgender officers to two northern forces and a subsequent recruitment of an officer to a southerly force. Their recruitment and appointment resulted in significant publicity and debate within the tabloid newspapers, causing embarrassment and difficulty for the individuals concerned. Within the respective forces there was a distinct lack of understanding and awareness upon the part of managers and colleagues alike of the requirements to enable such individuals to integrate into their forces and it emphasised the fact that although the service as a whole extolled the virtues of employing a diverse workforce, organisationally and culturally they were simply not prepared or educated enough to manage the process effectively.

4.7 The development of associations to represent diverse communities within police service and their role in the establishment of a diverse and representative workforce

Throughout the development of the service in England and Wales a series of associations have been established in order to represent the needs of some of these diverse communities within the Police Service alongside the recognised Police Federation, the equivalent of a police officer's Trades Union. Interestingly, each of these associations is known by an acronym, which is typical of this jargon-orientated service. Their development is subsequently documented.

4.7.1 Police Federation (POLFED)

Established in 1919 by the Police Act the 'Federation' is the representative body of all officers up to and including the ranks of Chief Inspector. The ranking system is a

fundamental part of the Police Service and is a direct indicator of the historical military roots of the service. Today there are a total of four ranks served by the Federation and this totals the majority of serving officers. The ranks are Constable, Sergeant, Inspector and Chief Inspector. The Federation identifies itself as follows:-

“The Federation today represents the interests of over 136,000 police officers, bringing together their views on welfare and efficiency to the notice of the government and all opinion formers”.

(Source <http://www.polfed.org>, accessed 10th December 2005)

Their role includes the negotiation of all aspects of employment including pay, pensions, benefits, hours of duty, training, promotion, discipline etc.

The Federation claims it is *“fully committed to the elimination of unfair discrimination and the promotion of equality and diversity for all”* (Source <http://www.polfed.org>, accessed 10th December 2005) and it has a distinct equality and diversity policy. Within the policy The Federation identifies that it continues to work with forces and policy decision makers in government to ensure fair recruitment and promotion practices for all officers regardless of gender, religion, ethnic background etc.

Whilst the intentions are explicit in terms of the viewpoint relating to equality and diversity it is questionable as to how effective the Federation truly is in this respect. The Service remains under the jurisdiction of the Crown and as such any Act of

Parliament or directive from the currently serving Home Secretary will become a 'lawful order'. As such officers are duty bound to obey the 'Queen's Regulations' without question. The fact that the Federation only represents what on the whole might be referred to as the 'rank and file' might also imply that their power can be perceived to be limited. Perhaps it is questionable as to why senior officers are represented by different bodies or associations when they work within the same service. Is there a dichotomy between the senior management of the service and the majority of serving officers?

4.7.2 Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)

Established over fifty years ago ACPO was designed to provide a central policy development body for senior officers rather than the forty-three individual forces developing policy in isolation. Interestingly, in 2006, out of the fourteen business areas of ACPO white males hold thirteen posts with the fourteenth being held by a female officer. Serving Chief Constables hold each of the business areas with the exception of one. By 2011 the fourteen business areas have been reduced to thirteen with only one post being occupied by a female police staff with no posts being held by senior serving female police officers.

One of the portfolios is that of Race and Diversity in which key aspects were subdivided into thirteen distinct areas that required policy and direction for Forces in 2006. By 2011 the key areas have been reduced from thirteen to eleven, suggesting that there has been a slight shift of emphasis reflecting the changes in society during those five years resulting in a change in policing strategies as a result of force

restructuring and cost cutting exercises instigated by the Coalition Government that came into power in 2010. These specific areas are detailed below:

Table 2 Key aspects of diversity in policing policy and practice 2006/2011

2006	2011
Race	Hate crime
Faith Issues	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
Sexual Orientation	Religion and belief
Youth	Gender
Employment Tribunals, Grievance and Discipline	Gipsies and travellers
Elderly, Disability and Mental Health	Mental health and disability
Gender	Race equality
Recruitment and Retention	Training
Training	Age
Immigration	Stakeholder engagement
Travellers/Gypsies	Human rights
Hate Crime	
Refugees/Asylum Seekers and	

(Source <http://www.acpo.police.uk>, accessed 3rd January 2006) and

(<http://www.acpo.police.uk/ACPOBusinessAreas/Equalitydiversityandhumanrights.aspx> last accessed 14 April 2011).

Clearly these policies relate not only to serving officers but also to the public at large. However, as the ACPO officers are not represented by the Federation and are a totally separate entity, it might arguably be questionable as to how aware ACPO officers are of the culture and sub cultures that exist within the service in the lower ranks. By the very nature of the promotion system within the service ACPO officers are usually well into their thirty year careers, usually well in excess of twenty years' service and so may well be out of touch with what is happening at the 'coal face' so to speak. These same officers also served in the rank and file at a time when diversity and recognition of different faiths, religions, orientations etc. was not perceived as being beneficial to the service. In addition to this fact, during their time in the service within the lower ranks according to previous literature the 'canteen culture' was reputed to be rife. Therefore, it may be that the policy makers of today were the heterosexual macho-male sub culture of the past.

4.7.3 The Superintendents Association (POLSUPERS)

The Police Superintendents Association is the representative body of superintending ranks formulated in 1952. Similar in structure to ACPO this association pays specific attention to the issue of diversity within the service and it has a designated business area allocated to diversity. Within this business area is a formal business plan relating to diversity issues and the association works in conjunction with the other staff associations and other key stakeholder groups. Part of their strategic commitment is to support the roles of the other associations and to act as a role model to other associations in respect of good practice. Additionally they seek to influence the service in its approach to diversity and to identify themselves as a

'reference' organisation in relation to the promotion of diversity. Like ACPO officers a cynical viewpoint might consider that again this is merely overt compliance with Home Office policy as most, although not all, superintending ranks again are long serving officers that may well have been exposed to the culturally inappropriate behaviour of the 1970s. However, there is no doubt that there is an attempt by the Superintendents Association to comply with the Home Office values of diversity implementation and that the public face of this association takes significant steps towards educating and promoting the concept of diversity within the service.

4.7.4 British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP)

Founded in 1987 the British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP) represents all ranks and grades of women in Police Service. It also encourages membership and affiliated membership from all interested individuals including males from all geographical Forces throughout the United Kingdom. BAWP produced a key document launched in 2001 "The Gender Agenda" and reviews a wide range of issues relating to women in policing ranging from alternative working practices, body armour for women and working practices and partnerships. (Source <http://www.bawp.org>, accessed 3 January 2006)

The association works extensively with the Home Office and other associations such as the Fawcett Society to raise the profile of women in the service and to 'fight the cause' to improve equality and respect for its members within the service and the wider community. Within its formal constitution the association has five key aims:

- To raise awareness and understanding of issues affecting women within the police service
- To facilitate and contribute to discussions on issues of concern to all officers – providing wherever possible the female perspective
- To develop a network of professional and social contacts between officers nationally and internationally
- To facilitate the sharing of information on issues affecting the Service and women in particular
- To contribute to the continuous professional development of all members

(Source <http://www.bawp.org>, accessed 3 January 2006)

By being a mutually inclusive association rather than exclusive (as is ACPO and the POLSUPERS) this association appears to adopt not only the philosophy of diversity but attempts to practice it. Even so, anecdotally, some ‘traditional’ male officers see the association as a ‘girls club’ and as such decry membership of the association and attempt to belittle its significance.

4.7.5 The National Black Police Association (NBPA)

The National Black Police Association (NBPA) was established in November 1998 following an expression of interest in October 1996. Utilising the strap line “*One voice, strength in unity*” the NBPA promotes the mission:-

“to improve the working environment of black staff by protecting the rights of those employed within the police service and to enhance racial harmony and the quality of service to the black community in the UK. Thereby assisting the police service to deliver a fair and equitable service to all sections of the community”.

(Source <http://www.nationalbpa.com>, accessed 6 January 2006)

The association goes on to define that “Black does not refer to skin colour” although most members of the association tend to be of Asian, Afro-Caribbean or African ethnic backgrounds. Their main purpose is to “oppose the effects of racism”. Although a national organisation there are regional associations in several, although not all, of the forty-three English and Welsh Forces and this association appears to be growing in strength and membership as increasing numbers of ethnic minority officers are being recruited into the Service. Again, experience of working within the service has given the author an insight into the perception of this association by some rank and file officers who regard the association as a detrimental and unnecessary addition to the family of representative associations. The argument put forward (by some officers) is that the Federation represents all officers below Inspector and there is no requirement for yet another association to represent black and ethnic minority officers as a special case. The fact that the association was so recently established appears to contradict this viewpoint, as clearly officers within this association do perceive a need for its existence. It is now well established and recognised by the Home Office and HMIC and like most other associations works in conjunction with interested parties in the general development of policy and

procedure relating to Police Service but like BAWP representing the female viewpoint, it represents the viewpoint of black and ethnic minority officers.

The NBPA in conjunction with BAWP also recognises the 'double jeopardy' of being both black and female and has identified significant barriers to what they refer to BME (Black Minority Ethnic) female police personnel and the discrimination they face in current service. The two associations continue to research this aspect of discriminatory practice within the service and seek to address issues relating to promotion and development of this diverse group.

4.7.6 The National Gay Police Association (NGPA)

During the course of the past fifteen years, the National Gay Police Association (NGPA), which was formed in 1990 (formerly the Lesbian and Gay Police Association (LAGPA)), developed into a formally recognised staff association. Principally established to represent and support gay staff the association also assists with policy development in relation to policing and sexual orientation, homophobic hate crime, victim care and family and community liaison.

Working in conjunction with the Service the NGPA has worked extensively during the past eighteen months to introduce sexual orientation monitoring within Forces. This data is reliant on voluntary self-classification and is collected in a similar process to the monitoring of race, gender and disability within the service. The NGPA recognises that there is still a significant proportion of discrimination against their members and states that voluntary self-classification enables such officers to exercise a free and 'genuine' choice in declaring their classification. This high

profile, and media interested pilot initiative could arguably be defined as a brave move in what is regarded as a predominantly macho male-dominated environment. The aim of the pilot document is to *“act as a catalyst for positive change from ‘tolerance’ to ‘acceptance’ of gay men and women as a resource to the police service”*.

(Source <http://gay.police.uk>, accessed 6 January 2006).

The shift in UK legislation in 2003 towards a more inclusive approach saw the introduction of the Employment Law (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003. These innovative regulations apply to all UK employers including the Service and are designed to promote equality of opportunity to those involved in single sex relationships which reflects the more tolerant society at large. The NGPA publicly acknowledges that in part the voluntary self-declaration scheme is an attempt to dispel the current ‘sub-culture’ which they freely identify is currently in existence within the Service. Their aim is to develop a more positive culture within the Service and to *“offer a positive signal to those joining the service”*. (<http://gay.police.uk>, accessed 6 January 2006).

Like the NBPA the NGPA hopes that by developing a positive culture towards their members in the service this will assist in the delivery and equality of services to the wider community at large.

However the NGPA faces the difficulty of many gay officers wishing to remain anonymous and to be ‘left alone to get on with it’ rather than highlighting their existence both within the Forces and in the wider public arena. There still appears to

be a stigma attached to officers who 'come out' at work and this continues to be reflected to an extent by society at large and continues to make news headlines, especially when officers are of a more senior rank.

4.7.7 National Disabled Police Association

As the most recently established staff association in the Service the National Disabled Police Association (NDPA) was established in September 2004 and offers to represent all disabled police officers and employees in the UK. The aim of the NDPA is:

“to promote disability rights and the equality of opportunity within the police services of the United Kingdom and the wider community”.

(Source <http://ndpa.info> accessed 15 March 2006)

The NDPA sees itself as an umbrella organisation offering advice relating to the employment of disabled people, interpretation and compliance of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and to identify best practice within forces. Furthermore, it offers to act as a mediator between employer and employee in relation to the promotion of disability issues and attempts to provide a forum and link for other individual staff associations. The NDPA is attempting to have a representative member in every force in the United Kingdom to raise the profile and awareness of disability issues and rights in the work place. Although in its relative infancy as a staff association recognised by the Service, there is little doubt that the level of influence this association will bring to bear upon both forces and National

Government will develop in the future and perhaps its establishment has been long overdue.

4.8 Conclusion

It is apparent that there have been definite attempts by the Service to change the long-held cultural concepts and practices that perpetuated the myth of white, heterosexual male dominance. The establishment and increasing membership of the various representative bodies indicates an overt attempt to develop a more diverse and integrated work force. However, the continued existence of sub-cultures within the organisation, in many ways, stifles the ability of the Service to develop, as it appears to still hold on to the values and beliefs of previous decades.

Rowe (2002) documents the turbulent relationship between the police and the public. He comments that public perceptions relating to the difficult relations police have had with diverse communities in recent times are not new and that concern with public relations can be traced back some thirty-five to forty years. With this backdrop it seems inevitable that the service might struggle to accept a truly diverse work force and that despite significant attempts to develop increased diversity there still remain several cultural barriers to achieving this aim. Rowe (2002) continues that *“statistical evidence also indicates that minority ethnic staff tend to be concentrated amongst the lower ranks of the police service”*. (p435). The argument that it is only recently that significant numbers of ethnic minority staff have joined the service is put forward as a potential reason for this phenomenon. However, the same might not be applied to women within the service. Both ethnic minorities and

women are significantly under-represented within the service and if the service is to reflect the demographic changes in society there will be a requirement to significantly increase the recruitment of both of these sectors of society. Interestingly, Rowe (2002) comments that other organisations within the criminal justice sector have similar diversity profiles and therefore consideration might be given to the factors influencing this. Successive Governments have continuously emphasized the need to develop increasingly diverse work forces, yet there might be an argument that it is the attitude of the Government itself that influences the recruitment profiles of the major public sector employers. Governments have acknowledged the need to increase diverse representation within their own house and there have been several high profile appointments of women and ethnic minority ministers, yet both sections of society continue to be under-represented within the current Government at both national and local levels.

In an attempt to rectify the situation the service has, during the past few years, embarked on a series of diversity training initiatives. Cashmore (2002) notes that none of the identified minority groups favour such initiatives as they tend to exacerbate the situation and disturb any status quo that might have previously existed. It seems that this is an attempt to create an appearance of bringing about some real and positive change in relation to diversity acceptance. The reality is, according to Cashmore (2002), that this is merely a "*ritualistic response*" (p330) and may increase the swell of negative feeling against the minority parties.

It can be argued from one perspective that if there is to be true cultural shift within the police service then this needs to be instigated not only from within the service,

but from the Home Office and Government itself. Perhaps society at large is in fact only 'playing the game' and that there can never be true social integration of diverse groups as each has its own specific values and beliefs that it refuses to relinquish. It may be that this is reflected in the diversity (or lack of it) within the service and that consideration might be given to accepting that the service will never achieve true cultural and representative diversity as society itself within the United Kingdom does not accept it.

So far this thesis has examined an overview of the literature and development of the police strategy in relation to creating a more diverse and representative work force. There are a minimal number of studies that consider gender and policing and these are notably those by Martin (1979), Martin and Jurik (1996) and Brown and Heidensohn (2000). The next Chapter identifies the methodological approaches I have adopted to further knowledge in the particular field of women in policing, drawing upon the existing literature as a springboard to my research. This research will specifically focus upon senior women in policing gaining an insight into the complexities faced by those women who choose to enter what is perceived as being one of the most traditional male dominated environments and gives an accurate account of the current position.

Chapter 5 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In the following Chapter I will identify the methodological approaches to derive both qualitative and quantitative data. By utilising a mixed methodology a holistic picture can be drawn of the experiences of women in the UK police service, with emphasis being placed upon senior women, but identifying that some of the issues relating to their progression to the ACPO ranks can emanate from the initial probationary experiences at the point of entry to the organisation continuing throughout their tenure within the service.

Firmly positioned within the feminist criminology methodology framework (Heidensohn, 1985, Walklate 2004) this thesis explores the relationships between feminist and gendered research and feminist criminological research in particular, utilising discourse analysis to address the issues in relation to elite women officers. The chosen strategy creates a unique insight into the existing situation. Feminist research¹ has traditionally been positioned in the study of social sciences thus implying that socially constructed experiences may well influence the views of either gender, but particularly impacting upon the female's view of their role and place in society. Feminist criminological research differs from the traditional feminist

¹ The extensive literature relating to feminist research and feminist standpoint theory cannot be fully explored in this thesis due to the limitations of this study. I acknowledge the wealth of feminist literature, but focus upon feminist criminology in particular as this more closely represents the position of women in policing, a significant body of women within the criminal justice sector.

approach reflecting the unique environment of the criminal justice system². The critique of feminist criminology by Heidensohn (1985) defined women within the criminal justice sector as being invisible and therefore, of no consequence within the field of criminology. The issue lies not only in the lack of visibility of women within the sector, but the concept that any association of the female gender with criminology as being deviant. Daly and Chesney-Lind (1988) comment that criminologists' differentiation in the acceptance of crime as a 'norm' for males, regarding male criminal activity as delinquent and deviant whilst sexualised for females, fails to recognise that there is an assumption by criminologists that female crime is either biologically (hormonal) or socially influenced. The discipline of criminology is itself gendered resisting the need to accept that female inquiry is relevant within the field.

Walklate (2004, p48) comments that "*the kind of work done by 'feminists' in criminology are to be seen as both a heuristic device and as an issue of contention*". It seems that women's' experiences within the criminal justice system, whether they be offenders, victims, or criminal justice workers is linked to the two concepts of power and patriarchy. Women's and men's experiences of the criminal justice system differ significantly as a result of this limiting interpretation.

When women seek to challenge society's collective view, especially as to what is or is not a suitable occupation for a female, the role of senior police officer perhaps is

² Parallels can be drawn between traditional feminist research and feminist standpoint theory upon which the feminist criminological framework is based. However, established in the 1960s the feminist school of criminology sought to address the victimisation of women within the criminal justice system. Originally established by Adler and Simon the feminist criminological framework evolved through liberal, Marxist, radical and socialist feminism standpoints with more recent eminent authors such as Brown, (2000) Heidensohn (1985) and Walklate (2004) developing the current framework.

the most challenging to a traditionally patriarchal society. It is arguably the ultimate challenge to male dominance. The role of command and control is rarely associated with female traits and even some women find the concept of senior police officers challenging. It is therefore suggested that this subject has never before been studied in any depth and this research seeks to redress this omission from feminist studies.

Previous police studies Martin (1979), Walklate (1995) and Brown and Heidensohn (2000) have tended to focus upon culture and leadership yet there have been few direct studies into women's career progression or lack of progression even on a limited basis other than Masters Dissertations produced by serving female officers. This is an essential area of research if the police service is to truly change its culture and to embrace the diverse benefits of employing senior women managers, thus representing wider society more closely.

This thesis is positioned within the feminism and criminology framework drawing upon such eminent authors as Martin (1979), Heidensohn (1985), and Walklate (1995). Women's roles within the criminal justice system tend to be marginalised, yet the increase in numbers of women entering the police service has increased their visibility reducing their '*token*' status (Kanter, 1977). Gelsthorpe and Morris's (1990) interpretation of the relationship between patriarchy and power particularly in relation to the police service and the resultant gender blindness towards women in the service reinforces the notion that feminist and criminology are diametric opposites. The concept of crime being anything other than masculine is still prevalent, with female crime still falling into the category of either mad or bad, but definitely deviant thus reinforcing Connell's (1987) notion of hegemonic and

heterosexual masculinity. Police work tends to be gendered with males and females frequently adopting sex-specific roles. There is debate about whether feminism and criminology can be linked, but authors such as Daly and Chesney-Lind (1988), Heidensohn (2000) and Walklate (2004) argue the case for the existence of a feminist criminological framework identifying the differences between gender and social constructs relating to masculine and feminine activities. Feminist criminology originates from within traditional feminist frameworks and develops a distinctive framework with a differing set of research questions that emerge from the distinctive environment within which it operates thus offering opportunity for the feminist perspective to be explored within that unique setting.

Walklate (2004) defines a good starting point to develop the framework or perspectives as liberal feminism, a position where women's rights to equity and non-discriminatory experiences exists. She highlights the importance of empirical research, yet recognises the flaw in this approach, in that it is based upon the assumption of normative (male) knowledge and behaviours. Walklate (2004) also recognises that radical feminism is another important position within the framework, reversing the traditional, socially acceptable notion of male domination over women. Yet it appears that the position of postmodernist feminism more closely relates to women in policing in that they are the '*other*' or outsider positioning of women. However, it seems that postmodern feminism is the most challenging position to the criminal justice framework, especially as the criminal justice system is intrinsically male, with high numbers of males being either criminals or being criminal justice workers.

Table 3 Walklate's (2004) criminological framework

Walklate's (2004) perspective of the development of the feminist criminological framework	
Liberal feminism	women's rights to equity and non-discriminatory experiences exists yet normative (male) knowledge and behaviours is prevalent (Walklate, 2004)
Radical feminism	The reversal of the traditional, socially acceptable notion of male domination over women.
Postmodernist feminism	The most challenging feminist perspective - women in policing are positioned as the 'other' or outsider.

To assess women's leadership progression I have utilised a number of complementary methods. In Chapter 3 I identified the concept of insider as defined by Stokoe and Smithson (2001). My previous experience of working within the service enabled me to readily gain access to elite women quickly establishing a bond of understanding in relation to language and culture yet remaining an outsider in relation to their experiences using a variety of complimentary discourses.

Firstly, I conducted a questionnaire survey within one force as a way of obtaining themes. To support the questionnaire I also undertook focus groups within the same force to cross check the themes. This process helped to identify themes of importance for the interview data collection. To gain intimate detail I undertook thirty five life-history interviews across England, Wales and Northern Ireland where I adopted a discourse analysis approach as defined by Wodak (1997), Kiztinger (2000), Hammersley (2003), Baxter (2003) and Pullen (2006).

5.2 Feminist approaches to criminological research

Studies into policing tend to be from the male perspective concentrating on the male, patriarchal (Walby, 1989) power relationships. Haynes (2008) highlights the difficulties faced by women in male dominated environments raising the issues of both macro and micro politics internal and external to the organisation. Yet there appears to be a minority of senior women who do not acquiesce to the view that women who appear to be more feminine and women with families can provide an equal level of service to those who are single and without dependents. This is one aspect, amongst others, that will be explored in this study identifying whether or not the perception that senior women may need to adopt male traits and behaviours in order to be accepted by serving officers of both genders and wider society.

Andrews (2002) raises the important question relating to feminist research being conducted with subjects who perceive themselves as being 'non-feminist' or even 'anti-feminist'. If the foundation of feminist research is based upon the notion of oppression and subservience then it seems reasonable to assume that such resistance might be experienced during the process of this research. Perhaps the lack of a specific definition relating to feminist research as debated by criminological authors such as Gelsthorpe (1990), Hammersley (1990), (1993) (2003) and Campbell (2003) endorses women's views that they do not know whether or not they are feminists and so gives rise to avoiding the question at all.

If feminist research is merely documenting the experiences and oppression of women (Daly and Chesney-Lind, 1988) of women, by women, then arguably this study is

positively feminist and the participants are contributing to feminist research. Andrews (2002) indicates that there may be significant differences between the perceptions of researcher and research subject in relation to the feminist viewpoint especially when applying the 'feminist' label but if feminist research deals with location and experience, even in a patriarchal setting, then the label 'feminist' appears to be justified. Perhaps the homogeneity of the police service might result in women identifying themselves as non-feminist or anti-feminist and one of the questions to be considered in this research is whether or not senior women in the service regard being a woman as an essential element of their success.

Campbell (2003) challenges the traditional feminist research perspective of female oppression and inequality and questions it in relation to gender specific research suggesting that women researchers researching women make assumptions relating to a shared experience. She comments that previous research into policing tends to be observational and limits the emphasis placed upon gendered relations tending to concentrate on police interaction in relation to perpetrators of crime and gender related crime, rather than gender relations within the workforce. She suggests that the use of discursive methods of research might be more appropriate to future feminist research within policing due to the nature of the development of 'interpretative rapport' and empathy between the researcher and the research subjects. It is interesting to note that Campbell's (2003) experience of conducting research within the police service was itself a gendered interaction. She comments that she was assumed to be a new member of clerical staff when conducting interviews with male officers and perhaps this experience highlights the extremely gendered nature of police culture. She concludes that her methodology falls short of

traditional feminist ideals but justifies her approach stating that by adopting a traditional feminist approach in such a male dominant organisation may in itself be counter-productive, particularly in relation to “‘non-feminist and ‘anti-feminist’” (p300) women. Campbell (2003) suggests a more flexible approach to gendered research whereby future research become more inclusive rather than exclusionary and suggests a more tolerant approach should be adopted.

During the early 1990s Gelsthorpe and Morris (Eds) (1990) commented in relation to feminist study:

“To say you are adopting a feminist perspective in an academic discipline of a feminist methodology in research usually leads to puzzlement, claims that there is no such thing and accusation of bias”. (P1).

There could be a degree of argument that little has changed in relation to the perception of feminist writing with the traditional notion of feminism as being a negative phenomenon associated with ‘man hating’ and deviation from the traditional female ‘normal’ role. Although academics acknowledge that a feminist perspective is a legitimate stance to adopt in relation to research, there is still a degree of negative association based upon the traditional perceived gender norms that prevails in British society.

Gelsthorpe and Morris comment that there is a perception that feminism is “*an exclusive focus on women*” (1990, p3) and this misunderstanding is still evident today. They go on to say that women in particular need to develop their own

understanding of feminist perspectives without the constraints of the male interpretation of what a feminist perspective is. In relation to criminology Gelsthorpe and Morris state that women are largely 'ignored' probably largely due to the fact that there are more male perpetrators of crime (and more male police officers) and so the male perspective dominates thinking in relation to criminology. Despite this text having been written some eighteen years previously, it appears that there has been little change in the attitude society and criminologists in particular adopt in relation towards women working within the area of criminology. They comment that there appears to be a "*notion of masculinity*" (1990, p8) that prevails.

Burgess-Proctor (2006) discusses how feminist criminology has evolved through a variety of phases and argues that:

"the future of feminist criminology lies in our willingness to embrace a theoretical framework that recognises multiple, intersecting inequalities" (p28).

She comments that there is a necessity to consider all aspects of difference, such as race, religion, gender and identify links between inequality, crime and the criminal justice system. She continues to identify the origins of feminist criminology and how the issues relating to male dominance in criminological research brought about the rise of the feminist criminology movement and how it might develop in the future, particularly in relation to the oppression of women within the criminal justice framework.

5.3 The Feminist and gendered viewpoint

In determining approaches to sociological enquiry Knaak (2004) develops the concept of the feminist and gendered viewpoint and agrees that the social constructionist approach purports gender as being a primary consideration when designing and conducting research. She refers to gender as being "*foundational*" (p305) and considers that "*adopting a social constructionist paradigm helps us move beyond the strictures of the nature/nurture debate*" (p305). She develops the theme of gender being "*multifaceted*" and "*multidimensional*" (p306) and argues that stereotyping either gender when conducting research can be further confused taking into consideration the transgendered viewpoint. She calls for a shift from the '*biological foundationalist paradigm*' (p306) to a socially constructed one.

Crotty (2005) suggests there are four elements relating to social research with each methodology requiring an individual approach rather than "*lumping them together*" (p3). He argues that each methodology can be sub-categorised; in some cases the sub-category of symbolic interactionism may fit a range of alternative methodologies. When adopting an epistemological approach to social research the ethnographic view appears to be an appropriate methodology that links to the constructionist viewpoint. Dick and Nadin (2006) view gender as being socially constructed, echoing the view of Knaak (2004), especially when linked to work based activities and gender stereotyping underpins their argument about female inequalities in traditionally male dominated roles, such as policing or banking. They comment that "*cultural conceptions of masculinity, such as aggression, assertiveness, dominance and pushiness*" (2006, p486-487) are considered

inappropriate behaviours for women at work, yet often the nature of the role in which some women find themselves appear to require some of these traits to be adopted in order to appear competent in the role.

Dick and Janckowicz (2001) and Dick and Nadin (2006) "*emphasize the importance of skills such as communication, nurturing, listening and team-working, traits frequently associated with femininity*" (p488). Lorber (2007) challenges the socially constructed viewpoint calling for a "*feminist de-gendering movement*" (p80). Lorber appears to deplore the binary division between the genders and considers that even staunch feminists only appear to dare to challenge the superficial issues relating to gender division such as hierarchical and biological roles rather than seek to '*dismantle*' (p80) gender difference. Lorber (2007) challenges the traditional feminist view calling for strict parity and equality in relation to work and employment dividing feminists into two distinct categories the '*Gender feminists*' (p84) and the '*Difference feminists*' (p84). She argues that '*gender feminists*' in Western society focus upon the unequal division of labour within households and employment due to society's socially constructed paradigm relating to the male/female power relationship. Conversely, she suggests that '*difference feminists*' focus upon the concept of gender itself identifying the biological and psychological differences between men and women including the use of particular language, discourse and behaviours. Lorber (2007) implies that society will revert to the traditional gender division of male dominance suggesting that women are unable to overcome their biological roles and that their attempts to blur gender differences are merely superficial with little impact for women's parity in a male dominated environment.

Pullen (2006) comments that researchers tend to adopt a masculine perspective arguing that women are *"not allowed to appear as women"* (p279) and suggests that the 'realist ontology' affects the language used in organisations even when commenting upon anti-realist situations. She further comments that qualitative writing itself is socially constructed and therefore reflects the masculine view particularly in gender-neutral organisations, such as the police service. Therefore, for a researcher to engage in feminine gendered research in a male dominated environment the real challenges, according to Pullen, are to write in feminine language expressing the feelings and emotions of the participants and to be credible by challenging the cultural norms of patriarchal organisation.

Wilkinson and Morton (2007) comment that feminist researchers usually adopt *"a viewpoint of their own culture, experience and tradition"* (p414) assuming themselves to be an insider and argue that male researchers are unable to adopt a feminist stance due to their gender difference. They also highlight the concept that a 'feminist' researcher can alienate some subjects due to their lack of understanding of the true meaning of feminist research in today's society. Feminist research has gone beyond the female oppression and 'victim' status. Therefore, the feminist researcher should adopt a variety of methodologies in order to gain an objective analysis of their research subjects. Suggesting that feminist research is research by women, about women with a view to shifting opinions and elicit change they advocate the use of conversation, diaries and life-history narrative. Pullen (2006) and Hammersley (2003) identify conversation and discourse analysis as a development of ethnography which might arguably be considered a more feminine method of research, reflecting

the emotive feelings of the research subjects as in conversation women and men use different language to describe situations.

Convention suggests that there is a necessity to engage in a methodological mix that utilises a range of approaches to research activity including the use of both primary and secondary data. Research conducted by academics tends to utilise both quantitative and qualitative data to a greater or lesser extent depending upon the discipline within which they work. There is a tendency for science-based research to emphasise the use of quantitative data which is largely confined to statistics relating to frequencies, ratios and correlations in order to 'prove' the case of the evidence resulting from the research activity. Watson (1997, p5) highlights that "*the pluralist strategy has clear appeal for management research, given the multifaceted nature of managerial activity*" and further comments upon the importance of a pragmatic, pluralist approach adapting the conventional and traditional methodological approaches to meet the needs of the particular research activity. By engaging in such a mixed methodology and drawing upon the different elements of research paradigms the researcher can;

"produce what amounts to their personal paradigm – with its own ontological, epistemological and methodological integrity – to stand as the conceptual foundation of that particular piece of research". Watson (1997, p7).

Burke Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) comment that the flexibility afforded to the researcher by adopting a pluralist pragmatic approach draws together the two

opposing paradigms of qualitative and quantitative research methods enabling a closer scrutiny of the activity that occurs within the research subject area without the constraints of either one or other conventions. They refer to this type of research as being "*third wave*" (2004, p17) and argue that it legitimises the mixed methodological approach as one affording the researcher complementary approaches that leads to more expansive research. They advocate the pluralist pragmatist approach particularly when applied to management research.

Due to the sensitive nature of policing and the concerns relating to adverse publicity certain 'rules of engagement' would need to be agreed between the researcher and the research subjects. An adoption of the 'Chatham House Rule' (<http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/about/> last accessed 15/01/10) in order to create trust and confidence between the parties enabling free discussion seems an appropriate strategy to adopt in order to ensure that no particular force would be identified within the study and that each force would be referred to as Force X, Y, Z etc. Furthermore, no one individual within a particular force would be identified by either name, rank or division or basic command unit (BCU) as this might identify both the force and the position of that individual within it, particularly where an officer holding one of the higher ranks is more likely to be easily identified both internally to the Force and externally to the general public, especially if involved in high profile activity.

5.4 The research process

In order to ensure that the key themes were easily identifiable and then elaborated upon a scoping study (questionnaire followed by focus groups) was undertaken to uncover the knowledge and policy domain that would inform the qualitative research of the organisation. This scoping study occurred within one representative English force that had a mix of rural, suburban and urban communities thus providing a wide range of policing activities and formed the basis of the initial research strategy before developing into the primary method of analysis. The scoping study comprised a questionnaire (Appendix i) issued to all 550 serving female officers within Force X with a 175 (31.82%) response rate and it included all ranks from Police Constable to ACPO ranks. This was followed by 7 self-selecting focus groups conducted over a 3-day period representing all of the divisions of Force X. However, the primary method of analysis for this thesis will be semi-structured life-history interviews with senior women, i.e. women from Inspector to ACPO ranks. 70 women from 23 forces responded to the request to participate in the one to one interviews of which, due to the limitations of time and cost associated with this study, 35 from 8 forces actually participated in this study.

This offered the most comprehensive and significant study of female elite police officers in the UK to date and as such provides a unique and arguably representative sample of the feelings of senior women officers within the UK. The response is drawn from 8 forces which covers rural, suburban, urban, city and metropolitan forces and covers the four geographic quarters of the UK.

5.5 The research philosophy

It is essential in any piece of social research that a variety of methodologies are adopted in order to attain the depth and breadth associated with robust and appropriate practice. A sound philosophical base must be established in order to identify appropriate methods of data collection and in order to establish this basis the research needs to be routed in a particular framework. This is a feminist criminological research project that follows in the same tradition as Martin's (1979) study into women's '*dilemmas and choices*' in a male dominated organisation and develops her ideas further. The complexities in relation to being female doing work that is traditionally perceived as male dominated appear to be well documented and continues to be a difficult area to navigate as indicated by Pollert (1983) and Metcalfe and Dick (2000), (2002).

The tri-phased methodologies adopted in this thesis included questionnaires, focus groups and in depth interviews which enabled the key themes to be quickly identified and could then be explored in greater depth during the one to one interviews. These methods have been proved to be philosophically sound in previous studies relating to gender Metcalfe (2008).

Table 4 Table defining the tri-phased approach to empirical research

	Methodological approach	Pilot/Main Survey	Action
STAGE 1	Questionnaire to all ranks of female officer in Force X	Pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 550 questionnaires • No of returns = 175, (31.82%). • Analysed using SPSS to identify key themes
STAGE 2	Focus Groups – open to all ranks	Pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 self-selecting focus groups • 1 focus group per division (or geographic area) of Force X • Each focus group discussion was digitally recorded and transcribed • Key themes cross checked against emergent themes from the questionnaire
STAGE 3	In-depth life history interviews	Main Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 interviews in 8 forces across England and Wales • Each semi-structured interview lasted at least 1 hour but no more than 2 hours • Interviews were digitally recorded then transcribed

The decision to utilise questionnaires was based upon the requirement to quickly gain a broad sense of the key themes or issues identified by women at lower ranks within a particular force to establish some basis to begin more complex analysis of what women’s views really were. Saunders et al (2000) indicate that questionnaires allow a degree of anonymity which gives flexibility to the subjects enabling them to offer a truthful view of their situation without fear of exposing themselves to direct scrutiny. This method of data collection enabled large quantities of data to be

gathered thus establishing reliable and valid data which could be utilised as a foundation of this study.

In order to conduct unbiased research individuals were selected from each of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) regional areas which cover the range of 'families' of forces and a wide range of geographic and demographic differences. This ensured that the research conducted was not influenced according to social background and culture in a particular area of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and so does not reflect the idiosyncratic tendencies particular to any one force or groups of forces. The aim of the researcher is to encompass the views of officers covering the full range of rural, semi-rural, urban and metropolitan forces across the UK. The research subjects belonged to forces that covered rural, semi-rural, sub-urban, urban and metropolitan forces and therefore represented the full diversity of UK forces.

Officers from the British Transport Police and Ministry of Defence Police were also given opportunity to be included within the study as were officers from Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) by volunteering to participate on a purely individual basis. Officers from Scotland were excluded due to the fact that the legislation and regulations under which these particular forces operate differ to those of the mainland UK.

5.6 Adoption of a variety of methodological approaches

Key aspects of the research objectives will originate following a full examination of relevant literature as well as following discussion and research of existing literature with interested parties such as the British Association of Women in Policing

(BAWP), the National Police Improvement Association (NPIA) and the Fawcett Society. This should provide generic background data to questions such as whether there were links to length of service, values and beliefs of individuals and if there were any significant differences between Forces.

An initial review of data and statistics produced by forces for the Home Office in relation to recruitment, retention and promotion over the recent past, (usually five years' figures are available), in a particular force will be studied as a basis for developing the questions to the foundation data enabling key themes to be identified and developed. As these statistics are gathered annually for Home Office returns this information is readily available and can provide a basis upon which assumptions can be made relating to the need to develop progression for women within the service. The data is available via publicly accessible statistical reports published by the Home Office Research and Statistics office and can be analysed to establish the current status of gender breakdown across the ranks within particular forces. No specific attention will be paid in relation to ethnicity in this study as the purpose is to establish barriers to progression and promotion for all women. Future analysis could identify that ethnic origin and/or sexual orientation might also influence promotion prospects, but that is not considered within the remit for this study.

During the 20th Century social researchers adopted a more flexible approach to data analysis as, according to Saunders et al (2000)

“They were critical of an approach which enabled a cause-effect link to be made between particular variables without an understanding of the way in which humans interpreted their social world”. (p89).

Silverman (2004) suggests that research into human and social activity requires a more flexible approach to data collection and that a qualitative approach might be a more appropriate method to gather data in certain cases enabling the researcher to explore meaning and perception in greater depth taking into consideration attitude and opinions of the participants. Miles & Huberman (1994) endorse this viewpoint and identify three main approaches to qualitative data analysis, *interpretivism, social anthropology and collaborative social research.* (p8).

5.7 The self-selecting focus groups

By using self- selecting focus groups confirmation of the themes identified in the questionnaires that needed to be developed were established thus reinforcing the researcher’s understanding of the themes drawn from the answers gathered in the questionnaire survey. The focus groups enabled the researcher to ensure that interpretation of the data gathered via questionnaire was accurate and reflected the current views held by women at the ranks of police constable to inspector within Force X.

The approach with the higher ranks of Chief Inspector to ACPO was the one to one in-depth interview using life-history narrative. Women at these higher ranks self-selected to participate and were digitally recorded to ensure that all of the data was

accurately collected. The justification for utilising this approach is that women at higher ranks tend to be more proactive in challenging the existing status quo in relation to the gender imbalance in the service and have the expertise and experience to participate in an accountable piece of research, albeit with the assurance that their anonymity would be preserved in order to reduce any likelihood of backlash from their male counterparts Musson (2006). In order to identify and select the above methodologies an extensive review of literature pertaining to research methodology was explored.

The literature review identifies a range of approaches to the methodologies that might be adopted and each was given due consideration prior to adoption of the strategies utilised in this thesis. It is essential that a well-researched strategy is adopted taking into consideration developments in relation to methodological approaches and ensuring that the approaches adopted were sensitive to the needs of the research participants and for those that might be affected by the outcomes of it. Crotty (2005, p1) identifies that there is a “*bewildering array of methodologies*” available to the researcher often resulting in confusion of both the experienced and inexperienced researcher.

Phillips and Pugh (2003) advocate that the characteristic of good research “*is based upon an open system of thought*” (p48) and debate the necessity to identify the right sort of questions to be asking in the first place. They identify that for many researchers the quantity and quality of the data gathered may be variable with some data being superfluous. They further identify that it is the researcher’s attention to detail and the ability to devote time and effort to investigate the research questions

that differentiates between the 'true' researcher and the inquisitive reader who may not be in a position to dedicate such time and effort to the question(s) being posed.

Debate between academics advocating the virtues of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies continues. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005a) comment:

"Throughout the 20th century, social and behavioural science researchers ...have witnessed a great divide between the two opposing camps of researcherspositivists on one side and interpretivists on the other side".

(p375).

They argue that this raging debate between the two opposing views is divisive and thus brings the concept of one methodological type being preferential to the other into disrepute. They suggest that a "*mixed methodological framework*" (2005b, p267) is a more appropriate research position to adopt dependent and relating to the type of research being undertaken.

Bryman (2006) concurs with the view of Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005a) recommending a pragmatic and contingency approach calling for a "*paradigm peace*" (2006, p113).

The diametric opposition between quantitative researchers and qualitative researchers makes the choice difficult there appears to be significant arguments for both cases. It appears sensible to take the middle ground and to adopt a mixed methodology, thus satisfying both the quantitative and qualitative researchers.

Newman and Benz (1998) suggest that both quantitative and qualitative research is an '*interactive continuum*' a view endorsed by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005a) who further comment that "*neither tradition is independent of the other, nor can either school encompass the whole research process*" (p380).

This seems to be a much more sensible approach to research methodology when studying people at work. How can such a subjective matter be interpreted in a purely scientific manner, when the very thoughts and emotions of the subjects under scrutiny shape the outcomes of the research itself? Limited amounts of data might usefully be interpreted in a more scientific way, for example when correlating information that lends itself to statistical interpretation, such as length of service in the job and numbers of respondents to particular questions. Onwuegbuzie and Leech appear to advocate the use of '*methodological pluralism*' as this then enables the researcher to adopt a more pragmatic approach to the subject. Having extolled the virtues of a mixed methodological approach the skill of the researcher lies in knowing when it is appropriate to adopt such a position.

Adopting an inductive approach offers a much more flexible system enabling greater freedom for researchers enabling them to change their stance according to the variables that the research activity might present. This also means that the researcher does not necessarily identify a rigid hypothesis to be proved or disproved. However, this can mean that the data gathered is far more difficult to interpret than data gathered following a deductive method of research and so the stance adopted depends upon the individual researcher's preferred style incorporating some of the researcher's ideas and preconceptions relating to the study subject(s). Dainty,

Bagilhole and Neale (2000) advocate the wider use of a mixed approach and suggest that the increased use of computer aided qualitative data analysis software could assist in the interpretation of gathered data. They argue that this helps refute the allegation of bias thus challenging the positivist view.

Studies by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005b) indicate that there appears to be a shift between the two opposed positions with a decrease in what they term the '*paradigm wars*' (p270) stating that although the positivist and phenomenological debate will still continue between purists, for many researchers, a mixed methodological approach might be more appropriate depending upon the area of research interest. They argue that a more integrated approach enables researchers to benefit from both methodological approaches giving breadth and depth to the study. Kelle (2006) also supports the use of mixed methodologies commenting that by utilising a range of methods the researcher overcomes the limitations of utilising one method in favour of another giving a more balanced view.

Even so, all research must follow a clear plan and have questions and objectives to be achieved. Any piece of research must identify a research objective and perhaps, hypotheses or questions that need investigation. There has to be a conscious decision on the part of the researcher to choose a methodology or methodologies and then pursue the collection of data according to that decision. This then needs to be interpreted and for the results and analysis to be communicated in order to add to the academic debate. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005b) further consider the questions relating to sample sizing and comment that whilst there appears to be some sort of

structure when undertaking positivist or scientific research there is little guidance in terms of sample sizes for more qualitative research. They comment:

“Disturbingly, typically no discussion takes place in introductory-level research methodology text books about sample sizes needed for qualitative research designs. (p283)

Valsiner (2000) adopts a similar position to research suggesting that *“no one particular methodology is preferable to the other”* (p100) and that researcher choice should be influenced by the subject matter rather than by convention. He too, refers to there being *‘warring camps’* (page 100) which appears to be detrimental to the academic debate. It appears that some academics are incapable of tolerating the opposite view or even acknowledge its existence. Valsiner comments that Anglo Saxon countries are more *‘fixed’* in their approach to research indicating a greater degree of flexibility in Continental Europe and South America. Bryman (2006) indicates that a more pragmatic approach is frequently undertaken by some researchers agreeing with Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) that:

“Pragmatist researchers consider the research question to be more important than either the method they use or the paradigm that underlies the method”
(p20)

However, Bryman (2006) warns that there can be difficulties associated with adopting a mixed framework as this can magnify unplanned outcomes to unexpected

findings. He suggests that this then leads to the necessity for triangulation in order to satisfy the requirement of reliability and validity.

It appears, therefore, that a variety of methodologies might be adopted when studying social research subjects, one of the frequently adopted approaches being that of ethnography.

5.8 The key research questions

Feminist criminology scholars note that the police profession is constructed along gender lines with masculine traits being more valued. As indicated at the outset of this thesis the principle question is why there are so few women being successful in reaching the ACPO ranks. The literature review illustrated how cultural working practices within the service undermine the feminine and female perspective. This is supported by an assessment of Home Office statistical evidence which identifies that there is a significant dearth of senior women in the police service nationally, despite attempts by the service to encourage women to gain promotion via a plethora of positive initiatives and a significant change in its recruitment and selection practices. The table that follows clearly illustrates the existing numbers and ranks that women have achieved in 2010:

Table 5 Police officer strength in England and Wales (including Central Service secondments), by rank and gender, as at 31 March 2010

Rank	Full-time equivalents			
	Male	Female	Total	%age Female
ACPO	196	35	231	15%
Chief Superintendent	446	55	501	11%
Superintendent	947	142	1,089	13%
Chief Inspector	1,732	315	2,047	15%
Inspector	6,188	1,142	7,330	16%
Sergeant	19,189	4,014	23,204	17%
Constable	78,471	31,362	109,834	29%
All Ranks	107,169	37,066	144,235	26%

Source Sigurdsson and Dhani (2010)

(<http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/hosb1410.pdf> last accessed 15/11/2010).

Although there has been a steady increase in the percentage of females entering the service the figures continue to identify that senior ranking females continue to be a significant minority.

There is no doubt that the shift towards a competency based framework benefitted women's career development opportunities as this reduced the reliance on the 'old boy network' that had prevailed within the service for many decades. The introduction of the Loughborough model for physical fitness in 2003/4 was designed to recognise the differences between the genders and to test men and women's fitness differently taking into account physique and gender. In addition, various items of equipment have been modified over recent years, such as the introduction of lighter

weaponry and motorcycles enabling women to enter departments that previously were prohibitive to enter due to the requirement for a larger physique and significant strength. Changes to the uniform have also endeavoured to ease the physical working conditions for women, although the BAWP continues to actively campaign for improvements in terms of the basic uniform, such as shirts designed for women and body armour and other personal protective equipment that is shaped to accommodate the female form.

This study sets out to identify the reasons why women do not progress to the higher ranks in the service so readily as their male counterparts and considers how changes in policy and work practices could lead to a more equitable future for women in policing.

5.9 Gathering foundation data

In order to establish a basic broad understanding of the situation affecting women's promotion within the police service generally, a medium size force was selected to undertake some preliminary research which would enable the researcher to establish various premises from which to develop more specific research that related to higher ranking officers. This would form the starting point of the research process and enable the researcher to gain a general view of the perceptions held by women across all ranks before focussing specifically on the ranks of Chief Inspector and above. The force selected had urban, suburban and rural communities, thus representing a broad spectrum of opportunities for officers when considering promotion prospects. In order to gather such broad data the researcher chose to utilise a questionnaire

followed by focus groups as this appeared to be the most efficient method of gathering a range of both qualitative and quantitative data which would highlight key themes across the ranks satisfying those authors who extol the virtues of utilizing a mixed methodological approach.

5.10 Piloting the pilot questionnaire within Force X

The utilisation of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gather initial primary data offered opportunity for individual opinion and observation to be discussed and developed enabling an individual personal viewpoint to be taken into account. Berg (1998) comments that this is the general nature of qualitative data and as such would require 'processing' by the researcher in order to obtain meaning from 'raw data' collected by tape recording and transcription. By adopting such methods both qualitative and quantitative data could be collected allowing statistical analysis of portions of the data yet allowing the free flow of comment on observed behaviours. Statistical analysis of the questionnaire allowed identification of facts, rather than opinion, although some opinions were sought by some of the questions asked. By using statistical analysis of factual questions (Chi-test) correlation could be established between certain sets of data. Data could be further cross-tabulated in order to produce more meaningful interpretation of the data gathered.

5.11 Justification for the utilisation of a questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed to identify the perceptions currently held by serving female officers within Force X regardless of rank relating to promotion and progression within their particular Force. This 'positivist' approach was an attempt to gather objective and factual measurements from which certain conclusions could be drawn, for example, length of service and to establish if there was any correlation to perceptions in specific divisions within the force that might indicate that managerial approaches varied across it due to local geographic and demographic differences.

The questionnaire was circulated electronically within the Force via their own intranet system with the option of officers being able to print off a copy and return it either by e-mail, post or fax to the researcher. Some officers preferred not to reply electronically for fear of a potential breach of security in that the return e-mail address was not part of the secure national police network, however others did not perceive that this was a risk and so a variety of return methods were utilised. It may be that this impacted upon the number of questionnaires returned. Within the Force that participated in the research, assuming that all 550 female officers (source Force X ADR 2005/6) received the questionnaire the number returned in total was 175, (31.82%).

In accordance with good research practice a pilot questionnaire was circulated to Force X's Women's Network Group prior to circulation to the whole female population of the force, which resulted in changes to questions 2a and 6a, giving

more options to choose and clearer directions as to how to answer the questions, e.g. multiple answers were acceptable in certain questions. The suggestion to change the title of the questionnaire to include progression as well as promotion was also adopted as this gave a broader definition to the purpose of the study. Despite checking the final version of the questionnaire to be circulated there still remained a flaw in the questionnaire in that the question asking "*Have you considered promotion to the next rank?*" was repeated, but this did not seem to impact upon the answers as the majority of officers answered it identically both times.

The questionnaire was circulated with a two week return deadline in order to ensure that information was gathered promptly in order to form the basis of discussion in the subsequent focus groups.

The questionnaire gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. This meant that where qualitative answers were given, it could lead to the development of further debate and discussion within the focus groups. This ensured that the research criteria were not too rigid and enabled a wider discussion with female officers during the subsequent focus group sessions.

The questionnaires were analysed using the SPSS 14.0 for Windows programme (Appendix ii). Dainty et al (2000) suggest that;

"computer aided qualitative data analysis packages now offer the potential to alleviate many of the time consuming aspects of qualitative analysis as well as providing greater methodological transparency" (p227).

Valsiner (2000) comments upon the pros and cons of utilising quantitative methods of analysis when conducting research commenting that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are preferable to the other. He does warn of errors of representation due to misinterpretation and suggests that, like Bryman (2006), and Onwegbuzie and Leech (2005a) (2005b) that a mixed methodological approach can limit such misinterpretation and give a more balanced view.

In order to ensure the quality of the data entry, upon its return each questionnaire was numbered and a random check of the data entry relating to 5% of the returned questionnaires was carried out. This checking process identified that data entry in the 5% of questionnaires sampled was accurate; therefore it is assumed that the data entered into the programme was accurate.

5.12 Justification for the utilisation of focus groups

A series of semi-structured focus groups over a period of three days were established and conducted within the force Headquarters and each of the area Divisions that covered the geographic area.

Female officers were invited to attend focus groups regardless of rank or length of service. This was a deliberate attempt on the part of the researcher to gather as much unbiased data possible. Discussions were initially based upon the questions identified in the questionnaire and allowed free flow discussion in order to capture thoughts and ideas that were unable to be expressed in the questionnaire due to the limitations associated with questionnaire type research. At the outset, all officers

were given the assurance that their conversations were confidential to those present in the group and that no individual officer would be identified either by name or rank. Permission was sought at the outset of every session to record the conversation for ease of transcription and inclusion of relevant points made during the conversations into the report. Officers were given the assurance that the transcription of the tapes would be undertaken solely by the author and that these would remain with the author and not be returned to force, thus avoiding any inadvertent identification of individual officers. Based upon this premise officers commented that they felt that they could discuss their thoughts and ideas freely without prejudice and this led to open and honest discussion giving a clear indication of the current situation within their particular force.

The size of the focus groups varied from station to station and was dependent upon officer availability and operational requirement at that particular point. 29 officers of mixed rank from Police Constable, Sergeant and Inspector attended the focus groups as follows:

Table 6 Focus Groups numbers in Divisions

Headquarters	12
Division A	4
Division B	3
Division C	5
Division D	3
Division E	2

The officers were engaged in a wide variety of duties, some, particularly those at Headquarters occupied more office based or were in specialist roles, however a

variety of operational and response type roles out in the divisional areas were also represented. In each of the focus group sessions officers were willing to participate in the discussions and seemed focussed and positive in their attitude to the research being undertaken. They were forthcoming in expressing their views about their experiences throughout their service and for the most part they expressed that policing was an enjoyable profession in which to work. Many commented that they felt that in comparison to some neighbouring forces, policies relating to improving conditions and opportunities for their officers were more forward thinking and that equality between the sexes was becoming increasingly common in recent times. This was interesting, as there often is a perception of the '*grass being greener*' within other forces.

The use of the questionnaire and subsequent focus group interviews enabled the researcher to identify the broadly held views of women officers. Adopting this approach enabled comparison between geographic regions and so enabled some conclusions to be drawn as a result of this activity. In order to identify specific barriers to promotion and progression within the Service, whether they are 'real' or self-imposed it seems reasonable to focus upon those women who have achieved high rank within the service. Therefore, the decision to conduct in-depth interviews with successful individuals seemed to be the next logical step to undertake, in order to draw further comparisons between the majority view, held by those who participated in the focus group sessions, and those who had achieved high rank.

5.13 Justification for the utilisation of in-depth interviews

Due to the financial and time limitations of this study only 35 women across 8 forces were interviewed and their ranks are identified in the following table:

Table 7 Rank profile of one to one in-depth interview subjects

Rank profile of one to one in-depth interview subjects	
Inspector	3
Chief Inspector	14
Detective Chief Inspector	4
Superintendent	10
Detective Superintendent	2
Chief Superintendent	0
ACPO	2
Total	35

Of the 35 women interviewed the 8 forces were deliberately chosen as being representative of the full range of force diversity and included, rural, semi-rural, urban and metropolitan forces across the four corners of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and therefore is arguably representative of the other 35.

There can be no doubt that this study is truly illustrative of the currently existing situation in relation to being female and serving within the UK police service. As such this thesis is an original, ground breaking and exceptional contribution to

research into women in the police service which will highlight the feminist perspective of policing and enable engagement with those agencies that seek to address the gender imbalance within the UK police service.

Individual high ranking or ACPO officers were invited to participate in semi-structured one to one interviews (Appendix E) where the researcher could develop concepts identified in the previous research activity and to establish if the widely held views expressed were based upon fact or perception. Roulston (2006) extols the virtues of conversation analysis and explores the validity of using both focus groups and individual in-depth interviews as a reliable source of data collection. She defines the 'open ended qualitative interview' as:

“one in which a researcher poses open-ended questions to participants of research studies, and follows up on responses with further questions” (p523).

Although the responses elicited within this type of interview can arguably be considered much more difficult to analyse, the quality of the content revealed cannot be disputed and therefore in terms of qualitative data analysis is a valid methodology to adopt.

Officers were invited to participate on a purely voluntary basis via circulation of an e-mail through the BAWP giving details of how to contact the researcher directly. Kelle (2006) stresses the importance of individuals being offered choice in relation to their participation or not in an interview situation. She comments that unless the individual is participating of their own free will, there can be 'open' or 'hidden'

resistance to participation, thus skewing the response to the researcher's questions. In order to achieve quality data, there must be an established trust between the researcher and the participants, enabling free flowing narrative. This elicited a good response from a wide range of locations across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It included the ranks of Chief Inspector, Superintendent, Chief Superintendent and some ACPO ranks. The response to the invitation to participate resulted in 70 officers across 23 forces covering the length and breadth of Britain offering to take part, although due to time and financial constraints half of this number was interviewed. This resulted in an overwhelming need to adopt a logical and systematic approach to the data collection and required significant logistical planning. Where possible, officers were batched into localities, thus attempting to ensure that no research subject was lost, but that the research schedule was manageable. Such a response endorses the views of Musson (2006) and Webster and Mertova (2007) that the sheer scale of data produced by life-history methodology can be overwhelming to the researcher but again indicates the depth and quality of storytelling as a research method.

5.14 Research analysis and life-history interviews

In analysing the life-history interviews I adopt the methodology of discourse analysis.

Hammersley (2003) in relation to ethnography and ethnomethodology considers the use of conversational and discourse analysis as approaches to studying the social world. He challenges the exclusive use of either of these paradigms suggesting that neither approach is self-sufficient, thus endorsing the view that a mixed

methodological approach might be more appropriate when conducting social research. He explores the constructionist viewpoint that people develop their view about social situations that they experience over time and suggests that these thoughts can often distort the truth about a particular experience based upon the individual's personal bias and influence of those with whom they come into contact. However, he acknowledges that both methods might produce empirical evidence and it is the interpretation of such evidence that can lead to lack of validity and reliability when interpreting data. Hammersley (2003) argues:

“So, even more obviously than with CA, what is involved in DA is not a rejection of all attributions of psychological or social attributes to people, but rather an insistence that only certain kinds of attributes be applied. In effect, DA treats attribution of those orientations deriving from recent processes of discursive interaction as legitimate, while rejecting any produced by genetic constitution or by early upbringing” (p769).

Hammersley appears to suggest that discourse analysis by its very rejection of any social influence from early years cannot be utilised as a reliable method of research when considering the activities of people in a socially constructed environment. It appears that he considers conversation analysis to be more socially constructed as the words people use do tend to be influenced by their early upbringing and their social contacts. Even so, Hammersley (2003) does not entirely dismiss these methods and acknowledges their usefulness when studying social entities. What he appears to reject is any link to what he terms as *“conventional social science”* (p772) stating

that although both techniques are useful and illuminating they merely offer supplements to more conventional forms of social research.

Fondas (1997) clearly identifies the language attributed to management activity as gendered, challenging the traditional management approach of command and control from earlier decades to the softer, more feminine approach of developmental, empowering management. Fondas 'unveils' the concept of feminine managerial traits and challenges the view that these are in any way subordinate suggesting that modern managers regardless of biological gender are feminized by the accepted quality management practices in modern society. By overtly stating that management activity is feminine it can be argued that she forces managers to reconsider the notion that female means less capable or subordinate.

Baxter (2003) extols the virtues of discourse analysis as being appropriate for empirical research suggesting that it is linked to feminist post structural methodology. She makes direct links between this approach and that of social constructionist feminism recognising the increased use of language analysis in the deconstruction of life-history narrative suggesting that the very language used by research subjects in itself is an opportunity to gain insights into the real issues, especially in relation to power relationships. She refers to this as Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) and suggests that the study of elite females in any organisation will result in specific use of language and behaviours different to that if both males and females participate in the study. Baxter argues that women can both be empowered and disempowered by both language and discourse suggesting that by merely being female there is an inherent power struggle between

males and females in any situation, relating to any activity and any age. She challenges the fixed views of authors such as Hamersley suggesting that the sheer complexity of feminist studies utilising this method can offer a rich body of diverse outcomes, more imaginative and varied than the more traditional approaches. Baxter (2003) indicates the inevitability of “*moving away from the old issues of the oppression and subordination of women*” (p66) acknowledging that there are differences between men and women and she celebrates this fact arguing that the very strength of women lies in their differences from men.

There can be no doubt that Baxter’s (2003) view that women have moved beyond being subordinates in a patriarchal society is an accurate account. Yet when women achieve senior roles in a male dominated environment do the same rules apply? It may be that early social experiences and socially constructed paradigms do still infiltrate the inner feelings and thoughts of women in positions of power.

Holmes et al (2003) comment that women’s behaviour comes under scrutiny in the work place with negative stereotypes frequently being applied by both male and female employees to female managers. In their analysis of how women give orders or commands they suggest that the use of ‘softening’ techniques, such as humour are often utilised by women managers indicating that women utilise a stylistic flexibility which on occasions can be misinterpreted as being a weakness, based purely upon their gender.

Wodak (1997) identifies the links between language and gender but suggests that these are not necessarily linked to biological sex and criticises the “*dogmatic*

position" (p12) of Butler's (1990) view that *"the category of 'sex' itself is a purely cultural product of discourse"* (p12). Wodak suggests that gender conforms to the social paradigm of male dominance resulting in a divergence between male and female and results in sex-typical behaviour and language reflecting the cultural norms.

With its origins in the early 1960s conversation analysis has increasingly developed as an appropriate methodology especially in relation to qualitative research. Authors such as Kitzinger (2000) identify its relevance in relation to feminist research suggesting strong links between ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (CA). Kitzinger indicates that CA is a key factor in power relationships and indicates that early feminists discount the relationship between feminism and CA suggesting that it undermines women due to the fact that it often explores the minutiae relating to women's issues and concentrates on language rather than being a legitimate method of the exploration of feminist issues. She argues that utilising this strategy does enable gender to be established, but she acknowledges that it may not be an appropriate methodology for all feminist research. For example Kitzinger (2000) considers it inappropriate if the research question relates to female oppression, but she does conclude that:

"CA a useful technique for understanding how, in our ordinary, mundane interactions, we produce the social order we inhabit – in other words, how we 'do' power and powerlessness, oppression and resistance". (p174)

Kitzinger's interpretation of CA is that it is not necessarily the words used that are important but the hidden meanings in specific choice of language, its sequencing including pauses, breaths, sighs and other non-linguistic communication. All of these need to be interpreted by the researcher and placed in context with the research subject's position in relation to their power, status and position within the organisation.

Wowk (2007) challenges Kitzinger's (2000) view indicating that Kitzinger's arguments are lacking credibility and are an attempt to supplement feminism with ethnond conversation analysis. Wowk suggests that Kitzinger's interpretation of CA is simplistic and objects to the links made with feminism identifying her belief that feminism and CA are two distinct methodological approaches. Wowk's criticism further suggests that Kitzinger applies CA in a systematic way, an 'off the shelf' approach to research thus undermining both feminism and CA. She does, however, acknowledge that there may be some usefulness in studying the type of language used in order to gain deeper understanding of research data. Kitzinger's (2008) response to Wowk's critical analysis refutes Wowk's interpretation and concludes that feminist work within CA does in fact offer a significant contribution to the development of CA as an appropriate discipline. It appears that both authors have entrenched and diametrically opposed views in relation to the use of CA as an appropriate methodology in feminist research and this blinkers their ability to be respectful of each other's views, thus indicating a degree of dissonance between researchers in the field of feminist research.

Stokoe and Smithson's (2001) paper indicates that there is a definite place for CA in feminist research yielding rich data, but they warn of the necessity to acknowledge the effects of organisational culture and indicate that the researcher must have a degree of insider knowledge of the organisation and be able to apply common sense interpretation to the language used. The police service is well known for its 'insider language' along with specific customs, practices, rites and rituals which continue to the present day. Therefore, it can be assumed the language adopted by serving women officers will be heavily influenced and may not reflect the language used by women outside this unique environment. They regard CA as a tool in the feminist researcher's armoury which requires sympathetic and intuitive interpretation.

Speer's (2002) opinion is that CA is a central tenet to design and delivery of feminist research indicating it as being 'respondent' centred thus requiring the research subject to shape the agenda and research questions. She argues that CA is an ideal method as this reduces the researcher's role in the data collection, but equally she acknowledges that the fact that the researcher is a woman, with empathy for the research subject, often with similar experiences, will undoubtedly have some influence in the researcher/research subject interaction. Emphasis is placed upon 'natural' discussion flowing from direct experience and emotion reflecting everyday occurrences. Speer (2002) suggests however "*that there is often a 'tension' or a 'conflict' between women's generally (non-feminist) accounts of their experience and our feminist interpretations of them*" (p785). She continues that some feminist researchers lack empiricism but in this study this is not the case.

As the majority of earlier studies relating to policing Martin (1979), Martin and Jurik (1996), Brown and Heidensohn (2000), Walklate (1995) (2004) tend to favour the use of discourse analysis, this appears to set a precedent in favouring Baxter's (2003) approach to analysing data derived from police orientated discussions falling heavily into the arena of discourse rather than conversation analysis. This study will therefore utilise Baxter's (2003) discourse analysis as the principle methodology.

5.15 Power and consent in the research process

Richardson and Godfrey (2003) raise the issue of ethical practice and an obligation for the researcher to conduct any interview, in particular, life-history interviews, with sensitivity and a responsible attitude towards the research subject. They stress the need for 'informed consent' raising issues relating to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. They suggest practical methods of engaging subjects in such a research strategy which is considered to be controversial within the research community. They highlight the relative ease of gathering information in such interviews, particularly when there is no gender difference between the researcher and the subjects and identify that there is potential for the interview to stray into potentially dangerous ground as interviewees may divulge information that they had not originally intended to as a result of the development of trust between the two parties. They advise that researchers ask the interviewee for their consent to use the information given during the interview both at the beginning and at the end of the interview to ensure that there is no feeling of fear or betrayal and that the interviewee retains ownership of the narrative. The need for anonymity in relation to studies of high ranking female police officers is essential as they can be easily identified both

within their own forces and externally due to the limited numbers of senior women in the UK police service. Therefore, the guidance suggested by Richardson and Godfrey is an essential aspect of this particular study.

Sandino (2007) comments that "*Life-histories produce narratives that focus on singularities*" (p197) gathering the real experiences of the interviewee at that particular point in time. Subjects inwardly reflect upon their experiences and recount their interpretation of the activity that occurred representing it from their unique perspective of the situation. By using life-history narrative researchers can gain a deep insight into the real life experience of another person and capture the emotion and feeling associated with a particular activity.

Dhunpath (2000) supports the use of life-history as a research methodology, but acknowledges some of the limitations, such as subjects refusing to answer particular questions posed by the researcher thus introducing bias due to the interviewee choosing either to answer or not to answer the question. He suggests that utilising life-history does not challenge the more traditional approaches to research but adds to the "*methodological pluralism rather than methodological monoism*" (p544) and lends an authentic view to the research subject in question by reflecting individual experiences. He celebrates its use suggesting that narrative study enables an understanding of human experiences thus becoming a complex and sophisticated methodology which reflects the complexity of the human being rather than trying to stifle the creativity and emotions of people by adopting a more rigid, possibly scientific approach to analysing human experiences.

Musson (2006) implies that the use of life-history interviews is particularly relevant when studying organisations and comments that it gives an indication of the culture within that organization as the 'actors' recount their individual experiences and interpret these giving a unique insight into individual perspectives of organisational behaviour. She further comments that humans create '*narrative accounts*' or stories which provide a rich source of data when gathered using open ended questions allowing the 'actor' to develop their story in depth. The challenge for the researcher is to manage the mass of data obtained and to avoid any influence or assumptions made based upon familiarity with the data due to its richness and depth.

This view is shared to an extent by Webster and Mertova (2007) who agree that the sheer quantity of data derived from this methodological approach can be problematic if not managed properly by the researcher. Wilkinson and Morton (2007) equally highlight the dangers of research subjects being more than willing to share their experiences with the researcher and indicate the importance of the researcher retaining control over the length and content of such conversations.

However, Musson (2006) suggests that in order to attain a degree of rigour and to gain more fertile data the use of life history narratives should be combined with other research methodologies in order to complement both the qualitative and quantitative research perspective and identifies that this particular approach to research can be extremely time consuming.

Webster and Mertova (2007) also extol the virtues of using a mixed methodological approach and comment that previously many researchers have perceived a

dichotomy between quantitative and qualitative approaches to research and have considered narrative inquiry in particular as being a socially constructed approach to research which may attract derision from the more scientifically orientated research community. They liken this methodological approach to storytelling, the original method of mankind sharing knowledge and experiences, and suggest that narrative inquiry is indeed a legitimate and effective method for researching human activity. They identify that *critical events* or *critical incidents* can identify an individual's positive or negative experience in relation to a particular occurrence and therefore has a significant impact upon their reaction to it.

By narrating the experience to another person, they re-live the experience making sense of it and position themselves accordingly within their particular organisation or society. In addressing concerns in relation to reliability and validity Webster and Mertova (2007) comment that:

“Narrative research does not produce conclusions of certainty. In narrative-based research, validity is more concerned with the research being well grounded and supportable by the data that has been collected” (p90).

They comment that validation methods normally associated with qualitative data analysis, such as triangulation, may not be appropriate. They cast doubt in relation to triangulation as being valid itself, stating that triangulation attempts to establish a single truth, when in fact truth tends to have multiple facets according to individual perception or interpretation. They suggest that multiple interpretation is a more valid test of reality and therefore indicates greater validity as this is linked to honesty.

They further conclude that this is a useful approach when dealing with the complex problems of human research and suggest that this approach may be more frequently adopted in social research in particular.

5.16 Gender and power in the research process

The unique contribution of this thesis to research into women in policing lies within the fact that it is written from a position of being both an 'insider' and an 'outsider' due to my previous employment as a senior member of support staff within a UK force. This provided both barriers and opportunity to the study, in that because of insider knowledge and understanding of the culture, systems, processes and structure of the service there appeared to be an air of acceptance into the research process and this established a degree of trust with participants. Potential barriers may have been that some participants already knew the author, but there appeared to be no evidence to suggest this was the case with some participants from the pilot study volunteering to participate in the in depth interviews as well.

Limerick and O'Leary (2006) acknowledge that there is significant diversity in the definitions relating to 'feminist' research resulting in a variety of epistemological assumptions. Scholars continue to debate the plethora of approaches but each appears to agree that feminist research focuses on gender from a social and personal perspective. They suggest that management has tended to turn a 'blind eye' to gender in the past, but changing demographics and the increased interest in women's studies has forced society to focus more upon this under-represented aspect of the work force.

Wilkinson and Morton (2007) agree that the notion of feminist research is undisputed but question its ontological position. Accepting the fundamental feminist premise that women and men are equal they question feminist epistemology suggesting that its origins stem from more traditional approaches to research. They suggest that the increased focus upon gender related study has accelerated the development of feminist paradigms raising issues in relation to ethics and objectivity.

Campbell (2003) raises the dilemma relating to feminist research in criminology suggesting that as criminology, and policing in particular, is male dominated, the inclusion of the male perspective into any research relating to the police is probably justified. Researchers in this field therefore, need to consider whether research that excludes the male perspective is truly representational. Campbell (2003) comments:

“through the epistemological lens of ‘representation’, the notions of ‘woman’ and ‘man’ are not seen as fixed and unitary but as fragmented, unstable and contradictory”. (p286)

Halford and Leonard (2001) identify the different feminist perspectives as *liberal, structural, radical, and Marxist*; each category identifying a specific viewpoint in relation to the interaction between men and women with a stereotypical view of the lack of flexibility between the male and female role. This rigid adherence by authors to such notions could even be the root cause of the power struggle between the sexes and might fuel the recognition of differences in relation to management style and therefore suitability for more senior roles. It is questionable whether or not

individuals within organisations even think about gender in relation to work at the point at which they perform their actual role.

Welch et al (2002) highlight the difficulties associated with gaining access to elite members of organisations, however, in this case there were no difficulties experienced by the researcher. In fact, the direct opposite was experienced with specific requests to be interviewed and special arrangements made to allow unrestricted access to the research subjects.

Mellick and Fleming (2010) highlight the tensions between using life-history narrative as a research strategy and identify the dilemma in relation to the ethics of disclosure suggesting that when elite members of an organisation engage in research utilising this methodology they expose themselves to potential harm. By the very fact that this thesis will be published, it potentially raises such concerns and they suggest that the gaining of consent by the 'actors' is an essential element of good research practice. This calls into question the authenticity of the accounts given. For example, is there reluctance by the research subjects to divulge every aspect of their experiences, or do they sanitise the version in order to conceal their exact identity and to prevent any unnecessary backlash from peers or colleagues? In this study their suggestion of gaining voluntary informed consent was followed with the elite women self-selecting their participation in the study. Those participants were assured of anonymity by non-divulgence of force, location within the UK, rank or name, thus ensuring that there was little likelihood of the '*harm*' identified by Mellick and Fleming (2010). By adopting such a stance this ensured that the fourth

element that may be a potential stumbling block, that of violating individual privacy was avoided.

The degree of openness and honesty of the conversations was also unquestionable with the majority of officers stating that they were more than willing to participate, especially if it could bring benefit to current and future serving female officers. Interestingly Welch et al (2002) suggest that affinity to an organisation can 'open doors' often resulting in a parity between researcher and research subject due to mutual interest. This certainly appeared to be the case in relation to this study where the generosity of the interviewees in terms of their time and hospitality was exceptional resulting in significant quantities of rich, qualitative data. Interestingly the experience of the researcher in this instance appears to defy the findings of other elite researchers. It appears that in this case the more senior rank the women held the more willing they were to participate in the study and less fearful of retribution, perhaps because they had already attained personal self-confidence and belief.

Although firmly embedded in the feminist criminology framework the researcher's own experiences of working as a woman (police staff) within the police service gives a unique understanding of the situations being recounted, yet retains objectivity in that although the experience was similar it was not exactly the same due to the difference between serving officer and police staff roles. Speer highlights the usefulness of 'prompts'. In this research the understanding of the acronyms and jargon and an ability to utilise them by both parties enabled the conversation to flow uninterrupted as the women being studied developed their life-history narrative without having to pause and offer explanations of acronyms, customs and practices.

The individual life-history interviews followed a similar structure, with a degree of flexibility dependent upon the answers given by each officer reflecting their personal and unique experiences, beginning with their first recollections of wanting to become a police officer. All of the interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed. In the interviews I ascertained their early aspirations with regard to career opportunities and promotion prospects before developing their early probationary experiences within policing and their integration into their particular force(s). Officers gave individual accounts of their rise through the ranks, the opportunities and barriers that befell them, the influence of mentors, senior officers, opportunities for personal and professional development alongside their change in domestic and/or lifestyle circumstances. (Appendix E). Officers who had family commitments and children tended to focus upon family life more extensively than non-married and/or childless officers, but even those who were single still identified family and social commitments that impacted upon their career trajectories. I used the emergent themes from the questionnaire and focus groups as a starting point or prompt to the discussion yet allowed officers the freedom to divulge what they felt was significant to their individual experience.

5.17 Conclusion to the research methodology

The debate relating to research methodologies continues to develop and in some respect is too great to explore fully due to the constraints of this thesis. Many theses concentrate solely upon the issue of selecting the most appropriate methodological approach to research and as the subject is so vast it can easily distract the researcher from their original focus. With this in mind, researchers have to make an informed

choice based upon the literature to which they have been exposed and to make a decision as to the methodologies they intend to adopt.

By adopting such a broad methodological approach to the research the data gathered I provide a far richer picture of the situation of women officers currently serving in the service within England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Although the majority of the research can arguably be judged as erring on the qualitative side, the use of statistical data in analysing the questionnaire results hopefully satisfies those academics who consider wholly qualitative research to be inappropriate.

There appears to be significant support for the use of a more qualitative approach, particularly when engaging in social and gendered research and it is interesting to note that significant numbers of medical and education research projects consider that in-depth interviewing and conversations are appropriate research tools to adopt when dealing with human beings.

In this case, the original foundation gathering exercise provided a basis upon which to develop the in-depth, life-history interviews to produce a unique insight into the views of senior women within the UK police service. Critics of this approach may well challenge this research stating that due to the fact that the research only includes the view of women and not men, that it is intrinsically biased, but this was a conscious decision by the researcher due to the constraints of this study.

To include the views of male officers would require a different and extensive literature search based upon the differences between males and females and so

distract the study from the real question as to why there are so few women in the ACPO ranks.

Comparisons might also have been drawn from other similar male-dominated environments, such as the Armed Services and again criticism might be levelled at this study in terms of its limited source of data from the police service. However, it is felt that this research will contribute significantly to the study of women in policing in particular and offers a particular view of the issues relating to women's progression and leadership in a traditionally male-dominated culture. This thesis will provide a new platform for future research into women's career progression in disciplined services and in the police service in particular.

In the following Chapters I evidence the experiences of women in UK policing between 2005 and 2010. Their accounts of their experiences as female police officers are examined and from these accounts, in conjunction with the previous literature review, a picture of the existing situation in relation to women's career progression in the UK police service can be established indicating opportunities for change.

6.0 Key themes from the questionnaire.

6.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I identify the key themes raised by the women themselves reflecting back to existing literature and providing an untainted lens through which a detailed and intimate view of the environment in which police women are required to operate can be viewed. As is common in feminist research by providing a candid insight into their world I draw upon the existing feminist criminological literature of Martin (1979) (1991), Heidensohn (1985), Martin and Jurik (1996), Walklate (1995) (2004) (2004) and Brown and Heidensohn (2000) and apply it to their situation and challenge any preconceived ideas held by the women themselves, their male counterparts and other feminist criminological authors, whose access issues may have given a restricted vision of their predicament. I am the conduit that allows the respondents' voices to become audible. Free flow comments and incidents are anonymous in order to protect the identity of individual women as previously discussed in the methodology Chapter.

The key themes that emanate from this research relate to a variety of social, societal and organisational factors that influence the environment in which senior police women are required to operate. These themes include work-life balance issues in relation to work and family commitments, including single parent families; training interventions and cost of pursuing a career; the long-hours culture within policing; role models, mentors, networking and issues relating to continuous professional development; attitudes, culture, values and beliefs both internal and external to the

organisation; working practices and women self-imposing barriers to career progression.

In this Chapter I begin by identifying the emergent themes from the questionnaire which form the basis of the focus groups and in-depth life-history interviews with senior ranking female officers. The questionnaire addressed all ranks and seemed to identify that issues that affected career progression for junior ranks are more linked to process and system rather than culture, leadership, internal politics and less tangible factors. This seemingly offers the service opportunity to swell the numbers of females attaining first and second line manager status by addressing some of the key issues outlined in the following Chapter. By identifying key themes affecting junior ranks I establish the different tensions that are separated by the rank hierarchy and correlate the results to the reviewed literature. Whilst some themes remain constant across the rank structure there is a clear demarcation between lower, middle and senior ranking officers with some interesting results that appear to contradict previous research into career progression of senior women. Within the life-history interviews there appears to be unanimity in relation to the roles and functions women are required to perform at senior levels and these are explored more thoroughly in the following Chapters.

This unique contribution to feminist research offers a different perspective to the issues that restrict women from achieving positions of power within a male-dominated hierarchical organisation and offers insight as to how more women can be encouraged and assisted to rise through the ranks.

6.2 Themes emanating from analysis of the questionnaire circulated in Force X

The results of the pilot study in Force X provided an indicator as to the likely barriers preventing women's career progression at the lower ranks within the service and comparisons can be drawn between the information provided via the questionnaire, the focus groups and the in depth interviews with more senior women. Some key themes emerged during the pilot study and these were reinforced to an extent by the focus groups and in depth interviews, but there seems to be a marked difference in the attitudes towards promotion and career progression between the lower and the more senior ranks.

6.2.1 Length of service, rank and traditional family roles

The aforementioned demographic changes in society and changes in social attitude have seen increasing numbers of females entering police service in general. There is no reason to believe that Force X would not have followed the national trend in which it could be assumed that officers with a significantly greater length of service might have been more reluctant in the past to consider promotion, due to social attitudes during the 1970s and 1980s. This resonates with the views proffered by Wood and Lindorff (2001), Powell and Butterfield (2003)

The table below indicates the length of years' service attained by the respondents at the point this survey was conducted.

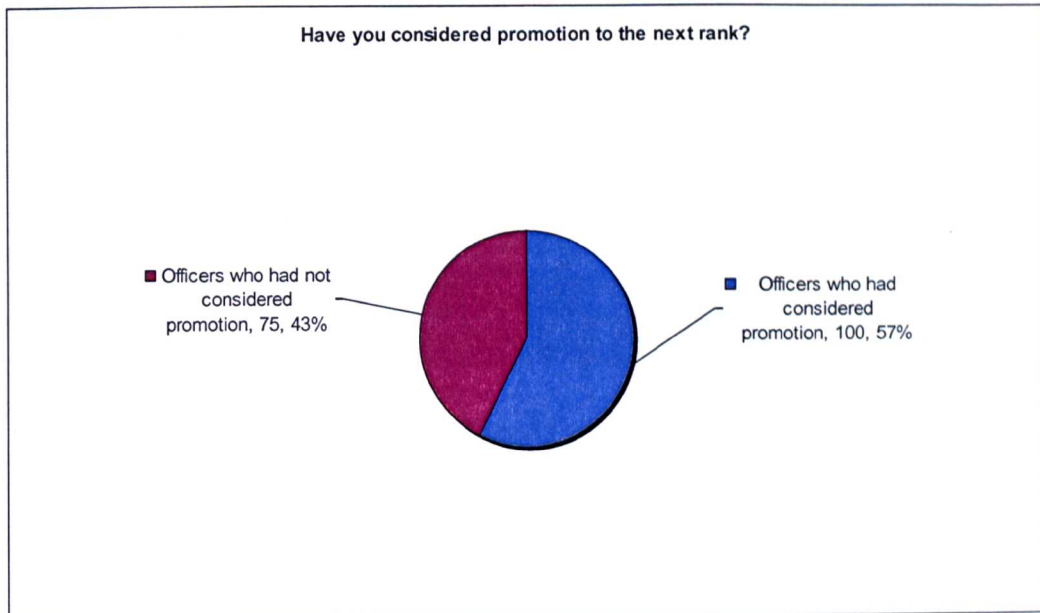
Table 8 Length of service and consideration of promotion

Length of service in years	Considered Promotion	Not Considered promotion	Total number
Probationer 1-2 yrs	7	1	8
2-4yrs 11 months	16	15	31
5-9yrs 11 months	18	15	33
10-14yrs 11months	17	12	29
15-19yrs 11months	29	12	41
20-24yrs 11 months	7	7	14
25-30yrs	6	13	19
Total	100	75	175

Analysis of these results utilising the statistical Chi-test indicated that there was no association between age and whether or not officers had considered applying for promotion. However, it appears that long serving officers might be less likely to apply for promotion based upon the premise of historical social attitude. By applying the Chi-test a figure of .063 was identified indicating that there was no association between length of service and whether they had considered applying for promotion. Therefore, the assumption can be made that for every 6 times in 100 this result would be expected by chance.

The following chart indicates the responses from officers in relation to considering promotion to the next rank.

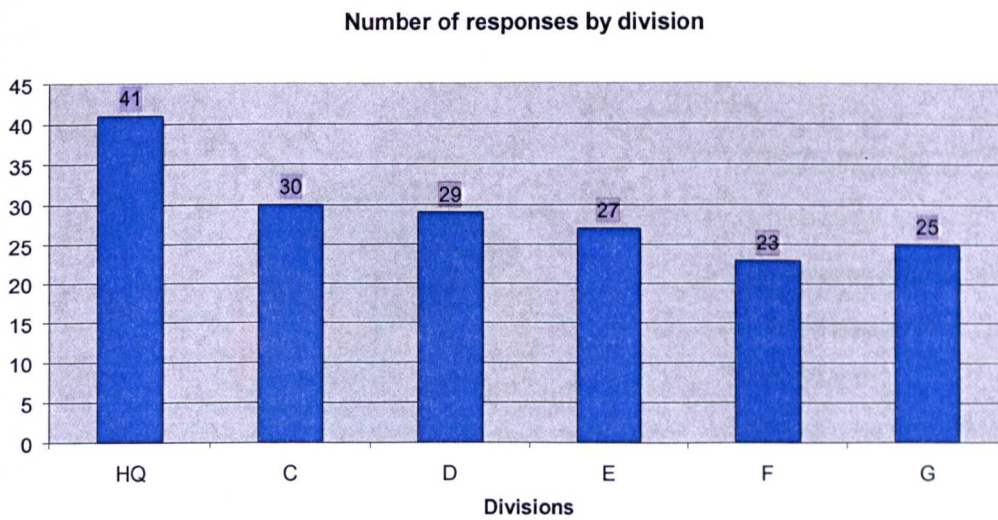
Figure 1 Numbers of officers who have considered promotion to the next rank



43% (75) of officers stated that they had not considered promotion whereas 57% (100) stated that they had considered it.

The number of responses from officers from each division was as follows:-

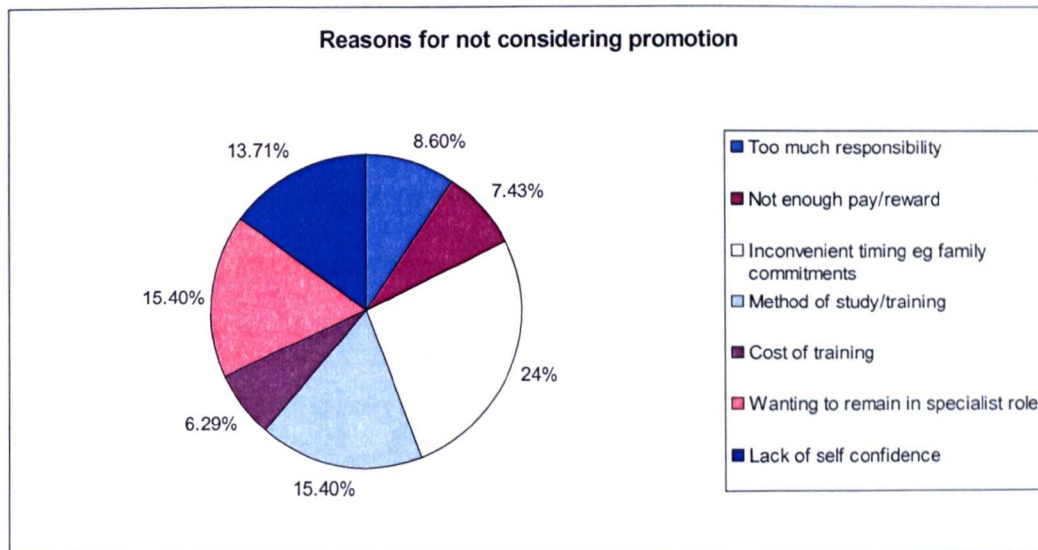
Figure 2 **Number of responses by division**



It appears that the greatest numbers of officers that do consider promotion opportunities are based at the Headquarters site, some 23%, with the least number to consider promotion to be in Division 4 with only 13% of officers in this division. However, there appears to be little significant variation between Divisions 1 to 5 with only a variation of 4% between the respective Divisions.

Officers were able to identify a variety of reasons why they might not consider promotion. The questionnaire enabled officers to state more than one reason as to why they might not consider promotion. The responses are as follows:-

Figure 3 **Reasons for not considering promotion**



It appears that the greatest barrier to considering promotion within Force X relates to inconvenient timing, such as family commitments as identified by Liu and Wilson (2001), followed by an equal desire to remain in a specialist role and the method of study and/or training. These themes were developed further in the focus groups. Some free flow comments captured by this question identified the link between officers not putting themselves forward for promotion due to family commitments and the difficulties associated between balancing work and home life. A sample of comments follows:

“With 2 young children and a husband who is a serving police officer working shifts I would find it difficult to dedicate the time to studying for my Part I exams”.

Kurtz (2008) comments how the necessity for women to balance multiple roles increases stress and burnout citing the gender division in work-family life as being a major source of such issues.

“The promotion system is too time consuming and due to family/home life and work commitment there is no time to study. It seems to be an unfair system of assessing a person’s suitability in the role as scenarios and interviews do not assess a person’s capability”.

“With 3 young children I do not have the time to study nor at the present the commitment. I could not return to shifts as a means of promotion”.

These comments appear to support the traditional approach to career development where Mavin (2001) and Belle (2002) suggest that women need to make direct life choices with regard to career development.

Interestingly several respondents commented that they did not consider promotion as they felt it would move them away from the roles they currently enjoy. Some roles related to remaining in a specialist post, but for others they stated that they enjoy the role of a police constable. Some sample comments follow:-

“I joined the police to be a face on the street helping people and arresting them, not to be bogged down in paperwork and meetings”.

“There is little police work when you are promoted; it is all number crunching and reports”.

“I enjoy being a PC; I have no desire for promotion”.

A minority expressed that there might be barriers relating to the volumes of work and limited resources and that occasionally women might not be involved in ‘banter’.

Only one respondent identified a wholly negative response relating to the Force stating that they felt sexual offences and child offences still tended to be allocated to female officers endorsing the views held by Holdaway and Parker (1998) and Dick and Jankowicz (2001) and the gender stereotyping suggested by Gerber (2001) and Weyer (2006).

On the whole, most respondents identified difficulties relating to work-life balance rather than Force policies or individual discriminatory practice. For those officers who had considered promotion, the next rank to which they could progress is detailed below. Of the 133 respondents who identified the next rank to which they could progress, the results are as follows:-

Table 9 **Number of officers able to progress to the next rank**

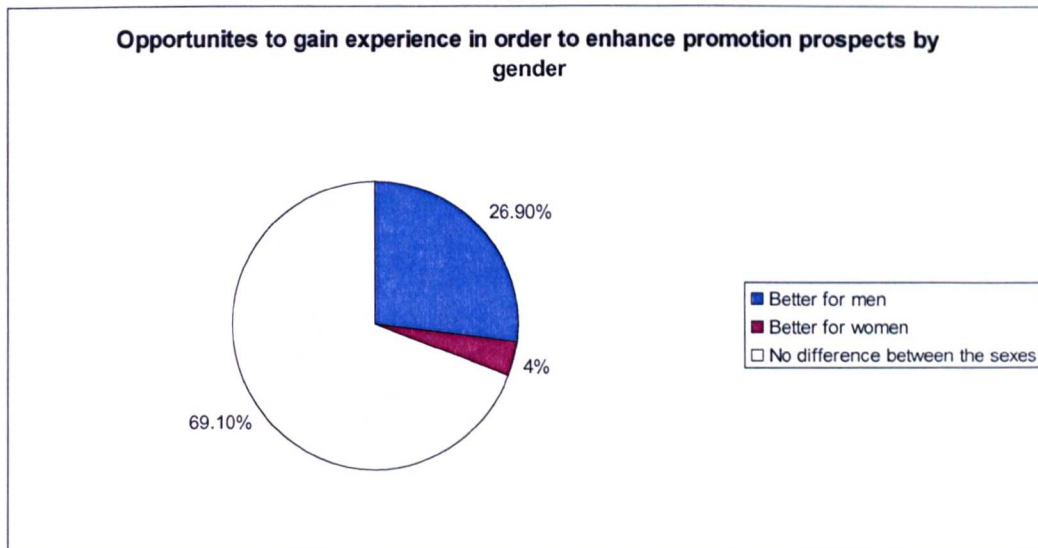
Rank	Number of officers
Sergeant	88
Inspector	32
Chief Inspector	7
Superintendent	4
Chief Superintendent	1
ACPO	1

The largest number of officers that could be promoted subject to available posts is at the rank of Sergeant reflecting the national statistics issued by the Home Office in 2010, (<http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/hosb1410.pdf> last accessed 15/11/2010). This indicates that 50% of the officers that responded positively to this question are currently in this position. A further 18% could be promoted to the rank of Inspector. Ranks above this level appear to have considerably less officers in a position to progress especially at Chief Superintendent or ACPO level. This correlates closely with the statistics produced by Sigurdsson and Dhani (2010) in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin stating police numbers and gender distribution. (<http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/hosb1410.pdf> last accessed 15/11/2010)

6.2.2 Promotion, encouragement and gender

Powell and Butterfield (2003) and Christopher and Wojda (2008) suggests that women are disadvantaged due to their sex when being considered for promotion. To ascertain whether there was any difference between the sexes relating to opportunities to enhance promotion prospects. The result was as follows:-

Figure 4 Opportunities to gain experience to enhance promotion by gender

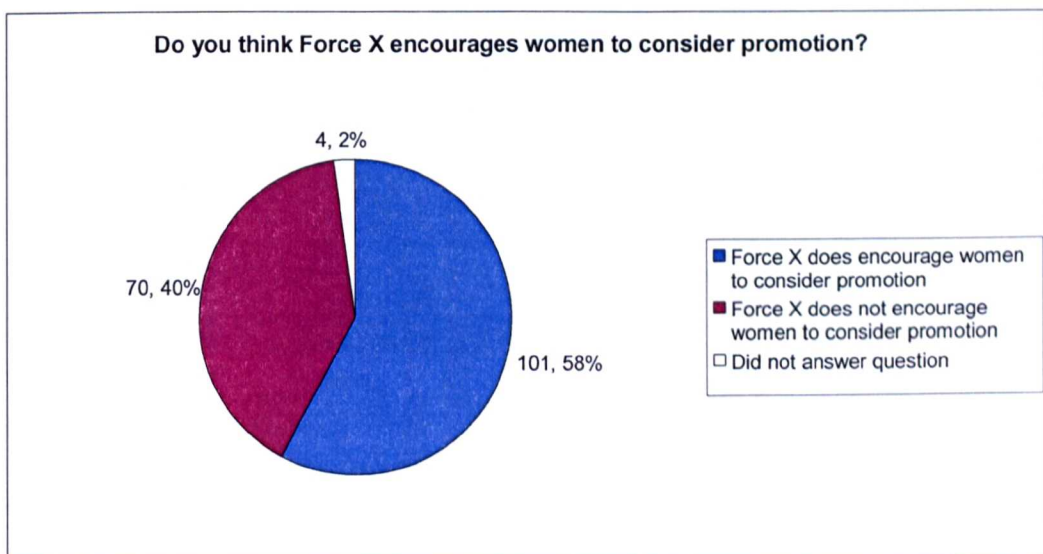


All 175 respondents answered this question. 121 officers stated that they felt that there were no differences between the sexes in terms of opportunity for development within the Force, with 7 believing opportunities are better for women and 47 stating they felt opportunities were better for men. This was an interesting result, opposing existing literature by Wilson (2003) Cornelius and Skinner (2005), as the common perception that police service is male dominated is not wholly reflected by these respondents. Only 26.9% felt that male officers were more likely to be offered more opportunity to enhance their promotion prospects. Perhaps the research conducted by Lord and Friday (2003) identified the initiations of change in the masculine culture of the service and this is reflected by the positive views expressed by these women.

It appears that Force X does actively encourage women to consider promotion. The Force has an established women's network group identified by Liff and Ward (2001), He, Zhao and Archbold (2002) and Ramaswami et al (2010) as being significantly

influential and linked with policies such as the Managing Diversity, Dignity and Respect policy, Maternity Policy, Parental Leave policy and the Promotion Selection policy it appears that the Force offers encouragement and support to all officers. 58% of respondents felt that Force X is proactive in its encouragement towards women to consider opportunities for promotion.

Figure 5 Does Force X encourage women to consider promotion?



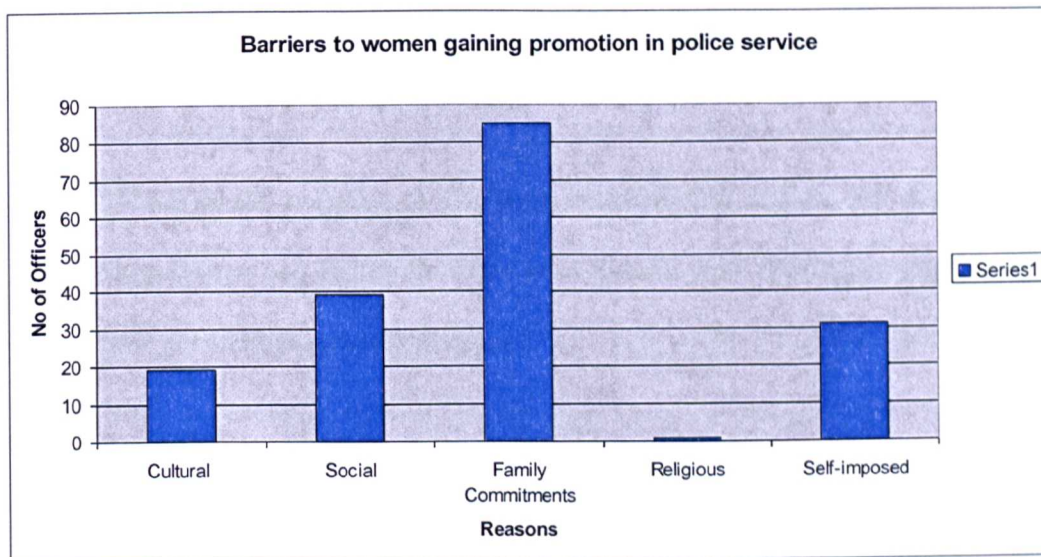
Out of the 175 respondents, 4 failed to answer this question, with 101 respondents stating that they felt Force X does provide encouragement towards women officers seeking promotion. The remaining 70 respondents stated that they did not consider that the Force provided encouragement to women officers to consider promotion.

6.2.3 Work, commitments and family life

When asked if women officers perceived barriers to gaining promotion in police service in general, the response was that 58.9% of felt that there were barriers (103

respondents) and 41.1% (72) respondents felt that there were no particular barriers to women gaining promotion within the service. A variety of reasons why women officers felt that there were barriers as illustrated in the table below. Free flow comments relating to their perception help to illustrate individual perceptions.

Figure 6 Barriers to women gaining promotion in the police service



The most frequently stated barrier related to child care. Samples of the comments relating to child care follow:

The first comment endorses the view held by Hamilton, Gordon and Whelan Berry (2006) that single women are seen by both genders as having greater opportunity for career development:

“It depends upon your circumstances. If you are a single, childless female, there are no barriers, if you are a mother with family commitments, then barriers exist”.

Other comments appear to reflect the concept of 'biologism' introduced by Brown (1990):

"It is difficult to be committed to achieving promotion due to family commitments. There is no real opportunity to work part time and still progress with your careers. There are limited paths when you are part time".

"Family commitments are a massive barrier".

"There is the pressure to put your children first and be the main carer. Pregnancies and maternity leave also knocks your confidence and coming back part time just makes it worse".

"Single mothers have massive constraints and financial pressure".

The final comment reflects Edwards and Robinson (2001) and Dick's (2004) views that commitment and the perception of commitment appears to diminish when women are asked to make a choice in relation to career progression or family life.

"Women's commitment to home and family life means the ability to devote time to study is difficult when juggling children, work and running a home".

The comments above identified that there are several notable barriers to women generally gaining promotion, some of which may be able to be resolved at Force level and others requiring change at a national level and possibly a fundamental

change in police recruitment and retention practices. These issues will be further developed in the following two Chapters where discussion during focus group sessions and in-depth interviews revealed differences between the ranks of Inspectors, Superintendents and ACPO officers.

6.2.4 Specialist roles and training issues

Another factor appears to be the desire to remain within a specialist role. Comments relating to this were linked to the fact that in some departments there are no Sergeant ranks within them, thus requiring the officer to leave the department and role in order to gain promotion and thus 'de-skilling' in the process. However, this is not exclusive to females; male officers in specialist roles suffer the same dilemma. This theme was further endorsed during the focus group sessions where it was identified that in most cases officers are required to return to front line operational duties and shifts in order to gain promotion, particularly to the rank of Sergeant. This tends to be custom and practice rather than actual requirement and discussions with senior officers in Chapter 8 reveal further details in relation to this aspect of career progression.

Other factors related to costs and methods of study with a small minority expressing that there were occasional discriminatory comments and practices occurring, often influenced by formal and informal networks as suggested by Linehan (2001) and the political networking to which Klenke (2003) refers. For example some comments were:

“There are times when it is felt in certain departments that it is jobs for the boys, which can be hard to overcome”. “Some men are shocked and surprised when you are skilled in a certain area that they aren’t”.

Eriksson-Zetterquist and Styhre (2007) refer to the negative aspects of positive action interventions which seem to be reflected by some officers, one free flow comment indicates the situation as she perceives it in Force X:

“Unfortunately it seems that because positivity has been highlighted towards women for promotion or specialist roles, it has actually made things more difficult”.

6.2.5 Demographic and organisational factors

The geographic Division that each respondent currently works in might also have been a factor in relation to their promotion prospects, particularly in relation to individual culture within Divisions and leadership style. The decision was taken to purposefully identify if there were any significant differences between the Divisions in relation to individual officer perceptions regarding promotion. There appeared to be few significant differences between the Divisions indicating that no particular Division either favoured or discriminated against women officers in terms of promotion. It can be assumed that Force policies and practices are applied equally across the Force despite the significant geographical differences that characterise Force X.

One factor that may have affected women's career choices within Force X might have been its geographic location. Forces that occupy large geographic areas might reasonably appear to hinder promotion prospects particularly with a need to relocate in order to take up a promotion. However, this is not an exclusive barrier to women, as society appears to accept more readily that mobility in relation to promotion is more acceptable when males uplift their families in order to pursue their careers. Mavin (2001) suggests that a male's career follows a natural pattern and order that is accepted by society, yet women have to make choices due to their situation and biology Kelan (2009) often rendering them outside the promotion ladders through situation rather than pure choice.

6.3 Conclusion

By piloting a questionnaire in Force X I have identified several emergent themes that are further developed by deeper discussion in both the focus groups and in-depth interviews. Key themes that readily emerged appear to follow the traditional barrier patterns identified by authors such as Mavin (2000) (2001), Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Powell and Butterfield (2003) relating to family roles, support and encouragement from peers and superiors, training and geographic location. These themes are developed in the focus groups offering greater insight into women's perceptions as to how such barriers might be overcome, or conceding acceptance of their fate thus falling into the gender stereotype traps identified by authors such as Yim and Bond (2002), Knaak (2004), Walklate (2004) and Weyer (2006).

The focus groups provide increased depth and meaning to the initial findings of the questionnaire enabling me to identify and focus upon issues that women perceive as being detrimental to their career development and this is reflected in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 Gender, culture and barriers to women's career development

7.1 Introduction

The forgoing Chapter identifies a variety of reasons from the focus groups as to why women are not achieving the higher ranks and the purpose of this study is to discover the reasons why. Participants in the focus groups included Police Constable to Inspector ranks. The key themes in this Chapter relate to flexibility, Tomlinson (2006), work environment and the way existing HRM policies are interpreted and implemented Metcalfe (2008).

Existing literature suggests that despite the organisation's attempts to change culturally, the underpinning police culture still tends to predominantly white, heterosexual male Martin (1979), Pollert (1983), Metcalfe and Dick (2000) (2002) Waddington (1999) and Campbell (2003), with sexist Kelan (2009) and homophobic attitudes continuing to be reflected in 'canteen culture' Brown (2000) which takes its toll upon women entering the profession. It is well documented that women suffer from harassment, often sexual harassment, with several high-profile cases in the 1990s resulting in landmark tribunal cases with record awards of damages to the complainants. Dick and Cassell (2002) acknowledged that many women anticipate a degree of sexual 'banter' and innuendo regarding it as insignificant and not peculiar to the police service. Other studies have emerged which question this position, and suggest other reasons why women do not progress within the service Haar (2005), Tomlinson (2007). In particular the personal beliefs and values of women police officers themselves may act as a barrier to progression. Personal choice linked to the

'biological clock' Liu and Wilson (2001) and Kelan (2009b) with many women having to choose between promotion, or, marriage and a family may also be a factor. This is of particular concern to the service as the increasing percentage of women entering the service combined with the fact that, as evidenced in Chapter 2, women frequently out-perform men in the promotion exams and gain a 'ticket', but fail to use it. With this in mind it appears that the only women likely to be successful within such an environment are those women who choose to remain single and childless, forcing women to make a career or family choice.

7.2 Similarities and differences in emergent themes

In this Chapter I draw upon the emergent themes identified in Chapter 6 and develop them referring to previous literature and identifying similarities and differences. Each of these themes will be discussed in turn. The emergent themes from the focus groups are:

work-life balance and part time working; Single parent families; The long hours culture; Time and finance to study; OSPRE, Internal promotion boards and the loss of specialist roles; Performance development reviews (PDR); Role models, mentors and networking; Changes in attitude and other contributing factors.

Six focus groups were held over a period of three days from 13th to 15th November 2006.

The first session, which was the best attended was held at the Headquarters of Force X, where twelve officers from a variety of ranks and roles attended. The session was

endorsed by a visit from the Chief Constable who gave his full support and encouragement to all present. The Chief Constable stated his commitment to increasing the diversity of the work force within Force X and offered his appreciation to those officers present for contributing to this research.

The second session was held at a police station where four officers were able to participate.

The third session and fourth sessions were held on 14th November 2006 with the final two sessions held on 15th November 2006. In total 29 officers participated in the focus groups. All of the sessions lasted for between one to two hours and followed a semi-structured approach developing the themes established by responses to the questionnaire.

Each of the sessions was recorded with the permission of the participants in order to enable accurate analysis of the discussions held and in order to ensure that no individual can be identified (thus hopefully ensuring that officers felt able to state their viewpoint without prejudice) the findings of the focus group sessions are grouped into themes.

7.3 Work-life balance and part time working

The statistical analysis of the questionnaire responses had indicated that there was no significant correlation between length of service and promotion. Many of the officers attending the focus groups had significant length of service as well as rank

and it was commented upon by some that there is an issue relating to time and timing which is linked to work-life balance. The issue appeared to be linked more to child care and family commitments as suggested by Mavin (2000) (2001) and O'Connor (2001), Burnett et al (2010) rather than a disinclination to progress. Nearly every officer that had family commitments stated that as primary carers of (principally) children, they tended to sacrifice their career aspirations in favour of their family Thomas and Davies (2002). It appeared to be a simple dilemma, a question of choice, career progression or family, with little opportunity to combine both. The comment was made by one officer that:

“By the time you have ten to twelve years’ service; you tend to keep putting off career progression thinking maybe next year”.

The officers acknowledged that the Force has statutory responsibilities to provide a twenty four hour, seven day a week service and they concurred that there were some roles that would be unsuitable for part time working. The comment was made that *“There is an organisational and leadership issue relating to 24/7 working”* as suggested by Jackson (2001) as well as the comment that *“bosses have been quite flexible in relation to part time workers”*. It appears that female officers are quite willing to operate flexibly in such situations giving the numerical flexibility that Tomlinson (2006) refers to but certain policies and procedures within Force X appear to discourage part time or flexible working. An example was given where a female officer was due to return to work following maternity leave and in order to arrange appropriate child care to enable her to work shifts she requested information relating to where and when her duties might occur. This appears to be a classic example of

organisational inflexibility similar to that identified by Cortis and Cassar (2005) and Gatrell (2011). The personnel department advised her that in accordance with the policy currently in use she would not be notified of these details until four weeks prior to her return to work. Perhaps an earlier indication of such information to officers might enable them to make the necessary adjustments to accommodate returning to full time shift work more readily as suggested by Tomlinson (2004).

In relation to part time working, most officers felt that the Force "*is getting this right*". Officers commented that their request to work part time has been met positively by the majority of supervisors concurring with the view of Edwards and Robinson (2001) with only isolated occurrences of less favourable responses. However, concern was raised that where an officer (regardless of gender) works part time, it appears that there is little cover in the form of job sharing in case that part time officer requires reverting to working full time hours. There is a preconception that if an officer works 20 hours per week then the remaining number of hours attributed to that post if it were full time are not covered and this relates to the full time equivalent head count and Force strength. In theory, part time workers should enable greater flexibility Tomlinson (2006) within the organisation. Part time workers also felt that they did limit their possibilities for promotion to an extent due to the requirement to return to shifts and operational duties.

In some cases, especially for new mothers returning to work, this is not possible to achieve. Where officers have been enabled to work part time by being attached to a shift, they feel a degree of isolation Rutherford (2001) from the team due to the 'insular' workings of shifts. This is an issue that could be addressed by positive

management of the integration of part time or reduced hours officers (regardless of gender, as there are occasions when male officers are single parents). Whilst it is acknowledged that from an allocation of duties perspective this might superficially appear problematic, by effective use of the duties system across the Force as well as within Divisions, perhaps a solution might be achievable.

When comparing part-time working within police service to other comparable services that require to provide 24/7 cover such as nursing, it was noted that other organisations have a bank of suitably qualified temporary workers that can be brought in to cover periods of absence due to maternity leave or sick leave. Police service currently has no such bank, but it was mooted as to the feasibility of such a national bank which might enable cover to be provided. This could not be addressed at Force level but could be considered nationally if there were standardisation of policies practices and appointments across all of the 43 Forces in England and Wales.

There was some concern that the organisational culture associates a lack of commitment as indicated by Thomas and Davies (2002) to the role with those officers working part time. Part time officers comment that they feel that they have to work harder to compete with their full time counterparts an aspect identified in Martin's (1979) iconic study into police women and latterly by Burke and Mikkelson (2005). Perhaps this perception could be counteracted by an explanation of the existing system to staff by managers in order to enable understanding of numbers of officers allocated to specific teams and the rationale behind the allocation.

It was suggested that in order to encourage officers (of both sexes) to consider promotion they should be 'targeted' early in their careers as managers of the future, virtually following their initial probationary training, as it was felt that there is so much else for officers to learn, particularly if they intend to undertake a specialist role. Perhaps the establishment of long term career plans might assist officers to focus upon a long term career within the service.

7.4. Single parent families

Difficulties occur for single parent families of both sexes as they rise up the ranks. Increased responsibility relating to rank and the need to provide 24 hours 'on-call' service can be problematic. For single parent families this can be particularly prohibitive, especially if an incident occurs during the night, requiring that officer to attend in their supervisory capacity, e.g. Silver Commander. Additionally, the hours required to train to achieve higher rank can be difficult to achieve. It was felt that this was also increasingly complicated for female officers with family commitments, as the opportunity to work shifts for some with children, especially single parents or those officers whose partner was also a serving officer on shifts, was virtually impossible due to the major upheaval to the family routine. This appears to be a perpetual problem with no obvious solution due to the nature of policing and an issue documented by Gill and Davidson (2001) in relation to long and particularly erratic working hours.

7.5 Long-hours culture

There is a cultural expectation that officers (at all ranks) work for long hours, particularly when they rise through the ranks and is evidenced by studies by Graef (1989), Lewis and Cooper (1995) and Edwards and Robinson (2001). This is detrimental to officers of both genders. It was suggested that management should take the initiative in respect of this and to lead by example and work appropriate hours Dick (2004). This should also be reflected in national training programmes, where frequently officers, (especially those in more senior ranks), are expected to participate in training programmes from 9am in the morning until 9pm at night. Practices at Force level could provide some relief in respect of the long hour's culture, but generally there is a national 'presenteeism' culture that needs to be addressed within the service. Rutherford (2001) notes the physical and psychological harm experienced by workers experiencing such practices and notes the exclusionary nature of presenteeism to women in particular, especially those who seek to attain senior positions within organisations.

7.6 Time and finance to study

When questioned as to whether opportunity to study was available the response was that generally study had to occur in leisure time which again impacts upon the work-life balance issue discussed earlier in this Chapter. Officers were aware that in some other Forces there are allocated study days which are incorporated into the duty rota enabling officers to have dedicated time for study and preparation for promotion or progression. The exception to this appeared to be those officers who participate in

the High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS). The general perception was that those (few) officers on this particular scheme are allocated specific study time.

The comment was made that it would be beneficial for all officers to be allocated time to study, however, concern for the organisation was also a factor that was raised, with the observation that if the Force were to invest time/money into an individual's study then the organisation should benefit from this, as well as the individual. Anecdotal references were made to individuals who had (perhaps in other Forces) been allocated funding or time to study, achieved a degree and then left the organisation shortly afterwards. This was felt to be a waste of organisational investment.

Cost also appeared to prohibit some officers from pursuing their careers further, especially in relation to the purchase of books and study materials, but again this is not limited to women officers, as one officer stated "*the issues that affect us as women affect the whole organisation, it's not gender specific*". These views echo the thoughts of Roberg and Bonn (2004) and White (2006) who identify the necessity for investment in officer training, yet recognise that women, due to their commitments, are frequently disadvantaged due to the rigid and inflexible nature of the training and promotion mechanisms. This is further compounded by the current OSPRE system which affects the majority of officers seeking promotion as it operates at Sergeant and Inspector levels.

7.7 OSPRE

Most officers felt that the current OSPRE system of promotion had both beneficial and detrimental aspects to its structure. It was acknowledged by virtually all officers who commented upon the process that OSPRE Part I appeared to be a fair and accurate method of ensuring that they had the necessary knowledge and understanding of legislation and its application. The comment was made "*It (OSPRE) is good in some respects as there is objectivity as it is not in-house*". However, when considering OSPRE Part II, several officers concurred that it is "*too subjective*" and commented that it "*does not show true capability as you can learn to pass OSPRE Part II*". Several officers concluded that OSPRE Part II was equally detrimental to both female and male applicants due to the structure of the scenario sessions. Many felt that although the situations might be realistic, the setting for dealing with them was unreal and that being faced with such a scenario under 'exam conditions' often meant that officers reacted differently due to nerves rather than how they might react if faced with a real situation. They felt that it was an unfair system in that there appeared to be mechanistic approach to passing OSPRE Part II and there were some comments that implied that potentially unsuitable applicants for promotion who 'knew the hooks' to elicit the right responses in the scenario situation were successful, whereas other applicants, whom officers felt would make excellent supervisors, were passed over due to the fact that they did not 'master' the system. White (2006) is critical of the mechanistic approach to training adopted by the service and there is no doubt that OSPRE falls squarely into this category.

7.8 Internal promotion boards and loss of specialist roles

For those officers who achieved their OSPRE Parts I and II the next stage of promotion within Force X for the majority of officers appears to be some type of 'board'. Officers explained that having passed OSPRE and 'got their ticket' in order to progress an internal panel is convened where potential applicants are interviewed. There was some concern that there is a lack of 'corporacy' across the divisions and significant concern was identified relating to having to leave a specialist post or department in order to achieve promotion. This certainly seemed to be a particular issue for many who commented upon this process. Several comments were made regarding the fact that all of the investment put into enabling an officer (at whatever level) to fulfil a specialist role was wasted in the event of promotion as there appears to be a Force policy that requires officers to become operational and return to a response role within a division prior to being permanently promoted to the next rank. One officer in particular commented that this appears to be dichotomous in that Divisions do not appear to want to employ officers in a supervisory capacity if they do not have recent operational experience. Yet in order to be promoted, you appear to have to have had recent, front line operational experience. This policy appeared to be the one that officers across all of the groups surveyed felt was most detrimental to any officer seeking progression regardless of gender.

"In relation to the boards...I understand that they are weighted towards operational divisional staff, so when people like ourselves who work in 'specialisms' go to a board we are struggling, because the evidence they are seeking to the questions are orientated and geared towards people who come

from Divisions. So, as a specialist, you are struggling even before you go into the room, because your evidence is not quite what they are looking for as it is not operational”

It was frequently commented that the process to develop, particularly in relation to a specialist role, is a slow process and the suggestion of the development of ‘pathways’ through the career structure within specialist areas might be one method that might enable officers of both sexes to progress more readily. The concern was raised that when officers have spent considerable time and effort in developing skills for a specific role, such as Road Policing, Firearms, etc. there is often little desire to leave the role. One officer identified that despite having passed their OSPRE examination and been successful at a board, they turned down the opportunity to be promoted and decided to remain in the rank of constable “*in order to be able to continue to do the job that I love and that I have trained for all of these years*”. This is further fuelled by a fear of getting ‘stuck in a job’ they do not like if they move to gain experience to be promoted, as is the perception relating to current Force policy. By establishing pathways to develop within a particular role(s) this could possibly encourage officers to consider promotion as they could then continue to develop those specialist skills that they have worked so hard to attain, without having to experience a move to a Division where they rapidly de-skill through lack of use of the specialist skills they have gained. Conversely, those in a specialist role who do return to Divisions in order to gain experience prior to attempting to gain promotion commented that their knowledge and application of the law is limited and involves considerable revision and updating simply because they do not readily utilise these skills in their daily job on a specialist unit. They feel under confident in their ability when returning to

operational duty with little or no retraining in respect of the law and current operational practices. Establishing a training programme to enable such revision could prove beneficial if the Force continues to adopt the policy of returning officers to operational activity on Divisions prior to promotion. The issue of competition was also a concern. One officer stated *"It is difficult to get experience acting on Divisions as there is a queue of people waiting on Divisions to get experience"*. Those returning to Divisions from a specialist role commented that they felt disadvantaged by this system.

It was noted that many so called specialist roles were also operational roles and therefore it is questionable as to why officers need to return to Divisions to undertake a response role prior to promotion, when they may well already have been operating in an operational capacity, but within a particular specialist role.

The counter argument for pathways through specialist roles was also raised. The comment was made that if promotion was established via a specialist pathway within a particular skills area then this would make it particularly difficult for new entrants to that specialist area, as there would not be the turnover of personnel enabling vacancies to occur.

A particular example given by an officer relating to the internal promotion board system was that during the interview the evidence they gave was different to that supplied on the written application form. The officer had assumed that the application form would have been read by the interviewing panel and so utilised alternative evidence in answer to the questions. When obtaining feedback following

notification that she had been unsuccessful, she was advised that the panel had not in fact read her application form and so were not in full possession of the facts relating to her competence. This may well have been an isolated incident, but it is certainly an aspect that could be improved as it may well be that by adopting such practices the Force is failing to appoint the most appropriate person to the role. Whether this reflects the view of Christopher and Wojda (2008), that highly qualified women are overlooked because of their gender, remains unclear in this instance and discussions with senior women in the in-depth interviews in the next Chapter illustrates this aspect more clearly.

The suggestion was made that the Force could benefit from the establishment of a skills database identifying knowledge enabling some management of the skills base that exists within the Force. This would increase opportunity for flexibility by enabling the organisation to effectively manage and utilise the skills and investment in individuals, but would require changes in policy in relation to current promotion practices.

7.9 PDR

The comment was also made that within Force X there are greater opportunities for lateral progression rather than promotion as suggested by Powell and Butterfield (2003). Officers felt quite strongly that they liked to be competent at their jobs condoning the studies by Holmes et al (2003) and Hayes and Allinson (2004) and that perhaps a more robust use of the existing PDR system could encourage and develop officers, particularly where they identified a lack of self-confidence.

Lord and Friday (2003) highlight the importance of self-efficacy and belief, noting that women tend to self-impose barriers based upon such ill-founded bases. Officers felt that the PDR system was the most valuable tool the Force operated, however, they felt that due to a lack of appropriate use and training for both managers and staff in how to use it effectively, it was a wasted opportunity.

Many officers commented that if this were used more effectively this might provide an alternative solution to OSPRE Part II as it would evidence competence, thus making it less subjective and offering women greater opportunities. If utilised effectively officers, regardless of gender, could develop a portfolio of their competences which could be assessed by their supervisors. The comment was made:

“It is a work career portfolio that should follow you around with everything that you do. It would enable me to evidence my skills, the abilities that I have built up, the relationships that I have formed, my communications. It is such a valuable tool that the organisation does not utilise”.

Officers were particularly conscious of the pace of change in relation to performance and ability and were acutely aware of the need for continuing professional development regardless of rank or role. Adopting a more robust use of PDR and developing a portfolio of evidence (similar to that currently required from probationary officers) might also enable evidence to be presented at interview boards where officers are changing roles or departments.

7.10 Role models, mentors and networking

The lack of female role models appears to be an aspect that the Force and the service could possibly develop. Several authors such as Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997b), Morash and Haar (1995), Cortis and Cassar (2005) and Ramaswami (2010) all stress the importance of establishing strong networks and mentors in particular. Ramaswami (2010) suggests that male mentors are particularly beneficial to females who aspire to senior roles. Some officers felt that role models could be beneficial in encouraging other female officers to progress, whereas others felt that this was not necessarily a determining factor in their personal inclination to be promoted. Metcalfe suggests that HR policies within gendered organisations are frequently lacking therefore subconsciously or consciously dismiss the necessity for women to be formally engaged in networking and/or mentoring schemes commenting that *“women’s development issues are not named or articulated”* (2008, p452)

It was felt that some female officers who have achieved high ranks across the service could even be negative role models due to their attitude and adaptive (male) behaviour to fit into what they perceive as a male dominated environment. Mavin (2006b) challenges the notion that the burden of mentoring aspiring females should fall upon the shoulders of senior women when there is evidence to suggest that aspiring females tend to fare better with a male mentor in a patriarchal organisation. Officers commented that there were few female role models endorsing Belle’s (2002) view and although the Force has an existing Women’s Network it appears that this could be further developed to increase opportunities for connecting women across the Force and to encourage mentoring relationships. However, the comment was

made that mentors need not necessarily be of the same gender Ramaswami (2010) and there were some examples of excellent mentoring practices already occurring within the Force, a view shared by Limerick and O'Leary (2006) and Mavin (2006b).

The Force Women's Network has in some cases endeavoured to encourage female officers to apply for promotion and care needs to be taken to ensure that their activity is not seen as positively discriminating towards women over their male counterparts. Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997a) (1997b) and Wood and Lindorff (2001) stress the importance of networking for women and Linehan's (2001) and Liff and Cameron's (2007) acknowledgement of the continued existence of exclusionary male networks impact negatively upon women's ability to progress. The issue of positive or affirmative action with regard to women's promotion was also viewed as a potentially damaging situation reflecting the view of Maume Jnr (1999) and Liff and Cameron (2007). An example was cited where a female officer was offered a mentor from the Women's Network to assist with her attempt to gain promotion, but no such offer was made to her male colleague. This seems to reflect the view of Eriksson-Zetterquist and Styhre (2007) that where organisations make positive attempts to engender equality such initiatives often result in greater inequality due to misconstrued perceptions by both genders. The female officer stated that she felt that all officers should be given opportunity to have a mentor to guide them through the promotion process. The theme of women wanting equality of opportunity Lawrence (2000) rather than preferential treatment was a recurring theme throughout all of the focus groups. Some officers stated that they were not particularly aware of the activities of the Women's Networking Group and the suggestion was made that

this group should work more proactively on a one to one basis rather than trying to adopt a broader approach to women's issues, the so called 'girl's club'.

The women identified that it appears that their ability to network effectively is not as well established as their male counterparts. The comment was made, "*men network, we don't*". Several officers commented that networking is a key aspect to develop to enable officers seeking promotion and in particular, those new to service to gain encouragement and support. Perhaps networking skills, identified as being so important by Rindfleish and Sheridan (2002), could be an aspect of personal development that the Women's Network in particular could explore in order to counteract this perception.

7.11 Changes in attitude

Officers commented that there is now greater opportunity for women to compete and operate alongside their male counterparts and that they bring a different perspective to the role of policing. This seems to concur with the findings of Grisoni and Beeby (2007) who suggest that task orientated organisations reduce the impact of gender, particularly in relation to positions of power. As a Force, Force X appears to be 'modern' in its approach to women officers and has adapted the leadership and management style across the Force to become one that respects difference and diversity. There is more evidence of a problem solving and team working approach to police work within Force X than there was in the 1970s and 1980s with officers being valued for their contribution to the role.

Officers with significant length of service commented that as an organisation, improvements have been made in relation to the cultural attitude to women in service and this has greatly improved in recent years. The comment was made that men and women officers have a greater mutual respect for each other's ability and this has developed over the past 20 years as it has become more acceptable for women to fulfil a full and proactive role in policing as documented by Silvestri (2007). This is reflected both nationally and at Force level. However, women appear concerned that there is almost a swing towards more positive discrimination for women and negative discrimination against men. Coincidentally, officers report that the public perception relating to women in police service also appears to have changed and that female officers command equal respect from the community as do their male counterparts. This contradicts the findings by Burke and Mikkelsen (2005) who implied that women were discriminated against more frequently, particularly by colleagues and members of the public, it seems that either their study was flawed, there has been a significant cultural shift between 2005 and 2010 or their research was conducted in within a more parochial setting than that in which Force X exists.

Examples were identified where opportunities have been made for women to gain additional training within the Force in order to encourage them to develop skills in areas where women are traditionally under represented, for example firearms. Women officers welcome this opportunity and state that providing it enables officers to gain the equal competence of male officers that this is a positive thing. However, they felt that if a male officer was in a similar position that they too should be enabled to access additional training in order to compete on a like for like basis. Equity and parity appear to be the aspect that concerns women most within the

Force; echoing Lorber's (2007) sentiment, they wish to be given opportunity without positive discrimination and to be valued for being women and bringing a different perspective to their roles.

The comment was also made that some women may be more suited to particular roles that others may not be competent to fulfil. For example, when discussing specific operational activity such as PSU (Public Support Units), those specialist teams that manage public order incidents, it was acknowledged that size, strength and physical make-up can contribute to the ability for women to be able to perform such a role. One officer commented

"I was told I had to PSU train, up until then I said I am not PSU training. I am fit and strong, but I cannot stand in a line of 20 blokes that are all 14 to 15 stone as I would be the weak link. I am not prepared to be the weak link. I was forced to do it and that is wrong".

Rabe-Hemp (2009) comments upon women's likelihood to be the so called weak link and that their avoidance of aggressive, dominant and physically demanding roles reinforce the gender divide.

The comment was also made that some male officers were also unsuited to PSU work due to their physical stature, an issue raised by Silvestri (2007). This was followed up with a viewpoint of matching strength and ability in such situations to enable the unit to work effectively without a weak link. This was reiterated across the focus groups that women did not want to compete where they were unable to do

so, but where they do wish to be competitive with men; they wanted to be considered upon their own merits and competence rather than by gender. As a consequence, women feel that they have to prove themselves more and work harder to achieve the same levels of respect. This seems to reflect little change from Martin's (1979) initial study into women in policing.

It was gratifying to hear that several officers had received significant support from colleagues and supervisors in their efforts to develop their skills and competences and in some cases achieve promotion. It appears that there are significant pockets of good practice in relation to this within Force X but this is related to individual management style. Where this occurs it should be celebrated and identified as good practice.

7.12 Other contributing factors

Some officers, with longevity of service, identified that to an extent those entering police service today have a different perception of their career opportunities within the Force. They commented that they felt that some entering the service did not see joining the Force as a 30 year commitment (especially with the change in pension rights to 35 years) and therefore, promotion was not a priority to them. On the other hand, some officers with relatively little service indicated that they did see police service as a long term career and had already stated their intention to gain promotion to the next rank at the earliest opportunity.

When questioned in relation to self-confidence several women commented that they felt that females are naturally more reserved and tend to 'put themselves down' Lord and Friday (2003) especially when faced with a job description or list of competences some of which they can do and some which they are not currently skilled to do. Whereas their experiences indicate that their male counterparts tend to put themselves forward for roles and or promotion regardless of any doubt as to their ability to perform certain aspects of the role. This appears to be a cultural aspect of our society, rather than specific to Force X.

Most officers felt that there needed to be a degree of experience and knowledge to enable officers (of both genders) to progress through the ranks. This view is documented by Silvestri (2007). However, it was acknowledged that a degree of flexibility in relation to experience could enable those officers with dependent care issues not to be discriminated against. Examples of good management practice were identified where this has been the case and several officers commented that they have been able to develop their careers as a result of positive and supportive management upon the parts of their immediate supervisors. When questioned, most officers stated that their recent experiences with managers have been positive although it was commented that "*there is the odd dinosaur, but they are few and far between*".

Some officers cited that their social background and upbringing did have some impact in relation to their choice of job roles but this appeared to be a relatively small influencing factor. Most officers commented that their families and friends supported their choice of career and did not regard policing as an inappropriate career choice for women. Again, this seems to contradict existing literature,

particularly Butler's (1990) and (2004) studies that imply that social upbringing does impact upon career choice and power relationships as well as achievement in the work environment.

On occasions the geography of Force X appears to be a contributing factor to officers not pursuing promotion opportunities. This is especially the case for those officers with dependents. The comment was made that if families are settled with children in schools in one county served by the Force there is a reluctance to move to an alternative Division in another county causing upheaval to the entire family. It was felt that apart from the benefits to the increase in pension, the benefits of promotion tend to be limited and therefore, some officers limit their promotion potential themselves through a desire not to become mobile due to rank. Moses Schulz (2003) indicates the importance of mobility, particularly for those aspiring to the most senior positions within organisations.

7.13 Conclusion

In this Chapter I have developed the emergent themes relating to gender, culture and women's career development between the ranks of Police Constable and Inspector derived from the questionnaire, exploring these more widely through the medium of focus groups and thus formed the basis of further discussion in the life-history interviews. The focus groups provided a more detailed overview of the existing situation within Force X thus enabling me to identify some initial structure with regard to the life-history interviews which follow in Chapter 8. Some of the key themes may be specific to Force X and less prevalent in other forces that have a different geographic and demographic structure and more importantly, a different

senior management team Klenke (2003) that may not reflect the progressive views shared by those in Force X.

Some interesting results emanated from the focus groups that appear to contradict some of the existing literature relating to women's experiences in UK policing, thus contributing new knowledge to the study of senior women at work and in particular senior women within policing within the United Kingdom.

In the following Chapter I move to the life-history interviews with senior ranking officers, Inspector to ACPO ranks, where the various discourses identified in the pilot study are further explored. In these interviews the sense and feeling of the discussions shifts, an intangible shift of emphasis upon some of the issues highlighted by the lower ranks. There seems to be an invisible divide between the rank and file female officers and those of Inspector and above. It is almost as if in the one to one interviews the participants more feel secure in their positions and therefore feel more at ease Tomlinson (2004) (2007) discussing their experiences and hopes for the future of women in policing. A further chasm erupts between the Superintending and ACPO ranks and the following Chapter identifies the various discourses that influence such divisions.

Chapter 8 Senior women's life-history interviews

8.1 Introduction

The following Chapter identifies the dominant discourses that shape women's position in policing. So far I have reviewed themes from the focus groups which identified meta-levels of concern. In the following I focus upon the micro-politics of gender within the police setting. I recount the experiences of senior women, Inspector to ACPO ranks, drawing upon the themes that emerged from the questionnaire and focus groups as discussed in the two previous Chapters. Osterlind and Haake (2010, p8) comment that "*Discursive structures are articulatory practices which constitute and systematize social relations*". They comment how discourse analysis forms the basis of analysing systems, processes, structures and interactions and that these constantly shift through both positive and negative functions particularly in relation to gendered organisations.

The following Chapter identifies the meta-discourses of HR policy, practices and the institutionalised behaviours that shapes women's positioning within the police organisation. As outlined in my methodology, Chapter 5, I adopted life-history interviews to explore the various discourses. I begin individual officers' life histories by establishing their original desire to enter the service, what influenced their decision to do so and their career aspirations at the point of entry and encourage them to divulge their distinctive career pathway to date. I explore keystone events in their lives that have influenced their career choice and pathway, including relationships, marriage, children and family responsibilities, the influences of champions and mentors and draw upon the themes identified in the lower ranks. By developing

these key themes I identify five key discourses that provide a unique insight into the lives of senior female officers, these discourses are difference; performance and development, networking, family and flexibility and queen bees and bitches. No other study has been as comprehensive or direct, and as such this thesis provides a unique contribution to the study of women in the criminal justice system. This Chapter reviews women's positioning within the hierarchy and considers how this reflects their behaviours and attitudes in relation to their position within it. I consider the issues between gender and power within the police and the differences between the women in their different ranks. At senior levels women are an elite, yet very visible minority and it is this visibility that dominates their behaviours and attitudes. For this reason any uniquely identifying factors relating to the respondents, such as rank, force, length of service are omitted from this study in order to protect their identity.

Wodak (1997) refers to navigating a pathway through various discourses and that by doing so individuals play a significant part in constructing them. This Chapter will examine the various discourses that influence the actor's response beginning with the relation to their class, education and entry into the service

8.2 The discourse of difference

Some key themes that have been identified in the pilot study by lower ranking officers also are present at senior levels, but to an extent there are subtle differences in relation to the impact they have upon individual women's views in relation to their career progression. Women's experiences are socially, culturally and historically

constituted and this frames a position from which they cannot entirely break free Baxter (2003). There is a degree of fragility relating to women's position within the police agencies resulting in women constraining themselves.

Wodak (1997) comments upon the ability of participants to socially influence their existence thus shaping the occurring discursive events by linking power relations to such events. Metcalfe (2008) develops this notion further suggesting that the links between power and gender impacts upon performance and results in "*creating conditions where a reflexive approach to professional development will become impossible*" (p453). What appear to be significant barriers at the ranks of Sergeant and Inspector, such as child care and work-life balance issues become less influential at the more senior ranks. This is particularly in relation to the ability to control working patterns as most senior officers tend not to work the rigid shift systems required of front line, operational officers. Senior officers appear to have greater flexibility in their working practices; they can plan their diaries to an extent, subject to operational requirement, and so can more easily accommodate some of the domestic issues that challenge lower ranking, front line officers. Even within the higher ranks, there appears to be a further distinct division between perceptions as to what the barriers to female career progression are endorsing the views held by Vinnecombe and Singh (2002) about the raising of the level of the glass ceiling. There appears to be a significant division in attitude between Inspector, Chief Inspector ranks and Superintendents, with a further division between Superintendent ranks and ACPO officers. There appears to be a substantial chasm between the lower ranked officers and ACPO, which for many women appears to be too deep and too significant to negotiate, but not because of lack of capability. There seems to be

a genuine lack of desire by the majority of women to sacrifice everything else for their career O'Connor (2001). In simple terms, women appear to value other aspects of their lives more greatly than career, which many cite as being a luxury afforded to them by their gender Weyer (2006).

This study found that for the ranks of Inspector and Chief Inspector the issues relating to shift working, costs of training and child care are similar to those identified in the pilot study which included PC to Inspector ranks. There follows a change in the cited barriers at the higher ranks, possibly related to age, length of service and the fact that these officers tend not to have very young child dependents, those who do have children tend to have teenagers or adult children. Although the feelings relating to guilt so clearly identified by Mavin (2000) (2001) and Gatrell (2010) still remain, these feelings appear to be minimised with emphasis being shifted to guilt displacement, in that the job is important and therefore justifies the sacrifices made. One Superintendent commented upon the necessity to identify what she termed as '*immovable events*', such as birthdays and family holidays over '*moveable events*', such as not taking teenagers to sports practice and arranging for her partner to fulfil this role. Her argument was based upon the premise that in this case her teenager could be negotiated with thus enabling a degree of freedom to undertake her role and dispelling some of the intensity of the feeling of guilt.

Several women commented upon their desire to be recognised as women performing effectively in their roles and making a significant contribution to the Service. The comment was made that they were saddened that they were no longer referred to as WPCs and that the uniform no longer gave them the choice to wear a skirt,

particularly when appearing in court. This national trend to blur the differences between the genders for some is disappointing which clearly refutes Vinnecombe and Singh's (2002) suggestion that women prefer the anonymity of androgyny. Many women wished to celebrate their successes and were proud that they were women that have achieved the level that they have due to their competence and ability. The following comment highlights this factor:

"I am a woman and it needs to be recognised, because I have skills as a woman that a man hasn't got and vice versa. I don't want to be recognised as equal, I want to be recognised for what I am and we are almost going too far the other way. They have made us all PCs and you can't recognise if it is a man or a woman coming to see you because they have changed our numbers. Maybe I'm old fashioned".

The focus shifts to more subtle issues such as role mentors, competition, opportunities such as secondments and the PNAC (Police National Assessment Centre) programme for senior officers, which continues to be centrally sourced at Bramshill, the police staff college in Hampshire. It appears that the leap from Superintendent ranks to ACPO is significant, with an increased work load, a more strategic and political role which for many women proves a leap too far reflecting Sneed's (2007) stance. The results of this study imply that for the majority of women it is a straight choice between career and quality of life. It seems that women value safety, security a quality home life and a degree of work-life balance that causes them to deselect themselves from the opportunity to take up an ACPO role. There were only two ACPO officers who participated in this study, both identifying the significant sacrifices they and their families have made in order for them to take

on the responsibility of an ACPO role. Both documented the difficulties they encountered in achieving their status referring to their experiences as a 'battle' Olsson (2000). The other officers who participated in the interviews, with the exception of one officer, whose acceleration through the ranks is notable, commented that they had no desire to achieve ACPO as they considered the likely toll upon their health, well-being and family life was not worth the stress, responsibility or remuneration they identified in currently serving ACPO officers. Many women commented that they pitied their male counterparts who are expected to develop their careers towards ACPO level and remarked how the issues that prevent them from making that leap to ACPO is as difficult for men, particularly those with families too. This reinforces Collinson's (2003) comments in relation to adopting the role of the conformist self and it is reasonable to assume that for many women the refusal to capitulate to the conformist self inhibits their ability to leap the chasm to the ACPO ranks. It seems that society appears to accept that men will sacrifice everything for a career thus fuelling the notion of hegemonic masculinity.

Some familiar themes perpetuate throughout the rank system and the concern that a lack of strategic work force planning is a significant concern that is frequently expressed. Throughout this Chapter the key discourses will be explored giving examples of officers' comments and views in relation to the barriers and concerns they have in relation to pursuing a senior career path within the service. There are similarities to the themes identified in the focus groups, but frequently there is different emphasis given to the themes.

Arguably senior police women play at promoting feminism through their interactions, language and their discursive situation, that of patriarchal or male dominance. Baxter (2003) implies that women are empowered by their socially constructed perspective and that the language they choose to adopt offers both strength and freedom on the one hand, but may elicit their downfall if the choice of language is deemed inappropriate to the situation by observers. According to Butler (2004) this is further influenced by socially constructed paradigms in relation to societal culture and ethnic origin. The notion of the management of creating a visible and professional status is reinforced by language, dress codes and other organisational and cultural symbolism resulting in a blurring of the genders in order to gain acceptance. Collinson (2003) comments upon the relative freedom of individual choice in relation to creating professional status yet recognises that in doing so individuals may find themselves in what he terms as a “*highly threatening*” (p531) situation resulting in insecurity particularly in gendered organisations thus reinforcing socially constructed imagery in relation to self and status. He suggests that the adoption of symbols, artefacts and rituals enable individuals to gain a degree of security in what would initially appear to be an insecure environment. Such symbols may be the wearing of cravats and ties, trousers rather than skirts and the abandonment of overtly feminine apparel with women moving to a more subtle approach to retaining accoutrements that clearly identify the feminine gender. By adopting such external and visible male symbols females gain a degree of acceptance into a male dominated world, suppressing, yet inwardly retaining, their femininity by developing a multiplicity of behaviours and attributes which vary according to the discursive situation. One officer, when discussing more senior ranking female

officers' behaviours gave an insightful comment relating to Collinson's views upon this. She stated:

"I think a lot of women emulate their male counterparts, think they have got to be like male managers. They are often feminine in appearance, but I think that femininity belies a very masculine style of leadership. They are bullies and hard, prickly and treat people in an awful way. They are male characteristics".

A few officers commented that senior ranking female officers did appear to utilise their position and power inappropriately adopting the less desirable male traits and identities resulting in alienation from either gender as these women were considered to be 'dangerous' and 'manipulative' reflecting Mavin's (2006b) notion of female misogyny by using their position of power and their sex to maintain fear and control. Yet I found little evidence of such women, perhaps they chose not to participate in this research, or maybe they are part of the myth that reinforces the notion of hegemonic masculinity with both sexes playing to the existing cultural norms of the service and therefore perpetuating the notion that powerful and senior women are undesirable.

Without exception, the women officers who participated in this study were white, British and considered their social origins to be either working/lower or middle class. There were no black or ethnic minority officers represented in this study, an interesting factor itself, not one volunteered to participate. This could be due to the very limited representation of BME officers at senior ranks or a desire to remain

anonymous as minority groups often aspire to blend rather than raise their profile in order to gain a degree of acceptance. Statistics published by the Home Office indicate that BME strength is improving, but the current statistics fail to identify gender at each specific rank. Coaker's (2008) report relating to BME career progression focuses in particular upon the barriers to BME officers in general, offering little distinction between the genders. In 2010 the statistics identifying BME strength by rank published also fail to indicate the gender ratio:

Table 10 Minority ethnic police officer strength (including Central Service secondments) by rank as at 31 March 2010, England and Wales
Rank Percentage of minority ethnic officer strength

ACPO	3.9
Chief Superintendents	3.0
Superintendents	3.3
Chief Inspectors	3.1
Inspectors	3.1
Sergeants	3.4
Constables	5.0
Total minority ethnic strength	4.6

(Source <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/hosb1410.pdf> accessed 10/09/10)

Given the emphasis that the Home Office and police service places upon improving representation by gender and ethnic origin, it is surprising that the statistics are not divided into gender and ethnicity more specifically as this fails to offer a truly accurate representation of the current status of women and ethnic minority women in particular. It appears that the only true reflection of BME women's status is within

individual force ADRs which are collected and collated by the Home Office, but seemingly these particular statistics are not produced for public consumption.

The influence of family and friends appears to have had little impact upon women's career choices or aspirations to progress their careers refuting the views of Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Powell and Butterfield (2003) who suggest that women are strongly influenced by early social interaction. Only one officer stated that immediate family, mother and brother, had been police officers and that this influenced her choice of vocation. Families and friends, on the whole, supported female officers' choice of occupation, despite several officers joining the service during periods of social unrest or high profile policing incidents such as the murders of WPC Yvonne Fletcher in 1984, PC Keith Blakelock in 1985 and the 'troubles' in Northern Ireland particularly between 1969 and 1997. Where officer's families did express reservation, this tended to be minimal and no officer commented that their families or friends were totally prejudiced against their career choice. A family's negative reaction to career choice is usually related to the perception that the service tends to be regarded as a career for men, rather than anxiety about safety or ability to perform the role. In the majority of cases the reaction of family and friends appeared '*neutral*' to the choice of career. Of all of the officers interviewed, not one appeared to have been unsupported in their career choice by friends and family, yet few came from families that had any history of policing within the immediate family circle; where there was any history it tended to be a distant relative or family friend. Officers that had significant length of service commented how in the past it was difficult for women to be selected for entry to the service with one officer commenting it took her in excess of 2 years to be accepted into her chosen force,

with the comment *“it was very disheartening, but I just kept on trying and eventually got there”*. This seems to concur with Christopher and Wojda (2008) who suggest that direct prejudice occurs against women in senior ranked positions.

The educational level of the majority of the women who participated in this study upon entry to the service was at first degree level, with one or two minor exceptions concurring with Bryett's (1999) view that there is a need for senior officers to be more highly educated. Educational experience seems to play a significant part in relation to career aspirations a view shared by Decker and Huckerbee (2002) and this contradicts the view of Liu and Wilson (2001) who considered women to have fewer qualifications than similar male applicants. For one officer in particular who did not have a university education and had been a product of the state schooling system, she felt that early education played a significant part in her career choice and potential progression. When recalling her discussions with careers advisers at school with regard to long term future career choices the options given were traditionally, stereotypically female, for example a teacher or a nurse, but not a headmistress or head of an NHS trust. She comments:

“Most police officers have ‘O’, ‘A’ levels and a first degree. I think schooling is very influential upon your career aspirations. Your expectations are kept quite low. If you go to private school you might get the same number of ‘A’ levels but your expectations in life seem to be different. I think education has a role to play in that shaping of ambition as well”.

She went on to comment that this association with perceived elite educational establishments continues, particularly if having gained access via the High Potential

Development Scheme (HPDS) or by gradual career progression through the ranks to the senior officers programme(s) at Bramshill:

“When I went down to Bramshill, Oxford & Cambridge were very well represented. Those people really had the self-belief that they could do it. I don’t know if the education system has something to do with what level you are expected to achieve”.

This officer’s view seems to agree with White’s (2006) interpretation of the mechanistic training methods engaged by police forces and reinforces the notion that visibility in relation to academic acumen or competence is a key factor in progression, especially for females.

Women officers acknowledge that on occasions public perception remains fairly parochial in relation to women attaining rank and authority within policing, particularly in rural counties, where white, middle class society prevails, reinforcing Wilson’s (2003) notion of stereotypical job roles. One officer comments that her appearance often appeared to affect public confidence in her ability, she states:

“The general public would say the male is superior to the female and the dark haired female is superior to the blonde. If you have dark hair and wear glasses and you’re female you might be bright”.

In relation to public expectation she has also received comments such as *“what have they sent you for”* when attending operational incidents, despite being the senior

commanding officer on the scene. This is not an isolated experience, with the majority of the women commenting that public expectation is that senior ranking officers are indeed male as suggested by Brown (2000). Another specific example given was when a female Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) contacted another force in relation to an on-going inter-force investigation. A junior member of staff passed her onto her counterpart in the other force upon which he answered the phone saying “*You alright mate*” making the assumption that because she was an officer of rank, she must be male. It seems that wider society still anticipates officers of rank to be male, reinforcing the gender stereotype.

Concern was expressed that if policing moved to the American style of policing where senior police chiefs are elected, then this would be particularly detrimental for female officers due to the entrenched nature of public perception in relation to women in policing. Other female stereotyping persists within society Burke and Mikkelson (2005) which is evidenced by the following statement from a Superintendent:

“Me as a blonde female? I would probably not stand a chance against my grey haired counterpart who looks like a lawyer, the more mature male. I don’t think the public are as diverse as they like to think they are. Black females don’t stand a chance”.

Interestingly, she identifies that being female and black is a further barrier to progression within the service and acceptance by the public. This resonates with Collinson’s (2003) view, that men place importance in relation to their status and

position by being respected by other men. In policing these constructs are clearly gendered, racial and classed, reinforcing the fragmented and contradictory lives of women. Women who work to carve out professional identities are always positioned as '*other*' to normal constructions of hegemonic masculinity.

8.3 Performance and development discourse

This section reflects the multi layered discursive hierarchy and structure of the service and identifies how women understand and contextualise behaviours and procedures and how this influences gendered performance. The socially constructed paradigms identified in the literature review indicate the fluidity of the performance and development discourse and how this shifts according to rank and seniority. Arguably this is reflected in the service's move from the title 'police force' to 'police service' shifting the emphasis from its military origins to a more feminine stance, that of providing a responsive service to society rather than one focussed upon enforcement. There can be debate as to whether this was a conscious movement towards emasculating the service or whether it was an acknowledgment of the changes brought about by the inclusion of women and other minority groups within the ranks.

Butler (2004) refers to the judgements made in relation to performance and how exceptional performance is associated with masculine synonyms such as 'hard' or 'strong' perpetuating the gendered perspective. Collinson (2003) identifies performance and gendered constructions of performance reinforcing masculinity in the work place. He highlights the competitive field in which such gendered activities act out their part suggesting that long-hours, mobility and commitment in relation to

corporate identity frequently results in older men withdrawing from the performance and career treadmill resulting in insecurity. Equally, such parallels might be drawn in relation to senior women in a masculine environment where there is a requirement to develop adaptive behaviour in order to conform to the existing culture. A direct example of this was given by one officer in particular:

I found that I had to adapt significantly to suit where I was working as an Inspector posted to tactical firearms. I had to become aggressive in my management style. I felt I had to put on different suit to go to work. It's about survival, but you must never show your vulnerability. I would go into briefings feeling physically sick.

For many of the women interviewed their time of entry to the service was during a period when the numbers of female officers were significantly less than the present day, the mid-eighties or earlier. Some were the pioneers in their forces and frequently their probationary period and allocation of what would now be a designated tutor constable was influential upon their self-confidence in particular. Women's' experiences were varied, with some officers identifying good experiences in their early career with others falling victim to the macho-male dominant, aggressive behaviours describe by Morgan (1981) that were prevalent at that time. Whilst none of the women interviewed appeared to have fallen foul of or victim to inappropriate initiations such as 'bottom stamping' there was evidence of inappropriate behaviour and language with one officer recounting her experience as a probationer as:

“The old barrack room culture when you’d have got a slap on the arse – that old, old canteen culture which was horrendous”

Some women experienced inappropriate comments with one specific example being:

“I effing hate women in the job you lot should be at home chained to the kitchen sink”.

This comment was made by a male colleague to a female officer on her first day of duty when she was crewed with him to go out on patrol. She commented that this type of behaviour is unlikely to occur in present day policing, although she does not doubt that some male officers may well covertly adopt this view, but fail to express it due to the codes of conduct and policies that exist within forces in relation to sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour. The use of such derogatory language demeans women who might choose either to respond to and challenge it, or to ignore such incidences, resulting in women becoming ‘othered’. Metcalfe (2008) comments how *“stereotypical language associated with masculinity”* (p454) produces what she terms as *“gendered hierarchies”* (p454) resulting in the establishment of masculine power bases a view similarly shared by Collinson (2003).

Similarly, another officer recounted two incidents of sexual harassment in her early years, referring to the individuals concerned as ‘dinosaurs’ but she was quick to point out that the service had changed and the type of ‘banter’ is now much less sexually orientated and inappropriate behaviour is more usually challenged and dealt with more openly. This same officer made the comment that although she believes the behaviour in the lower ranks in relation to inappropriate behaviour has been

addressed, she recognises that as a senior officer her understanding of what occurs on a daily basis is limited due to her position within the organisation. She recognises that senior managers are often unaware of what is actually happening at operational level. However, her attempt to address this issue, should it occur, is to chair a diversity group and encourage female officers to contact her and she describes herself as a *'figurehead'*.

Another officer, upon passing her Sergeant's exam was greeted onto shift with the comment by her male Sergeant:

"Well folks, this Cindy doll actually has a brain"!

And

"How's a wee girl like you going to control a section of men"?

Patronising comments such as these undermine women's ability to perform in policing fuelling Connell's (1987) notion of hegemonic masculinity. The anecdotal stories of inappropriate behaviour appear to reflect a time that the service has seemingly put behind it, the general feeling was that such overtly inappropriate behaviour and language is no longer in common use, although senior officers are not so naïve as to assume that it has been completely eradicated.

For some officers the entry into police culture was challenging, with a naive acceptance of the inappropriate behaviour or *'canteen culture'* prevalent in the early Eighties.

“I mistook banter for attention and thought it was because they liked me and I was part of it, but there were constant remarks about your appearance or private life, but I thought they were accepting me as part of the gang. It was quite hard. I wouldn't accept it now. At that point I thought it was fine and that was just how it was”.

Clearly this officer desired to fit into her environment and as such played the game reinforcing her marginalised state Dick (2004). Comments such as these in some way fuelled the determination of successful, senior women by encouraging them to overcome the prejudices of their peers and to challenge inappropriate behaviour in the future, not only for the benefit of themselves, but also for their sisters who, possibly due to their status in the rank system, may well be less able to challenge inappropriate behaviour. Other anecdotal incidents of inappropriate behaviour included a senior male officer insinuating that the proffering sexual favours might enhance career aspirations. In this particular incident the female officer was heavily pregnant, but this seemed not to deter her senior officer. She commented that for years after this event, the male officer would *'blank her'* and she felt the incident impeded her progress at job opportunities and promotion boards up until the point of his retirement from the service. Even though he may not have been directly on the promotion board, his influence appeared extensive resulting in a highly gendered perception in relation to performance which marginalised this officer.

Early recognition by and support of senior colleagues appears to be of paramount importance to enabling women in particular to carve out a career path. The issue in relation to self-confidence appears dominant with every woman interviewed

highlighting this as something they struggled with. It seems that due to gendered constructions women appear to need the informal support, or 'permission' to engage in promotion and career progression Osterlind and Haake (2010). This notion is illustrated below.

"Confidence – I think it's a female thing. I find that women tend to need a little shove; you need permission to go for the next one (rank). I've been helped enormously by Superintendents. Chief Officer Mentors are important. It's knowing that I'm ready. You kind of need someone to sit you down and say you are ready now. Women need permission. Women won't give themselves permission until they are 110%. Men have better self-belief. It's that banter and networking thing".

And

"When the Chief Superintendent boards came up, my inclination was not to go for them, but I've also heard myself say I'll see what the Chief Officers say to me. When you get to the higher ranks, it's an equal opportunities process, but you know fine well that they are not going to put you there if they don't think it's good for the organisation, because they can't afford to. They are not going to put people there that they can't hand over a huge responsibility to. So you need their permission".

Another officer highlights the competitive nature of the promotion boards:

Getting promoted is very competitive. They (men) do bullshit more than women. There needs a change in culture, but that will take years.

There was consensus in relation to the view that men appear more confident when selecting themselves for the promotion boards and frequent reference to men 'bullshitting' their way through promotion panels whereas all of the women, without exception, expressed reticence in relation to being able to offer sufficient and appropriate evidence of competence when attempting to gain the next rank. Evidence was also offered by a number of officers who, when working alongside male colleagues on projects or strategic issues would identify solutions to problems or to develop new ways of working and the male colleague would vociferously take the credit for the achievement. An example of this was given by one officer in particular, who, when newly promoted to the next rank, was placed into what Ryan and Haslam (2005) refer to as a precarious position alongside a newly promoted, but senior ranking, male colleague. Both colleagues worked together with a dysfunctional team where the female officer instigated new practices and procedures through negotiation and consultation with the team resulting in significant operational improvement. Once this was recognised by senior ranks within the force the senior male colleague took the credit for the improvements by discussing loudly what had happened at every opportunity, whilst the female officer remained silent and overlooked Callahan, Hasler and Tolson (2005). Her comment was:

"I didn't want to be boastful. Officer X talks about it as if he's done it. I was gob-smacked!"

There was frequent reference to male officers *'building their own portfolio of evidence'* to gain competitive advantage at promotion panels or acceptance onto the PNAC programme. There seemed to be a genuine desire by women to make improvements to working practices and conditions for the benefit of others. The women concurred that when considering promotion prospects male officers in similar positions appear to be merely collecting evidence that *'ticks the boxes'* in relation to the key performance indicators for promotion, particularly in relation to problem-solving, leadership and diversity issues.

Clearly such episodes relate to women's self-efficacy within the work environment Morash and Haar (1995) and Lord and Friday (2003). The female officers regularly used words like *'authentic'* and *'genuine'* in respect of their achievements and without exception they seemed to hold very strong feelings relating to integrity.

When identifying the importance of having a senior, female role model one officer comments:

"Overwhelmingly having a female role model is good. Then, not all female officers are cut out for the higher ranks, the same as not all males are. I think what might be useful is if female officers had a female officer of a higher rank. It gives you a kick up the bum sometimes".

The issue relating to the discourse about limited access to appropriate mentors was frequently cited with suggestions as to how the service could widen its mentoring capacity by working with partner agencies in the criminal justice system:

“We have to have greater access to all female ACPO officers. Mentoring should be national and external to the force. We have done some work with the prison service. They are where we were 20 years ago and the shared knowledge and learning is unbelievable and I’ve said why can’t we swap roles for 6 weeks and shadow someone. But then it comes down to pennies and who is going to backfill your post etc. There is definitely potential to work with our partner agencies or other forces regionally”.

This officer highlights the problem associated with obtaining an appropriate mentor. It appears to suggest that although many ACPO officers, male and female, have a desire to mentor aspiring officers; often the burden of their workload prevents them from fulfilling this role to any great extent. Unless the service recognises the significance mentoring has upon developing the next generation of ACPO officers, the situation described below will be perpetuated.

“In recent years one of the ACCs has offered to be a mentor but often cancels. Unless you are a really determined individual or on HPDS you get little support”.

It seems that mentoring within the service tends to be internal to individual forces rather than regionally or nationally or inter-agency, thus placing a burden on a limited number of individuals with little chance of successful and long lasting working relationships being established.

For officers with any length of service, there can be no doubt that there was significant, overt prejudice within the service at that period in time in relation to gender. An example of this is:

"At point of moving to next rank it was one rank at a time. I've never thought I want to reach the rank of X. The first couple of times I applied I came second in the exam and didn't get through the boards. At that time, very few women got through and you just accepted that. I was put forward as highly recommended at the time and I didn't get through on the base of sex. But there were very few women at the time, probably 3 in 100".

It seems that the key to successful promotion lies in the recognition and championing by a senior ranking officer, even if that is the immediate line manager. Coincidental to this is the ability for the aspirational officer to develop adaptive behaviours Osterlind and Haake (2010) to conform to the cultures and sub-cultures that exist within the organisation's promotion practices and procedures. This applies particularly at the lower ranks, and for that senior officer to begin to raise the profile of the individual in question. Without the championing by the senior officer the pool of talent remains latent with many potentially excellent officers not gaining the opportunity to develop their careers. One officer comments, that as a PC seeking a change in job role to reduce the monotony of their existing role the influence of another higher ranking officer was paramount to the opportunity for her to begin to progress her career resulting in meta-discourses. She comments:

“Someone on my job interview panel pointed me out as a high potential officer then the force started to take an interest so I got onto the HPDS Scheme after 8 years”.

In relation to the HPDS there appear to be negative connotations for officers who adopt this route. Culturally the organisation sees accelerated promotion as a negative experience. One officer states in relation to her experience on the HPDS:

“You definitely had a label attached to you, people suddenly think that all you’re interested in is yourself and your own career and you don’t give a knack about anyone else. People might be very nice to your face. I know they talk, I’ve heard them talking about other people”.

This is not an isolated comment. Others include:

“At that point (when accepted onto the HPDS) you were labelled as something a little bit different; therefore you start to fill those shoes”.

And

“I came with label of graduate I didn’t realise that was such a big deal. That was my ‘label’ it seemed to be a big deal. I did end up applying and getting on HPDS. I was treated differently, although not at the station, my shift who were all hairy arsed coppers were all pleased for me”.

It seems that until the service addresses the negative associations with the HPDS officers will fail to utilise this opportunity to develop their careers due to the

connotations and ostracising from their peers. This is not unique to women; male officers on the HPDS scheme are equally labelled. The culture continues to sustain the (misguided) notion that HPDS candidates are not time served police officers and therefore incapable of performing effectively during operational activity a view endorsed by Osterlind and Haake (2010). Interestingly, the comment above indicates that the shift colleagues the female officer was allocated to celebrated her success at a local level, yet there still seemed to be a wider reticence in relation to the HPDS in relation to her comments about being a graduate.

There is no doubt that the HPDS scheme should be demanding, its purpose is to identify the elite and to accelerate their promotion through the ranks. However, it appears that the expectations of the service and the burdens placed upon officers following this pathway may in itself be discriminatory towards females, who may well also have the added responsibility of nurturing family as well as their police role. In relation to the high standards demanded by the service in relation to HPDS candidates, the comment was made:

“There was an expectation you will achieve ACPO, it's now Superintendent. You're assessed against those competencies. There are very high demands and you get kicked off the scheme if you fail your exams more than once”.

In relation to an officer's experience upon the scheme she identified the struggle to achieve although she acknowledges that the system has improved in terms of process:

“HPDS – this is where I sound a bit bitter – I felt the force didn’t really support me. You applied independently of the force to the Home Office then passed the process which was a big achievement, but you came back to force and despite having been selected it was all down to your Sergeant and what they thought of it which was of course, not a lot. It was almost as if you weren’t wanted – we’re going to test you and we really want you to fail. This has changed, now you are supported, I’ve seen it and done it for other people. Everything you did – you were given a task to do with no explanation and just expected to do it”.

This same officer commented that she had no sponsor whilst she was on the scheme, something she felt was vital to success. Male colleagues on the scheme were sponsored and this enabled them to have the support and guidance of a mentor. As a result of not gaining a sponsor this officer withdrew from the scheme, effectively truncating her career opportunities and chose to concentrate on her family life.

“There was a woman who had gone before me she had a terribly hideous time on the scheme – I met her once – she was pulling up the ladder after her”.

However, it seems that the perception of HPDS remains fundamentally flawed.

“Funnily enough one of my contemporaries on the course is still in Inspector rank – he hasn’t achieved high rank either”.

The success rate appears to have been low in relation to the level of personal investment resulting in officers not regarding the scheme as a career opportunity.

“The scheme was badly run anyway, we were the last cohort through before they changed it, out of the 20 of us I think only one has reached ACPO”.

Another aspect emanating from discussions with officers about the HPDS programme is that frequently officers are promoted or assigned into roles that they would not necessarily have chosen to follow. For example, one officer had the intention of pursuing a CID pathway, as this type of work interested her, but as she had been identified as a potential HPDS candidate she was advised to follow a different, more operational route. She uses the words *‘pushed down the route’* which clearly identifies that her choice was overcome by her senior officer who commented that she was *‘ridiculous, you will go for promotion’*. Despite this, she feels lucky that other people have recognised her ability and supported her in her attempts to gain promotion.

Few women entered the service with particularly high career aspirations Yim and Bond (2002), even those who have achieved ACPO ranks. One officer did identify that the service appeared to offer a structured organisation with potential for promotion and this was one of the reasons for her joining. The women stated that they did not necessarily have a career plan, rather progressed sequentially and incrementally as a result of opportunity rather than design reinforcing Mavin’s (2001) view that women’s career trajectories are frequently distracted due to their gender. One officer comments:

"I didn't think I wanted to be Chief Constable when I started, I just thought I can do that, or I wouldn't mind trying that. I could go for promotion after 2 years so I got promoted after 2 ½ years and just kept studying. This was before OSPRE so you could qualify more quickly and got through first time. I'd been in 3 years and got promoted to Sergeant then promoted to Inspector at the end of 1992".

Other officers also comment that their career paths tended to be opportunistic Mavin (2000) (2001), particularly in relation to taking on the non-traditional female policing roles, such as traffic, or CID, or drugs related roles. Traditionally female officers have engaged in female orientated work such as child abuse, women's issues and headquarters roles. It appears that in order to be truly successful women have to *'fight for the big jobs, the really difficult jobs'* and to place themselves in precarious positions Ryan and Haslam (2005). Officers frequently refer to being *"given big jobs with high profile roles"*. In the 1980s there is evidence to suggest that women were not promoted as quickly as males with frequent reference to being *"passed over at boards"* Edwards et al (1996) and Meyerson and Fletcher (2000) resulting in some women being in a position where they could not be promoted to the next rank for several years. On the other hand, officers felt that their gender did sometimes reduce the likelihood of them even passing a paper sift. The suggestion was made that paper sifts for promotion should be anonymous or even out-sourced in order to make the process fairer as each candidate attempting a board is already known to the panel and the belief is that this results in nepotistic appointments rather than appointments gained on true merit. There were several suggestions that promotion at senior ranks was usually linked to who Linehan (2001) rather than what you knew and the

beneficial connections with more senior ranking officers was essential. One officer even referred to the promotion board system as being '*corrupt*' suggesting that on occasions individuals might be '*blacklisted*' for not conforming to a Chief Officer's view. She commented:

"Nepotism is alive and well."

Women do not shy away from taking responsibility, but they comment that their methods of dealing with that responsibility differ to males Klenke (2003). Often the comment is that their approach is '*less testosterone driven*', more people orientated using softer, people management skills. There is a general recognition that breadth of experience, particularly operational is vital for success at boards.

Sometimes women are allocated '*token*' roles Kanter (1977), Archbold and Moses Schultz (2008), Osterlind and Haake (2010). These are often high profile and usually male dominated. So called token roles might include senior roles in firearms, road policing (or traffic) and other similar type of operational support service roles. Women assigned to such roles are frequently placed in very challenging situations and are constantly '*tested*' or blamed for restructuring of departments that may coincide with such actions. Women frequently talked about having to prove their competence and having to out-perform their male counterparts, this theme has occurred in both the focus groups and the in-depth interviews. One woman comments upon her determination and excitement at being promoted into such a role:

“The fact that I was getting a specialist department as a female was like, bring it on, I’m absolutely ecstatic”!

As the promotion system for Inspector ranks and above is reliant upon boards where a panel is formed and applicants are paperwork sifted prior to short list selection, there were a few anecdotal incidents where women have as Cornelius and Skinner (2005) noted been directly discriminated against. Due to the specific nature of the particular examples which could potentially identify individuals’ exact examples will not be presented within this thesis. Although superficially the promotion system appears to be a fair system based upon competence, there appear to be occasional incidents where some nepotistic behaviour appears to be practised. Equally, where quotas in specific units or work activities were identified and where under-represented groups existed these too were felt to be particularly detrimental to women. All of the women expressed that they desired promotion based upon their ability and competence not because of their gender Christopher and Wojda (2008).

For some women they may naturally achieve their potential at the lower or medium level ranks. It appears that for certain individuals direct life choices terminate their desire to progress to the senior ranks Mavin (2001). This relates not only to family life as previously discussed, but also to the enjoyment and challenge of their existing role.

“I met my husband around the time that I was working in diversity which was turgid then I went to the force control room and that was fantastic and I thought I’m having a really good time as an Inspector why do I want to be a

Chief Inspector? There was no monetary incentive and I couldn't see myself pushing on to Superintendent. I was really enjoying myself at Inspector level and thought I had got there and had reconciled myself that others would get above me".

It appears that in some cases, women self-evaluate their position in life, as suggested by Liu and Wilson (2001), not just focussing upon career, but taking into consideration other issues, such as health, happiness and work-life balance. Perhaps the desire to remain in a competitive environment gives way to a more intrinsically rewarding way of life, with status and responsibility taking a back seat.

"I then had the focus and stability in my life which endorsed the decision I had made career wise. I didn't have to rely on my job for my identity. My priorities had already started to change from work to fitness, running, and sport. I was happy with what I was doing outside of work as well as work and had found a nice balance – the icing on the cake was a stable relationship. I had had another couple of abortive attempts at promotion just for the hell of it".

As identified in the pilot study, the issue in relation to proving competence Kerber et al (1977) is a recurrent theme. There is no doubt that the service places great emphasis upon competence and in particular in the operational environment. As discussed in the focus groups, career paths that follow the specialist pathways appear detrimental to career progression.

“Every time I changed role I had to re-prove myself. What is the point of changing role to broaden my experience to make me a better senior officer when you have to go back to the beginning? I had all this breadth of work, but might well have been newly promoted – I found this really frustrating”.

One officer specifically commented about the need for all ranks departments and roles to be seen as all part of as she called it *“the police family”*. She emphasised the importance of uniformed, lower ranking officers and how more senior, specialist roles are reliant upon the lower ranks providing a vital service across the range of disciplines through the shift system. She raised the issue of elitism Welch et al (2002), particularly in relation to more glamorous roles, such as CID, but pointed out that without the uniformed PC arresting criminals on the front line, there would be no role for CID. Although her comments were not specifically gender related, there is no doubt that this officer raised an important point into the cultural behaviours that manifest themselves internally within the service, the *‘them and us’* culture. Her insight suggests that there are various factions within the service due to deep rooted cultural behaviours and attitudes and one in particular relates to gender

In Chapter 7 criticism of the OSPRE promotion methodology for the lower ranks of Sergeant and Inspector was raised by the pilot study and the focus groups. This was also identified by more senior ranking women. One officer who is currently an OSPRE role actor and assessor commented upon its subjectivity in relation to Part II of the process and the flaws that exist within it. She explained that although assessors use a checklist there can be subjectivity at the point where assessors rate

candidates in relation to the scalars. The reliance of human interpretation can result in quality candidates being missed. She comments:

“To be truthful, I don’t think that the best people get through”.

She suggested that a fairer process could be introduced by videoing the OSPRE Part II scenarios enabling dip sampling of the video and audio tapes which would provide a more robust quality assurance system.

Concern was raised about the need to continuously develop competence in a variety of roles and to produce documentary evidence in order to attain promotion at boards. The issue of people jumping from one role to another in order to ‘tick’ boxes to show they have a wide range of experience across roles was commented upon by several officers. This linked to the earlier comments by the focus group participants in Chapter 7 who shared similar concerns in relation to lack of commitment to the job (or specific role) and the de-skilling of officers in order to gain promotion issues raised by Metcalfe and Dick (2002) and Dick and Cassell (2002) in particular.

Time to produce such evidence also appeared problematic with heavy work burdens, combined with family life, women in particular struggle to find time to produce the necessary documentation to evidence their occupational competence. Cortis and Casaar (2005) clearly identified such difficulties in relation to work-life balance issues. Resilience to what officers term as ‘*knock-backs*’ in relation to promotion seems to be a key factor in gaining successful promotion, particularly when the selection criteria are met, yet women are apparently overlooked time and again. One

officer commented that she felt women were less resilient to negative promotion experiences, partly because of their nature and lack of self-confidence. She comments:

“Once women have got the knock-back they are not as tenacious, it’s a confidence issue. They think I can’t do this. I’m going to throw in the towel because I’m not one of the boys. I’ve got the kids, home life, I can’t put up with this every year”.

It seems that some women feel that the promotion system is weighted against them because of their gender a view that concurs with Christopher and Wojda (2008).

At the opposite end of the promotion scale there is the Police National Assessment Centre (PNAC) process for senior officers. This assessment process identifies and prepares future ACPO officers. The continuance of the PNAC course at Bramshill appears to be problematic, particularly for those officers in forces not located close to Hampshire, linking to Collinson’s (2003) view upon mobility being a key aspect of achieving senior rank, as well as the duration of the programme. A senior officer elicits some of the problems she perceives with the current programme:

“The reduction of the command course (PNAC) to weeks rather than months is good, but there must be better ways of doing the course, getting together for 2/3 days then going back to force and putting it into practice. There has to be cleverer ways of doing the strategic command course, it’s a big turn off to males and females. Some people just rule themselves out. So few people

are prepared to move house or force. ACPO are becoming a lot more hard-nosed and you have to go where the service sends you. For females that is an absolute disaster. I would never have applied if I would have had to move. Why would I want to give all of my life up just to become an ACC? I always put family first”.

This statement highlights several key factors that will disenfranchise women of the notion of considering promotion to ACPO. There is the issue of the duration and location of the programme. The method of learning can also be called into question. Clearly, the adult learning cycle is not reflected in the structure of the programme requiring officers to remain in the ‘classroom’ setting for weeks, rather than having opportunity to directly implement newly learnt skills. This officer also raises the issue of mobility. This too can link back to socially constructed paradigms that women are mothers, nurturers and home builders Cortis and Cassar (2005), Gatrell (2010), (2011). The requirement to be mobile at senior ranks for many officers, both male and female is prohibitive especially when taking into consideration care for children, elderly relatives and the investment people make in their homes and lifestyles Collinson (2003).

8.4 The discourse of networking

Gaston and Alexander (1997) and Metcalfe and Dick (2002) both highlight the necessity for women to be able to engage with other women within policing. The establishment of networks, both formal and informal and the presence of mentors are perceived by some academics as an important discourse in women’s career

progression. Many women referred to the feelings of isolation Rutherford (2001) and Jackson (2001) and Archbold and Moses Schultz (2008) despite the existence of formal and informal networks both within their individual forces and the wider police service as outlined in Chapter three. All of the forces represented in this study had in existence inter and/or intra force networks. All women were members of BAWP, ACPO Women, The Superintendents Association, their individual force networks, intra-force networks or a combination of these.

There appeared to be varying thoughts upon the effectiveness and necessity for such networks in some way contradicting the views of Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997a) (1997b), Gaston and Alexander (1997), Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Metcalfe and Dick (2002) all of whom identified the significance of such networks for women. Some officers appeared to use the formal networking system more actively than others. Some cited that the activities within the networks themselves were detrimental to the women's cause by engaging in 'girly' activity. For example, in criticism of one of the BAWP Senior Women's Conference one officer commented that on the only occasion she attended one of the activities was to be correctly measured for a brassiere. Her view was that conferences should be for career development and that social and particularly image related activity fuels the perception that women are appearance conscious and therefore unsuited to the rugged world of policing. Yet Linehan's (2001) account of the existence of '*old boy's networks*' includes social and sporting activities as being a key aspect of men's networking, yet there appears to be negative connotations associated with social activities provided by women's networks by some female officers. There seems to be a dichotomy between the male and female perception of the purpose of

networking. Perhaps women are sensitive to the inclusion of more social activities within their network groups for fear of male interpretation of female social activity as being a sign of weakness rather than the power and strength of being feminine identified by Baxter (2003)

There were other similar comments from officers in relation to in-force networks providing social events. These women commented that the social aspect of in-force networks, in their opinion, undermined the professional and developmental aspect of belonging and so disassociated themselves from such networks. A minority of officers questioned the necessity of the existence of networks whilst another officer comments upon the 'shelf life' of formal networks:

"The In force Network and BAWP are useful for those who need it. Not everyone wants to take part in them. However, they do send strong message to the organisation but I do think they have got a shelf life".

In relation to the ACPO women's network one officer comments that it is:

"A good network that combines both support and encouragement with a capacity to influence strategy and policy at a national level".

It seems that individual experience in relation to networking influences the individual's perception as to their validity. This echoes the findings in the pilot study where in the focus groups officers' opinions were varied as to the value and necessity of belonging to a network. It seems that the views of He, Zhao and Archbold (2002)

about the creation of strong work-related networks are not entirely accurate particularly in respect of female officers.

Positive comments regarding networking include:

“BAWP conferences are generally fantastic”.

In some forces women were automatically assumed to want to be part of their women's network. This caused some resentment from both genders, men resented not having a formal (male) network and women resented the assumption that they wanted to be part of it. An officer explains her role in relation to her inter force network:

“I got really involved with the women's network because I saw it as a great opportunity to change and shape some policy which we have done around flexible working & maternity. In my view they made the mistake of telling all females that they were automatically a member and not everyone wants to be a member and that built up some resistance by people saying 'how dare they assume that that's what I want, how dare they, I don't want to be' and at the same time an awful lot of criticism was levelled at the network from male colleagues, as you would expect. With comments like, why haven't we got one”?

For some women, the existence of such formal networks was seen as vital reflecting Kurtz' (2008) view that police officers require mutual peer support. These women tended to be the less senior ranks, Inspector level, and they also tended to be younger

in service. Some of the more senior ranking officers, with significant length of service of twenty years plus, recognised that the existence of networks is probably beneficial Klenke (2003), but their work commitments limited their ability to engage with such networks either locally or nationally. Whether this reflects Rindfleish and Sheridan's (2002) view that senior women merely opt out of formal networks can be debatable. It seems that there are senior women who would welcome the opportunity to develop stronger networks, but their level of workload and responsibilities deny them that luxury. The accusation of inaction and apathy levelled at senior women choosing not to network and pursuing an individualistic approach seems to be a fallacy.

Other women saw the networks as detrimental by highlighting and focussing attention upon gender resulting in hostility from both genders. It may be that such hostility is a direct result of increased visibility as suggested by Collinson (2003) and Kelan (2009a) both internally and externally to the organisation. Cortis and Cassar (2005) imply that such increased scrutiny of women may well incur unjustified vilification rather than networks being regarded as supportive, developmental and beneficial to the organisation. There appears to be a detrimental sub-culture that regards networks on the one hand as a sign of weakness for the individuals who are members of that network, but that the network itself is a potential threat to the dominant male culture.

8.5 Family and flexibility discourse

As in the pilot study, work force planning emerged as a key theme along with the contentious issue of the stigma of part time or flexible working which Dick (2004) refers to as a *'dilemma'*. Whilst force policies indicate that there are opportunities to work reduced hours, flexible hours, job share and other similar initiatives, in reality these appear to be at best poorly administered and at worst positively detrimental to women's career prospects reflecting Tomlinson's (2006) view that despite offering organisations numerical flexibility part time women in particular tend to be ostracised by both peers and the organisation, particularly when they are pregnant (Gatrell 2011). The pilot study indicated that local interpretation of force policies meant opportunities to work part time were limited with a cultural assumption that part-time workers lack commitment Cortis and Cassar (2005) to the job and are a drain upon force resources. Based upon the assumption that an average working week of 40 hours is normal, officers evidenced that whilst on reduced hours they frequently work 35 hours or more per week. Culturally the service is still alien to the notion of flexible working viewing officers who attempt to engage in such initiatives as lacking commitment. The following comment is a sad indictment in relation to flexible working practices.

"I know there is an awful lot of talk around flexible and part time working, job sharing, career breaks, term time working. I am absolutely convinced that if those things had been available to me, which they weren't, I would not be here today. If I had availed of part time working, or whatever, that would have effectively been the end of my career. Anyone who takes the brave step

of going to reduced hours will find out they are no longer seen as a serious contender. That is the way the (police) culture still is”.

This also relates to officers who take time off for maternity leave. Kelan’s (2009b) concept of disadvantageous biology can clearly be identified in such situations. There appears to be little attempt to integrate working mothers back into the service in flexible positions due to a lack of strategic work force planning, again a theme that emerged from the focus groups in the pilot study. Evidence of this is:

“I knew I was always going to be coming back full time, I wanted to get on, but knew if I came back and wanted an office job I’d get written off, so I came back straight away onto 24/7 shifts and it was hard”.

An officer evidences her dilemma following returning to work after maternity leave:

“I asked to come back part time, albeit when we worked the hours out it was 36 hours. So it was effectively full time. The shift pattern I required was not to work on Sunday nights, to work a night shift, but to finish at midnight and when we worked a late shift on a Monday and Tuesday to start at 5pm instead of 2pm”.

This officer was trying to accommodate the requirements of her force, her family requirements taking into consideration that her husband was a serving officer in the same force, on shifts and they had no wider family support available to assist with caring for the new baby. She further relates the difficulties she experienced:

“My line manager basically said I don’t really know if I can authorise any of this and we went around in circles and I came back to work full time, because they said it was either full time or nothing. It was unworkable. I went home crying on the first day because only one person spoke to me. I think I was seen as a trouble maker I think, because I was going to disrupt the status quo and nobody had ever worked part time in custody in the force before”.

Liu and Wilson’s (2001) and Gatrell’s (2011) studies highlighted similar difficulties being faced by women who had chosen to begin a family, sacrificing opportunities for promotion and clearly being treated differently. Suggestions as to how to improve flexible working opportunities that would benefit both women and the organisation were offered by some officers. One such suggestion was:

“Employing somebody on a part time Saturday evening shift which some mums might want to do; there are still opportunities to employ people on peak periods. Our establishment is on full time equivalents as well as posts, so they look at two part time workers and see two posts”.

This officer makes the very relevant point about how the service and individual forces manipulate the statistics in relation to officer strength. She makes the relevant observation that two half time posts are equivalent to one full time role, but the force statisticians still consider this as two posts. A simple adjustment to the way forces measure their work force might offer improvement for those officers, both male and female, who might wish to undertake part time working. Gill and Davidson (2001)

commented upon the lack of organisational flexibility in relation to inflexible work force planning which is clearly reflected by this example.

There seems to be reasonable evidence that the decision to have a family contributes significantly to lack of career progression and missed opportunities. For those women who did not have children they did comment that they strongly believed that having children would impede their career progression due to a variety of factors, such as, the perception of commitment (cultural), the logistical issues of balancing shift work and family life under rigid shift structures at the lower ranks and the long-hours culture, partially, although not exclusively, resulting in their decision to remain childless. One childless officer commented:

"I don't know how some of them cope. It's so hard to juggle and to manage you are just adding to the stress and the problems you've got in work anyway. I think it's the biggest barrier"

Another childless officer commented:

"Kids in my view are the main obstacle to people going on. I honestly thought that once you've had a family if you get to Sergeant then that does them. Once you get to Inspector you've got your foot on the management ladder and the hours become slightly more manageable"

And:

“If I’d had kids I would probably have stopped” (going up the promotion ladder). It’s so hard to juggle and to manage. I just wonder how people do it”.

Another interesting comment related to the perceptions one female officer had of her male colleague’s social and cultural attitudes:

“I think they all expect that the wife’s at home and looking after the kids. I think there is this mentality in male police officers that female civilians should be at home looking after the kids”.

She went on to comment that although there was a cultural shift in terms of male officers’ views of women in the work place, but that it was a very slow process of evolution due to the internal police culture Gerber (2001).

For those women who made the life choice to have a family, timing seems to be a factor to be taken into consideration reflecting Gelsthorpe and Morris’s (1990) comments relating to the notion of *‘biologism’*, although the majority of those women who had children commented that the birth of their first child was often unplanned. It seems that there is no ideal time in a structured career to begin a family. Upon taking that decision, or the onset of pregnancy some women were able to make strategic decisions in relation to their careers and their family.

“We made a conscious decision that he (husband) would retire and take on the care of the children. I took on role of primary breadwinner and he

became a house husband. There is no doubt in my mind that if we had not made that decision at that point things would have been very different. I wouldn't have been able to have done what I have done without that support. It would definitely have impacted upon the way we now live".

This is clearly an example of what Kelan (2009a) refers to as a detrimental solution to both parents, with a total role reversal wherein the husband becomes the primary carer of the children and manages the household on a daily basis. It seems that in order to achieve ACPO ranks the reversal of traditional family roles and support of a partner in a family situation is paramount.

At the lower ranks parents are frequently required to make direct life style choices. Where officers were married or had partners within the service decisions needed to be made in relation to career progression for individuals as well as how to manage child care issues. Conscious decisions as to which parent was going to progress their career and which would undertake family responsibilities. At the lower ranks the issue of shift working can have an impact upon such a choice.

"Both working shifts when children were small so made conscious decision to work opposite shifts. Wider family support was vital. It wasn't easy, but we had a good support network (family). My husband has been very supportive".

Despite the fact that women have been an integral part of the service for some considerable number of years the issues of predominantly male managers but also some female managers still being unprepared or unwilling to accept that women in

service will consciously decide to begin a family is evident Liu and Wilson (2001), Gatrell (2011). One pregnant officer commented that when she advised her line manager of her pregnancy at three months duration and asked for advice as to what to do now his reply was "*I don't know*". This situation was further exacerbated when she notified the HR department which identified that there were procedures and protocols to be observed, including the necessity to perform risk assessments to ensure that the officer could continue working in her current role. At six months of pregnancy the officer commented that no such risk assessments have been undertaken and the degree of apathy of the force in relation to her situation is frustrating. There appears to be a general lack of management of pregnant women within the service. Basic maternity policies and practices adopted by civilian employers, in some forces, do not appear to be in existence, or if they are in existence, they are not in common use. This officer went on to highlight that policies in relation to refresher use of force training and, where the role demands, firearms refresher training, are also not fully developed in respect of pregnant women. Pregnant officers are therefore exposed to de-skilling, declassifying Tomlinson (2006) alongside potential threat due to the fact that they are unable to carry their appointments (personal protective equipment) or are 'out of time' in their training and operation of it. This is particularly an issue for officers serving in Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) where every officer, male and female, is issued with a handgun as standard protective equipment. This raises the issue of organisational culpability in relation to pregnant officers entering and egressing police stations in a country where there realistically might be occasions of public disorder requiring officers to draw their weapons in defence.

There also seems to be a lack of formal return to work policies in existence for pregnant women, particularly those who suffer ill health following the birth of their children. In some forces there appear to be discriminatory practices occurring in relation to women returning to work following long periods of ill-health after pregnancy in that there is greater emphasis upon the sickness/absence management triggers rather than reviewing individual cases. This reinforces Gatrell's (2010) view that the pregnant body at work is regarded as problematic. Forces are required to produce statistics to the Home Office in relation to officer sickness and absences as this is one of the statutory performance indicators used. Hayday, Broughton and Tyers (2007).

For those officers who did not have children some had little empathy for their counterparts who had families and failed to recognise the difficulties in balancing work and family life, particularly when considering promotion.

*"Women seem to think there is never a good time (to do your promotion).
You can be part time as a Sergeant or an Inspector you just get paid more.
It's almost like they say I'm doing my family that's the compartment and I
can't look out of the box".*

However, this was not an exclusive opinion as some officers did not begin their families until later in their careers. One officer comments:

*"I did all of my promotion before having children, but having children did
impact upon me going for Chief Inspector rank – some of that was timing.*

One of the boards was two weeks after I had had my first baby and people would say why don't you go for it? They said, Mum could look after the baby and that annoyed me. I wasn't well enough, but even if I had been I wonder how people think that can happen. Some women can do it. Just because some French woman politician did it – it doesn't mean everyone can. That board was when they promoted almost everybody”!

The more empathetic officers, usually those who have their own children identify that possibly a good time to choose to have children is between the rank of Sergeant and Inspector. Frequently Inspector ranks and above have greater flexibility in their working patterns as suggested by Tomlinson (2007) enabling them to manage their work load to accommodate pregnancy. Several women comment that they were moved to a custody role when pregnant, although due to the implications of Health and Safety legislation this no longer seems to occur. As with the focus groups, some women identify that women returning from maternity leave have in the past demanded unreasonable working patterns. Forces now have much more effective policies and working conditions for returning mothers. There appears to be an acceptance that the organisation has made significant attempts to accommodate the needs of officers, but there needs to be recognition by returning mothers of the needs of the organisations.

8.6 Queen Bees and bitches discourse

There is no doubt that there is a lack of female role models Belle (2002) to encourage and support those women who aspire to achieving senior ranks. This may in part be

due to limited numerical representation of women at senior ranks, but there also appears to be an element of elitism Welch et al (2002) in relation to the few who have achieved senior ranks in the past. In addition to the minority representation, the quantity of work and the expectations of presenteeism Rutherford (2001) of senior ranking officers, both males and females, are without doubt excessive as alluded to in the sections relating to strategic work force planning and family life.

One officer highlights this problem:

“There is a lack of good role models – a significant lack. The others (Superintendents in my force) are deemed to have pulled the ladders up behind them. It then becomes a heavier burden on the few who do it”.

Whilst another officer comments:

“I wouldn't say ACPO women are a type. There are some that I don't particularly like or get on with. There are some who are self-focussed and nothing else matters, but there are ACPO men like it as well. It is not peculiar to gender”.

She continues:

“There are some ACPO women who say it was hard for me so it should be hard for you. They pull the ladder up. I do mentor – it's my job to nurture people and help them on their way whether you are a man or a woman”.

Another officer comments:

“Some senior women shy away from being approachable, the bitches from hell. They think I’ve had it tough and hard and so will you. I like to be me, regardless. I like to share experiences”.

Another officer recollects:

“Sometimes there were problems with female colleagues - single female officers got to a certain level and obviously had no ambition to go any further but wanted to make damn sure nobody else got any further either”.

A further comment:

“ACPO women fall into a couple of categories. Women who turn into men and women who pull the ladder up. Then again, we are very selfish because we all know that there are only a few jobs and the further up you go the tighter the opportunities are so people literally close it and they don’t share it”.

It seems that previously there has been evidence of senior ranking female officers that have firmly closed the door to those that follow in their footsteps, but without exception, the women participating in this study appeared to indicate a greater willingness to support and encourage those aspiring to achieving career success thus refuting the opinions of Callahan, Hasler and Tolson (2005). This significant shift may prove beneficial for women entering the service and is likely to have a positive

long-term impact upon the numerical representation of women at more senior ranks. Yet Mavin (2006a) (2006b) argues that such expectations of senior women mentoring aspiring women is unrealistic and unsustainable.

In defence of the notion of women pulling up the ladder, there does appear to be recognition of the burden of work that senior ranking officers undertake supporting Belle's (2002) comment in relation to the complexity of balancing senior, professional and family life.

"It's almost like they are up that ladder and they have taken it with them. I've had discussions with them about it. They've got an incredible work load; it must be difficult to fit everything in. In terms of mentoring, shadowing, support – we really need that from a female perspective and we haven't got it as a Force".

This research indicated that whilst there is a recognition by senior ranking officers that mentoring and nurturing talent is an essential factor endorsing the research of Metcalfe (2008) and Limerick and O'Leary (2008) the luxury of gender matched mentoring is not essential Ramaswami (2010), yet it may be desirable. From a numerical perspective it is unlikely that the majority of aspirational women would be likely to attain a senior ranking female mentor due to their minority representation.

One officer in particular raised the point that on occasions senior ranking women appear to relish their token status Simpson (2000) and resist other women's attempts to achieve similar rank Mavin's (2006) so called '*Venus envy*'. She referred to one

occasion where a senior ranking female officer sat on a panel where no female officers gained promotion. The comment was made:

“You can almost see her sitting there quite smugly saying it’s not easy rising to this rank, you others can’t do it, but I did”.

Yet such an elite status was not identified in the participants in this study. Without exception, all officers who participated relished the notion of increased representation of women within the service, particularly in senior roles or non-traditional female roles.

All of the women interviewed valued their femininity and indicated their distaste in relation to those women who adopted male mantles Wilson (2003). Without exception all of the women expressed a desire to be valued as women bringing a woman’s perspective to policing and contributing to the changing nature of the service. This contradicts the views of earlier studies by Klenke (2003) and Hayes and Allinson (2004) who suggest that in order to achieve success in male-dominated environments women need to adopt male traits and behaviours. Words like sincerity and authenticity were regularly applied to their behaviours and interactions. Women expressed a desire to *‘be themselves’* contradicting Collinson’s (2003) notion of conformist behaviours. There was a general feeling that the culture within the organisation is changing, but that women needed to be more expressive in relation to their achievements in particular. However raising heads above the parapet and becoming visible Kelan (2009a) was still considered to be risky, with one officer stating.

There is still a bit of glee, cultural enjoyment, when you drop a bollock – particularly if you are a blonde. If I was a bald, fat man I could say anything silly in a meeting, but because I'm a woman it's different. But I think that's wider society's view as well".

There is no doubt that due to their limited number senior female police officers are in the isolated state identified by Simpson (2000). This isolation and visibility in some cases manifests itself in the anxiety identified by Collinson (2003) and lack of self-efficacy that is so frequently referred to by women of rank. For their male counterparts this heightened visibility is difficult to comprehend, but one officer recounted her experiences of attending a women's meeting where a senior ranking male officer also attended. As the only male officer present he expressed his feelings of being 'singled out' and identified to which her response was "*welcome to my world, this is what I deal with on a daily basis*".

8.7 Conclusion

In this Chapter I have outlined the key discourses that impact upon the ability of women to progress their careers within policing. The identities of women are fluid and variable and women have to, as Wodak (1997) states, navigate these various discourses in order to preserve their identities Collinson (2003). In order to do so senior women create an image and adopt language and behaviours that enable them to enter the male dominated world of policing, yet due to their biological gender they are forbidden to fully integrate the culture and be deemed equal to men.

As I indicated earlier there appear to be two notable divisions resulting in three distinct groupings of ranks. In the first category there are the front-line, lower ranks of Police Constable and Sergeant wherein the main significant barriers appear to relate more specifically to tangible and what I perceive to be solvable barriers. These relate specifically to work force planning, organisational culture and HRD issues. Such changes could be implemented within a relatively short time frame and reflects the literature relating to such issues.

In the second category, Inspector to Chief Superintendent ranks, there is the development of more subtle, social and cultural barriers, which could be minimized or eradicated with a shift in both organisational and social culture. The likelihood of such a shift occurring in the short-term is unlikely, as society's preconceptions relating to women in male-dominated roles still prevail to the notion of hegemonic masculinity.

The chasm that exists between Superintending ranks and attaining ACPO ranks appears to be significant with physical, psychological and sociological factors impacting upon an individual's capacity to consider, let alone actually making that leap. In the following Chapter, I attempt to address each of these three categorical states. By drawing upon existing literature and presenting the challenges I have identified in this research to some of that literature, particularly in relation to women in policing, I move the debate regarding women in senior positions to a new plane, thus contributing to that body of literature and provide a unique insight into women in policing.

Chapter 9 Why do so few women achieve the ACPO ranks?

9.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I draw together the key themes from the questionnaire, focus groups and life-history interviews. In doing so I introduce new knowledge to the body of literature that documents women's career progression in general, but focussing specifically upon senior police officers. No existing piece of research has concentrated explicitly upon this sector of the UK workforce in such depth and the ground-breaking results reveal interesting discrepancies between the literature that focuses upon women's careers in other sectors of industry. The intention is that this study offers an insight through a different lens into the world of senior women police officers. I also identify changes and improvements that can be made at both force and national levels in an effort to improve opportunities for women to progress their careers more readily within the service.

Previous police specific authors such as Martin (1979) (1991), Brown (1997) (2000), Brown and Heidensohn (2000), Walklate (1995) (2004) have tended emphasize aspects relating to leadership and or organisational culture, alluding to women's career progression barriers, but not specifically focussing upon them. Wider police literature is dominated by research conducted in either the United States or Australia with little representation of the picture within the United Kingdom. The notable difference between this research and other police research is that this has been conducted from the 'insider' perspective as defined by Stokoe and Smithson (2001), having previously been a police service employee, but also as an 'outsider' as a

researcher who has intimate knowledge of the culture, language and unwritten codes of practice that uniquely exist within the police domain.

In Chapter 5 I outlined the methodological approaches I adopted in this study beginning with a questionnaire to identify the key themes. The following focus groups and in-depth interviews enabled me to identify any similarities or differences between officers of lower or higher rank and those who had shorter or greater years of service. There appears to be divergent obstacles faced by women at differing points in their careers and each of the data gathering methods identified subtle differences, yet some factors, that of being female gender Butler (1990) Olsson (2000), resonates throughout the entirety of a female police officer's career.

The questionnaire clearly identified issues faced by junior ranking officers often with shorter length of service, that, in particular related to the timing and development Simpson and Altman (2000) of long-term relationships or marriage and the decision relating to the dilemma of choosing promotion over beginning a family, reflecting Brown's (1990) notion of '*biologism*'. Coincidental to this decision making process is the initial consideration as to whether or not to contemplate promotion at all Powell and Butterfield (2003) with some women fearing career progression rather than embracing it Mavin (2008). The suggestion by Hammersley (2003) that early social influence impacts upon women's decisions to even begin the promotion process at the lowest rank seems to be unlikely, with only one officer citing any familial influence in her decision to become a police officer. Women's initial decisions regarding career progression seem to be influenced by factors that affect the position they find themselves in at that particular point in time Liff and Ward

(2001), with a particularly influential factor being the culture Rutherford (2001) and sub-cultures Waddington (1999) that exist within the service and within divisions and departments in individual forces. This culture is shaped by the senior management teams within individual forces and it is notable that where forces have a higher representation of senior female officers there appears to be less resistance to the notion of women attaining senior positions. Their visibility acts as a beacon to aspiring women Collinson (2003) Kelan (2009a). The questionnaire further identified difficulties with time and costs associated with preparing to undertake OSPRE and these aspects were further developed in the focus groups.

The focus groups developed the initial themes identified in the questionnaire and expanded some of the issues that relate to work-life balance Tomlinson (2007) alongside limited implementation of family friendly policies, part-time working Dick (2004) and job-sharing. New themes that emanated from the focus groups included the local policies and practices within forces that impede women's ability to develop their careers. These relate to the organisation of shifts and work flow He, Zhao and Archbold (2002), management of duties teams, attitudes to expectant mothers by some colleagues and managers, alongside a lack of recognition of potential high performers. The difficulties identified in the questionnaire relating to evidencing experience, skills, qualities and competences became a key aspect of the focus group discussions indicating that at Inspector ranks the initial obstacles to women considering promotion to Sergeant, which mainly were attributed to shift patterns and lack of work flexibility Tomlinson (2006), diminished due to their ability to manage their work flow more flexibly. At this level the predominant barriers were more subtle usually relating to promotion processes and practices, Holdaway and

Parker (1998) which, although allegedly transparent, appear to be, in some instances, manipulated by senior ranks and promotion panels in order to achieve the desired outcome Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008). It seems that at this level the importance of a mentor or champion is vital for success Ramaswami et al (2010). Without having the support of another officer, of either sex, that is willing to offer recommendations of an individual's suitability to attain the next rank, or a lateral move into a politically significant role, it seems that women are frequently passed over possibly due to their exclusion of the male networks where so much informal business takes place Brown (2000).

The interviews provided richer data identifying the micro-positioning of women in relation to their positioning within policing Metcalfe (2008). Women's perception of their own uniqueness in comparison to male colleagues and their acuity in relation to their ability to perform at a level that satisfies the women themselves appears to be significant Kelan (2009a). The requirement to become physically mobile becomes problematic, particularly when linked to society's socially constructed paradigm of the roles women play in family and social life Schein (1973) (1975). The issue of self-efficacy which began to emerge in the focus groups takes on increased significance with women adhering to Butler's (1990) socially constructed paradigm of female inferiority.

Each approach identified significant obstacles for women in defined ranks enabling the development of a clearer picture of the transition from Police Constable towards the ACPO ranks. The following identifies the distinct differences between the three methodological approaches to data gathering and indicates differences between those

approaches. Each different data gathering method elicited subtle and emerging differences as to the reasons why women do not achieve the ACPO ranks with a few resonant themes at every level, predominantly self-efficacy and belief, family responsibility, flexibility and mobility.

9.2 Tiers and transitions

In the previous Chapters I identified that there are three clearly distinguishable tiers of rank wherein women officers attribute differences to their reasons for not attempting to gain promotion to the higher ranks. I defined the jump between Police Constable and Sergeant ranks to Inspector, followed by the leap from Inspecting ranks to Superintending ranks before defining the chasm between Superintending and ACPO ranks. In attempting to make sense of such notable divisions I offer potential solutions to the organisation to reduce the intensity of the defining gaps yet acknowledge that there are wider issues affecting such divisions. These issues include socially constructed paradigms identified by Butler (1990) relating to women in general and reflects cultural Rutherford (2001) and societal preconceptions held by both genders, internally and externally to the service Liff and Cameron (2007). Other factors may include the media stereotyping of women in traditionally male-dominated organisations, as suggested by Thomas and Davies (2002), which continue to subconsciously and subversively detrimentally fuel the notion that women are less able to achieve senior positions particularly in gendered organisations Acker (2000). It appears that Lord and Friday's (2003) and Rabe-Hemp's (2009) conclusions that policing is still perceived by wider society to be a male occupation holds true. Therefore, attempts by organisations such as BAWP and

HMIC's (2000) recommendations to increase senior women in policing appear futile endorsing the views of Sumner (1990) until such time as there is a significant shift in the values and beliefs of society at large. It is interesting to note the public and media reaction to the, thankfully, few incidences, where female officers have died in the line of duty. Wider society appears to find this totally abhorrent and unacceptable. The media reporting of the deaths of six female officers PC Mandy Raynor (1982), PC Angela Bradley and PC Jane Arbuthnot (1983), PC Yvonne Fletcher (1984), PC Nina MacKay (1997), PC Alison Armitage (2001) and more recently PC Sharon Beshenivsky (2005) (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/the-life-and-death-of-pc-sharon-beshenivsky-516152.html> last accessed 25/03/11) reinforces public opinion that policing is a man's world Dick and Jankowicz (2001). Whilst the death of any police officer in the line of duty is a tragedy, it seems that the deaths of women are more poignant and repulsive to society.

There is no doubt that for some women they do make a conscious decision to limit their promotion prospects as suggested by Mavin (2001). This may be due to the nature of the role, the level of responsibility and direct personal life choices. The women in this research talked about the need to balance the desire of engaging in a fulfilling career but also being able to enjoy a reasonable quality of life taking into account family and recreation giving rise to Tomlinson's (2007) view of a healthy work-life balance. The view held by Burnett et al (2010) that work-life balance policies have done little to produce well-balanced families and tended to develop what they term "*a climate in which ad hoc flexible working practices are employed*" (p546) appears to hold true. Women seem to place a different emphasis upon the

values relating to family life than their male counterparts resulting in them simply de-selecting themselves from the promotion stakes, particularly at the higher levels.

9.3 The tier that jumps

There appears to be a plethora of reasons that contribute to factors that appear to prohibit some individual female officers from considering career development or promotion at the lower ranks. If this is a truly representational study it seems that where an individual has the determination and capability to progress to the next rank they are generally supported and encouraged within the majority of Forces. It seems that the service of the 1970s and early 1980s, to which many women referred to as '*Life on Mars*' time recognising the television series documenting this era of policing, has long gone, dissipating the issues related to so called '*canteen culture*', referred to by Holdaway (1994), Walklate (1995), HMIC (1999) and Brown (2000), with the associated discriminatory practices and behaviours. The responses elicited from the questionnaire and focus groups appeared to acknowledge that some aspects of police work might dictate the choices that women make when considering career progression particularly if they wish to follow a particular career pathway.

In this tier the most significant and recurrent reason for women not putting themselves forward for promotion is the loss of a specialist role, such as Family Liaison Officer, Test Purchase, Firearms etc. as identified by Walklate (2004). For many officers it is a straight choice between promotion and doing the job that they enjoy and in many cases have spent years training to reach the necessary exacting standards of the particular role in question. This is not a gender specific issue Stokoe and Smithson (2001) and it may well be that significant numbers of male officers are

also not putting themselves forward for promotion for the same reason. However, this is merely conjecture, as this study focussed entirely on female officers, yet the women who participated suggested that this might be the case. It does seem that this is a key element in some women's decision making in relation to long-term career objectives.

The second most significant reason is directly linked to the issues relating to work-life balance and caring for either children or relatives reflecting Kurtz's (2008) view that women are required to adopt a multiplicity of roles in work and society. Coincidental to this reason is the issue relating to the attainment of the specialist role, Walklate (2004) which appears in many cases to enable more opportunity for women to work part time.

This study into UK policing indicates that there does appear to be a direct link between women choosing either to further their careers or to have a family endorsing Liu and Wilson's (2001) views in relation to work-life balance but challenging Thomas and Davies (2002) suggestion that women are sacrificing careers for family. The concept of 'superwoman' who can 'have it all' appears to be an unworkable utopia for most women and the choice has to be made, partly due to the organisation's negative attitude to part time workers indicated in Dick's (2004) study being tolerated rather than actively encouraged. For the majority of women there is no choice to make. The desire to maintain good work-life balance and family life heavily outweighs the choice of career particularly when pursuing a career may well lead to negative impacts upon lifestyle, physical health and welfare. Not one single woman who participated in this study felt that she had sacrificed her career, she had merely made an informed choice as defined by Tomlinson (2007).

Timing and cost also appear to be contributory factors for this first category of women, as they are predominantly, although not exclusively, younger women in the age bracket that may consider marriage and or having children, reflecting Brown's (1990) suggestion of the impact of '*biologism*'. This concurs with studies by Mavin (2001) and Belle (2002) who agree that the decision to adopt family life may well impede women's' ability to significantly progress their careers to senior levels.

There might be some local opportunities within individual forces to explore alleviating some of the cost issues that appear to be prohibitive when studying for promotion to Sergeant and Inspector ranks via the OSPRE system. This may not be gender specific and any opportunity to make improvements in this area might encourage officers of both sexes to consider promotion more readily. There is a suggestion White (2006) that changes to the OSPRE system may well influence officer's decisions to attain these ranks. Equally, the inequity of the process of the OSPRE Part II is a contributory factor to women choosing not to progress their careers.

As identified in Chapter 7 the fact that the selection process in OSPRE Part II is apparently open to subjective interpretation and on occasions, there is a perception that the 'wrong' person is selected for promotion, results in women choosing not to participate in this process. This view corroborates White's (2006) interpretation of the rigid and mechanistic approach to promotion via this method. In 2011 the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) announced amendments to OSPPRE Part II which would be implemented from May 2011 to reduce the role scenarios

from 7 to 5. This followed a review into OSPRE which many officers hoped would bring about significant change to the process. The NPIA could have utilised this opportunity to significantly change the process making it more equitable and transparent which might have resulted in more officers considering promotion to Sergeant and Inspector ranks. As such, a significant opportunity to encourage more women to consider promotion has been lost as the principles of assessment remain the same with the same subjective marking criteria, just fewer opportunities to achieve attaining the standards.

There is no doubt that the long-hours culture significantly impacts upon women's decisions to pursue their careers at all levels within the service. Graef (1989), Lewis and Cooper (1995) and Edwards and Robinson (2001) all identify this as an issue resulting in Rutherford's (2001) '*presenteeism*' practices. Unless the service addresses this poor work practice women will continue to disengage from the promotion stakes in favour of better quality of life. Officers commented on the difficulties associated with attempting to study whilst undertaking a full and active role commenting that the quantity of work appears to be prohibitive to enabling appropriate study time to occur. A solution to this could be to include study time as part of every officer's duties thus enabling all officers, male and female, to have true equality of opportunity to gain promotion to the next rank at Sergeant and Inspector level. This situation eases once the rank of Inspector has been attained and the promotion system moves to 'boards' or panels. This change to the promotion system presents its own issues that are different and will be explored further in this Chapter at a later point.

There appears to be a genuine desire by women to assist the service to enable increased opportunity for development and promotion for their gender. The comment was made that as an organisation the service is excellent at strategic planning in relation to major incidents and work related activity, but there is a weakness in linking the human resources available along with skills capability to which Valentine and Godkin (2000) refer to the service's long term strategy. The recording and identification of individual skills sets attained by officers appear lacking as outlined by officers when discussing how, at promotion opportunities, they had to prove their competences, noted by Gerber (2001), time and again by giving specific examples of their achievements. The suggestion was made that the establishment of each officer producing a portfolio of evidence spanning their career demonstrating their competence in the role might alleviate this resulting in more women considering promotion to the next rank increasing functional flexibility Tomlinson (2006). However, as previously alluded to, workload could prevent officers from maintaining such continuous professional development records and without designating time to enable officers to undertake such recording, it seems unlikely to become reality.

As identified earlier in this Chapter concern was expressed that interview panels convened to promote officers from Inspector ranks upwards, on some occasions, were not given the application forms where officers had already given specific examples of competence in particular skills areas. When officers were interviewed following their application they sometimes made the assumption that the panel already knew of some of their skills, but later feedback following an unsuccessful attempt at promotion identified that this was not the case. This resulted in officers

feeling despondent and disenchanted with the system and processes relating to promotion. It seems that a perceived lack of transparency can be detrimental to some officers' attempts to climb the ladder.

Local implementation of work force practices and policies varied across the participating Forces. The establishment of national practices and policies in relation to return to work and maternity policies could alleviate some of the difficulties cited by women and the adoption of more flexible working practices as defined by Cortis and Cassar (2005), particularly in relation to part time working and job sharing. Edwards and Robinson (2001) comment that this could and should be explored by the organisation. The cultural notion of part time workers lacking commitment documented by Simpson (2000) and Rutherford (2001) needs to be addressed by senior managers within the organisation and the duties teams need to become more creative in their strategic workforce planning. The adoption of widely recognised good HRM practices from the civilian world in relation to the management of part time workers with initiatives such as job sharing could be integrated into the service without compromising the adherence to the Queen's Regulations which govern the activities and 'employment' of police officers. Liff and Cameron (2007) highlight that in the majority of cases poor HRM management results in inefficient use of human resources and this research has clearly evidenced such malpractice due to rigid adherence to out-dated attitudes to workforce numerical flexibility noted by Tomlinson (2006). In Chapters 6 and 7 I offer evidence of how inflexible attitudes towards women returning to work, particularly if they return on a part time basis, discourages women by failing to accommodate the basic requirements of giving people time to put in place domestic arrangements as suggested by Jackson (2001) to

enable them to return to work. This simple step could have a major impact upon encouraging women seeking promotion at the first and second management levels.

9.4 The tier that leaps

The in-depth interviews revealed a different dimension when considering barriers to progression for middle managers in the service supporting Metcalfe's (2008) view that utilising such a methodological approach elicits significant meaningful data that would otherwise be lost or misinterpreted through utilising other data collection methods. Between the ranks of Inspector and Chief Superintendent the women who participated in this research generally felt that the ability to control their flow of work and removal from the rigid shift system did enable them to consider promotion more readily. Some of the aspects identified by the lower ranks relating to work-life balance and family responsibilities were replicated at this tier, but with a significantly lower degree of influence. Child care issues in particular remained an issue, particularly when officers were required to provide night cover, especially if there were no partners or extended families able to offer support.

The predominant factors relating to this group were more subtle. These revolved around factors such as self-efficacy, mentoring opportunities and networks. The evidence seems to suggest that Archbold and Moses Schulz's (2008) assessment that mentoring and networking is controlled by males is apparent, with those officers who have access to senior male mentors appearing to progress their careers more successfully. Yet the evidence from this research indicates that women appear to desire female mentors, perhaps in an attempt to find the feminine influence as

defined by Brown (1997). The lack of female mentors and role models is without doubt a significant contributing factor to women opting out of the promotion stakes between the ranks of Inspector and Chief Superintendent. Ramaswami et al (2010) highlight the importance of appropriate mentors for senior personnel regardless of gender.

Ironically, the importance of networks deemed so important by Linehan (2001) seemed to dissipate in this tier. Women at this level acknowledge that the force and national networks offer inspiration and support to junior ranking officers, yet few of the more senior ranks seemed to participate in such networks. There were varying reasons for this, some cited lack of time to participate, others commented upon the inappropriateness of the content of some of the network activities in relation to their career development whilst others simply said they did not need such support mechanisms. This seems to refute the evidence presented by Archbold and Moses Schulz (2008) yet women still refer to the isolation of their positions Rutherford (2001) and Jackson (2001) state that this is due to their deficiency of numerical representation rather than a lack of belonging to any network. Yet if the lower ranks attend such networks it is essential that senior women do so too, in order to encourage junior officers and to give them the access to senior ranking women that so many female officers cite as being a particular barrier. Accessibility to senior officers is a critical component of the career trajectories of aspiring women. There can be no doubt that the service has made serious attempts to address some aspects of these issues by the establishment of both formal and informal networks and mentoring, yet these remain insufficient to provide encouragement to those women who aspire to more senior positions.

Of greater significant importance is the expectations of the roles of existing ACPO women being enabled to act as mentors Ramaswami et al (2010). It seems that these women are perceived as the keyholders to the future of women in policing, even though the evidence I have provided suggests that women tend to fare better with male mentors in male dominated organisations. I have provided evidence that indicates the way that women in lower ranks seek guidance and permission to progress to the next rank from these iconic female figures. I found no evidence of Mavin's (2006a) (2006b) '*venus envy*' only a desire to gain more access to senior ranking women. Yet, if women are to reduce their token status (Kanter, 1977) they need to disassociate gender with successful mentoring relationships. The misguided notion that the key to success is via other women in itself appears to impede the opportunities for some of those who aspire to senior ranks due to their blinkered expectations. By clinging to the notion of what Mavin (2006a and 2006b) terms '*solidarity*' and '*sisterhood*' aspiring women place themselves and their senior female officers in an impossible situation, simply due to the lack of numerical representation of senior female officers and an unrealistic expectation of gaining access to ACPO women.

Women who occupy '*token*' roles defined by Kanter (1977), Archbold and Moses Schultz (2008), and Osterlind and Haake (2010) commanding traditionally male dominated roles that relate to firearms, public order, road policing and other high profile areas seem to be those that are particularly admired by aspirational female officers. The question must be asked if such traditionally male orientated roles attract a certain type of woman whom other females admire and respect. These women clearly occupy a high profile role and exude confidence that inspires those

who seek to follow in their footsteps. In Chapter 8 I provided evidence that some ACPO women do consider that they have a role to play in the future of women in policing, yet their workload and the excessive demands placed upon them by aspiring female officers frequently prevents from fulfilling what they see as an obligation to assist other women to reach senior ranks. Additionally, the service needs to incorporate the mentoring of future ACPO officers into all senior officers' workloads, not as an additional extra to be undertaken out of goodwill, but as an integral part of their duties.

The HPDS plays a part in encouraging women and men to progress, as evidenced in Chapter 8, but it is fundamentally flawed. The culture that prevails and the negative attitude towards officers who follow the scheme requires significant change. Without such a cultural and attitudinal shift, as defined by Osterlind and Haake (2010) towards fast track entrants to senior management, the service will continue in its dogmatic approach to promotion and leadership that only time-served officers can attain the senior ranks. The attitude and nature of society towards long-term careers or careers for life no longer exists. In order to reflect wider societal changes with regard to work and recruitment practices the service needs to adopt a more flexible approach to engaging middle to senior managers. The requirement to begin at the lowest rank is questionable, particularly in the light that more senior officers, Inspectors and above, operate at more strategic levels thus arguably not requiring basic police constable skills providing they have appropriate advisors on hand with experience of operational activity at ground level. This notion retains the historical military roots of the organisation and it can be argued that this no longer meets the demands of modern day policing.

9.5 The ACPO chasm

Women who have attained Superintending ranks are few in number and frequently referred to their journey to this rank as being the '*battle*' referred to by Olsson (2000). The evidence from this study identifies that the achievement of this rank appears to come at a high price to family and social life Cortis and Cassar (2005) with ever increasing demands from within the service, the persistent and continuously high work-loads with a prevalent presenteeism culture so frequently referred to by the participants of this study, and the exacting expectations of their peers and society at large. For the women who have attained this rank the majority stated that the final hurdle, that of PNAC, is a hurdle too many, principally due to the inflexibility of the programme with it being delivered centrally at Bramshill. In addition the duration and method of delivery of the programme is unattractive, requiring officers to be away from their families and their roles for significant periods of time. Moses Schulz (2003) defines the necessity to have increased mobility when considering the most senior positions and it seems that for the majority of women this is the one sacrifice they are not prepared to undertake. For most women the need to ensure that children and wider family members are not disrupted as a result of their career aspirations is paramount reflecting Collinson's (2003) view about actors having specific identities that differ between work and home life. It seems that for the majority of women, even those who do not have children, women choose not to become mobile just for the sake of promotion. Until the service can remedy this requirement to be mobile it appears that this is the final choice that women make. In order to attain ACPO ranks officers, both male and female, are usually required to relocate to a different force upon appointment and

their tenure in post may be as little as five years, before being required to move again.

A further influencing factor is that by the time officers are in a position to consider ACPO ranks they frequently have significant length of service. Officers' comments indicate that the remuneration and additional pension benefits are not significantly attractive for them to consider moving to the next rank. Instead, they choose to remain within the Superintending ranks. This is a conscious decision rather than antipathy towards promotion to ACPO and several officers commented that they had sympathy for their male counterparts who have anecdotally commented about their dislike for the inflexible methodology used to deliver the PNAC programme and the requirement to be away from home for extensive periods of time. Women believe that they have the luxury to opt out of the promotion race at this point specifically due to their gender.

By remaining within the Superintending ranks officers are not thrust into the macro and/or micro-political world defined by Sumner (1990) and so retain some links with the front line police activity which so many officers comment is an important factor to the enjoyment of their career. Once the chasm has been leapt, women enter the macro and micro political arena, where accurate interpretation of the micro politics in particular, is an essential requirement to survival. Wood and Lindorff's (2001) suggestion that women fail to accurately interpret such political manoeuvring is in itself derogatory and fuels the notion of hegemonic masculinity. Their status is challenged and women have to defend not only their position and status but their sex detracting from their effectiveness within the ACPO environment. The notable lack

of women attaining ACPO ranks places those who do achieve such rank under intense and unjustifiable scrutiny from actors within the police service, politicians, media and the public at large, particularly in the cases of high profile incidents which are managed by women resulting in Ryan and Haslam's (2005) precarious positioning of such women. Their relative isolation suggested by Simpson (2000), Liff and Ward (2001) is accentuated thus making the ACPO ranks look even more unattractive rather than unattainable to women. In short, the majority of women appear to prefer not to subject themselves to such scrutiny and so make a conscious decision not to leap the chasm.

One officer who had completed her PNAC and achieved the ACPO '*ticket*' commented upon the further difficulties faced by women when applying for ACPO positions. It seems that Police Authorities, who appoint senior ranking officers, tend to reflect the traditional, patriarchal view that still prevails in wider society and they appear reluctant to, as one officer stated, "*take a chance appointing a woman at ACPO ranks*". She recounted how she appeared to be offered an interview as a '*token female*' as defined by Brown (2000), Liu and Wilson (2001) and Cortis and Cassar (2005), yet was repeatedly rejected at the interview stage. After several failed attempts to achieve an ACPO position she undertook a shadowing role in a force that had an existing female Chief Constable where she was able to engage in ACPO activities increasing her ability to evidence her competence, develop a mentoring relationship, identified as so crucial by Ramaswami et al (2010) that finally resulted in her being able to achieve an ACPO position. Without being championed by an existing female ACPO officer, it seems the gates to the ACPO ranks are not freely opened to female applicants, despite the service's declaration of equality of

opportunity for promotion to either gender. It seems that even at ACPO ranks women have to prove their competence to a higher standard than their male counterparts Gerber (2001) and in order to do so women have to be both determined and resilient in order to achieve ACPO status.

9.6 Shattering the myth of the thin blue ceiling

There is no doubt that several authors' suggestion of the existence of a glass ceiling dominates the literature that relates to women's career progression. Eminent authors such as Maume Jnr (1999), Meyerson and Fletcher (2000), Simpson and Altman (2000) Jackson (2001), Liff and Ward (2001), Cornelius and Skinner (2005) and latterly Weyer (2006) all refer to glass ceilings, walls or escalators in other industries and use epithets such as '*shattering*' or '*breaking through*' to emphasise the apparent visibility of such a barrier. The evidence gathered in this study appears to refute the existence of such a ceiling in the police service, because the use of the word '*ceiling*', by its very definition, appears to suggest that the barrier to women's career progression is at the higher levels. The evidence provided by this study identifies that the barriers to women's career progression pervades all levels of rank within the police service, but for differing reasons which are attributable to the unique circumstances of the individuals concerned. As such, I suggest that the existence of a glass ceiling within the police service is a myth. There is no thin blue ceiling, but there are vertical and lateral barriers within the organisation resulting from restrictive practices and policies that force women to make life choices based upon their values, beliefs, circumstances and socially constructed cultural upbringing.

I further suggest that in making such life choices women are not the weak victims so often portrayed in feminist studies, but they are in fact the architects of their own worlds acknowledging and accepting the constraints of the organisations within which they choose to work. By adopting the word *victim*, feminist authors undermine the achievements of those women that are successful in male dominated worlds. I suggest that these women are champions rather than victims. They control their own destiny by making informed choices about family, work and lifestyle choosing either to compete in the promotion race or to opt out of it, based upon their circumstance and desires. They acknowledge the constraints of the environment in which they operate and seize opportunities as they arise. Such women are in fact resilient, determined and enterprising in manipulating their career trajectories and balance a multiplicity of demands that are placed upon them by society due to their perceived gender. Women choose not to enter the political world of the ACPO ranks citing that the roles undertaken at ACPO simply do not appeal to the majority of them. ACPO roles require officers to move away from the core aspects of policing delving them into both a micro and macro political arena which many women find abhorrent and unattractive due to the posturing and positioning required in such visible roles. It is this unattractiveness of the roles combined with the unduly heavy work burdens, long-hours culture Graef (1989) Lewis and Cooper (1995) and Edwards and Robinson (2001), plus a relatively limited differentiation between remuneration and benefits at Superintending ranks and ACPO ranks that renders the prospect repellent to the majority of women. Until such time as the service addresses these key aspects and makes ACPO ranks more attractive to women there will continue to be a dearth of female senior officers which will perpetuate due to the lack of role models and mentors thus reinforcing the notion of hegemonic masculinity

attached to policing. Males will continue to dominate the senior ranks thus fuelling the masculine culture and shaping the organisation according to male paradigms. When females do achieve the senior ranks their influence is limited due to their insignificant numbers (Archbold and Moses Schulz 2008) and their refusal to adopt the male traits clearly defined by authors such as Callahan, Hasler and Tolson (2005). They retain their feminine approach to leadership as identified by Oshagbemi and Gill (2003) refusing to conform to the male norms arguing that men and women are simply 'wired' differently, approaching the roles in a different manner, yet similarities appear to be discernable due to the restrictive confines of the organisational culture specifically attributed to senior roles within the service.

9.7 Closing the loop

At the outset of this study I identified five principle aims and objectives that needed to be addressed in relation to the careers of senior women police officers. The first objective was to establish if early social interactions impacted upon women's career choices. Both studies by Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Powell and Butterfield (2003) suggest that early social interactions do significantly impact upon women's career decision making. The evidence presented by this research suggests otherwise. The participants in this study categorically deny early social influences affected their decision making with regard to entering the police service, or upon their aspirations in respect of role or rank. Assumptions can be drawn that both the earlier studies either no longer reflect women's views in 2009/2010, when the majority of the field work for this study was conducted; or the particular industrial sector occupied by the

women studied by Wood and Lindorff (2001) and Powell and Butterfield (2003) does not typically reflect the views of women who choose to enter the police service.

Similarly the notion that socially constructed paradigms in relation to women's roles in society as offered by Butler (1990), (2004) and latterly Cortis and Cassar (2005) seem to have little influence on women's decision making when entering the police service, but there does seem to be some correlation with their studies when considering promotion to senior ranks. It was interesting to note that the emphasis police women place upon being '*feminine*' echoes the views of Fondas (1997) and their desire to retain the trappings of femininity, alongside feminine dress codes reflects Wodak's (1997) point relating to imagery. Even though they enter a male-dominated profession, police women want to be recognised as women deploring the gender blindness that Kelan (2009) refers to and endorsing Lorber's (2007) hatred of gender divisions. When sharing their experiences and thoughts the women participating in this study did express their frailty in relation to their gender supporting Baxter's (2003) references to inner thoughts differing to their external positioning. .

There can be no doubt that the most significant and influential factors to women not attaining the ACPO ranks relates to organisational culture, policies and practices. Despite the aims of the Home Office to reduce the gender divisions within the service by developing more inclusive recruitment practices and the HMIC's (1995), (2003) attempts to deconstruct the male-dominance of the culture there still remains an undercurrent or sub-culture of hegemonic masculinity identified by Connell (1987). At best male officers tolerate women within the service echoing Sumner's

(1990) paternalist approach by adopting protective behaviours shielding women from the dangers of taking on more responsible or challenging roles. At worst, the struggle between the sexes, so clearly identified by Dick and Cassell (2002), continues with subtle conflict between them resulting in women choosing to opt out of the promotion stakes due to apathy. Although there is acknowledgment by the women officers participating in this study that there has been a significant organisational culture shift in recent times, the significance of that shift is minimal and superficial retaining the characteristics of a male-dominated environment with exclusive male networks defined by Linehan (2001) and Klenke (2003) thus ostracising women in the workplace. Such networks become increasingly exclusive with higher rank rendering senior women isolated Simpson (2000) and vulnerable Liff and Ward (2001).

In this research I have provided clear evidence of work place practices and local interpretation of policies by managers that clearly discriminate against single parents and part-time workers in particular, regardless of gender, particularly in respect of workforce planning. This is discriminatory in respect of some women, but not all. Such practices and policies discriminate against those women who either choose to have children or have family commitments and any officer (male or female) who seeks to work part-time. These practices do not necessarily discriminate against all women as those who do not have such family commitments and are willing and able to work full time appear to have equality of opportunity to progress their careers.

Earlier research by Metcalfe and Dick (2000), (2002) and Thomas and Davies (2002) had previously indicated such issues, but the service has yet to address these.

Incorporating greater utility of functional and numerical flexibility Tomlinson (2004) by the adoption of more family friendly and work-life balance policies would significantly improve not only the representation of women within the service but is likely to bring about more cost effective workforce management. Such inflexibility and the lack of strategic approaches to HRM revolve around the organisation's rigid and out-dated approach to the notion of commitment Metcalfe and Dick (2000) Thomas and Davies (2002), particularly part time working or flexible working practices, such as job sharing. Adopting a more pragmatic approach to the management of part-time working for women returning from maternity leave and other family friendly policies might encourage women to remain in the promotion race rather than choosing to opt out. By retaining such a stance the organisation regularly loses a talent pool thus incurring significant financial and intellectual cost.

Earlier in this Chapter I suggested that the '*glass ceiling*' is a mythical representation in that the term '*ceiling*' suggests that its manifestation is at the higher levels. I conclude that for many women they do in fact choose to self-impose, not barriers, but restrictions in relation to career progression at all levels within the service. However, the notion that women are powerless Powell and Butterfield (2003) to overcome such restrictions is fiction. Without exception, all of the participants in this study identify that they chose either to progress their careers or not. There is no doubt that the support of partners or wider family members is essential and the role reversal referred to by Kelan (2009b) is a key element in women's successes. It is interesting to note that Martin's (1979) original study into police women still holds true. Police women do make choices in relation to the roles they undertake and the career trajectories they follow. It seems that in the past 32 years there has been little

change to the nature and culture of policing, despite the protestations of the organisation that it is an advocate of workforce diversity. I suggest that the organisation is merely conforming to legislative requirement rather than engendering a true culture of diversity and as such women and other under-represented groups will continue to face the 'battle' defined by Olsson (2000). Until such paternalist conformist cultural ideas change then the numerical representation of women at ACPO ranks will continue to be minimal. Whilst male officers continue to dominate the ACPO ranks and the Police Authorities that select senior officers they will perpetuate the status quo.

There can be no doubt that the role of mentors is essential as earlier studies by Limerick and O'Leary (2006) and latterly Ramaswami et al (2010) identify. The gender of the mentor seems irrelevant to individual women, yet the earlier research implies that senior women who have male mentors are more likely to be successful. Yet if mentors adopt the paternalistic approach identified by Rutherford (2001) then women will never be regarded as equal. I suggest that this stems from the wider social and cultural nature of UK society suggested by Korac Kakabadse and Kouzmin (1997a) (1997b) where the clearly defined divisions between men and women are imposed even before birth, a view further endorsed by Jackson (2001). Society simply does not see women as leaders in certain professions and where there is potential for women to be harmed or even killed in the line of duty that seems to be the final cultural taboo.

9.10 Conclusion and recommendations

Through this research I have documented the historical situation of women in policing and identified their current position. There appears to have been little significant progress for women to attain the more senior ranks in policing since their attainment of full police powers in 1975. In order to encourage women to attain ACPO ranks the organisation needs to undertake a significant cultural shift. There are some relatively simple and pragmatic approaches the organisation could adopt in order to move towards such a shift and the benefits would impact upon both male and female officers' attempts to gain promotion.

The organisation can implement certain changes to its workforce planning, practices, training and development which may result in an increase in females considering ACPO ranks. Yet there seems to be an invisible, self-imposed barrier for women that relates to self-efficacy to which no-one seems to have the answer. Several officers stated that they felt that women are simply '*wired differently to men*' and so their belief in their own ability is impaired not due to any external influence, but to self-influence. There seems to be no link to early social interaction, but it may be that wider cultural influences that have not truly been defined in this study are a factor. This area is worthy of further study but is beyond the scope of this research.

The credibility and strength of this research lies in that it is a unique and intimate study of women in policing and that I adopted the role of both insider with established knowledge of the culture, customs and practices of the organisation which enabled me to gain access to senior ranking officers and as an outsider, an

academic researcher. My previous role within the service and my existing knowledge of the policies, customs and practices that govern the working lives of women in policing enabled me to gain immediate access to the issues that appear to prevent women from achieving the higher ranks without having to explore the nuances of police culture. As an insider I was familiar with the language, organisational structure and hierarchical framework, posturing and internal politics that shape the service and was accepted by the participants of this study as a knowledgeable and trusted individual. As an outsider, I was detached enough from the organisation to view its activities objectively. As I was no longer part of the police family, the constraints of being female and immersed in the culture afforded me the luxury of being able to observe, reflect upon what I was told and critically analyse the activities of the organisation without the bias of being an insider. No other researcher in the field has been in such a position; therefore this research is a unique contribution to the extant research on women in policing.

Most of the recommendations that follow could be easily implemented resulting in increased workforce capability with little or no cost implications. The recommendations fall into two categories at force and national level. It is acknowledged that some forces will have already begun to adopt some of the recommendations offered, particularly Force X that participated in the pilot study for this thesis. The existence of 43 differing forces rather than a national service is perhaps one of the factors that influence the continuance of some inappropriate interpretation of policies and practices and despite national key performance indicators in terms of the management of crime statistics there appears to be few other criteria against which forces can benchmark their position. There is no doubt

that individual forces are heavily influenced by the attitude and behaviours of the Chief, Deputy Chief and Assistance Chief Constables. When these posts are occupied solely by men with no female representation at senior levels the likelihood of the rest of the workforce being receptive to promotion of females to senior ranks is limited.

9.10.1 Recommendations for implementation at force level

Forces could review their policies and local managerial interpretation relating to returning to an operational response role or Division prior to promotion, this would reduce officers withdrawing from the promotion stakes in order to retain a specialist role.

Return to work policies following maternity or long term absence could be reviewed with regard to part time working and a more flexible approach to part-time working or job sharing could be adopted. In conjunction managers could inform individual teams of officers as to how allocation of part time workers to specific shifts occurs and increase communication between management and officers increasing participation and involvement.

New entrants to the force who appear to have management potential should be nurtured and developed even in their probationary period of service by the assigning of appropriate mentors who are regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary. There is no doubt that the supporting mechanism of a mentor is essential to any officer aspiring to ACPO ranks regardless of gender. In addition consideration should be

given to the allocation of study days and these to be included in the duty rota encouraging officers to study for promotion.

Assisting officers with the purchase of necessary texts (e.g. Blackstone's Manuals) or the establishment of inter and intra force libraries could be adopted. Negotiation with Blackstones over the production of the manuals as e-books could be a further consideration with forces having multiple licence access enabling it to be incorporated onto the force intranet.

Specific training initiatives could be implemented for officers returning to a Divisional response role to enable them to update their skills and knowledge in relation to legislation and operational activity. Officers concerns in relation to the loss of skills in specialist roles often leads to them not considering promotion. Additionally the exploration as to whether there are opportunities to develop 'specialist pathways' through forces to enable the retention of specialist skills and to maximise investment in training would be beneficial.

The development of internal force skills databases enabling maximum utilisation of individual's skills and abilities, enabling identification of any potential skills gaps would increase efficiency.

The establishment of networking and mentoring opportunities is essential but there must be an allocation of time to enable officers to fully reap the benefits of such support mechanisms. Officers frequently cited that although they had access to such opportunities their participation was limited due to excessively high workloads.

Forces which or that do have internal Women's Networks need to ensure the primary personnel within it to have time allocated to enable them to fulfil this role. Many officers who held posts within networking groups commented that this was additional to their existing duties and were often undertaken in rest time. Where forces have an established mentoring scheme this should be further encouraged and developed highlighting role models and offering access to them.

Utilising the PDR system more effectively would ensure that managers and officers are adequately trained and the adoption of a personal development portfolio where officers can maintain their skills and evidence their knowledge would be beneficial.

All forces need to address the long-hours culture that still exists within the service and encourage managers to lead by example.

9.10.2 Recommendations to be implemented at national level

The opportunity to raise the issues and concerns relating to OSPRE Part II with NPIA should be re-visited. Many officers consider that the current system is unfair and lacks transparency due to the subjective interpretation of the performance indicators by individual OSPRE assessors. By establishing a more equitable process the likelihood is that the numbers of officers who would consider promotion to Sergeant or Inspector ranks could be increased benefitting both men and women.

Although there is resistance to a national service there could be investigation into the potential development of a 'bank' of skilled officers that could be deployed nationally in times of staff shortage. This might reduce the perception of

unsustainable working hours and thus encourage officers with family commitments to consider promotion more readily.

There is no doubt that the impact of long-hours culture relating to national training programmes such as PNAC is detrimental. The service needs to develop a healthier attitude to work-life balance and to review the necessity for mobility at the senior ranks. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some requirement for ACPO officers to be mobile, perhaps the consideration of regional ACPO posts might prove beneficial. ACPO officers currently on occasions have to move from one end of the country to another in order to attain a post. This clearly detrimental to family life and is potentially a significant barrier to women who value their families highly.

The negative connotation of being an HPDS officer needs to be addressed by the service. There is no doubt that the branding of an officer as HPDS ostracises them from their peers resulting in isolation and disillusionment. The service might also wish to reconsider its stance in relation to appointing officers at middle and senior levels from external industries. This is a particularly contentious issue for the service based upon its adherence to the time-served officer. As policing becomes increasingly strategic at the higher levels it is questionable if this attitude is helpful or sustainable.

There needs to be easier transition between the tiers identified by this research and the benefits of undertaking promotion to the next rank should be more clearly identified. This not only relates to remuneration and pension but also to the personal development individuals attain as a result of gaining the next rank.

The existence of support networks such as BAWP should continue to be encouraged with officers choosing to belong on an individual basis. There is no doubt that the work undertaken by BAWP in the Gender Agenda and Gender Agenda 2 has benefited women's career opportunities. However, BAWP needs to retain its professional position in order to encourage more senior women to participate in its activities and to command respect from men.

ACPO officers should become more accessible to aspiring officers. The ACPO officers in this study clearly aim to assist aspiring women, yet their capacity to do so is limited due to their lack of numerical representation and significant workloads. If the service is truly determined to increase the representation of women at senior levels this is the most significant aspect to address.

There needs to be a review of the selection processes adopted by internal promotion boards for senior ranks and Police Authorities appointing ACPO officers in order to develop transparent, equitable systems and processes ensuring parity for applicants of either gender. Whilst the service declares that there is equality of opportunity there appears to be discrepancies between individual's experiences and the stated policies of the service. This could be due to local interpretation. Promotion to senior ranks still appears to be open to subjective judgements and the formulation of more objective recruitment practices would be beneficial to the service ensuring that the most competent applicant is appointed to a role. There was recognition by the women who participated in this study that individual forces differ in culture which is usually defined by the existing senior team, their inherent values and beliefs shaping the way in which individual forces execute their business. This could include

recruitment panels consisting of senior officers from within the individual force but also with additional external members to develop a more objective approach.

9.11 Limitations of this research

This research begins to identify some of the issues that prevent women from attaining the ACPO ranks. Critics of this research will identify that it is a limited depiction of women in policing in the UK as it is the representative views of a small number of female officers.

At the outset I identified that this study does represent the range of urban, suburban, rural and metropolitan forces and so I argue that it offers relevant insight into the existing situation. Due to the large scale of the service and the limitations of this thesis I chose to sample a representative number of forces and women officers within this research. It would be unrealistic to expect a thesis to represent every officer in the UK, but by utilising a self-selecting sample a picture can be drawn from this.

The lack of representation of female officers from ethnic minority and differing cultural backgrounds may influence the findings of this research. It was a deliberate and justified decision to only represent the views of female officers and I acknowledge that the inclusion of the views of male officers in relation to difficulties attaining ACPO ranks may well be similar.

This research develops a firm basis for future research into the career progression of female police officers on a more extensive scale. There may be other significant

factors that have not emanated from this research that may be linked to demographic and cultural influences that affect individual forces at a local level. There appears to be similarities in the difficulties faced by police officers who wish to pursue their careers regardless of gender, particularly those that relate to work-life balance and family friendly policies. The review of existing working practices and policies would be beneficial to both genders and the adoption of more flexible and modern approaches to HRM would be beneficial not only for those who work within the police service, but there would also be a direct benefit to the communities that forces serve as they would reflect their composition more closely.

10 Reflective postscript

At the outset of this research my aims and objectives were to clarify the barriers to women achieving ACPO ranks in the UK police service. It was my intention to not only produce an academic piece of work, but a useful document that will enable women in policing to overcome some of the issues that appear to prevent them from achieving the ACPO ranks. A police service that more closely represents the community it serves is likely to be more efficient and engage more effectively with the service users.

This long journey has challenged my academic ability and has enabled me to develop my research skills more fully. I believe that as a result of this research I have gained a greater insight into the skills of the research discipline and therefore have a more scholarly approach to research than when I began. As such, it has broadened my perspectives, developed my academic ability and enabled me to meet some inspirational and extremely competent women.

I have learnt a lot about my own ability to produce scholarly work. I have always adopted a disciplined approach to work, yet this has tested my ability and my stamina. I too have found that the support of a senior, female in my chosen profession to be invaluable and I thank my supervisor Dr Beverly Metcalfe for her guidance and unerring support throughout my journey.

I hope that the various police agencies will view this work as a starting point to improve the working terms and conditions for women police officers, who balance a

multitude of roles; wife, mother, nurturer and police officer. Women do not wish to put their careers to the back burner or on hold, but the burdens of carrying the plethora of roles assigned to them by wider society alongside their chosen career is forced upon them. Until there is a significant change in UK attitudes to women in policing they will continue to face subtle discrimination both internally and externally to the service. I hope that the key issues I have identified, along with my recommendations will encourage the service to review its practices and policies and make policing a truly diverse workforce representing society at large.

It has been a privilege to undertake this study and I dedicate it to those six brave women who paid the ultimate sacrifice to the job they loved.

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Appendix A

WOMEN AND PROGRESSION (Rank and Opportunities)

This questionnaire will form the basis of research into women's perspectives of progression within Force X.

This is a joint venture between Force X and Janet Astley a Liverpool Hope PhD student and Senior Lecturer in Business Management (Human Resources Management) based at York St John University. Data gathered from this questionnaire will be analysed to enable the Force to consider how it might encourage women to consider promotion/progression and to identify potential barriers to progression within the service for women.

Following the questionnaire, focus groups will be established to further discuss how improvements can be made locally to the current system and to identify if Force and National training strategies need to be reviewed. As a result of this survey a written report will be produced to the Force identifying recommendations that can occur within Force X to improve opportunities for women. It will also be used as a comparator with other Forces in England and Wales as part of PhD research which will be conducted over a longer period of time.

The questionnaire is designed to be anonymous and no individual will be identified during the analysis of the data. Questionnaires can be returned in 2 ways:

- By returning completed questionnaires to the Positive Action Team (for bulk return)
- By fax to 01904 876759 (please mark for the attention of Janet Astley)
- By post to

Janet Astley
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Business & Communication
York St John University
Lord Mayor's Walk
York YO31 7EX

Closing date for the questionnaire is 3 November 2006 at 1700hrs.

How to complete the questionnaire

Please indicate your answers by placing an X in the box or boxes where appropriate.

Dialogue boxes are available with some questions to enable you to elaborate your answer, or where the question's answers do not apply to you specifically or do not lend themselves to tick box selection.

1. How many years service do you have as a police officer?

- Probationer (1 – 2yrs)
- 2-4yrs 11 months
- 5-9 yrs 11months
- 10 – 14 yrs 11 months
- 15 – 19 yrs 11 months
- 20 – 24 yrs 11 months
- 25 – 30 yrs

2. Have you considered putting yourself forward for promotion to the next rank?

Yes if yes go to question 3

No if no go to question 2a

2a If no, why not? (Tick all boxes that apply)

- Too much responsibility
- Not enough pay/reward
- Timing is not convenient due to other commitments (eg; Family)
- Method of study/training
- Cost of study
- Wanting to remain in specialist role
- Lack of self confidence
- Other (please specify in the box below

3. Have you considered promotion to the next rank?

Yes No

3a If yes, which is the next rank to which you can progress?

- Sergeant Chief Superintendent
- Inspector ACPO
- Chief Inspector
- Superintendent

4. Do you think there is a difference in the opportunities available to gain experience in order to enhance promotion prospects?

- Yes, easier for men
Yes, easier for women
No difference between sexes

5. Do you think Force X encourages women to consider promotion?

- Yes No

6. Do you think there are barriers to women gaining promotion in police service?

- Yes No

6a If you answered Yes, do you think these barriers are:
(Tick all boxes that apply)

- Cultural
Social (societies view about women's roles)
Family commitments (inability to work shifts)
Religious
Self-imposed by women
Other (Please specify in the box below)

7. Which Division do you work in?

- Headquarters
1 Division
2 Division
3 Division
4 Division
5 Division

Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire and to contribute to the debate relating to women's progression within the Police Service. If you would be

willing to take part in a Focus Group, please contact the Positive Action Team on ext xxxx or via the Positive Action Team internal e-mail address.

Appendix B

Q2.Free flow comments

2 Children (aged 6 & 2 yrs) and husband is serving police officer working 24 hr shifts. Recently returned to full time hrs in specialist role. Would find it difficult to dedicate the time to studying for Pt I exams.

Also not feasible for part time working if wanting to achieve promotion

Also, I have left it too late, this is part due to the fact that I did not consider promotion until I had 22 yrs service. This is something I now regret bitterly.

As an older member I have had a good career in previous employment managing large numbers of people for a large corporate organisation. I do not wish for a 2nd career. This is a job I enjoy doing well.

As soon as you take and pass the exam they put you 'acting' straight off your own depth onto full shifts with no consideration for child care.

Don't feel old enough to be a sgt yet

Double jeopardy race & ethnicity

Due to large family do not feel I have enough spare time to dedicate to study

Even though I have considered promotion and I have passed Pt I I have decided not to progress, so that I can gain more experience as a DC in more areas and this is not as easy when going up in rank plus role is not appealing at this time

Going to HQ road policing unit in Jan 2006 wanted that role before promotion

I have only been promoted to PS in the last 5 months. I will consider promotion in the next few years.

I am very disillusioned with the police. We are constantly expected to take on large amounts of work with few resources then criticised for mistakes. I have been discriminated against on several occasions and have decided my home life is more important.

I do not feel that I could do a higher ranking job other than PC with the responsibility of a family. My family come first and as such I think the job would suffer.

I enjoy being a PC and have no desire for promotion

I work reduced hours and I am not sure how this would work with training & childcare needs.

Initially family commitments. Internal politics. Provide best service to customers (in current role)

It's a man's world here. Women are often not involved. Excluded from conversation/banter

It would be good to have training courses as they do in the Armed Forces.

Joined the police to be a face on the street-helping people and arresting then not to be bogged down in paperwork and meetings, had that in the previous profession

Little police work involved when promoted. All number crunching & reports.

Looked into promotion but not done anything about it

No comment

Of more recent years it seems to me that the further away from constable rank one gets, the less of a police officer one become the role of manager of staff and budgets takes over.

Passed part I but failed Pt 2. Unable to afford time to study due to family. Nothing to show for passing Pt 1

Previously lacked confidence but am considering taking exams, still unsure & I have nearly 6 yrs service

Promotion system is too time consuming & due to family/home life and work commitment no time to study. Unfair system of assessing a person's suitability in the role as scenarios and interviews do not assess a person's ability.

Force Xstill automatically allocates sexual offences & child offences to women. Sexism is an everyday occurrence. PSU not for girls. Women are here to make tea. Women can't do job as well as men. Women have stated that they have left departments due to treatment because of gender. There is a long way to go.

With 3 young children I do not have the time to study nor at present the commitment. I enjoy my LPO role which for flexibility and more social hours cannot be bettered. I could not return to working full shifts as a means of promotion.

With family life 2 x children under 5 yrs demands of normal life conflict with work. Spare time is biggest issue. I am able enough & want to do my best at work. The fear of not being able to commit fully scares me.

Appendix C

Q6A.Free flow comments

Barriers are lack of opportunities, experience and to a certain degree faith by seniors in giving women tougher jobs/crimes.

Barriers returning to work following childbirth. Action group should concentrate on keeping women in job let alone promotion

considered promotion but not attempted it - no place on form to explain reasons

Depends on circumstances-single, childless female, no barriers, mother with family commitments, barriers exist.

Despite promotion of equality of opportunity it does not really exist. Men decide who they want in a role & it isn't usually a woman.

Difficult to be committed to achieving promotion due to family commitments. No opportunity to work part time and still progress with career. Limited paths when part time.

Dyslexia - more time if could produce certificate. Cost prohibitive. Appears to discriminate against disability

Family commitments are a massive barrier

Flexible working hours in higher ranks. Family - time to study. Support lacking from family - links to society's view about women.

I'm aware of several cases where women have experienced 'difficulties' and spoken to chauvinistically by senior officers when they've returned from maternity leave. This has been due to requests for varying work hours (childcare) & also lack of facilities to express milk if needed in order to feel more comfortable at certain times. It appears to be frowned upon by certain senior male officers that women should have babies then return to work expecting to have 'things made easy for them'.

I am a qualified sgt not taken board whilst I pursue a specialist role and complete DC training.

I am currently in a specialist role within HQ am I am qualified in both Pt 1 & 2 of Sgts Ospre. Due to current force policy I am unable to apply for promotion within my specialist field. I therefore have to consider my future career path-promotion or maintain my rank & my specialism. My future development is being hindered by this policy and see no valid reason for it.

I don't think enough encouragement/opportunity is made available to working mothers in order to make promotion viable. To gain promotion means a return to shift work - no thanks.

I have had positive experiences during my service in relation to support for development. I have also managed to develop my career whilst being a single parent of a young child at times with no family assistance nearby. I believe the mind set of the individual is relevant but also accept that some of my colleagues may have experienced significant barriers.

I work part time and constantly face a battle with the full time men in my office. I wouldn't have time nor the inclination now to go for promotion.

In order to be promoted I would have to leave my area of expertise as there are no sgt ranks in my current dept. I appreciate the importance of the role of acting/temp sgt. however in order to be considered for this I would have to take a huge leap of faith & move from my current role. If I were not successful with promotion I would be stuck with a job that is not my 1st choice with nearly 20yrs experience. I don't wish to become a response officer. I suspect a lot of women PCs with longer length service are in specialist roles and have same view

Inability to work certain shifts. It isn't necessarily working shifts-it is the expectation that you must work over 40 hours plus or you're not committed to the organisation. An assumption you may not wish for development opportunities if you are pregnant/new mother. Due to negative experiences

specifically surrounding gender I don't currently have the energy to continue/literally fight the system. Availability of role models/mentors to assist/guide-few in numbers due to their work load.

Lack of self esteem & determination. Too worried about treading on others

Living in rural community with virtually no childcare facilities during day, let alone evening/weekend

Male attitude-women only get promoted because the Force needs a certain %age of women in post!

Many views are that if women want a family they should leave the job. Some people resent females having reduced hours, let alone promotion & reduced hrs. Officers with longer service resent younger officers being promoted young in service. It feels like you have to have 15 yrs experience to have any credibility.

No comment

No part time opportunities for Inspector yet.

Not being able to go away on courses for weeks at a time.

Part time workers are viewed as "dossers". This does not encourage study for promotion. The 'old boy network' does still exist in places.

Pressure to put children first and be main carer. Pregnancies and maternity leave also knocks your confidence and coming back part time just makes it worse.

Single mothers have massive constraints and financial pressure for massive amounts of childcare. It's a 'no win' situation and you get some men saying 'jobs for the girls' when you do get given a supervisors role that suits your time constraints.

Single parent. Rural location makes child care difficult.

Single parent.. Attitude of senior managers not helped. Afraid to jeopardise current role which suits current family commitments.

Still a male dominated environment and the culture of face fits/play sport together/drink together etc. Males tend to get on quicker and easier.

The service is still male dominated despite a notable increase in the number of women joining. A lot of women are put off by the macho attitude which still exists eg task force, firearms, road policing. Unless you are a strong character it is difficult to put yourself forward in such an environment.

There are times when it is felt in certain departments that "it is a job for the boys" which can be hard to overcome. Also, maybe a time men are shocked/surprised when you are skilled in a certain area that they aren't

There is no encouragement and support for anybody.

There is not enough flexibility to vary shifts on response. This ties in with family commitments.

There is still a "jobs for the boys" culture and if as a woman you do not join the drinking, socialising it can seem that you're overlooked, despite your skill and experience.

This is the main area-single parent females find shifts impossible so unable to try and get promoted or work in specialised role.

Unfortunately it seems that because positivity has been highlighted towards women for promotion or specialist roles it has actually made things more difficult. When females do get these positions there can be whispers of "she only got that cause she is a woman". Makes you wonder why you worked so hard to get it. Also knocks your confidence.

Women's' commitment to home & family life means the ability to devote time to study is difficult when juggling children, work & running a home

Transfer from another Force-no history, difference in procedures. Time for study difficult. More sensible to promote on ability & follow military idea based upon experience.

Appendix D

Number of years service

Statistics

		How many years service do you have as a police officer?	Considered promotion?
N	Valid	175	175
	Missing	0	0

Frequency Table

How many years service do you have as a police officer?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Probationer 1-2yrs	8	4.6	4.6	4.6
	2-4yrs 11 months	31	17.7	17.7	22.3
	5-9 yrs 11 months	33	18.9	18.9	41.1
	10-14yrs 11 months	29	16.6	16.6	57.7
	15-19yrs 11 months	41	23.4	23.4	81.1
	20-24yrs 11months	14	8.0	8.0	89.1
	25-30yrs	19	10.9	10.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Considered promotion?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	100	57.1	57.1	57.1
	No	75	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Number of responses by division

Statistics

Division

N	Valid	175
	Missing	0

Division

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	.6	.6	.6
HQ	40	22.9	22.9	23.4
C Division	30	17.1	17.1	40.6
D Division	29	16.6	16.6	57.1
E Division	27	15.4	15.4	72.6
F Division	23	13.1	13.1	85.7
G Division	25	14.3	14.3	100.0
Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Officer's length of service

Statistics

Considered promotion?

N	Valid	175
	Missing	0

Considered promotion?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	100	57.1	57.1	57.1
	No	75	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Crosstabs

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Considered promotion? * Division	175	100.0%	0	.0%	175	100.0%

Considered promotion? * Division Crosstabulation

Count		Division						Total	
		HQ	C Division	D Division	E Division	F Division	G Division		
Considered promotion?	Yes	26	16	16	16	13	13	0	100
	No	14	14	13	11	10	12	1	75
Total		40	30	29	27	23	25	1	175

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.888 ^a	6	.823
Likelihood Ratio	3.267	6	.775
N of Valid Cases	175		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .43.

No of years service before considering promotion

Statistics

		How many years service do you have as a police officer?	Considered promotion?
N	Valid	175	175
	Missing	0	0

Frequency Table

How many years service do you have as a police officer?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Probationer 1-2yrs	8	4.6	4.6	4.6
	2-4yrs 11 months	31	17.7	17.7	22.3
	5-9 yrs 11 months	33	18.9	18.9	41.1
	10-14yrs 11 months	29	16.6	16.6	57.7
	15-19yrs 11 months	41	23.4	23.4	81.1
	20-24yrs 11months	14	8.0	8.0	89.1
	25-30yrs	19	10.9	10.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Considered promotion?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	100	57.1	57.1	57.1
	No	75	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Appendix E

Appendix E Questions utilised during the life history interviews:

What age were you when you first thought about becoming a police officer?

What was your family/friends reaction to your decision to join the police?

How would you describe your family background and ethnic origin?

What is your educational background?

How old were you when you joined the force?

Can you tell me about your experiences as a probationary officer?

Were there many other women in the force at that time?

Upon completion of your probation what rank did you set your sights upon achieving?

At what point did you think about career progression?

Was your career progression planned?

Tell me about your career progression.

What helped/hindered your career progression?

During your probation were you mentored or influenced by another officer?

At what point did you consider going for promotion to the next rank?

How did you gain promotion to the next rank?

What family commitments did you/do you have?

How do you manage these?

When you announced to your colleagues you were pregnant – how was that received?

What were your experiences during pregnancy at work?

Were/are there maternity policies in existence?

What are your views about networks?

How important do you think women's networks are locally/nationally?

What about role models/mentors?

Are ACPO women different?

Why do you think there are so few women at the ACPO ranks?