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Managing the 'hidden' workforce: an ethnographic study of workplace cleaning and its implications for management practice.

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Abstract

This research attempts to contribute to the discipline of management practice by studying the behaviour of a specific group of low paid workers. Evidence has been gathered, via an ethnographic study of three groups of cleaners in three different types of organisation – clinic, school and hotel, about the employment relationships enjoyed by these cleaners and their employers; and the extent to which their psychological contracts contribute to their performance. Findings suggest that, not only do employees in each case study demonstrate diverse behaviour, but also certain facets of performance are unlikely to be obtainable from the employees studied. The research concludes that some issues facing the organisations in this study can be generalised beyond cleaning the workplace to other low-paid types of work and that using a management strategy, which ignores the present reality of such types of work and ignores the idiosyncrasy of the psychological contracts of the people to whom it is applied, could be unwise.

Acknowledgements

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Finally, my wife and children, Linda, Benjamin, Mark and Adam, have smoothed the path and made easy what must have, at times, seemed to them to be an unnecessary endeavour given my time of life.

Contents

Word count = 81,582

Glossary of terms

- CRB – Criminal Records Bureau[1]
- EOR – Employee-Organisation Relationship
- IIP – Investors in People
- LMX – Leader-Member Exchange
- NHS – National Health Service
- PCT – Primary Care Trust
- POS – Perceived Organisational Support
- QAA – Quality Assurance Agency
- TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
- UK – United Kingdom
- US – United States

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[1] This department was superseded by the formation of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in 2012

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The chapter establishes the basis for carrying out the research (1.1) before detailing a short rationale of its importance (1.2). This is followed by an overview of my motivation in choosing the topic (1.3) and a statement of the aim, the research question, the objectives and the anticipated contribution to knowledge (1.4). The rest of the chapter informs the reader of the structure of the manuscript, with overviews of the theoretical model used to analyse the primary data (1.5); the methodological approach taken to collect said primary data (1.6) and carry out the analysis (1.7); the findings (1.8); and finally, a summary (1.9).

1.1 The research

Little of the research undertaken in the area of the psychological contract has utilised data from workers in lower paid jobs, many of whom have quite short tenures in the companies for which they are employed. However, the employment relationships generated by the psychological contracts of these types of employees still needs to be better understood in order that management can improve its approach to influence their behaviour. In addition to the scarcity of research in this type of work there has also been a preponderance of investigation following a quantitative methodology. Consequently, this research comprises two major themes in an attempt to uncover aspects of employment relationships that can affect performance in a depth unattainable except through an ethnographic methodology. The first of these involves the participant observation of three groups of people, in different organisations, whose task it is to clean the workplace, with the quite wide agenda of trying to: understand the culture of the groups; discover how they were treated and how they felt about their work; and extract underlying meanings of their employment relationships. The second is the establishment of a model, centred on the psychological contract[2], which can serve to analyse this primary data by utilising a number of relevant organisational constructs. Finally, the implications of the content and status of the psychological contracts for the management of these people is discussed.

1.2 Importance of the research

Much of the academic research into psychological contracts focuses on their breach[3] and the effects of such developments. However, few have approached the problem by trying to establish the performance implications of both the content and status of the contracts and fewer still have made comparisons between workers in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments. Furthermore, deriving the findings using an ethnographic study provides information about all the observed aspects of the working

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[2] A pivotal concept in this research and initially defined as "an individual's belief regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party" (Rousseau, 1989 p123)

[3] Morrison & Robinson defined 'perceived psychological contract breach' as "the cognition that one's organisation has failed to fulfil one or more obligations within one's psychological contract in a manner commensurate with one's contributions" (1997 p230)

environment of the respondents and allows commentary on events and occurrences that, by quantitative approaches, would be obscured.

Its contribution to knowledge is a warning to practicing managers to be aware of the complexity of even such a relatively simple activity as cleaning and, more importantly, to critically review what they want from their employees and what they are prepared to offer in return.

1.3 Overview of the inquiry

During my first 23 years in employment (8 spent in the engineering sector and 15 in manufacturing) my career developed from apprentice to technician (in engineering) and then from management advisor to manufacturing manager (in manufacturing); this last move, from being someone who provided alternatives to managers to being someone who actually made the decisions, having a profound effect on my working life. Realising that I lacked certain skills necessary to manage successfully, and then finding the acquisition of these skills to be ultimately elusive, led me to leave management for teaching – but also led me to become a student of management. Indeed, an ongoing perception that management skills remained elusive to many people, which fuelled an uncomfortable feeling that management theory dissemination was flawed, has resulted in this inquiry.

The consequences of applying a management strategy to a workplace situation for which it is not suited could have detrimental effects on the performance of the organisation (Abraham et al, 1998; Ghosal, 2005; Joss, 1994; Koch, 2003; Yasin & Alavi, 1999). Research has shown that a number of management theories have been unsuccessful in their implementation, partially because of a mismatch between what management was trying to achieve and what the workforce was prepared to accept. Donaldson & Hilmer, in a seminal article, wrote "a manager lives in a case study – his or her own organisation" (1998 p18) and asserted that managers need to be able to reason from general principles, apply them to the facts of their case and recognise that careful analysis of an organisational situation is required for new behaviours to be effective (1998 p19). The study will provide primary evidence to support this contention from three case studies in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments, and will use this data to show the content and status of the psychological contracts generated in the companies. It will show that, even three functions ostensibly carrying out similar activities – cleaning rooms – can actually be vastly different from each other and need to be treated as such. Furthermore, it will also show that some factors influencing the performance of the respondents can be generalised beyond 'cleaning'.

1.4 Aim, research question, objectives and the anticipated contribution to knowledge

The over-arching aim was:

- To expand our understanding of the link between an individual's employment relationship and their performance in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments

This was accomplished by answering the research question:

- To what extent do the psychological contracts of cleaners in the workplace contribute to their performance?

These were pursued through a number of objectives:

- To gain an in-depth understanding of the employment relationships held by cleaning workers and their employers in different organisational environments
- To model the employment relationships prevalent in each environment and establish their influence on performance
- To postulate the potential implications for management in the chosen organisational environments
- To speculate the wider implications to managing people by generalising beyond the nature of employment relationships in the relatively homogeneous area of cleaning the workplace

The anticipated contribution to knowledge, can be split into two major aspects:

- Workplace cleaning employs 18.7%[4] (Office for National Statistics, n.d.) of the total number of people employed in the UK – a largely 'hidden' workforce whose work tends to be noticed only when it is not done – and is carried out under a combination of different terms and conditions (for instance: in-house/contracted, part-time/full-time workers, temporary/permanent workers, private/public sector organisations and workers seeing the occupation as main job/second job); yet it is has been largely ignored by researchers, making it a valuable area of study in its own right. This research seeks to develop knowledge of the complexity of the employment relationships in even such a relatively simple function.
- This study reveals that management in the three case studies only attempt to influence a limited dimension of the performance potentially available to the company from their workers. The implications of this self imposed limitation, whilst offering no template, should provide practicing managers, in related environments, with valuable insights into the consequences of the content and status of the psychological contracts of their own workers.

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[4] Figure from April-June 2012 – 551 thousand people from a total workforce of 29.4 million

1.5 Overview of modelling the employment relationship

The methodology chapter (3) will show that the primary research involved the collection of data from three case studies in order to establish what the cleaners did, their working relationships, what they perceived about the organisation and how it treated them, what their expectations were and, critically, what they were prepared to give to the organisation. This last item amounted to the 'psychological contract' (Rousseau, 1995) that exists between an individual and his/her organisation – and here lies a crucial supposition of the project. Sturges et al pointed out that it was the psychological contract that ultimately determined an individual's behaviour at work (2005 p824) and Motowidlo et al that behaviour ultimately determined performance (1997 p72) so, as it is performance that management seek to influence, a model involving the psychological contract was necessary to analyse the primary data from the three case studies. This model, based on Guest (1998 p661), utilised constructs that acted as antecedents to the psychological contract and also constructs that were influenced by it. Indeed, it is the link between psychological contract and performance that enables the research question to be answered – making Guest's (modified) model vital to any findings.

Chapter 2 contains a justification for using and modifying Guest's (1998) model before describing the various constructs used within the model. It establishes performance as the ultimate outcome of the psychological contract, thus instituting a theory through which the research question can be answered.

1.6 Overview of the primary research

It was my contention that the differences between organisations and the differences between the people working in organisations could influence their performance. Therefore, I needed to understand the chosen people and their jobs in substantial depth and, as chapter 3 will show, decided that becoming a 'participant observer' within the groups under study or, in other words, by carrying out an 'ethnographic study', was an appropriate approach. To this end I worked as a cleaner in three different cleaning functions – a clinic, a school, and a hotel – spending 45, 23 and 20 months, respectively, in each and generally working with the groups for one shift per week. The choice of 'cleaning the workplace' as a vehicle, whilst providing many potential cases as all buildings need to be cleaned, probably owed most to an observation made during Young's ethnographic study of a clothing manufacturer when he pointed out the importance of involvement such that "my efforts at 'pure' participant observation floundered with my ineptitude before sewing machines, but I became effective at packing finished items" (1991 p92). Indeed, like Young's packing, cleaning was a function requiring little training in order to become a co-worker and 'co-worker status' assisted my integration into each work-group as I could truly carry out the work alongside my colleagues. The importance of this was established by Schein (2004) who observed that people would co-operate if they saw a benefit to themselves, which helping the respondents to do their jobs

facilitated; and these tactics served to open up the access to the deeper perceptions of the workers. Underpinning all the primary activity was the need to establish trust between the people involved in the study and I. If this relationship – and hence the trust – has not been established to the extent that I have uncovered the "basic underlying assumptions" (Schein, 2004) then this ethnographic inquiry will have discovered nothing of note. However, if I have been successful in plumbing these depths, the three studies will have highlighted both similarities and differences between the cases.

Chapter 3, the methodology, investigates the paradigms available to carry out this study and justifies the selection made; identifies credibility considerations by utilising issues of the validity, reliability, authenticity, plausibility and criticality of the research; documents the research approach; describes the practical methods undertaken; discusses how ethical issues have been dealt with; and details certain inherent limitations. The actual primary data are contained in the first portions of chapters 4, 5 and 6 – the field settings for the clinic, the school and the hotel respectively.

1.7 Overview of the analysis and discussion

The analysis of the results can be divided into two stages. The first stage involves a discussion of the similarities and differences between the three organisations and highlights the complexity of a relatively simple function and this discussion utilises the model developed by Whyte (1981) and summarised by Jones (1991 p197-198) involving the assessment of peoples' perceptions in four areas: activities, interactions, sentiments and symbols. The second stage involves applying Guest's (1998) model to the data collected from the three case studies in order to establish the performance achieved in the three organisations and the major issues affecting this performance. Findings suggest that, of the three components of performance – job/task conscientiousness, organisational citizenship performance and interpersonal citizenship performance (Coleman & Borman, 2000) – management at each of the case studies expends most effort on the former.

This two-stage analysis is carried out in the second portions of chapters 4, 5 and 6, with comparisons between the three case studies and the major findings of the research being covered in chapter 7.

1.8 Overview of the conclusions

Generalisations beyond the findings of the case studies are restricted to broad warnings for managers to heed when they are considering their own approach to management. Managers should be cognisant of the implications of potential performance problems if the 'employee-organisation relationship' (EOR) (Tsui et al, 1997) is inappropriate; if 'perceived organisational support' (POS) (Eisenberger et al, 1986) is low; if workers consider themselves 'underemployed' (Feldman, 1996); if workers do not form a homogenous group to the extent that it affects the 'fairness' (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006) of their psychological contracts; if

psychological contract breach/violation (Rousseau, 1989) is high; or if there is a strong focus on cost minimisation. I would suggest that managers need to pay sufficient attention to the psychological contracts of their staff and how each individual's contract affects his/her performance. The evidence gleaned from this ethnographic study, whilst giving no pointers towards a 'best way', suggests that transparency in what an organisation wants from its employees and what it is promising, or indeed what it can promise, in return, are important. As a contribution to knowledge, it firstly reveals that even though workplace cleaning ostensibly defines the case studies investigated, similarities almost end there. Secondly, it highlights the importance of recognising how the dimensions of performance expected from individuals by management are reflected in the status and content of their psychological contracts.

Chapter 8 provides the conclusions. It summarises the main findings of the inquiry, reviews the extent to which the research question and aim have been met and includes both the limitations of the project and the potential generalisation of the findings beyond the case studies. A statement is included on the delivery, or otherwise, of the anticipated contribution to knowledge and concluding remarks set the findings into context.

1.9 In summary

In addition to analysing the employment relationships of the 'hidden workforce' and showing the diverse relationships between employees of different organisations, this study attempts to demonstrate the importance for managers to recognise the significance of their expectations regarding the performance of their staff – and what they provide in return. Using an ethnographic methodology to obtain the primary data it does not seek to provide any template for managers to adhere to, but merely attempts to add to the understanding of management as a discipline. Findings suggest that there is cause to be aware of the magnitude of the effect of the psychological contract on performance and, therefore, the research provides useful material to assist management decision-making in environments similar to those studied.

The next chapter establishes a model by which the effects of different behavioural constructs can influence the content and status of the psychological contract and, importantly, the ultimate impact on performance the psychological contract can have.

Chapter 2 – Modelling the employment relationship

The time I spent at the clinic, the school and the hotel generated the data summarised at the beginning of chapters 4, 5 and 6 respectively. That data is categorised into activities, interactions, sentiments and symbols, using Jones (1991) model[5], in order to establish a coherent picture of the employment relationships existing at the three organisations studied and hence prepare for the next stage in answering the research question. Sturges et al pointed out that it was the psychological contract hat ultimately determined an individual's behaviour at work (2005 p824) and Motowidlo et al that behaviour ultimately determined performance (1997 p72). To this end, I have used a modified version of a model first introduced by Guest (1998 p661), which revolved around the core concept of psychological contracts (Rousseau, 1995) but went further by establishing a causal link from the influences on the contracts, through the contracts themselves, to outcomes and finally the resultant behaviours generated.

In his model Guest (1998 p661) identified, generically, influences and consequences of the psychological contract, but I have identified specific constructs that fit into the model and make it appear as in the diagram below. The added constructs are necessary in order to provide sufficient depth of analysis to strengthen the findings. This chapter firstly justifies the changes made to Guest's model (2.1) before describing the constructs in detail (2.2).

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[5] Jones (1991) model is useful in organising the data and its usage is covered in more detail in chapter 4 along with a justification of the data collection process

Influence	Core concept	Outcomes	Behaviour

Job status

Organisation-based self-esteem

Work intensity

Culture (or Normative Contract)

Motivation

Conflict

Psychological contract

Organisational Justice

Performance

Perceived organisational support

Leader-member exchange

Organisational commitment

Employee-organisation relationship

Job satisfaction

Exchange ideology

Figure 2.1 – Model of the relationship based on Guest (1998 p661)

2.1 Justification

Guest's motivation for designing a model was to establish the consequences of psychological contracts to both individuals and organisations (1998 p661). He therefore constructed a three-stage model where 'causes' affected the 'content' of psychological contracts, which in turn led to 'consequences'. Guest was very specific about his consequences identifying, amongst others, 'motivation', 'job satisfaction' and 'organisational commitment' – actual organisational constructs – which I have also used (although I refer to them as outcomes). However, he was less specific about the causes, specifying only one construct – 'organisational culture/climate',

and providing only generic descriptors for the others – 'policy and practice', 'experience' and 'expectations' (1998 p661).

I have made two modifications to his model. Firstly, I have translated 'policy and practice', 'experience' and 'expectations' from his causes into a series of behavioural constructs that largely cover his descriptors and I have grouped them as 'influencers' (see figure 2.1). Thus, for instance, 'exchange ideology' and 'organisational justice' fit into expectations; 'leader-member exchange' and 'perceived organisational support' come from experience; and 'employee-organisational relationship' and 'work intensity' are part of policy and practice. Secondly, and crucially, I have extended the model beyond consequences to behaviour based on Sturges et al (2005) contention that the psychological contract ultimately determined an individual's behaviour at work and used Motowidlo et al's assertion that behaviour ultimately determined performance (1997) to complete it as a working tool for use in this study.

Clearly the model in figure 2.1 may look substantially different than Guest's original, but apart from the inclusion of behaviour, the changes made do not alter the fundamentals of his construction, they merely bring in constructs that fit into Guest's descriptors. With regards to the inclusion of behaviour, I would suggest that the Sturges' (2005) / Motowidlo et al (1997) observations make it a justifiable addition – although, notwithstanding this, it could be argued that more, less or different constructs could have been used under the influencer's umbrella with examples such as 'emotional intelligence' (Mayer et al, 2004) 'organisational cynicism' (Dean et al, 1998); 'person-organization value congruence' (Ren, 2010); 'work-family conflict' (Netemeyer et al, 1996); 'orientation to work' (Bennett, 1978); 'equity sensitivity' (Huseman et al, 1987 p223; and 'principled organisational dissent' (Graham, 1991) all having a claim for incorporation. However, choosing a type and number of constructs that would give an adequate picture of the influences on the psychological contracts, appeared to be sufficient for these purposes.

In chapters 4,5 and 6 the status of each construct, in the three organisations studied, will be analysed and their combined effect on the performance behaviour of the people employed will be interpreted – accepting the causal directions provided by the model. Indeed, the relevance of such a model is rooted in the way it enables the complexity of the employment relationship to be viewed from a number of different perspectives.

2.2 Constructs making up the model

2.2.1 The core concept – psychological contract

The description of the model commences with the core concept. If researchers (Guest, 1998; Rousseau, 1995; Sturges, 2005) are correct, then it is this construct that determines behaviour at work.

2.2.1.1 The unwritten contracts

Rousseau wrote of an 'unwritten' contractual base involving employees and organisations (1995) and Rousseau & Parks split this broad base into two distinct forms, "social or promissory" (1993 p3). They identified 'social contracts' as "addressing shared, collective beliefs regarding appropriate behaviour in a social unit" where "such contracts are in effect cultural" (1993 p3). These social contracts were permeated with behaviours that transcended organisations and reflected the social norms prevalent at the time, the context of the work being undertaken and the inherent cultural traits. In contrast they portrayed 'promissory contracts' as "essentially paid-for promises where commitment of future behaviour is offered in exchange for payment" (1993 p4). Rousseau & Parks posited a link between the two forms by suggesting that, although social contracts were largely inherited and promissory contracts were voluntarily entered into, the former would influence the terms of the latter (1993 p4). Promissory contracts were further subdivided into three types, 'psychological', 'normative' and 'implied' (Rousseau, 1995 p15).

Rousseau based the psychological contract on social exchange theory (Blau 1964, Gouldner 1960), defining it as "an individual's belief regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party" (Rousseau, 1989 p123; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994 p246) – which firmly suggested that at least one party to the contract was an individual employee. Indeed, Rousseau & Parks established this with their comment that "psychological contracts exist at the individual level where the beholder is party to the contract" (1993 p19). Morrison & Robinson – reviewing a number of authors – went further still as they wrote, "researchers view the psychological contract as held by employees alone" (1997 p229) and "the organisation is not seen as possessing a psychological contract of its own" (1997 p228). Guest & Conway, however, were in disagreement with these authors, with regard to the one-sided focus of the contract as an individual's belief, when they defined the psychological contract as "the perceptions of both parties to the employment relationship – organisation and individual – of the reciprocal promises and obligations implied in that relationship" (2002 p22); thus placing it firmly as "a two-way exchange" (2002 p22). However Shore & Coyle-Shapiro pointed out difficulties with the two party approach, suggesting that accepting the organisation as a party to the contract required it to be endowed with human-like attributes or to be 'anthropomorphised' (2007 p167)

The implied contract was defined as "patterns of obligations arising from interactions between parties (e.g. individuals and organisations) that become part of the social structure of which the relationship is a part (e.g. legal, cultural)" (Rousseau, 1989 p124) and a major difference between the psychological and the implied contract was that the former was at the highly subjective, individual level, where parties may well have had disagreements about the terms; whereas the latter was at the level of social consensus, where the terms of the contract could be observed by third parties (Rousseau, 1989 p124). This would appear to have put the implied contract very close to the social contract. Both were shared by a number of people and both shared the word 'culture' in their definition. However, the distinction was in the voluntary nature of promissory contracts, where one could decide to buy-in to an implied contract but one did not have the same freedom with the social contract.

In 1995, Rousseau developed a third promissory contract, the normative contract, which described "the shared psychological contract that emerges when members of a social group hold common beliefs" (1995 p9) and this type of contract existed where the organisation had many members who identified themselves in similar ways with it and each other (1995 p10). This differed from the implied contract in that, although it was not individual and was therefore less subjective, it specifically related to people who were party to the contract and who, in consequence had different views than third parties. Indeed, Rousseau compared her normative contract with the makeup of organisational culture, concluding (1995 p49) that the two constructs described the same phenomena. Therefore, the definition of implied could then be restricted to the "interpretations that third parties make regarding contractual terms" (Rousseau, 1995 p9) and signified the potentially objective view of people, not directly involved in the contract, regarding its nature. The apparent reason for modelling the promissory contracts in this way was to establish the differences between the individual, the group and any third parties looking in on the group. These third parties could view formally (IIP[6], QAA[7], audits) or informally (public opinion on company reputation, company credibility amongst customers and suppliers) and the results of these views might serve to influence psychological and normative contract development.

One of the problems with the psychological contract, as shown above, was whether there was one party or two parties to the contract. This was not the only problem as there was ambiguity with the language when applying 'unwritten' contract constructs to research situations. This ambiguity manifested itself in two major areas, the first of which was the usage of the terms 'promise', 'expectation' and 'obligation'. Rousseau, in collaboration with Robinson, clearly saw promise rather than expectation as the basis for a reciprocal exchange, "the psychological contract is distinct from expectations…based on perceived promises of reciprocal exchange" (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994 p246). Guest & Conway also used 'promise' in their definition

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[6] Investors in People
[7] Quality Assurance Agency

(2002 p22), but Grant defined it firmly in terms of expectations and not promises (1999 p328) – as did Morrison & Robinson (1997 p228). Furthermore, Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler questioned whether expectation and obligation "are indeed conceptually distinct" (2000 p906), and Guest (1998) suggested that there was a blurred demarcation between the two concepts in the minds of the employees, which, if true, would make any distinction difficult for research to detect. The second area where ambiguity manifested itself was in the actual use of the term 'psychological contract'. Whilst it appeared to be generally accepted that the psychological contract existed between an individual and his/her organisation, it was used to describe groups of workers and their organisations. Indeed, a number of authors (Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2009 p5; Guest et al, 1996 p5; Patch et al, 1992 p47; Rogers, 1995 p15; Suazo, 2009 p137) discussed the passing of the traditional psychological contract – summarised as the individual providing loyalty and the organisation giving security – but such a contract mirrors an implied or normative type, or even, at a societal level, a social type. Atkinson & Cuthbert, meanwhile, reviewing literature on the subject, retained the term psychological to describe what Rousseau would term normative. They posited that there were two tendencies prevalent in describing the psychological contract, which led to multiple perspectives of the contract; these being the contract that prevails within an organisation or the existence of homogeneous groups within an organisation (2006 p647).

The usage of the term to describe a group of workers in an organisation was likely to be an attractive interpretation to managers. One has a better chance of managing a pervasive psychological contract than managing a series of different and unique contracts. Notwithstanding this, it was important to establish the definition of the psychological contract as it applied to this inquiry, due to the central position it holds. To this end, I propose a combination of the definitions of Rousseau (1989 p123) and Guest & Conway (2002 p22), "the perceptions of both parties to the employment relationship – organisation and individual – regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between said parties". This definition has the advantages of being unique to the individual, accepts that the contract involves two parties and is not restricted to 'promises', thus acknowledging 'expectations' as being germane. In addition, I propose acceptance of Rousseau's (1995 p49) conclusion that culture and the normative contract are one and the same construct.

2.2.1.2 The psychological contract

Guest identified the psychological contract as important because it had the potential to integrate other organisational concepts (1998 p659) and he constructed a model, which distinguished this as the central construct that combined all the influences impinging on the employee (not only organisational influences but those brought in from all sources) and translated these into a belief system and set of behaviours that the individual applied to the organisational context (1998 p661). In order to establish organisational effectiveness, the role of the other party – the organisation – was to provide the organisational influences that would furnish them with the belief system and set of behaviours that they required. It was in the

content of the psychological contract where – based on 'trust', 'fairness' and 'delivery of the deal' (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648; Guest, 1998 p661) – the beliefs and behaviours were forged.

The *'deal'*, according to Atkinson & Cuthbert, referred to the obligations contained within the psychological contract but, in keeping with the unique nature of the construct, their research showed no definitive list of what these obligations were – even though they did report a number of examples including job content, job security and future career prospects (2006 p649). They identified patterns of employer and employee obligations, pointing out that "many have termed these patterns 'transactional' and 'relational' psychological contracts, indicating the type of obligation contained within each" (2006 p649). Transactional contracts were specific, 'monetisable' exchanges over a finite and often brief period of time, whilst relational contracts were open-ended, less specific agreements that established and maintained a relationship (Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2010 p197; Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648-649; Morrison and Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1989, 1995). Implying that contracts were neither totally transactional nor totally relational, Atkinson & Cuthbert posited that "the deal can be considered [as] being on a continuum" (2006 p659) with the two ends of the continuum being the purely transactional contract and the purely relational contract. '*Fairness'*, in this context, they asserted, equated "to the consideration of organisational justice" (2006 p648), describing the perception of the fairness of treatment received from an organisation and the behavioural reaction of people to such perceptions. Finally, they contended that *'trust'* was "the key integrative concept within the psychological contract" (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648) and "the key influence on trust is whether each side (employer and employee) has kept its promises and commitments to each other, i.e. delivered the 'deal'" (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648). The authors suggested that employees could develop trust in specific individuals who represented the organisation (supervisors, managers) or they could develop trust in the organisation itself (2006 p649).

With the social, implied and normative contracts being related so strongly with culture, the link under discussion here is between performance and the psychological contract only – the role of culture being as one of the antecedents of psychological contract as shown in figure 2.1. Conway & Briner highlighted the idiosyncratic nature of this contract regarding its link to performance when they asserted that it was an individual's ideology and personality that were prime movers in what he/she was prepared to give to an organisation and how much he/she felt under an obligation to reciprocate for what the organisation provided for him/her (2005 p52). Accepting this individual range of performance responses, the next most potent effect on performance would appear to depend upon whether the psychological contract was in a state of fulfilment or breach.

2.2.1.3 Fulfilment of the psychological contract

Irrespective of whether one sees the agreement as a one-way or a two-way contract, fulfilment would mean that expectations/promises/obligations were being met. Dabos & Rousseau (2004) concentrated on this fulfilment issue when they posited that mutuality and reciprocity were the core elements of psychological contracts.

In this context, the degree of mutuality described the degree to which a worker and an employer shared beliefs regarding the specific terms of their exchange agreement and it could be measured by, for example, the size of the gap between the obligations of the employer to the employee – as rated by the employer, and the same obligations – as rated by the employee. Dabos & Rousseau contended that "some degree of mutuality or shared understanding was essential for the parties to achieve their interdependent goals" (2004 p52) and the smaller the gap between the perceptions of employee and employer, regarding particular obligations, the greater the mutuality. In contrast, the degree of reciprocity described the degree of agreement about the reciprocal exchange between the parties and this could be measured by, for example, the size of the gap between the obligations of the employer to the employee – as rated by the employer and the obligations of the employee to the employer – as rated by the employee. Its significance to performance was identified by the observation that "an employment relationship is more likely to endure and meet its goals where parties reciprocate their commitments and obligations to one another" (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004 p55) and the smaller the gap between the perception of an employee regarding what is offered to him/her by the employer and the perception of the employer regarding what is offered to him/her by the employee, the greater the reciprocity.

2.2.1.4 Breach of the psychological contract

Morrison & Robinson suggested that discrepancies between each party's beliefs could lead to a breach in the psychological contract (1997 p230). Indeed, although fulfilment and performance were shown to be linked (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2006; Dabos & Rousseau, 2004; Turnley et al, 2003), much more research has been aimed at the effects of perceived psychological contract breach, which was not surprising in light of the findings of Robinson & Rousseau (1994) that breaches of psychological contracts were more prevalent than fulfilment. Morrison & Robinson defined 'perceived[8] psychological contract breach' as "the cognition that one's organisation has failed to fulfil one or more obligations within one's psychological contract in a manner commensurate with one's contributions" (1997 p230), although this view, which would tend to suggest that only the employer could initiate a breach, was not held by everyone (Guest, 1998; Guest & Conway 1999, 2002; Herriot et al, 1997; Herriot & Pemberton, 1996). Consequently, for the purposes of this inquiry Morrison &

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[8] It is important to note the use of the word 'perceived' in regards to contract breach. It may be that an employer has not actually changed any portion of the psychological contract it has with an individual. However, if an individual perceives a change, their reaction will be the same irrespective of whether an actual breach has occurred (Robinson 1996 p576).

Robinson's (1997) definition of perceived psychological breach has been modified to take account of Guest & Conway's (2002) scenario of employee breach and becomes "the cognition of one party that the other has failed to fulfil one or more obligations within the psychological contract in a manner commensurate with the aggrieved party's contributions".

Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler indicated two distinct causes of perceived breach: 'reneging' which occurred due to "unwillingness or inability of the employer to fulfil its obligations to employees" (2000 p907) – which could be expanded to include the employee as being unwilling or unable to fulfil obligations; and incongruence, which occurred when each party had a different understanding of the promises that had been made (2000 p907). Morrison & Robinson suggested that the cause of the breach could influence the strength of the reaction to it, with a breach due to incongruence having less effect than being unable to fulfil the obligations that, in turn, would be weaker than being unwilling to fulfil obligations (1997 p244). It should be noted, however, that Turnley et al found no evidence, in their sample of 68 ex-MBA students and 66 telecommunications workers, that an attribution of the cause of a breach affected the aggrieved party's response – although they tried to explain this result as being due to methodological issues (2003 p193). Tomlinson & Mayer posited that there were mechanisms by which trust could be repaired via efforts made by a trustee in light of contract breach, naming a perception (on the part of the trustor) of the trustee possessing integrity as an important factor to any repair (2009 p94). Methods to facilitate repair included exonerating responsibility for trust breakdown by blaming the cause on and external locus to the offender, as uncontrollable by the offender, or due to something unlikely to recur (Weiner et al, 1987).

2.2.1.5 Violation of the psychological contract

Morrison & Robinson (1997), along with Rousseau (1989), identified a very specific aspect of 'breach', which they termed 'violation', suggesting that this was an emotional reaction where "the victim experiences anger, resentment, a sense of injustice and wrongful harm" (Rousseau, 1989 p129). Rousseau also believed that the intensity of this reaction was a combination of a person's general beliefs (about trust, respect for persons and codes of conduct) and the importance they attributed to the unmet obligation (1989 p129). Thus an employee's perception of breach was cognitive; whereas violation was an emotional experience that could – but did not necessarily – arise from a breach. Words including frustration, anger, resentment, bitterness, indignation, outrage and distress were used to describe the results of a psychological contract violation – but breach applied to any perception of a failure to fulfil whilst violation developed only in specific instances. However, as violation was an aspect of breach, reneging and incongruence would still be causal factors. Therefore, attribution of the cause, combined with the individual's judgement of the fairness of the decisions behind the breach, made up the *process* that would influence the emotional reaction. Also the magnitude of the perceived breach – and the implications the breach had for the individual – combined to deliver the *outcome*, which would also influence the emotional reaction (Morrison & Robinson, 1997).

2.2.2 Influencers

Having established the psychological contract as the core, each of the constructs described in this section could serve to shape this contract between the two parties.

2.2.2.1 Job status

Feldman identified at least five dimensions on which work arrangements could be arrayed. These were 'permanent/temporary', 'organisation-hired/agency-hired', 'year-round/seasonal', 'main-job/second-job' and 'voluntary/involuntary' (1990 p104). Jacobsen added a sixth dimension "hours of work per week as a proportion of what could be termed the normal (or expected) hours of work per week" (2000 p188). Indeed, Ryan utilised this last dimension to define part-time work, identifying it as "paid work which is of a regular nature and which is carried out during hours which are substantially shorter than normal for the sector concerned" (ILO, 1989 in Ryan, 1998 p10). Ryan further warned against viewing part-time workers as a homogeneous group suggesting that their wants, needs and aspirations could be different from, not only full-time employees but also other groups of part-time employees (1998 p14), a point supported by Maynard et al (2006b p159). Rotchford & Roberts, also warning of the dangers of ignoring that part-time and full-time employees were different, wrote "personnel policies that do not reflect these differences possibly are inadequate and may even be dysfunctional to either part- or full-time workers" (1982 p228). In addition, whether through comparison with other employees in their organisation or as an inherent personal reality, many people within this inquiry suffered a position of 'underemployment'; a complex topic which Feldman refrained from actually defining whilst suggesting that it represented "an inferior, lesser or lower type of employment" (1996 p387) that was judged relative to some standard.

It was the standard against which the employment was measured that caused the main difficulties in establishing a worthwhile definition and Feldman identified five dimensions of underemployment. These were: involuntary employment in a field outside his/her area of formal education; involuntary engagement in part-time, temporary or intermittent work; possession of more formal education than the job required; possession of superior work skills and work experience than the job required; and earning wages of 20% or less than in his/her previous job (1996 p388). However, irrespective of the dimension used, underemployment was conceptualised as a discrepancy between satisfactory employment and current employment (1996 p390). Indeed, 'satisfaction' was an important issue when deciding if an individual actually was underemployed. As Feldman admitted "the psychological dynamics of underemployment appear to be driven by a perceived discrepancy between the current employment situation and the preferred one" (1996 p403), which would suggest that the last three dimensions would only apply if the individual wished to engage in employment that met those dimensions (e.g. work that required his/her level of education, work that met his/her skills and experience, or work that paid the same as his/her previous job). In consequence,

'underemployment' could be described as a continuous variable that was a perception of an individual's job status, felt by the individual, which was heavily influenced by limitations of choice. Indeed, Glyde specifically identified underemployment as an involuntary condition and as a problem for the worker, not the organisation (1977 p247). Furthermore, the involuntary nature of the underemployment seen in this study, and the limitations of choice suffered by the people studied, suggested that this kind of worker was not practicing any form of portfolio working where they were selling their skills in a variety of contexts (Cohen & Mallon, 1999 p329); rather they were only increasing their weekly hours of work in any way they could.

As detailed earlier, Feldman suggested that underemployment represented "an inferior, lesser or lower type of employment" (1996 p387) which connected with the specific concept of 'dirty work'. Hughes (1958) first coined the phrase 'dirty work', using it to refer to tasks and occupations that were likely to be perceived as being tainted, disgusting or degrading (p122). Ashforth & Kreiner reported that, contrary to an expectation that the stigma attached to dirty work would make it difficult for people involved in such activities to construct a positive sense of self, an abundance of evidence suggested that incumbents maintained a relatively high occupational esteem and pride (1999 p413). They further posited that this was primarily a group outcome such that the stigma of dirtiness fostered strong occupational and workgroup cultures and led to workers defining themselves, at least partly, in terms of the occupation (1999 p414). Ashforth & Kreiner asserted that workers utilised self-serving beliefs to transform the meaning of their stigmatised work by using three techniques: 'reframing' – transforming the meaning of the work to give it a more positive slant; 'recalibrating' – highlighting certain aspects of the task to demonstrate their importance; and 'refocusing' – shifting emphasis away from stigmatised features to non-stigmatised features (1999 p421). Ashforth & Kreiner further contended that workers would make 'selective social comparisons' with workers in ostensibly similar positions to themselves, but with comparative disadvantages (1999 p424) – although these comparisons could be quite tenuous and might have appeared, to outsiders, as unsustainable. Specifically with regards to dirty work, it could be surmised that the greater the magnitude of these coping mechanisms within the individuals, the less underemployed they might feel; with Maynard et al demonstrating that, whilst accepting their underemployed status, a reduction in the mismatch between an employee's needs and the characteristics of their job reduced negative attitudes (2006a p530).

2.2.2.2 Work Intensity

Green identified the differences between 'performance', 'efficiency', 'skill' and 'work intensity' (2001 p56). This latter term representing the intensity of the effort required during the time spent at work and being different from the amount of time spent at work. Thus the output of an individual worker could be raised either by increasing the work intensity, the amount of time spent at work, or a combination of both. However, 'output' was not classed as the same

as 'performance[9]' or 'efficiency'. 'Performance', here limited to the contractual tasks of an employee, was, according to Green, affected by both the individual's skill in performing the task and by the work intensity, with some scope for a trade-off between the two (2001 p56). This 'performance' was 'efficient' if it could not be improved without raising either skill or work intensity, or both, whilst it was 'inefficient' if it could be raised without working harder or with greater skill, or both. Consequently, a rise in performance that was brought about by increasing work intensity did not necessarily represent an increase in efficiency; rather, it was simply a matter of raising an input to increase the output. Green reported a substantial increase in work intensity amongst a range of sectors within the UK and a demonstrably strong link between that rise and increased productivity in those sectors (Green 2001 p76).

2.2.2.3 Organisational Culture

Schein defined culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (2004 p17). Schein's model described three levels of culture, ranging from the obvious manifestations that one sees when one walks around an organisation to the deepest hidden, seldom articulated, assumptions. The surface manifestations he termed 'artefacts', and they could include shift patterns, rules and regulations, organisation charts, dress code, rituals (team briefing could be a ritual as could be 'hand washing' five minutes before shift end) and notices. They were easy to see but difficult to decipher and, partially because they were easy to see, any investigation into artefacts was not overly threatening to most groups. The second level Schein called 'espoused beliefs and values' and these tended to predict the manifestations visible at the artefacts level. Beliefs and values in the espoused state needed to have proven their worth – or be perceived by the group to have proven their worth – when tested against reality, in order to become an embedded part of the culture. For instance, a company might be moving towards trying to obtain the IIP (Investors in People) kite-mark with the espoused belief that 'people are our most important resource', but if people perceived that this was an exercise carried out to meet the requirements of certain customers then that belief would not become an embedded part of the culture. Thus, at odds with reality, it would remain an espoused belief. The deepest category, 'basic underlying assumptions', was a set of aspects that were held and taken for granted by group members and "this degree of consensus results from repeated success in implementing certain beliefs and values" (Schein, 2004 p31). Espoused beliefs and values which, when tested against reality, were perceived to be valid by members of the group, would become – over time – these basic underlying assumptions. Indeed, it was the repeated success of the behaviour that made changing basic underlying assumptions extremely difficult.

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[9] This research will review performance again later in this chapter as it has facets beyond mere improvement of output, but a narrow view will suffice for the purposes of investigating the relevance of work intensity to the inquiry

Sathe pointed out the difficulty with the definition of the word "culture" and how different people interpreted the word – neatly avoiding this difficulty by suggesting "like other concepts 'culture' does not have some true and sacred meaning that has to be discovered" (1983 p6). He utilised the "ideational" school's view and defined culture as "the set of important understandings (often unstated) that members of a community share in common" (Sathe, 1983 p6) – a definition not at odds with Schein. Indeed, Sathe's use of the word 'important' in his definition has implications for this inquiry in that it referred to what was important to the community under study. Efforts to change what was important to people, when they perceived that they were enjoying success by maintaining what they did, might be difficult to achieve.

There have been a number of attempts to model the construct. Payne developed a three dimensional framework for describing cultures, which focused on the relative strength of three specific aspects: 'pervasiveness' – the range of behaviours and beliefs that the culture imposes on its members; 'consensus' – the proportion of people in the organisation who have absorbed the culture and behave in accordance with its beliefs and values (2001 p108/109); and 'psychological intensity' – the amount that people actually internalise the culture from compliance "through to what Schein calls 'taken-for-granted assumptions' or unconscious beliefs" (2001 p110). Meyerson & Martin took a different view, believing that, "cultures are socially constructed realities and, as such, the definition of what culture is and *how culture changes* depends on how one perceives and enacts culture" (1987 p623) suggesting that "organisations *are* cultures" (1987 p623). Davey & Symon concurred as they wrote, "culture is seen as a process of organising and not as an attribute of organisations" (2001 p124). Smircich (1983) investigated the concept of culture and organisation and identified two categories of researchers' views – variable and root metaphor. The definitions of Schein (2004) and Sathe (1983) were representative of conceiving culture as a variable within an organisation, as indeed was Payne's (2001) model used above. In contrast, Meyerson & Martin (1987) and Davey & Simon (2001) viewed culture as a root metaphor of organisation. Conceptualising culture as a variable within an organisation has significant attraction if one is considering organisational change, mainly because it presents the possibility of changing the course of the organisation by manipulating this single variable (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Schwartz & Davis, 1981). However, conceptualising culture as a root metaphor suggests that changing culture is synonymous with changing the organisation and the strategy for change will depend on how one perceives the specific culture/organisation in question (Meyerson & Martin, 1987 p623).

2.2.2.4 Organisational Conflict

Payne gave examples of the influence of his dimensions, suggesting that organisations populated by people displaying low 'consensus' may demonstrate conflicting values and beliefs; organisations that employed many part time workers may have actually set out to establish low 'pervasiveness'; and organisations that demonstrated a preponderance for

managerial control were expecting very limited 'psychological intensity' from their employees (2001 p111-120). Indeed, based on Payne's model, a mismatch between what a situation needed and what the culture offered could serve to increase conflict.

Rahim (2002 p207) defined conflict as "an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities" (i.e. individual, group, organisation, etc.) and De Drue et al broke the construct into two distinct categories: task conflict – which occurred when there were disagreements about distribution of work resources, organisational procedures and policies, and interpretation of factual information on workplace issues; and relationship conflict – which arose from issues of personal taste, values and beliefs (2004 p8). Lewis et al also identified and modelled the conflict scenario quoting Amason's theory that conflict is multi-dimensional – "while one dimension of conflict enhances decision quality, another dimension attenuates consensus and affective acceptance" (Amason, 1996 in Lewis et al, 1997). According to Lewis et al, Amason, with others, formulated the idea that conflict could be categorised into two types: cognitive (or issue related) where the conflict arose to bring discussion and argument in order to improve the quality of decision making; and affective (or personal related) where conflict arose through people being unwilling to co-operate with each other, (Amason et al, 1996 in Lewis et al 1997). This was a slightly different categorisation than the one established by De Drue in that, for instance, affective conflict could arise about the task (a scenario not covered by Lewis) making both models useful for this inquiry.

Traditional views of organisations tended to treat conflict as a process to be avoided (Drucker, 1989 p119) with these views being grouped under the unitary perspective of an organisation where everyone shared the same goals and agreed on how to achieve them (Fox, 1966 p367). In this perspective, there was either no room for conflict, because of the way the organisation was designed, or conflict was a result of ineffective, poor management. Either way, the organisation did not gear itself for managing the process other than attempting to eliminate its sources. Fox, in his seminal article, was highly critical of proponents of this ideology and suggested that a pluralistic perspective, where the individuals and groups within an organisation competed with each other – legitimately – for resources and could have different objectives and goals which inevitably brought conflict (1966 p372), was a more realistic view of organisational life. This latter ideology at least legitimised the presence of conflict, thus allowing its management – not its elimination – to be part of the normal activities of the company.

2.2.2.5 Perceived organisational support

Organisational support theory (Eisenberger et al, 1986) considered how employees developed ideas about the extent to which their organisation valued them. The theory established a construct, 'perceived organisational support' (POS), defined as employees' "global beliefs about the extent to which the organisation cares about their well being and

values their contributions" (1986 p501), developed by Eisenberger et al to describe the process of social exchange (Blau, 1964) via the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). Social exchange suggested that the relationship between the organisation and the employee was built on a cost-benefit analysis with the norm of reciprocity describing the obligation of the employee to respond to the benefits he/she received from the organisation by delivering benefits in return. Research has consistently found POS to be related to many of the benefits sought by employers including commitment (Akremia et al, 2013; Rhoades et al, 2001; Settoon et al, 1996), attendance (Eisenberger et al, 1986), intention to stay (Chew & Wong, 2008; Wayne et al, 1997), in-role performance (Eisenberger et al, 2001; Muse & Stamper, 2007; Settoon et al, 1996) and extra-role performance (Chen et al, 2009; Moorman et al, 1998; O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999; Peelle, 2007). It was characterised by the condition that an employee's perception was not based on any written or implied contract containing explicit or implicit promises, but on the general treatment that he/she received from the organisation. Shore & Shore (1995) suggested that there were two types of human resource practices that were key to POS, discretionary benefits (such as personal time off or payment for education) and organisational recognition (such as salary increases or promotion).

2.2.2.6 Leader-member exchange

A construct also based on social exchange (Blau, 1964) was leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, which contended, "leaders develop separate relationships with each of their subordinates through a series of work-related exchanges" (Greguras & Ford, 2006 p433). These relationships included exchanges required by the employment contract (designated as low-LMX) and also those which went beyond that contract and could be characterised by mutual trust, comradeship and mutual obligations (identified as high-LMX) (Liden & Maslyn 1998 p43); with evidence suggesting that the greater the perceived value of the exchanges, the higher the quality of the LMX relationship (Wayne et al, 1997 p84). Some researchers (Dansereau et al, 1975, Graen & Cashman, 1975; Liden & Graen, 1980) suggested that the quality of this exchange resulted in leaders differentiating their subordinates into two distinct groups; the 'out-group' – populated by people who perform no better than the employment contract required, and the 'in-group' – containing those who provided the leader with benefits beyond that contract. Graen (1976) further suggested that the in-group would be relatively sparsely populated. Dienesch & Liden, critical of the lack of an explicit definition of the construct, posited three dimensions to describe its scope. Those were: 'perceived contribution to the exchange' – where each party to the exchange judged the quality of the work-oriented activity provided for their mutual benefit; 'loyalty' – the public support demonstrated, by each party, for the other person and their goals; and 'affect' – the mutual affection based on personal traits rather than work values inherent in the relationship (1986 p624-625). However, Liden & Maslyn, detecting characteristics from exchanges which did not fit into any of these three, identified a fourth dimension; 'professional respect' – which describes the perception of one party, regarding the reputation for excelling within their line of work, of the other (1998 p65). This multidimensional concept suggested that there could be danger in classifying

employees into an in-group/out-group dichotomy. If each LMX was unique, each relationship would score differently on different dimensions and each leader would favour certain dimensions above others. Hence, whilst there may be obvious candidates for each group – those with particularly high-LMX and those with particularly low-LMX – many others would not fit comfortably into either. Furthermore, Liden & Maslyn accepted that they ignored the longitudinal aspect of LMX. Indeed, although they quoted earlier research – that LMX quality develops very early in relationships (Liden et al, 1993; Settoon et al, 1996 p220) – they suggested that the four dimensions identified above might develop at different rates and have different influences on the relationship with some being more enduring than others (1998 p67).

2.2.2.7 Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange

There were conceptual similarities between perceived organisational support (POS) and leader-member exchange (LMX). As described earlier, they were both based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) with the major distinctions being the parties involved in the exchange and the direction of the exchange. The parties involved in POS were the employee and his/her organisation and the direction was unidirectional in that, although the exchange was two-way, it was the perception of the employee that the construct measured. Meanwhile, the parties involved in LMX were the employee and his/her leader with both the exchange and perception of it being two-way. Wayne et al contended that employees viewed the exchanges with an organisation and a leader as distinct (1997 p85) – finding evidence to support this contention in their empirical research. However, they also found evidence to support a theory that there was a reciprocal relationship between the two constructs with LMX having a stronger influence on POS than vice-versa (1997 p104). They posited that POS was less susceptible to change than LMX with their logic for this latter view arising because internal changes within organisations meant that leaders could often be changed (due to promotion, retirement, transferring out, etc.), requiring new LMX development (1997 p91). POS, on the other hand, was more likely to change when new owners acquired the company or when there were fundamental changes to the strategy of the organisation – generally less frequent than internal personnel movements.

2.2.2.8 Employee-organisation relationship

This construct[10] viewed the employment relationship solely from the perspective of the employer and it included "employer's expectations about specific contributions that it desires from employees and the inducements that it uses to effect the desired contributions" (Tsui et al, 1997 p1091). Tsui et al justified this view by suggesting that although negotiations between employee and employer existed, it was the employer who defined the bulk of the content within the relationship. They put forward four employer approaches to the employee-

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[10] This is a specific use of the term 'employee-organisation relationship' introduced by Tsui et al (1997). Other writers use the term to describe the overarching relationship between organisation and employee which includes culture, psychological contract, OCBs (see: Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2007; Aryee et al, 2009)

organisation relationship of which they described two as 'balanced' and two as 'unbalanced' (1997 p1091-1094). Of the two balanced approaches, they gave one the title 'quasi-spot contract' and described it as an approach where "the employer offers short-term, purely economic inducements in exchange for well-specified contributions by the employee" (Tsui et al, 1997 p1091). Employers limited the expectations they had of the employee – even restricting[11] the employee from going beyond that expectation – and matched the pay to the job. They gave the second the title 'mutual investment' and in this approach the employer viewed the relationship as a combination of economic and social exchange. Indeed, the employer looked for contributions from the employee to benefit the organisation's interests that went beyond the accepted norm and, in return, the inducements the employer offered went beyond the purely economic. The approach "entails unspecified, broad and open-ended obligations on the part of both parties" (Tsui et al, 1997 p1092) and indicated a much longer-term relationship.

With regards to the unbalanced approaches, the title 'underinvestment' was used to describe a situation where the employee was expected to accept broad and open-ended obligations whilst the employer was only prepared to reciprocate with short term monetary rewards; and the opposite 'overinvestment' was used to describe a situation where the employer offered open-ended and broad-ranging rewards whilst only expecting the employee to perform well-specified, job-focused activities (Tsui et al, 1997 p1093). Their research suggested that employee performance was optimised under the 'mutual investment' approach and was at its worst within an 'underinvestment' regime. Such results would not be unexpected if a more generalised social exchange approach were used, but Tsui et al put this model forward as a conscious approach that an organisation could take in designing its 'inducements for contributions' strategy – it being the more powerful player in the exchange.

2.2.2.9 Exchange ideology

Application of the above 'inducements for contributions' strategy presumed that an employee accepted the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and a measure of this acceptance was identified by exchange ideology, defined as "the strength of an employee's belief that work effort should depend on treatment by the organisation" (Redman & Snape, 2005 p765). Implicit in the constructs based on Blau's social exchange theory (1964), which include perceived organisational support, leader member exchange and psychological contract, was that the employee would reciprocate with his/her attitudes and behaviour based on what he/she received from the organisation. However, if an employee did not accept this norm of reciprocity, the inducements provided by the organisation would not influence his/her performance. There appeared to be some links between exchange ideology and 'orientation to work', which Bennett defined as "a measure or reflection of how an individual views a

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[11] If restriction of contribution is present in the contract then the company is blocking the social exchange (Blau, 1964) and preventing the employee from acting out the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), which may cause changes in other constructs.

particular situation in terms of what he desires from it and the extent to which he expects these desires to be achieved in it" (1978 p188). Research suggested that these desires and expectations might have depended on treatment received from the organisation (high exchange ideology) or they might have had little dependence on such treatment (low exchange ideology) suggesting that orientation to work influenced such an ideology. Furthermore there also appeared to be strong links between exchange ideology and 'equity sensitivity' which held that "individuals react in consistent but individually different ways to both perceived equity and inequity because they have different preferences for (i.e., are differentially sensitive to) equity" (Huseman et al, 1987 p223) making equity sensitivity a subset of exchange ideology in that individuals who displayed any sensitivity were in the high exchange ideology group.

Related to an individual's acceptance of the exchange relationship involved in his/her employment, exchange ideology was unlike the other constructs detailed so far. It influenced all those constructs that were based on the Blau/Gouldner social exchange theory, but it existed only as a measure of how an individual perceived that social exchange and could not exist on its own. However, in the context of psychological contract, this would suggest that the reciprocation dimension is not equally important to the performance of all workers such that, as Witt & Broach identified, individuals with low exchange ideology "put forward effort without regard to what they receive from the organisation; they work hard even if they perceive themselves as being treated poorly" (1993 p98) or work inadequately even if they perceive themselves as treated well.

2.2.2.10 Organisational justice

Organisational justice referred to employees' views of whether they were treated fairly by their organisation (Cohen & Greenberg, 1982; Witt et al, 2001 p506). The construct was broken down into components depending on the source of the influence on the employee's views, with Cropanzano & Greenberg (1997) asserting that there were two components: 'distributive' justice, which referred to the perceived fairness of the allocation of resources by the organisation; and 'procedural' justice, which described the perceived fairness of the process by which the decisions on resource allocations were made. Bies & Moag suggested a third component that they termed 'interactional' justice which denoted the quality of the interpersonal treatment they received in their dealings with their organisation (1986 p44); although Cropanzano & Greenberg (1997) held that this was part of procedural justice. In addition, Greenberg suggested that interactional justice contained the subcomponent 'informational' justice[12], which focused on the explanations provided about why certain procedures were used or why resources were allocated as they were (1990 p411). Moorman (1991) considered interactional justice to be distinct from distributive and procedural justice;

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[12] At this stage Greenberg did not actually use the term 'informational' although he described the component in detail

and, in an attempt to standardise the construct, Colquitt et al (2001) concluded that interactional justice was a valid third component (along with procedural and distributive justice) and was made up of two sub components: informational justice, as just described; and interpersonal justice, which related to the actual way people were treated, described by words such as sensitivity, politeness, dignity and respect (Stecher & Rosse, 2005 p231). Indeed, experiments undertaken by Stecher & Rosse concluded that each of the three components detailed were distinct variables (2005 p243) so for the purposes of this research "organisational justice is defined as distributive, procedural and interactional justice" (Scandura, 1999 p27).

2.2.3 Outcomes

Guest (1998) suggested that the state of the psychological contract would affect an individual's perceptions about their employment. Each of the constructs in this section could be shaped by the condition of this contract between the two parties.

2.2.3.1 Organisation-based self-esteem

The Oxford English Dictionary defined self-esteem as "confidence in one's own worth or abilities". This global definition was modified to a restricted measure termed organisation-based self-esteem (OBSE), which reflected "the self-perceived value that individuals have of themselves as organisational members acting within an organisational context" (Pierce et al, 1989 p625) and was later still defined as "the degree to which an individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, and worthy as an organisation member" (Pierce & Gardner, 2004 p593); with those possessing high OBSE perceiving themselves as important, meaningful, effectual and worthwhile to their employers (Pierce et al, 1989 p625). The same authors (in 1993) advised the use of the latter construct to predict organisation-based issues, stating that the global construct referred to peoples' perception of their competence across all the roles they occupy in life whilst OBSE was only relevant in the organisational frame of reference. Their evidence showed that predictions of a variety of organisational behaviour constructs were more consistent using OBSE than they were using measures of global self-esteem (1993; 2009).

2.2.3.2 Job satisfaction

Smith et al defined job satisfaction as "the extent to which an employee expresses a positive affective orientation toward a job" (1969), whilst Locke defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (1976 p1297). Accepting that the construct was multidimensional in nature, researchers have described it as an evaluative judgement about the degree of pleasure that consists of affective and cognitive components (Hulin & Judge, 2003; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Whilst these components were not mutually exclusive, the cognitive component referred to attitudes about the job conditions (such as level of activity, task diversity, pay and general working conditions) and the affective component consisted of the feelings, or

positive/negative emotions associated with the work such as boredom with the job, like/dislike, interesting/uninteresting and pleasant/unpleasant (Schleicher et al, 2004 p167).

2.2.3.3 Organisational commitment

Defining 'organisational commitment' as "a strong belief in the organisation's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation, and a strong desire to remain a member of the organisation", Mowday et al (1982 p27) built their definition on Etzioni's concept of 'member involvement' (1961). Etzioni suggested that there were three kinds of member involvement: moral – characterised by the member (employee) accepting and identifying with the goals and values of the organisation; calculative – demonstrated by the rational willingness of the employee to reciprocate benefits received with effort delivered; and alienative – represented by negative attitude displayed by the employee toward the organisation. Identifying their original definition as an 'active' relationship where an individual was willing to give something of himself or herself in order to contribute to the organisation, Porter[13] et al returned to the concept in 2005, reporting that "in subsequent research by ourselves and others, this definition came to be labelled as 'affective commitment'" (2005 p176) – which established it as only part of the commitment construct. Meyer & Allen posited a broader definition of commitment. They specified their descriptions as components of commitment of which they identified three: affective commitment – a desire to be part of an organisation; continuance commitment – a need to be part of an organisation; and normative commitment – an obligation to maintain employment in an organisation (1991 p61). Their unwillingness to accept 'normative' as a part of 'affective' was highlighted by their contention that desire and obligation were not necessarily the same concept – an individual feeling obligated to provide the organisation with something but having no desire to do so (1991 p78). Accepting that organisational commitment has been defined in a number of different fashions, these definitions shared a common theme in that they all referred to a bond or link between the individual and his/her organisation (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990 p171).

2.2.3.4 Organisational commitment and job satisfaction

The relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment was not clear. Researchers have found causal, correlational and non-existent relations between the two when applying different models to empirical analysis although, methodologically, there were significant issues surrounding the proof of causality. Cross-sectional analyses of responses ignored any time lag effect between the two and in longitudinal studies there was no proven optimal time lag[14] to deliver valid results. Furthermore, although the bulk of the literature that

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[13] Porter et al are the same three authors as Mowday et al in 1982 – Porter, Mowday & Steers
[14] Respondents in the Bateman & Strasser (1984) research averaged 10 years service, whilst those in Curry et al (1986) averaged 6 years, Vandenberg & Lance (1992) did not provide figures but all were established employees in the same company, Koslowsky et al's (1991) respondents averaged 7 years, Currivan's (1999) sample averaged 5 years and Meyer & Allen's (1991) data arose from four questionnaires, one prior to entry and then one each after 1, 6 and 11 months.

favoured a causal link was in the 'job satisfaction as antecedent' direction (Gregson, 1992; Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1985 p747; Meyer & Allen, 1991 p70; Mowday et al, 1982; Mueller et al, 1994; Price & Mueller, 1981; Testa, 2001, Wallace, 1995 p817), there was sufficient doubt cast on the link to make this assumption dangerous with researchers finding 'commitment as antecedent' (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992) and others finding 'no link' (Currivan 1999; Curry et al, 1986; Glisson & Durick, 1988; Koslowsky et al, 1991).

2.2.3.5 Motivation

Mitchell defined motivation as "the degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain specified behaviours" (1982 p82) and he emphasised that it was unique to an individual, it was intentional on the individual's part and its outcome was the behaviour of the individual. Locke & Latham contended that "the concept of motivation refers to internal factors that impel action and to external factors that can act as inducements to action" (2004 p388), suggesting that both intrinsic and extrinsic facets of the construct influenced the behavioural outcomes. Ellemers et al, reviewing the theory of motivation, identified three sets of influences; those factors that energised people to act, those that focused the action in a particular direction and those that caused people to sustain their actions (2004 p459). They proceeded by suggesting that motivational models (Maslow, 1943; Vroom, 1964; Mowday, 1973; Locke & Latham, 1990) tended to address only one or other of these sets of influences and hence gave only a limited picture of this complex topic (2004 p459). Indeed Locke & Latham (2004), whilst proposing a model which did attempt to integrate existing theories, accepted that it was only a preliminary attempt and called for additional research into the problem. Combining Ellemers et al (2004) with Locke & Latham (2004) would categorise motivation into 6 factors comprising intrinsic energising, intrinsic focussing, intrinsic sustaining, extrinsic energising, extrinsic focussing and, finally, extrinsic sustaining factors.

2.2.4 Behaviour

Whilst this particular inquiry was not strictly a research into motivation theory, the constructs previously described in this chapter (influencers, core concept and outcomes) did play a part in the behaviours that an individual chose to engage in – as will be seen in chapters 4,5 and 6. Thus examples of motivation (outcomes of a multitude of shaping forces that an individual was subjected to) could also be categorised within these other constructs: their perceived status; the intensity of the work they were required to perform; the employee-organisation relationship imposed upon them; the perceived justice or injustice felt as a member of the organisation; the exchange ideology they possessed and how it affected their willingness to reciprocate; the perceived organisational support felt with regards to how their employer valued them; the leader-member exchange relationship they enjoyed; the three components of organisational commitment that helped to form the bond with their employer; their internalised organisation-based self-esteem; their job satisfaction; the organisational conflict they needed to cope with in their day-to-day activities; the organisational culture shared with their colleagues; and, finally, all the above operating through the 'unwritten' contracts,

specifically the psychological contract, voluntarily entered into. In essence, motivation was the closest construct to the behaviour that management needed from its employees.

2.2.4.1 Performance

Fundamentally, organisations need to perform effectively in order to survive and, because organisations are people, this requires the people to perform effectively. Sathe (1983 p17) and Lewis (1996 p9), although speaking specifically about culture, suggested that managers were really interested in behaviour change when they sought improvements in performance. Organisations convert inputs into outputs and managers are tasked to make that conversion process as effective as possible, which usually involves attempts to make people perform as well as they are able.

2.2.4.2 Establishing performance terminology

Motowidlo et al agreed with Sathe (1983) and Lewis (1996) that performance was a behavioural – not a results – construct and defined an individual's job performance as "the aggregated value to the organisation of the discrete behavioural episodes that an individual performs over a standard interval of time" (1997 p72). Clearly differentiating performance behaviour as that behaviour which actually affected the goals of an organisation – negatively or positively – as opposed to behaviour that had no effect on the goals, they broke it further down into two constructs. These were task performance, which included behaviours that contributed to, or impeded, the execution and maintenance of the core technical function within an organisation (its actual conversion process); and contextual performance, comprising behaviours that contributed to, or impeded, the broader organisational, social and psychological environment (in which the core technical function exists) (Bergman et al, 2008 p229; Conway, 1996 p310: Motowidlo et al, 1997 p75). Van Scotter & Motowidlo (1996) further broke down contextual performance into two dimensions: 'interpersonal facilitation', that which was directed at other individuals; and 'job dedication', that which was directed to the job/organisation. Motowidlo et al also contended that cognitive ability largely influenced task performance whilst personality largely influenced contextual performance, although they accepted some cross over (1997 p80). This construct was closely linked to a model of behaviour originally introduced to describe that facet which goes beyond the individual merely carrying out the task – organisational citizenship behaviour.

Katz (1964) appeared to be the first to recognise the need for employees to go beyond their defined role requirements and this was built on by other researchers (Chen et al, 2009; Muse & Stamper, 2007; Organ, 1997; Van Dyne et al, 1994) who identified two general components of behaviour at work: those of in-role behaviour – the contractual requirements surrounding performance of standard job activities (Chen et al, 2009 p120), and extra-role behaviour – anything not classed as performance of standard job activities and, by implication, 'discretionary' (Tierney & Bauer, 1996 p298). Organ defined organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly

recognised by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation" (1988 p4) – categorising it in the latter group of behaviours. He later returned to the definition based on his own and the findings of Morrison. Morrison (1993) questioned how much the perception of in-role and extra-role behaviour differed between individuals. Asserting that, irrespective of a formal list of duties, people would differ in what they considered to be in-role/extra-role behaviour, she contended that employees who defined their job broadly were more likely to engage in extra-role behaviour than those who had a narrow view of their job, because they saw this behaviour as part of what they were paid to do. Organ asked similar questions to Morrison (1993) and appealed for reference to extra-role behaviour to be avoided when describing OCB (1997 p88). He also struggled with how one could differentiate between extra-role behaviour that would promote effective functioning of the organisation and that which would promote the opposite (1997 p87). Thus, whilst some behaviour – such as staying after work without pay to resolve a crisis – could clearly be OCB, other behaviour – such as conflict – may well have appeared not to be OCB but future outcomes showed that it was. Based on this, Organ redefined OCB as "performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place" (1997 p95) and, whilst it was less specific than the original definition, it went some way in overcoming the problems highlighted. Graham coined a similar definition purporting that OCB was "a global concept that includes all positive organisationally relevant behaviours of individual organisation members" (Graham, 1991 in Van Dyne et al, 1994 p766), clearly including both in-role and extra-role behaviours as part of the construct.

Some authors (Chen et al, 2009; McBain, 2004; Tierney & Bauer, 1996) were in danger of looking at OCB and extra-role behaviour as synonymous such that, whilst implying that extra-role behaviour was directed towards promoting the effectiveness of the organisation, they ignored the issue that extra-role behaviour could be applied to consciously harm an organisation, as in the case of 'whistle-blowing' (Gundlach et al, 2008) or 'principled organisational dissent' (Graham, 1986). In a similar vein Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, clearly differentiating in-role behaviour from OCB, suggested that OCB undertaken by employees at the expense of in-role behaviour (perhaps due to guilt from carrying out personal activities when they should have been performing their contractual tasks) would be unwelcome to the organisation (2007 p172). Williams & Anderson further categorised OCB by identifying where the benefits of the behaviour had effect, coining the term OCBO to include behaviours that benefitted the organisation in general and OCBI to encapsulate behaviours that benefitted individuals within the organisation (1991 p601-602). Indeed this last distinction was important if one looked to eradicate any redundancy in the concept of performance behaviour.

Conway reported that Borman & Motowidlo (1993) based the concept of 'contextual performance' on organisational citizenship behaviour OCB (1996 p310), but Coleman & Borman suggested that some research literature had identified the concept as encompassing

OCB (2000 p26). Therefore, in attempt to clarify the constructs of performance and OCB, along with other similar constructs including: prosocial organisational behaviour (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986); organisational spontaneity (George & Brief, 1992); civic virtue (Robinson & Morrison, 1995); job dedication and interpersonal facilitation (Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996); sportsmanship (Organ, 1988); and the above mentioned OCBI and OCBO (Williams & Anderson, 1991); Coleman & Borman established three broad categories of behaviour based on the primary beneficiary of that behaviour. These three were: "interpersonal citizenship performance – behaviours benefiting organisation members; organisation citizenship performance – behaviours benefiting the organisation; and job/task conscientiousness – behaviours benefiting the job/task (2000 p41). Werner, arguing the need for a broad definition of employee performance, used Katz (1964) proposal that – for an effective organisation – people must enter and remain in the organisation, carry out the job requirements and carry out activities that go beyond the role requirements (2000 p4). From this, without claiming an exact match, he contended that OCB and contextual performance were very similar constructs. Critically, Coleman & Borman (2000) and Werner (2000) left out of their integrated model any behaviour that was detrimental to the organisation – a facet that was included in the task performance/contextual performance construct of Motowidlo et al (1997) and is an important issue in any study of organisational behaviour. Hence whilst the construct of citizenship performance behaviours could be useful to inform positive behaviour, there is a need to utilise a construct that will enable negative behaviour to be assessed. Indeed, Organ's redefinition of OCB, as "performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place" (1997 p95) and the Bergman et al view of contextual performance, comprising behaviours that contribute to, or impede, the broader organisational, social and psychological environment in which the core technical function exists (2008 p229) are synonymous, except for the purely positive direction of Organ's view.

This inquiry needs to establish a common framework to usefully interpret these similar concepts and, in consequence, this manuscript will refer to performance and organisational citizenship behaviour categories under the heading 'performance' and will use the sub-categories detailed in the second column of table 3.1 (courtesy of Coleman & Borman, 2000 p41) instead of their corresponding titles in the major sources of literature – with a proviso that these performances can deliver positive or negative contributions.

Source	This manuscript	Performance literature	OCB literature
Overall measure	Performance	Task and contextual performance	In-role and extra-role behaviour
Sub category	Job/task conscientiousness	Task performance	In-role behaviour
Sub category	Organisation citizenship performance	Job dedication	OCBO
Sub category	Interpersonal citizenship performance	Interpersonal facilitation	OCBI

Table 2.1 – Performance and citizenship behaviour terminology

2.2.4.3 Justification of the position of performance within the model

The model (figure 2.1) suggests that the psychological contract is formed via a series of influences and results in outcomes, which help to determine the behaviour that an individual will demonstrate in relation to their particular organisation. It is this behaviour, related to the organisation, that can be translated into 'performance' (Motowidlo, 1997 p72) and it is that performance which management seeks to influence. Indeed, in the cases dealt with in this inquiry, the idiosyncratic nature of the psychological contract with the unique responses to contract breach makes performance not only a unique response by each employee, but also a response that sometimes fluctuates, sometimes follows a trend and remains difficult to predict with any accuracy. An example of this would be a housekeeper at the hotel whose job/task conscientiousness and organisation citizenship performance were high, exchange ideology and interpersonal citizenship performance were low, and who was viewed by management as very dependable. However, when management breached her psychological contract by failing to recruit adequate numbers of staff to maintain an effective housekeeping function – a breach that affected her by causing her to lose her days off and work longer hours when she was in the hotel – she went absent on sick leave for a reason that, whilst being valid, would not previously have resulted in her non-attendance. Clearly, this particular housekeeper felt a certain job satisfaction, possessed a level of organisational commitment and enjoyed her own personal organisation-based self-esteem which researchers have attempted to link to performance.

Schappe (1998) investigated the effects of three variables: procedural justice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (specifically *affective* commitment) on performance and concluded that only organisational commitment emerged as a significant predictor of the two citizenship dimensions. Rifai (2005) took the same three variables as Schappe took in 1998 but proposed that procedural justice was antecedent to job satisfaction, job satisfaction was antecedent to affective commitment and that, in turn, was antecedent to the citizenship dimensions, concluding that the model was fully supported by the evidence. However, neither Bateman & Organ (1983) (attempting to show a causal link between job satisfaction and the

two dimensions) nor Williams & Anderson (1991) (attempting to show a causal link between job satisfaction/organisational commitment and the two dimensions), although proving correlation, could show a causal link.

Meanwhile, Organ & Lingl (1995) tried to establish if one or more personality traits underpinned job satisfaction and the citizenship dimensions, but found only that job satisfaction accounted for some variance in performance. Motowidlo (1984) specifically investigated the effect of job satisfaction on interpersonal citizenship performance but he broke down the dimension into sub-categories (assertiveness, self-acceptance, anti-sexism and consideration) finding the one that related closest to the behaviour benefiting the individual – consideration – to be the only one with significant influence. In stark contrast, Feather & Rauter (2004) found no significant evidence of job satisfaction influencing performance and Williams & Anderson (1991) concluded that organisational commitment had no link to the two citizenship dimensions. Finally, the conflicting outcomes are possibly best summarised by looking at the efforts of Curry et al (1986) who tried to replicate the results of Bateman & Strasser (1984) – that organisational commitment is antecedent to job satisfaction – without success. However, there was no evidence to suggest that job satisfaction and organisational commitment were in any way negatively related to performance and, although there were inconsistencies in results, many studies showed some positive link between facets of satisfaction and commitment with one or more of the three performance dimensions. There are many variables potentially involved in performance and, as can be seen even when concentrating on such closely related variables as job satisfaction and organisational commitment, results were difficult to replicate, possibly due to the influence of combinations of other variables, as with OBSE below.

In a study ranging from managers to clerical workers, Baird identified a significant proportion demonstrating high levels of self-esteem[15] but receiving poor ratings of job/task conscientiousness from their supervisors (1977 p297). In contrast, Brockner & Hess found a significant positive relationship between the self-esteem ratings of members of quality circles and the organisational citizenship performance of the circles (1986 p619), although they accepted that good performance of a circle could have raised the self-esteem rather than their anticipated causal direction of self-esteem influencing performance. Sekiguchi et al maintained that employees with high OBSE would be prepared to engage in organisational citizenship performance because they felt competent to do so, whilst people with low OBSE were more likely to withhold such behaviour in order to align themselves with their negative self-views (2008 p765-766). Holding that those with high OBSE *should* perceive themselves as effectual within their organisation, Tang & Gilbert found a link between OBSE and both citizenship dimensions. However, the respondents gave their own ratings of their OBSE and

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[15] This research was carried out before the 'organisation-based self-esteem' construct was formulated. However, the measure undertaken was based on work and respondents were aware that they were to be rated on their job performance by their supervisors

performance, which brought into question the objectivity of those performance gradings. In fact Allen et al, from respondents across a variety of industries, discovered substantial differences between self-rated performance and supervisor-rated performance (2000 p109) and questioned the reliability of any single rating – whatever the source (2000 p110). A rationale used by Allen et al to explain the differences between ratings involved the premise that much interpersonal citizenship performance displayed by an individual was likely to escape the attention of a supervisor, by its nature being directed to others within the organisation (2000 p98); a rationale that could bring into question results obtained from a person's direct superior.

In addition, researchers have also looked at a direct link between the psychological contract and performance. Firstly, regarding the effects of employer breach on performance, Robinson & Morrison (1995) discovered that organisational citizenship performance was reduced by perceived psychological contract breach. Furthermore, they found that trust mediated the relationship between the relational component of the breach and organisational citizenship performance – but not the relationship between the transactional component of the breach and the performance measure. Robinson (1996) returned to the same sample and extended her analysis to demonstrate that all three dimensions were reduced by perceived psychological breach, although this additional research also discovered that the greater the trust an employee had in the organisation the less likely he/she was to perceive a contract breach. Indeed Robinson concluded "a loss of trust is the critical ingredient in the relationship between psychological contract breach and subsequent employee reactions" (1996 p593). Robinson et al, meanwhile, emphasised the dynamic nature of perceived obligations and found that, in a study of MBA graduates in the first two years of employment, an employee's perceived obligations to his/her employer declined over time whilst the obligations he/she expected his/her employer to fulfil increased over time (1994 p147). This would, at first glance, seem to be at odds with Guest's contention that, "with longer service the psychological contract is likely to become broader and deeper" (1998 p651) – assuming that it was not interrupted by a breach of the nature described above – but the study of Robinson et al was based on new starts whereas Guest was commenting on a longer term development. Robinson et al also discovered that an employee would reduce his/her perceived obligations if he/she perceived a psychological contract breach – either transactional or relational in nature – although the damage done by breach of relational obligations was stronger than that done by breach of transactional obligations (1994 p147). Secondly, as certain researchers (Herriot & Pemberton, 1996; Herriot et al, 1997; Guest, 1998; Guest & Conway 1999) saw the contract as a two-way exchange, there was potential for either the employer or the employee to breach. Indeed, although most of the research on contract breach has concentrated on the breach by the employer, Morrison & Robinson contended that the interpretation of employee breach might be quite different from the process described above. They held that an employee breach was unlikely to elicit the same emotional response from the

anthropomorphised organisation as the reverse breach elicits in the individual (1997 p250). However, there was some evidence from the findings of this inquiry that employee breach did cause significant upheaval.

2.3 In summary

In this chapter I have attempted to formulate a model to analyse performance (for use in chapters 4,5 and 6). Importantly, the earlier contention, of performance being difficult to predict with any accuracy, was borne out by the conflicting research findings regarding the links between performance and the outcomes of the psychological contract, and performance and the psychological contract itself. However, I suggest that the literature provides sufficient evidence to keep the position of performance as the ultimate outcome of the many constructs affecting the individual at work. This assumption is crucial to the credibility of this research as it is the (positive) alteration of performance that management seeks to influence (Abrahamson, 1996). Indeed, although I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter that an argument could be made for inserting different constructs into Guest's (1998) model, I have attempted to select a sufficient number of robust constructs to provide a partial, but adequate, picture of the employment relationship. Furthermore, whilst Guest's model may not fully describe the employment relationship, I have found no evidence to suggest it lacks either logic or merit.

The next chapter discusses the methodology used to capture and analyse the primary data.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

This methodology initially provides an analytical view of the paradigms that appear to suit my research project and me, suggests the 'realism' paradigm as the best match between the two and puts forward an argument to use ethnography as the data collection method (3.1). It then critically reviews issues surrounding validity, reliability, authenticity, plausibility and criticality (3.2). The research approach (3.3) follows and contains explanations of the choice of cases, the process of gaining acceptance amongst the cleaning workers, the actual data collection, data analysis processes and exit strategies before finishing with steps taken to address the credibility of the research findings. Ethics (3.4) and limitations (3.5) are discussed next and the chapter is summarised (3.6) to bring out the key issues.

3.1 Theoretical base

Silverman took a pragmatic view of the choice of research methodology writing that "our research problem defines the most appropriate method" (2007 p6). Being careful not to denigrate any quantitative or qualitative methodology, Silverman implied that the method followed logically from the research problem and warned the researcher to avoid having an ideological commitment to any one paradigm. However, choosing a paradigm – "a set of linked assumptions about the world which is shared by a community of scientists investigating the world" (Deshpande, 1983 p101), or "conceptual orientation or perspective from which research questions, methods and styles of explanation flow" (Gregory, 1983 p360) – based on the research problem, would enable me to access the most relevant literature for my background reading. Suggesting that "a paradigm reflects a researcher's understanding of the nature of existence" (2004 p403), Thompson & Perry asserted "beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology) within the paradigm drive how the knowledge about that reality is sought (epistemology). In turn, those beliefs then drive the research techniques (methodology) chosen for the research" (2004 p403). They put the decision clearly in the hands of the researcher, with the person's 'beliefs about the nature of reality' being the basis of the methodology he/she ultimately chooses. Taking the Thompson & Perry assertion along with Silverman's point about the research problem defining the methodology, there was a need to match the methodology with the inquiry and, because of differing views on how many paradigms could be established, a review of those that appeared to be closest to my beliefs assisted the justification of the final choice.

Cohen et al, after performing a critique of the normative (human behaviour is rule-governed and should be investigated by positivistic natural science – 2007 p21) and interpretive (human behaviour is individualistic and subjective, and theory is emergent, arising from particular situations – 2007 p21-22) paradigms, implied that these two did not sufficiently cover the issues facing researchers. They put forward a third paradigm, 'critical theory', after observing that "just as positivistic theories can be criticised for their macro-sociological persuasion, so interpretive and qualitative can be criticised for their narrowly micro-

sociological persuasion" (2007 p27). Unlike the other two paradigms, critical theory was prescriptive in that its purpose was not merely to understand situations to change them (Cohen et al, 2007 p26), rather it sought to modify the social order within a democratic society in order to promote equality. The critical theorist would probably argue that the other two paradigms were trivial in that they accepted rather than questioned situations – seeking only to understand and not to modify. However, this had ethical dangers in that assumptions of what was 'right' and 'wrong' within research situations might not be transparent and seeking change[16] in one direction may not be in the best interest of the participants. This was accepted by Cohen et al, who recognised that objectivity could be lost when researchers took an ideological stance. Striving to maintain objectivity, I accepted that I was trying to 'understand and not to modify' and designed the research with that in mind.

The observation that this study was not seeking to change was, I believe, an important design aspect – partially as it served to remove the 'critical theory' paradigm from consideration. Furthermore, a quantitative study following the normative paradigm also appeared to be mismatched with the requirements of this research. Indeed, the normative paradigm inference that human nature is governed by rules was unlikely to help a study that was attempting to show that the individualistic nature of employees, and the environments that they and their organisations created, made any rules operate in a very general manner. Therefore a paradigm that treated respondents in a more individualistic way needed to be sought.

In contrast to Cohen et al, Healy & Perry, (2000) detailed four paradigms that, they purported, were sufficient to cover the breadth of social research. The first of Healy & Perry's paradigms – termed 'positivism' – appeared to entirely match the normative description detailed earlier. Regarding the second, both sets of authors agreed on the term 'critical theory' and the paradigms entirely matched, with the distinction between the interpretive paradigm described earlier and Healy & Perry's third and fourth appearing to be of most assistance to my inquiry. Healy and Perry named their third paradigm 'constructivism' and their fourth paradigm 'realism', which together largely matched with the Cohen et al interpretive paradigm; the distinction being captured by Stake who brought the relevance of the paradigms to the forefront when he looked at the uses to which 'case studies' were put. In Stake's 'intrinsic' case study, an instrument where the case itself was the focus, a "participant's perceptions are being studied for their own sake" (Stake 1995 in Healy & Perry 2000 p120) and this was given the label 'constructivism'. However, in his 'instrumental' case study, an instrument where the case was being used to understand something else, "perceptions are being studied because they provide a window to a reality beyond those perceptions" (Stake 1995 in Healy & Perry 2000 p120) and this was referred to as 'realism'. It was the realism paradigm that appeared to

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[16] This requirement for change was also inherent in 'action research' where interventions were introduced into specific situations. This project did not appear to benefit from an interventionist approach.

map best to this project with the use of instrumental case studies, investigated in order to expand our understanding of the link between an individual's employment relationship and their performance in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments, clearly putting the work within that realm. As Healy and Perry noted, "realism believes that there is a 'real' world to discover, even though it is only imperfectly apprehensible" (2000, p120); going on to use Poppers (1972) three ontological assumptions to describe the relevance of the paradigm to the kind of research undertaken here. Popper's 'world three', they summarised, "consists of abstract things that are born of peoples' minds but exist independently of any one person" (Healy & Perry 2000 p120). Watson, in his year as a participant observer amongst a group of senior managers, used the realism paradigm and argued that his observations did not only apply to the group of managers he spent his time with. He justified the wider applicability of his findings suggesting "getting very close to managers in one organisation is a means of generalising about the processes managers get involved in" (1994 p7). Some of the cleaning processes discussed here apply beyond the individual organisations studied and I contend that the implications of those processes, for management, go beyond cleaning.

Accepting the realism paradigm, as both a limitation on the research but also as a mechanism to assist the credibility of the research by enabling established research modelling to assist validity, reliability, authenticity, plausibility and criticality was a necessary but insufficient undertaking before allowing the research to commence. To meet the sufficiency aspect, there was a need to establish the form, within the scope of the realism paradigm, which the inquiry would take. Fielding described ethnography as a form of research which combined several methods including interviewing and observation (2001 p145) whilst Silverman returned to the origin of the word 'ethnography' to describe it as "writing about particular folks" (2006 p67). He also discussed the way a researcher carried out this form of research – by becoming a 'participant observer' within the group of people under the study. Fielding continued his description by writing that ethnography necessarily involved the study of behaviour in the natural settings of the people involved and required the researcher to understand the "symbolic world in which people live" (2001 p148). Bryman suggested that ethnography "entail[s] the extended involvement of the researcher in the social life of those he or she studies" (2004 p291), the implication being that a substantial amount of time spent as participant observer was necessary in order to understand the symbolic world of the workers – and my commitment to this time requirement is dealt with in the 'data collection' section further in this chapter. Thus the realism paradigm, underpinning an ethnographic form of research, was established as the necessary, and sufficient, framework for this inquiry.

However, irrespective of the tools and techniques that will be used to improve the credibility of this research, this paradigm does have disadvantages. Unlike positivistic studies that can be applied to diverse scenarios in order to generalise findings, the applicability of the results of

this type of paradigm will have limited applicability to other situations – a crucial aspect with regards to the aim of this study. Furthermore, quantifying the data is hindered by the uniqueness of the recorded incidents and there is an inherent difficulty to control for researcher bias.

3.2 Enhancing the credibility of the research

The use of the predominantly quantitative measures 'validity' and 'reliability' to address issues of credibility in qualitative research has been questioned (Sanjek 1990 p394) and alternative methods including 'authenticity', 'plausibility' and 'criticality' have been suggested as substitutes (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993). However, as Chan pointed out, using validity/reliability notions can strengthen the veracity and credibility of qualitative research findings (2013 p513). Denzin, meanwhile, pointed out the disputed nature of the legitimacy of research, citing a series of 'paradigmatic wars' between advocates of various approaches (2010 p420-422). Pointing out that some interpretivists 'seldom use terms like validity or reliability' (2010 p424) he nevertheless warned against entrenchment suggesting that "we need a moral and methodological community that honours and celebrates paradigm and methodological diversity' (2010 p425). Consequently, in order to take as broad a view of credibility as possible, I have attempted to address it from two approaches – validity/reliability (Healy & Perry, 2000) as well as authenticity/plausibility/criticality (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993).

3.2.1 Validity and reliability

The model put forward by Healy and Perry was designed to assist the researcher by identifying ways to address the validity and reliability of his/her research, specifically for qualitative research under a realism paradigm umbrella (2000 p118). Consciously utilising theory that could also be applied to positivistic research, it indicated a need to be cognisant of six criteria.

3.2.1.1 Ontological appropriateness

Firstly, I needed to establish if the world being investigated was actually world three – as opposed to "the very objective world one and the very subjective world two" (Healy & Perry 2000 p120). In other words, *ontological appropriateness* had to be established. I was planning to undertake a number of instrumental case studies, which I believed, would provide insight into issues that influenced the employment relationship within the cleaning function. Whilst the unique perspectives of the people and the culture of the individual organisations could have worked against any generalising of results – thus making it appear that a 'world two' assumption was relevant – I posited that the nature of the tasks being performed, the nature of the population available for recruitment into the occupation and the focus of management dictated by the purpose of each organisation, would all serve to assist at least some generalisation. However, as Van Maanen cautioned "we must temper our craving for generality by seeking the unique, particular, defining aspects of organisations, rather than

treating such aspects as social noise or nuisance" (1985 p119), requiring much care to be taken in establishing any generality within the world three paradigm and this study; care that is reflected in the generalisations put forward in section 8.3.

3.2.1.2 Contingent validity

The extent to which results could be generalised was also covered in the second, ontological, issue; "realism research discovers knowledge of the real world by naming and describing broad, generative mechanisms that operate in the world" (Healy & Perry 2000 p123). Hence, I needed to establish *contingent validity* – validity about the constructs used and the contexts that made them contingent to the particular case studies within the inquiry. Ethnography, as established earlier, required me to become a participant observer in each of the three organisations under study and this entailed observing everything that the workers did during the time that I was present. Contingent validity here was served by my attempts to make no judgements concerning what activities were undertaken, only the recording and analysis of the 'broad, generative mechanisms' operating in their worlds at those times. Significantly, although accepting that the reflexive character of social research – in that social researchers are a part of the social work they study and will interpret it based on their own perceptions (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 p14-16) – makes such objectivity difficult, Hammersley & Atkinson suggested that "we can still make the reasonable assumption that we are able to describe phenomena as they are, and not merely how we perceive them or how we would like them to be" (2007 p16). Furthermore, the choice of models to firstly organise and secondly analyse the data required careful screening to ensure they met this contingency issue and these models are discussed later in the 'data analysis' section. Notably, suspending subjectivity by withholding judgements concerning activities undertaken was difficult and required me to constantly reflect on my role.

3.2.1.3 Multiple perceptions

Thirdly, and moving on to an epistemological issue, "realism relies on *multiple perceptions* about a single reality" (Healy & Perry 2000 p123) and the recognition of this required me to triangulate results from a number of data sources and from his peers' interpretations of his findings. Employee records, direct observation of behaviour and extensive data collection (mostly qualitative with some quantitative) directly from employees and managers – along with focus groups to discuss findings – assisted the meeting of this issue. Accepting that the direct observation of behaviour and the beliefs, values and underlying assumptions from the workers in this study was the main source of data, triangulation of results was possible even within this limited data source, as familiarity with people and processes increased due to the long durations of the studies (45 months in one study, 23 and 20 months in each of the other two). Hence, the multiple perceptions mentioned above tended to focus on my interpretations of the perceptions of the cleaners involved, with the help of the analytical models discussed later in this chapter. However, data derived from managers involved in the case studies was

severely limited due to the need to treat observed incidents as sensitive and to refrain from divulging potentially harmful information.

3.2.1.4 Methodological trustworthiness

Fourthly, the first of three methodology criteria, *methodological trustworthiness* "refers to the extent to which the research can be audited by developing a case study database and by the use of quotations in the written report" (Healy & Perry 2000 p123) – and I acknowledge that adherence to this criteria is weak. The provision of an audit trail through the data generated comprised mainly of the notes I took following each participant observer session. There were a limited number of interviews undertaken with managers/clients of the workers in the case study, but the strong reliance on the qualitative data I collected – and the necessary confidentiality of any discussions I had with participants – made anything other than broad audits of activity schedules almost impossible. Quotes from participants were used sparsely in the translation of data into information – mainly because the self-imposed restrictions on the data collection process did not lend itself to accurate quoting – but they served to bring forward specific issues arising from the events being described.

3.2.1.5 Analytical generalisation

Fifth was *analytical generalisation*, which is a necessary aspect of the paradigm as per its establishment – mentioned earlier – of being a world-view that the research was attempting to provide knowledge of a reality beyond the case studies. In this criterion "realism research must be primarily theory building, rather than the testing of the applicability of a theory to a population" (Healy & Perry 2000 p123). Realism researchers accepted theory testing within the paradigm, but they held that theory building was necessary. I suggest that the use of theory within his research was the use of very broad theory – the influence of certain constructs on the psychological contracts of employees leading to certain outcomes and ultimately to the behaviour of those employees within the studied organisations – with the issues around cleaning and the issues raised in the research question requiring the modelling of this broad theory into a form that was useful as an analytical tool. Notwithstanding this apparent use of existing theory, the research did attempt to build a theory concerning the appropriate management of this type of employee and similar employees engaged in comparable activities. The extent of '*analytical generalisation*' could be very closely linked to the earlier described '*ontological appropriateness*' and '*contingent validity*' of the research findings. In his review of Street Corner Society (Whyte, 1981) – Bryman acknowledged the wider implications of this work when he wrote, "Whyte was able to demonstrate that culture is both something that frames what people do and is continuously affected by them" (1991 p212). In this statement he generalised Whyte's findings to describe a universal cultural property. In a similar way Feilding described research undertaken by Caroline Humphrey where she, legitimately, "sets out the official theoretical model of the Soviet collective farm…through a detailed analysis of [only] two collective farms" (2001 p146). Indeed Cohen et al, critical of the emphasis of some ethnographic research, suggested "the task of

ethnographers is to balance a commitment to catch the diversity, variability, creativity, individuality, uniqueness and spontaneity of social interactions…with a commitment to the task of social science to seek regularities, order and patterns within such diversity" (2007 p169). Furthermore, they posited that "it is possible, therefore, to suggest that ethnographic research can address issues of generalisability" (Cohen et al, 2007 p169), proceeding to interpret 'generalisability' as a combination of 'comparability' – to achieve which the "characteristics of the group that is being studied need to be made explicit so that readers can compare them with other similar or dissimilar groups" (Cohen et al, 2007 p169), and 'translatability' – to achieve which "the analytical categories used in the research…are made explicit so that meaningful comparisons can be made with other groups and disciplines" (Cohen et al, 2007 p169).

Bryman believed that "it is the quality of the theoretical inferences that are made out of the qualitative data that is crucial to the assessment of generalisation" (2004 p285) – inferring that generalisation would be dependent on the theory established within the study. Indeed, part of the aim of this inquiry was to test out what was comparable and translatable with other groups and disciplines and the reader must judge the achievement of this following his/her reading of the conclusions of this report. Care was, however, required to avoid making claims of generalisability when the evidence did not warrant those claims, as Van Maanen (1985) warned, but the nature of the realism paradigm is such that the researcher should not fear generalisation if it is justified. In support of inference beyond the case studies, Hughes became convinced that "if a certain problem turned up in one occupation, it was nearly certain to turn up in all" (1970 p149). He suggested that there was no absolute virtue in studying one particular kind of work, but it was important for one to approach the study with a comparative mind. He believed that this approach, when one looked for common dimensions, enabled the differences to become clearer and more impressive (1970 p149).

Baszanger & Dodier (2004 p11), in an attempt to characterise ethnographic research, identified it as satisfying three simultaneous requirements associated with the study of human activities:
- The need for an empirical approach;
- The need to remain open to elements that cannot be codified at the time of the study;
- A concern for grounding the phenomena observed in the field.

It was within all three of these requirements that the potential for generalisability arose. They pointed out that "a study becomes ethnographic when the field worker is careful to connect the facts that he/she observes with the specific features of the backdrop against which these facts occur, which are linked to historical and cultural contingencies", also describing ethnography as a "science of the particular" (Baszanger & Dodier, 2004 p12). However, they accepted the potential for generalisability when they wrote "this does not exclude a second

step in which a series of ethnographic studies can serve as sources for defining universal, human phenomena, in the true sense" (Baszanger & Dodier, 2004 p13). Indeed, this inquiry attempted to bring into question very specific human phenomena, which Baszanger & Dodier would accept as possible. Whilst being carried out in only three organisations in East Lancashire, the emphasis of the analysis was based on well-researched constructs that served to inform the employment relationship – along with the actual task of cleaning. Part of the aim of the study was to identify influences transcending organisations and, in that respect, to generalise beyond the three case studies. Therefore, grounding this study within the confines of the aforementioned geographic region and thus the cultural traits which permeated the workers of that area may have added unnecessary constraints – see Baszanger and Dodier's second requirement, above, "the need to remain open to elements that cannot be codified at the time of the study" (2004 p11). Indeed Ryan, in her study of part-time and full-time workers, was able to generalise some of her findings beyond the four case studies she undertook in West Yorkshire (1998). Healy & Perry's six criteria, the last of which follows, could serve to pitch this research where it legitimately should be. Whilst the culture of any locale could be influenced by its industrial history, Bryman allowed for the potential for this to be dealt with in a research project when he pointed out that "a researcher will often draw comparisons with findings by other researchers relating to comparable groups" (2004 p284). Indeed, although 'comparable groups' with respect to this research could be any group whose individuals have psychological contracts with their organisations (that can be breached) and whose performance within their organisations can be influenced by similar stimuli, there is a potential for unwarranted generalisability claims – which needs to be avoided.

3.2.1.6 Construct validity

The final criterion was *construct validity*, where 'construct' is defined as "an abstraction or concept that is deliberately invented (constructed) by researchers for a scientific purpose" (Polit & Hungler, 1995 in Parahoo 1997 p272). The criterion was "concerned with the extent to which the construct is accepted as meaningful and the extent to which any measurement tools or techniques quantify it effectively" (Ashman, 2007). Eisenhart & Howe suggested that, within qualitative/ethnographic research, it was important that the constructs were meaningful to the people under study (1992 p648) or, as Cohen et al posited, the constructs "reflect the way in which the participants actually experience and construe the situations in the research" (2007 p138). This study reviewed a number of constructs which potentially influenced the employment relationship and applied these constructs to the data collected, relying heavily on the interaction theory (dealt with in more detail in the 'data analysis' section below) used by Whyte (1981) and on the influence of the psychological contract on behaviour posited by Guest (1998). The major weakness here is the modification made to Guest's model in order to analyse the findings. The revised model is necessarily incomplete and, as detailed in the justification of its usage in chapter 2 – arguments could be made for including different measures.

3.2.1.7 Summary of validity and reliability issues

Although I would suggest that the four of the six criteria have been adequately met by the methodology undertaken, the use of triangulation to meet the third *'multiple perceptions'* (Healy & Perry 2000 p123) criterion was weak – as was the lack of an audit trail in satisfying the fourth '*methodological trustworthiness'* (Healy & Perry 2000 p123). However, it may be possible to mitigate these weaknesses as, suggested earlier in this section, credibility can be viewed from by an approach not born out of positivism and the next section uses one such technique.

3.2.2 Authenticity, plausibility and criticality

Later in this chapter there is an extensive description of the research approach, the data collection process and the data analysis. However, although these have been justified and the procedures follow acceptable research theory, how do I provide evidence that I had the skills to achieve and maintain trust with those people I spent time with? How do I overcome potential criticism over the lack of an audit trail and the lack of triangulation from readers reviewing the validity and reliability criteria? Furthermore, notably, none of the following plans actually addresses the question of whether I had the necessary skills to deliver useful findings from the primary data. Golden-Biddle & Locke suggested that there were three dimensions central to convincing readers of the credibility of an ethnographic study – authenticity, plausibility and criticality (1993 p595). Authenticity requires me to convey that not only did I actually fulfil the role of participant observer, but I also understood the world of cleaning under investigation; plausibility demands that the research findings bore relevance to the employment relationships of the people studied; and criticality necessitates that a contribution to knowledge was achieved (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993 p599-600).

3.2.2.1 Authenticity

Authenticity, nearest to the positivist concepts of validity and reliability (Schultze, 2000 p29), concerns the ability of the text produced to convey to the reader the vitality of the lives of the respondents and relies strongly on my ability to convince my audience of having 'been there' (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993 p599). This needs to be more than merely a log of the number of visits and May suggested that the capabilities to "understand, listen and learn" (2001 p156) were key, making a question I needed to ask myself, 'however thorough and relevant the access plan is, have I got the necessary skills to understand, listen and learn?' Potentially a major limitation of the research, the quality of the theory that emerged from this inquiry hinges on the primary data, its analysis and the communication of this analysis in the text. When in the field undertaking the ethnographic study, I was not in control of events. I recorded these events and interpreted them – but missed many events and, probably, misinterpreted others. The use of my peers and my supervisors had a major part to play within this issue by assisting me in avoiding complacency and assessing my progress in building my understanding, listening and learning skills. May held that "to become part of a social scene and participate in it requires that the researcher is accepted to some degree. This period of

'moving into' a setting is both analytically and personally important" (2001 p157) and the access to the three organisations was a delicate matter. Indeed, although I did everything possible to avoid insurmountable problems, I was prepared to abandon a case and re-negotiate with another organisation – had the need arisen. Collecting basic data about the employees including their gender, age, length of service, shift patterns and duties along with information about the way the function was organised and managers' perceptions of general aspects of the workers' motivations, aspirations, conflicts and co-operation was relatively straightforward. However, establishing the in-depth information about the perceptions of cleaners regarding their jobs and the social reality of their work (the rest of data collection process), was less so and key events, as described in the 'data collection' section below, helped to break down barriers and thus increase the depth of information obtained. Indeed, as the reader can judge from reviewing the 'research approach' section (3.3), authenticity was greatly enhanced by the how the outcomes of the unforeseen events enhanced my participation – even though I posit that the acceptance gained at the three sites was by no means uniform. Furthermore, the achievement of acceptance can be judged from the evidence provided in the relevant parts of the text.

In a practical sense, the tools used to convert the notes taken during my visits to a rich representation of relevant issues affecting the employment relationships of the respondents, as well as building an adequate picture of those relationships, were important. The use of Whyte's (1981) model to reorganise the raw data to a form from which meanings could be extracted (described in more detail in the data analysis section below) and the development of Guest's (1998) model (detailed in chapter 2) facilitated a coherent treatment of the case studies and helped me to make sense of what, in raw data form, held limited meaning. Indeed, whilst no claim can be made that this is a definitive account based on certainty and methodological precision (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993 p599) the text is designed to convince the reader that I actually carried out the study, I have the necessary skills to understand, listen and learn and I followed a disciplined pursuit and analysis of the data.

3.2.2.2 Plausibility

Secondly the issue of plausibility rests largely on the findings from an area of work that has largely been ignored by researchers and the findings that, even with people carrying out very similar activities – cleaning the workplace – there are substantial differences between the psychological contracts generated in the workers of the three organisations studied. Such findings, I would argue, are feasible based on the variability of the influencers (in Guest's modified model) affecting the psychological contracts of the employees. Furthermore, the findings do not appear to be trivial in nature, having relevance to the implications of management practice in this kind of low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environment. Readers of this kind of research are likely to be interested in the content and status of the psychological contracts generated in this area of work and, as 18.7% (Office for National Statistics, n.d.) of the UK workforce is involved in some form of cleaning, findings are

probably relevant to a large number of managers. Indeed, Shultze pointed out that plausibility is enhanced if the ethnographer can normalise the findings by aligning them with common experiences in everyday organizational life (2000 p31), which I have attempted to furnish by showing the limited dimensions of performance pursued by management in this kind of activity and the ways that the workers responded to these tactics.

3.2.2.3 Criticality

Finally the criticality dimension stipulates that the research findings sufficiently question present assumptions to deliver a contribution to knowledge (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993 p599). This study challenges the reader to consider the uniqueness of the psychological contract, but also to recognise how paying attention to the influence of established organisational constructs on a person's psychological contract can enable managers to be in a more informed position regarding the performance of that person in this area of work. Furthermore, it highlights the effect on performance created by management consciously restricting its scope to only job/task conscientiousness, but also emphasises the importance of establishing clarity regarding what management expects from employees and what it offers in return.

3.2.2.4 Summary of authenticity, plausibility and criticality issues

How convinced the reader is that I was actually 'there', that I faithfully represented my interpretations of the events witnessed and that the findings are both relevant to management practice and contribute to knowledge as a unique insight into a largely ignored area will be decided by the quality of chapter 4 and all that follows. I suggest that the above shows the reader that important credibility issues have, at least, been considered.

3.2.3 Summary of credibility issues

The first part of this treatment of credibility used the somewhat contentious (Shultze, 2000 p29) 'validity' and 'reliability' criteria penned by Healy & Perry (2000). Whilst I accept that some researchers consider this approach to be inappropriate (Sanjek, 1990) others do not (Chan, 2013) and I therefore included the ways in which I had attempted to address these issues. Although finding the justification to be weak in the areas of *'multiple perceptions'* and *'methodological trustworthiness'*, I suggest that this section justifies the use of realism paradigm as an appropriate tool – acknowledging its limitations – and ethnography as an appropriate form of research. The second part utilised the alternative approach taken by Golden-Biddle & Locke of convincing the reader that the research is credible by creating a perception that the work possesses authenticity, plausibility and criticality. In this part I have attempted to show how the study has met these dimensions. However, ultimately the credibility will be decided by the quality of the text as discerned by the reader – yet he/she can be further persuaded by the practicalities of the method, and these practicalities are covered in the rest of this chapter.

3.3 Research approach

I physically worked as a cleaner in three different organisations over, approximately, a four-year period. I attempted to understand the ways in which my co-workers perceived their jobs and looked for similarities and differences between the perceptions of people in the three organisations. Simultaneously, I undertook a study of the various constructs that affect the employment relationship in order to establish the relevance of these to the people and the organisations under study (covered in chapter 2). Armed with the analysis of the primary data and the review of the literature, I aimed to critically assess the extent of homogeneity of cleaning, particularly analysing how the complexity and variability of employment relationship phenomena could have an effect on management of this kind of employee. However, in a practical sense and notwithstanding the validity and reliability criteria discussed above, the key issue of the inquiry was the credibility of the ethnography from authenticity, plausibility and criticality dimensions, and there were five practical aspects that influenced this:

- Gaining the trust of the people within the cases under study
- Reaching far enough into the reality of the cases under study to achieve useful findings
- Being sufficiently open and receptive to the events unfolding in the cases to achieve useful data
- Possessing sufficient analytical tools to make sense of the findings
- Having sufficient awareness of related existing research to recognise implications of the findings

3.3.1 Choosing the cases

Primary research was carried out in three organisations and careful planning of interactions within the case studies assisted the efforts to achieve the first two of these aspects (gaining trust and reaching far enough into reality)

- The clinic. At the commencement of the study there were twenty-two cleaners working various shift systems, some on full-time contracts and others on part-time contracts, with the cleaners (known and referred to throughout this document as 'domestics') employed by the organisation. Major changes in supervision, shift patterns and work intensity occurred during the study; which effectively served to lengthen its duration to 45 months.
- The school. This case study comprised two data collection periods. At the commencement of the study there were ten cleaners (known and referred to throughout this document as 'cleaners') on this site; all working on the same shift system and all on part-time contracts with the cleaners employed by a contract cleaning company. This provider had contracts with many schools and offices in the north of England and entered the business of contract cleaning in 1967. Although there were changes in personnel over the study period, work content and organisation of the function was stable and the duration of the first period was 20 months. However, whilst the data collection was

underway, a new school was being constructed adjacent to the existing buildings. The opening of this new school coincided with the cleaning contract being awarded to a new company – possessing very little expertise in workplace cleaning – with all the cleaning staff being transferred via TUPE (transfer of undertakings – protection of employment) regulations to the new provider; the now eleven staff employed on part-time contracts and all working the same shift pattern. Data was collected, in this second period, for 3 months.

- The hotel. At the commencement of the study six cleaners (known and referred to throughout this document as 'housekeepers'), employed by the hotel, worked various part time hours. Changes in personnel and numbers employed occurred in the study period and this lasted for 20 months

Choosing these organisations was carried out via purposive sampling, where I selected the companies because they were the most likely to provide the necessary data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994 p202). I was attempting to access organisations that would, potentially, provide quite different results from each other with the knowledge that the ethnographic nature of the data collection necessarily restricted the number of cases to a manageable few. The sort of diversity I was looking for was public versus private, full-time employees versus part-time employees, temporary staff versus permanent staff, minimum wage versus enhanced reward and in-house[17] cleaners versus contract cleaners, but other criteria were equally important once potential choices were made. The first of these was to gain permission from the relevant management of each organisation to work alongside the people under study with the proviso that nothing I discovered would be shared with said management. Having established this criterion, the second was to gain permission to work alongside and to talk with the employees themselves. Indeed, the above three organisations became the case studies, but only after other organisations – two factories, a premier league football club, two further education colleges and two (other) hotels – had been rejected because the criteria could not be fully achieved. Furthermore, it did not prove possible to investigate any temporary staff within the chosen cases because, although some individuals enjoyed very short tenures, all staff were employed under permanent contracts. Indeed this last observation highlights a potential problem with the research – outcomes would have been different in different companies, as each would have distinct cultures and distinct problems – and this further highlights issues regarding generalisability mentioned earlier.

3.3.2 Gaining acceptance

Having gained access, there was a need to achieve acceptance and the approach involved me undertaking a long process of gaining familiarity as a co-worker. Being willing to undertake any task requested and partaking in non-task activities including 'making the tea' and attending team briefings were behaviours designed to gain acceptance, as were regular

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[17] 'In-house' refers to staff employed to clean the premises of the company paying them – as opposed to 'contract' staff who carry out their activities on the premises of clients and are paid by a contract cleaning company

attendance at the workplace and a willingness to carry out the work which was of maximum benefit to my specific co-workers at that particular time. All these were designed to help to build rapport and break down obvious barriers, as it was clear to me that the people I was working with would be fully aware that I was not part of their work group, had no economic requirement to do the work and could therefore leave whenever I wished. However, the overt participant observer always has that problem and the planning and execution of my role is detailed below.

Becoming an effective participant observer was, I believe, the single most critical aspect of this inquiry. This type of study could have been ruined by even a single inappropriate action or comment made. It was also clear that until I was accepted as a normal part of the daily working lives of the people under study, any data would be of a superficial nature and would give little insight into the important aspects of cleaning life. Mistakes made in gaining acceptable access into the environments could have caused substantial damage to the research and could have caused the abandonment of certain avenues of enquiry. Careful planning and careful handling of my role – as well as substantial periods being spent in the environments for (apparently) little return – might still have resulted in unworkable relationships. Of this, I was fully aware. Although no researcher can design an 'access plan' that would prevent any inappropriate behaviour on his or her part, much was achieved by removing as many potential obstacles as possible in the planning stages – as the following six show.

Firstly, the companies in which the research was being carried out were not paying me. This 'independence', whilst not guaranteeing acceptance, appeared to help reduce any fears within the people being studied. Secondly, the reasons for the research were explained to the people being studied and emphasis was made about the need to ensure no harm came to them. This 'overt' approach (Cohen et al, 2007 p174; Fielding, 2001 p150; Silverman, 2007 p55)) had the advantages of not requiring me to hide my true intentions. Indeed, participants discovering the truth in a 'covert' study would effectively end the study and the potential strain on the researcher of maintaining a charade is avoided in an overt study by the real purpose of the study being transparent. In this respect, I formed my own "psychological contract" (Rousseau, 1995) with the people involved in the study with my promise, covering the confidentiality of all data gathered, being reinforced many times over the early parts of the research. Thirdly, I negotiated an arrangement with management such that I could enter the premises at any time whilst the people being studied were carrying out their tasks and this, initially, required a very careful approach. Barriers to access were stronger in some of the target companies than in others and acceptance in some of the workplaces occurred more slowly than in others. Fourthly, I spent a substantial amount of time in the workplace with the express intention of becoming part of the normal environment. Lincoln & Guba identified a number of ways that credibility could be addressed and one of these was prolonged

engagement in the field. The others were; persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis and member checking – this last item referring to the use of respondents in validating findings (1985 in Cohen et al 2007 p136) – and all of these formed part of the process. Fifthly, Neff-Gurney observed that "some researchers may never succeed in achieving more than superficial acceptance from their respondents because of the status each researcher occupies" (1985 p42) and she encountered specific – and substantial – problems as a female researcher in a male dominated setting (1985 p42-62). However, there were other status issues that could affect access. Watson spent a year investigating managerial work in a company and his access was influenced by the company having employed him to design a scheme for recruitment and development of managers in the future (1994 p5). Educational, social, ethnic and cultural differences between researcher and those being researched could all have served to make the reality of the respondents opaque to me, but an awareness of these differences and a conscious attempt to actually play the role of a cleaner on all data collection episodes assisted in minimising this status issue. Sixthly and, I believe, the most difficult and the most crucial to the success of the inquiry, involved the careful design of any interactions with the people so as not to negatively interfere with their normal activities. Co-operation was a commitment that the people under study could withhold – with no fear of reprisal[18] from their superiors. Schein (2004) observed that people would co-operate if they saw a benefit to themselves, which led me to design the data collection so as not to *cost* the people in terms of their time and effort. Any *benefit* to be delivered depended on negotiations between the individual cleaner and I, as I became co-worker alongside him/her – and these were different for each individual. To this end, as with the first point above, there was a need to establish a psychological contract with the individual workers involved in the study. McDonald & Makin's description "a relational [psychological] contract…is characterised on the employees' side by perceived obligations to their employer of loyalty, and on the employer's by an obligation to provide job security" (2000 p85) suggests that creating an environment where the workers perceived an obligation to me (providing the required data) required the workers to perceive that I owed an obligation to them (by being prepared to become involved in their activities).

I was fully aware that there was a degree of danger in actual involvement in cleaning activities. On the positive side was the opportunity to become accepted as part of the natural scenario in which the workers were participating – but on the negative side was the chance of alienating the people by a superficial involvement that might have been interpreted as patronising. In his study of sewing machinists in a rainwear manufacturing facility, Young noted the importance of involvement when he pointed out that "my efforts at 'pure' participant observation floundered with my ineptitude before sewing machines, but I became effective at

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[18] This was due to my independence. The company had no vested interest in the outcome of the research and hence I was 'tolerated' rather than 'installed'. In my presentation to the employees at the clinic, I explained how easy it would be for the workers to successfully end the study – if they wished to.

packing finished items" (1991 p92). In this inquiry, the option to get involved in the activity was feasible because I had, or soon gained, sufficient skill to be capable of carrying out the tasks undertaken by the cleaners. Indeed, the choice of cleaning the workplace owed much to this issue – that I could become a true participant observer. The dilemma of the extent to which a researcher should get involved was commented on by Bryman, who questioned "the degree to which [the ethnographer] should be or can be an active or passive participant" (2004 p303) but accepted "sometimes ethnographers may *feel* they have no choice in getting involved, because a failure to participate actively might indicate to members of the social setting a lack of commitment and lead to a loss of credibility" (2004 p303). However, Bryman did not see active participation as a problem – except in illegal or dangerous situations (2004 p303) – whilst May put the emphasis on the skills of the ethnographer, writing "despite traditional concerns with 'establishing rapport' or what is called 'going native' and hence not being 'objective', for many researchers who possess the capabilities to understand, listen and learn, these are not problems" (2001 p156). Indeed, Fielding believed that 'not getting close enough' was more of a problem, with some ethnographic research being too superficial (2001 p149) and, for me, the balance between eliciting co-operation from the employees (by helping them) and losing objectivity (by becoming too involved) did need monitoring. Although I contend that this was never a major issue, believing that such a balance was achieved through paying continuous attention to the maintenance of the relationship between the cleaners and I (thus developing the practical plan required to open up the access to the deeper perceptions of the people involved), losing objectivity was probably of most danger – and this is covered in section 3.3.4 'exit' below. Underpinning all the aspects covered in the access plan above was the need to establish trust between the people involved in the study and me. If that relationship – and hence the trust – had not been established to the extent that I could uncover the "basic underlying assumptions" (Schein, 2004) then this ethnographic inquiry would have discovered nothing of note.

However, there remains the question, 'having carried out all the above planning did I achieve the desired acceptance?' and, although the answer is particularly subjective, I believe the evidence suggests that I acquired sufficient acceptance to provide significant results. Certain specific events, described at the start of the next section, enabled me to show that I was willing to get as heavily involved as I could in the activities of my colleagues – both work and non-work related. At the clinic my relationship with my co-workers led to me becoming welcome in the kitchen during both official and unofficial tea breaks but, possibly more importantly because the conversations tended to be of a more personal nature, I was also invited to accompany people on their 'smoke-breaks' outside of the premises. These took place in all kinds of weather, so it was important that I did not demur when it was inclement, and it was noticeable that other co-workers seeing me present at those very private sessions tended to be more open afterwards. At the school all tea breaks were unofficial and secretive yet, although it took a number of weeks for me to even learn that they existed, I was invited to

partake in them – even being once reprimanded by the supervisor (along with some colleagues) for taking a longer than acceptable break. Again, I was viewed slightly differently by the other cleaners following this event because, I suspect, I accepted the criticism in the same way that they did. In contrast, although at the hotel (as detailed in chapter 6) there was very little opportunity for non-work activities – and hence the evidence of acceptance is much more sparse – many of my conversations touched personal topics. Nevertheless, because the number of unforeseen events that helped me gain acceptance at the clinic and the school were far less at the hotel, I cannot claim that I achieved the depth of involvement here that I did at the other two – although working hard on a particularly difficult weekend (covered in 3.3.3 'data collection' below) did help considerably.

Furthermore, one very significant example, I believe, of acceptance beyond the superficial was the language that my colleagues used in my presence in all three cases. Initially bland, it developed into very colourful prose with considerable swearing and sexual innuendo with no apparent abatement for my benefit. Clearly idle time on the part of the workers served to assist my acceptance – as it enabled more personal interaction – but careful handling of my role and spending considerable time just working alongside each individual with (apparently) little return appeared to be crucial. Indeed, whilst I would not claim that my co-workers ignored my status as someone who had no financial need to carry out the work, I 'felt' that I was part of each group when I was present. For example, towards the end of my first data collection period at the school, I asked a sample of teachers if they were aware that I was a researcher and none of them was. They all thought I was a cleaner who just worked on Fridays!

3.3.3 Data collection

Whilst I was constantly aware of the need to gain trust, become accepted and, consequently, glean the useful data required to make the inquiry meaningful, the reality of the actual data collection was haphazard and the outcomes of unforeseen events tended to have more influence than any planning. Planning was, however, important and certain basic practices were established:

- Before each case study commenced, all cleaning staff were made aware of the purpose of the research and everyone was made aware that they had no obligation to get involved
- Before working with a particular individual for the first time, I reiterated the purpose of the research and indicated that any conversations were strictly confidential
- I carried out activities as directed by my co-worker for the day and information was obtained via conversation, rather than interrogation, as the work allowed. Indeed, I had very few predetermined questions and these tended to cover facts such as marital status, number of children, time in the present job and previous employment and were designed to encourage said conversation

- Neither recordings of conversations nor written notes were made during the time spent with individual cleaners. I believed that either of these activities would interfere with the quality of information obtained so, although it was less convenient and some data would be lost, I wrote the details I could remember as soon as possible after each session. These notes were initially hand-written in a notebook (the purchase of an iPad improving this activity), usually in the car, and were later transferred to a word file on the computer. The handwritten notes (iPad notes) were used to recall the actual events and were recorded in that way on the computer. As the notes were being typed I also added interpretations of the events, delineating the two by typing my thoughts in a different font.

- In an effort to make my presence as routine as possible, I tried to work the same shift each week in each case study. This had the effect of generating an expectation that I would be present on a regular basis.

These practices established a workable routine but, as mentioned above, the outcomes of unforeseen events proved crucial to the quality of the data obtained. These events were variable in their significance to my acceptance but the most influential concerned my willingness to react positively to either the work needs or the personal needs of my co-workers – as can be shown via the following examples. At the school, two incidents had a major positive effect on my standing amongst the workers. Firstly, soon after commencing the study I was faced with being asked to clean a particularly dirty boys' toilet (excrement covering the walls) that, retrospectively, appeared to be a 'test'. Cleaning it without complaint helped to build rapport, but it was the second incident that proved to be of most import. As is described in more detail in chapter 5, a situation arose where a number of the cleaners were found to be without CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) documentation and these people were, at very short notice, not allowed on site such that when I arrived for my usual weekly shift I was told of the situation and offered to clean a patch on my own. This offer was gratefully accepted and, indeed, proved to be the norm for the next four weeks, seeing me work on my own to help mitigate the problem. At the clinic, I discovered that many of the domestics were undertaking NVQ (National Vocational Qualifications) studies in Mathematics and English as part of their training. Being a teacher, I offered to help people on an individual basis and this was accepted by a number of the workers resulting in their achievement of the qualifications. Finally, at the hotel, one weekend saw a particularly high occupancy with most of the guests leaving on the Sunday morning. My normal shift occurred on Fridays but I offered to change the arrangement if it would help. As previously, this offer was also accepted and that Sunday witnessed an enormous workload moderated by a high degree of camaraderie. The result in each case was a major change in the way I was treated and a perception that the conversations I had following the incidents were at a much deeper level.

A very important issue regarding the collection of data was the amount of time that needed to be spent in each case. Initially, I planned to spend approximately 18 months working at each

site – but this estimate owed more to the necessity to fit data collection into the time scale for the inquiry than what the study itself required. In the event, the time spent at each site was determined by my perception that I had obtained sufficient data and this was influenced by the dynamics within the case studies.

Venue	Date commenced	Date ended	Number of shifts worked	Approximate hours worked	Number of words in notes
Clinic	5th August 2008	25th April 2012	123	430	61208
Clinic	5th December 2012	19th December 2012	3	9	
Old School	23rd January 2009	27th August 2010	47	150	28188
New School	20th June 2012	21st September 2012	8	25	
Hotel	16th October 2010	7th May 2012	56	240	24156

Table 3.1 – Summary of data collection activity

As can be seen from the above table, far more time was spent at the clinic than at either the hotel or the school. This reflected the substantially more change that occurred at the clinic, as can be seen in chapter 4. Indeed, whereas the organisational and working practices at the hotel and the school remained relatively stable (apart from the change in contract cleaning company that led to the second period of data collection at the school), the clinic saw changes in supervisory personnel, supervisory structure, work intensity and shift working patterns; all of which served to affect employment relationships. Furthermore, the relative stabilities of the case studies also affected exit.

3.3.4 Exit

Michailova et al (2014) argued that deciding when to leave, or 'exit', case studies was necessarily an arbitrary decision because our understanding of the social phenomena being studied must be "incomplete and imperfect, representing an approximation and oversimplification" (Shaffir & Stebbins, 1991 p242). This was certainly true in this enquiry. Firstly, my motivation to exit the school and the hotel was dominated by 'theoretical saturation' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) prompted by a growing perception in both, over a number of visits, that I was learning little that I considered to be new. Whilst I was aware that there were always, potentially, events that might either change my perceptions of the environments or perhaps clarify my understanding of previous events and their importance, I needed to be cognisant of the time constraints of my research and, more importantly, the dangers of eroding my objectivity through the relationships I was building – an issue I will return to later. Opposing my exit from the school was the knowledge that the old school was due for

demolition and the realisation that the existing cleaners would be transferred to new employers when the school was built. Consequently, I agreed with the supervisor and the cleaners that, if the new company agreed, I could return to assess the effects of this major development.

The situation at the clinic was somewhat different in that, even when I did finally exit, I had not reached saturation point – albeit that I spent approximately twice as long at the clinic as I did at the school and the hotel. As will be seen in chapter 4, the employment relationships, working practices and structure were continually changing which made for a far less stable environment than was observable at either of the other two. However, I was still constrained by time and, here, the potential for increased subjectivity was far greater than at the other two sites. Over the (almost) four years as participant observer I formed quite close relationships with a small number of domestics and found that I was in danger of being inordinately influenced by them. Having become quite used to my presence, some domestics would seek me out and give me advice about issues that they thought might be of interest to me – many of which were helpful in that they perhaps prevented me from blunders through ignorance (for instance, being informed of the death of the partner of a domestic), but some were dangerous in that they could create preconceived ideas (such as being told of an indiscretion of a co-worker). Being aware of the dangers and being vigilant in assessing my own responses, I believe, assisted my objectivity but, towards the end of my tenure, I became aware that the need to exit had begun to outweigh the potential for additional information.

Furthermore, I also found that exiting the clinic was much harder, emotionally, than was the case at either the school or the hotel; yet perhaps this is not surprising as I spent almost twice the amount of time at the clinic than at the other venues. However, there are possibly other reasons why this was the case: there were very few housekeepers – providing less opportunities for relationships; the turnover at the school was high – creating much shorter relationships; and I saw substantially more psychological contract breach and violation at the clinic – creating much deeper relationships. Hammersley & Atkinson also considered how exit affected the participants of ethnographic studies pointing out that losing the ethnographer could be strange to them (2007 p122), and the depth of effect appeared to mirror my own findings. Although people at the school and the hotel expressed sadness when I left, even though I made everyone aware of its imminence, there was no mention of maintaining any ongoing relationships, with cleaners at the school and housekeepers at the hotel generally expressing satisfaction that I had obtained what I needed from them. In contrast, a number of the domestics were reluctant for me to finish and asked me to keep in touch – sentiments that I consider to be genuine as I have returned to the clinic a number of times since, and will do again. Indeed, I have been concerned about whether this clear disparity in the depth of the relationships between the workers in the case studies has been reflected in the quality of the findings – the reader need only look at the word count in chapters 4, 5 and 6 to see how

much more content there is concerning domestics at the clinic – and I cannot definitively state that this is not the case. However, in defence of the possibility of a difference in quality I return to the reasons why I spent so much more time at the clinic – there was so much more activity, so many more developments and so much more change. The nature of the relationships that are described in chapters 4, 5 and 6 are different – there is considerably more content in the psychological contracts of the domestics at the clinic than there is in those of the cleaners at the school and the housekeepers at the hotel – so my exit had to be dictated by the need to plumb this depth. I can only point out that being aware of the risk to quality, I endeavoured to combat it.

Moreover, Michailova et al suggested that there could be an important link between exit and theorising, holding that, "as an act of discontinuity, exiting is likely to prompt creativity, reflection, and learning – processes necessary for building good theory" (2014 p140). Having exited the old school and returned to the new, I certainly felt more reflective in terms of analysing the behaviour of the cleaners – a perception that I also got when I returned for a brief sojourn at the clinic in December 2012. The actual discontinuity – the ending of the data collection phase – had the effect of channelling me towards the analysis which, in itself, forced a theorising phase. In terms of credibility, being able to manage exit strategies rather than have them forced on the researcher by events beyond his/her control would appear to be preferential and I was able to achieve that approach.

3.3.5 Data analysis

This occurred in two stages. Firstly, it was necessary to reorganise the data from notes made following each study session to a form from which meanings could be extracted. This first stage followed a model developed by Whyte (1981) and summarised by Jones (1991) involving the assessment of people in four areas: activities, interactions, sentiments and symbols. Jones implied that the information surrounding people within an environment could be encapsulated within the four areas: activities – the things that people do (including working on the job, reading at break time, writing notes, obtaining fresh supplies, etc., which constitute their physical activities); interactions – contacts with other people (including their frequency, duration, reason and who originates the contacts); sentiments – how people feel (about themselves, others, the work and the organisation); and symbols – things that define the situation under study (objects, uniforms, notice boards, phrases in conversations, meetings, etc., which serve to identify the organisation) (1991 p197-198). Secondly, there was a need to establish how this reorganised data described the employment relationship and a modified version of Guest's (1998 p661) model was used. Guest established a model where the psychological contract was central to the employment relationship, certain aspects influenced this contract and a person's behaviour was, via the outcomes of the contract, affected by it (1998 p660-662). One of the aspects influencing a person's psychological contract, according to Guest, was organisational culture. Schein (2004), specifically dealing with the levels of culture within an organisation, described three levels of culture: 'artefacts', 'espoused beliefs

and values' and 'basic underlying assumptions'[19] and held great store in how difficult it was to access the latter two beliefs and values and basic assumptions. However, although Schein was looking only at culture, there were similarities between his categories and those of Jones; with Schein's artefacts embracing Jones's activities, interactions and symbols and Jones's sentiments covering Schein's espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. It was my contention that Jones's model gave the opportunity to access the deeper, unseen sentiments – within all the constructs in Guest's modified model, not just culture – by extracting the shallower, observable activities, interactions and symbols. An in depth discussion of the model is provided at the start of chapter 2.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Bryman broke ethical issues into four main areas: "whether there is *harm to participants*; whether there is a *lack of informed consent*; whether there is an *invasion of privacy*; whether *deception* is involved" (2004 p509) and the inquiry was designed to deal with all those considerations.

In negotiating access to the companies, the following aspects were central. Firstly, two steps were taken to prevent harm from coming to the participants: I specifically pointed out that no reports could or would be provided to management regarding any aspect of the study (and managers acknowledged that the need for data about an individual's attitudes and beliefs could not be obtained without this proviso); and all participants were informed that any discussions that they had with me would neither be shared with colleagues nor would any published results include identification of individuals. Secondly, to address the issues of informed consent and invasion of privacy, I explained the purpose of the study to all the people involved and also explained that the research could only continue if they were willing to allow it to continue. Indeed, it should be noted that they, the participants, all knew that they could stop it at any time because the organisation was in no way sponsoring the study. Thirdly, Bryman wrote "deception occurs when researchers represent their research as something other than what it is", usually perpetrated "because researchers often want to limit participants' understanding of what the research is about so that they respond more naturally to the experimental treatment" (2004 p514). This research had nothing to gain by 'limiting participants' understanding'. Indeed the opposite, with people understanding the nature of their relationships with their jobs and their colleagues, would be more beneficial to the inquiry.

3.5 Methodological Limitations

I would suggest that these fall into three broad categories: the efficacy of the paradigm used, the constraints of the case studies chosen and my skills at ethnography. Bryman, quoting Trow, argued that "the problem under investigation properly dictates the methods of investigation" (Trow, 1957 in Bryman, 2004 p342), an observation echoed by Silverman (2007

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[19] Schein's views on culture are dealt with in more detail in chapter 2

p6), and I was cognisant of this sentiment as I reviewed potential paradigms. Limitations afforded by this chosen methodology were the collection of the primary data, the lack of 'breadth' of coverage, the issue of 'generalisability', the 'open-endedness' and diversity of the situations studied and the subjectivity of the ethnographer (Bryman, 2004 p339-341; Cohen et al, 2007 p188-190). However, the approach detailed above did appear to provide me with the best tools to answer my research question and hence meet my aim and objectives. Indeed, whilst issues such as lack of breadth and generalisability were limitations brought on by the methodology, they also provided focus for the inquiry and assisted me by providing proven social scientific method. There does, however, remain me and the limitations that I must bring to the inquiry. In mitigation of this, although the 'research approach' section above details the planning that assisted this process, what have not been dealt with are the experiences I brought to the study. I taught at the higher education facility at Blackburn College, in a relatively deprived area of the country, for nineteen years and had first hand experience of the pastoral care of students from a variety of backgrounds – many of who were from a socio-economic background, which dictated that they did not financially contribute directly to their education. Prior to this, I worked as a Manufacturing Manager in a factory with difficult industrial relations – a distinct part of my task being to build trust and credibility with an alienated workforce in order to introduce 'quality assurance' into production operatives' responsibilities. In both of these roles the need to try to understand the issues surrounding the people I was attempting to 'manage' was a crucial aspect, and these experiences served to assist the primary data collection process.

I was cognisant of the disagreements between Pfeffer (1993; 1995) and Van Maanen (1995a; 1995b) regarding the efficacy of "paradigmatic consensus" (Pfeffer, 1995 pp682) applied to organisational research. The "synthetic, rather rag-tag and multiple paradigm field of organisational studies" suggested by Van Maanen, (1995b p688), with the limitations that this engendered, appeared to match my expectations. The need to be cognisant of alternative methods of research was, therefore, understood and modifications to the research approach were always considered during the continuous review process established through the supervisor/student relationship. Indeed, the constructs used in Guest's (1998) model arose via an iterative process based on the experiences gained from the data collection process and the knowledge gained from the literature review.

3.6 In summary

Having established the realism paradigm linked to ethnography as my chosen methodology, I suggested five practical aspects that were necessary to give credibility to the inquiry.

- Gaining the trust of the people within the cases under study
- Reaching far enough into the reality of the cases under study to achieve useful findings
- Being sufficiently open and receptive to the events unfolding in the cases to achieve useful data

- Possessing sufficient analytical tools to make sense of the findings
- Having sufficient awareness of related existing research to recognise implications of the findings

Much of this chapter has focussed on proving that I possessed the attributes required to meet these aspects. Addressing the first three of these attempts shows that I have attempted to meet the 'authenticity' dimension of Golden-Biddle & Locke (1993), whilst dealing with the fourth and fifth aspects shows an endeavour to demonstrate I have achieved their 'plausibility' and 'criticality' requirements. It is in these latter two where the question of sufficiency largely lies. Convincing the reader that the ethnographic inquiry makes sense and offers something distinctive as well as causing him/her to question how the psychological contract/performance link informs management practice is the whole purpose of this research.

The next three chapters provide analysis of the three case studies – the clinic (4), the school (5) and the hotel (6).

Chapter 4 – the clinic

This chapter contains an analysis of the clinic case study. Initially there are the findings discovered during the data collection periods – organised into an overview (4.1) and then 'activities', 'interactions', 'sentiments' and 'symbols' (Jones, 1991) (4.2) – with a subsequent analysis using the model developed in chapter 2 (4.3) and a summary (4.4).

4.1 Overview of the clinic cleaning function

The clinic is situated in the centre of a north of England town and houses a number of facilities including three doctor's surgeries, specialised health services and accommodation for nurses and health visitors. It was completed in August 2006 and the cleaners (known as 'domestics' in the NHS and described accordingly throughout this summary) were initially recruited from other NHS establishments in the area. Employed by the Primary Care Trust (PCT), the organisation of these domestics changed markedly even in the time of this case study, which commenced on 13th August 2008 and ran through to 25th April 2012 (with a brief sojourn in December 2012). The first eight months of the study saw me working at different times on different days at the centre, but later I spent one evening per week with the domestics.

The domestics cleaned the whole of the inside of the centre and worked on a variety of shift patterns to achieve that requirement. At the commencement of the study there were twenty-two domestics, including a supervisor, who worked a range of shift patterns such that staff were on site from 5.30am to 10pm, Monday to Friday. The shift patterns, along with the number of staff on each pattern, are summarised in the table below.

Shift pattern	Number of staff
Full-time (mornings)	9
Full-time (afternoons)	0
Part-time (mornings)	0
Part-time (afternoons)	5
Part-time (evenings)	7
Full-time supervisor (variable pattern)	1
Total	22

Table 4.1 – Clinic staffing in August 2008

In addition it should be noted that, within these categories, staff had unique basic contracts with full-time staff, whilst all working 37.5 hours, starting and finishing at different times and part-time staff, not only having different start and finish times but also having different numbers of contracted hours per week. By April 2010 the patterns of work had changed markedly, with the now twenty staff following the patterns in the table below.

Shift pattern	Number of staff
Full-time (mornings)	4
Full-time (afternoons)	2
Part-time (mornings)	1
Part-time (afternoons)	3
Part-time (evenings)	9
Full-time supervisor (variable pattern)	1
Total	20

Table 4.2 – Clinic staffing in April 2010

In the period between the two dates, nine people left and seven started. Thus, at that time, there had been twenty-nine different employees carrying out the function. The major changes in that first 20-month period could be summarised into three categories. Firstly there was an ongoing move to reduce full-time staff as management discovered that, because of the way the centre operated, the full-time shift patterns hindered the cleaning function. Most of the clinical activity in the centre occurred between 8.30am and 5.30pm, which meant that a significant part of a full-time domestic's activities were being carried out whilst office and clinic staff were working – even though cleaning was more efficient when rooms were vacant. Secondly, there was an attempt to transfer full-time staff away from morning work to afternoon work. As stated above, the centre's activities mainly occurred between 8.30am and 5.30pm, so full-time morning shift domestics had 2.5 hours (most of them started at 6am) when they could work unhindered, whilst full-time afternoon shift domestics had 4.5 hours (they finished at 10pm) when no one else was present. Thirdly, there was pressure to reduce overall costs by reducing the domestic hours in total. Domestics carried out 627 hours of work per week in August 2008 which had reduced to 510 hours of work per week by April 2010; a drop of 19%.

April 2010 saw a change in management's recruitment strategy, partially prompted by an increase in clinical activity after 5.30pm as doctors' surgeries were staying open later and some of the specialised health services were offering evening clinics, which had the effect of reducing the amount of time rooms were vacant late in the day; and partially prompted by management's dissatisfaction with the performance of the incumbent staff, as absentee rates were high and job performance was considered to be low. Consequently, all staff were asked if they would like to reduce their hours (either as a temporary or permanent measure) and, more significantly, a decision was taken that all new recruits would be contracted to work five 2-hour shifts per week at the times of the day when they could be the most productive. Management envisaged these times to be 6am-8am in the mornings and 8pm-10pm in the evenings, but had to make a compromise on the latter. The NHS had an 'unsocial hours' policy that required a premium to be paid to workers after 8pm at night so, because cost cutting overrode employing people at the optimum times, the 2-hour evening shift recruits would work 6pm-8pm. By December 2011, these changes had resulted in the pattern below.

Shift pattern	Number of staff
Full-time (mornings)	3
Full-time (afternoons)	0
Part-time (mornings)	7
Part-time (afternoons)	3
Part-time (evenings)	11
Full-time supervisor (variable pattern)	1
Total	25

Table 4.3 – Clinic staffing in December 2011

Between April 2010 and December 2011, eight people left and thirteen started, resulting in a total of forty-one different domestics having worked at the centre over the 29 months of the study so far logged. Furthermore, although the number of employees had increased by the end of 2011, the number of weekly hours had reduced further such that 467 hours – a reduction of 26% from the start of the study – was being realised.

In addition to these substantial changes in staffing, there were four major changes in the supervision/management of the domestic function. Firstly, at the commencement of the study, the manager responsible for the domestic team fulfilled this as part of her larger role as facilities manager for the site. Within three months of the start of the study, the responsibility for the domestics was transferred to a different manager whose role involved managing domestic functions at a number of sites in the PCT – an outcome that served to change the emphasis of the function. Secondly, at the commencement of the study, plans were in place to recognise the difficulties being experienced by a single supervisor trying to manage workers whose work patterns spanned 16.5 hours per day. In an attempt to improve this situation two 'team leaders', made functionally responsible to the supervisor, were promoted from the cohort of full-time domestics and commenced (one working a permanent 6am – 2pm pattern and one working a permanent 2pm – 10pm pattern) in September 2008. Thirdly, the original supervisor left the centre in March 2010 to be replaced by one of the team leaders – with the subsequent team leader vacancy being filled by an existing domestic but being reduced to a part-time position. Fourthly, the remaining full-time team leader left her post in the middle of 2010 and was not replaced.

These changes did not transpire through a coherent strategy, but were reactive decisions taken because events dictated the changes. The change in the manager was necessitated by the promotion of the existing manager and a need to cut costs; the creation of team leaders was rushed and saw the incumbents commencing their roles without a job description and being asked to perform very few supervisory tasks, which resulted in an initially ineffective start to their roles that did not significantly improve as their roles continued; the resignation of the full-time team leader forced a structure that management had little confidence in – but felt they could not modify further; and the move towards more part-time working was driven by a

need to cut costs. The new manager told me, in mid-2011, that she believed the domestic function to be poorly designed admitting that "we've been playing catch up since the centre opened to try to make the function fit the requirements better" whilst accepting that "within the health service there is only so much you can do". She acknowledged that the new practice of employing people for only 10-hours per week was untried and, therefore, a gamble. Yet, having told all domestics that the 10-hour per week employees 'are the future' – and without giving adequate time to review the efficacy of the new system – two 15 hour evening contracts were offered in January 2012. Indeed, by December 2012, recruitment of 10-hours per week staff was becoming difficult with the centre having four well-advertised vacancies but receiving no applications.

Finally, also in December 2012, domestics were informed that planning was at an advanced stage to transfer the maintenance of the building, which would include cleaning, to a private 'PropCo'[20]. Information was sparse but staff were told that TUPE arrangements would apply to them when the transfer of responsibility was completed.

4.2 Categorised summary of the data from the clinic

The data has been categorised into 'activities', 'interactions', 'sentiments' and 'symbols' (Jones, 1991). However, within these categories, more significant observations have been identified in separate, indented paragraphs.

4.2.1 Activities

Domestics were allocated a specific 'patch' constituting a selection of offices, clinics, reception areas, corridors, laboratories, kitchens, storage rooms, staircases and elevators. At the commencement of the study these patches were seldom altered, but this policy became less so as the study progressed. Certain staff complained that they were moved too often and some reported that the supervisor had told them they were being moved to improve a substandard area. The staff used mops, cloths, dusters, brushes, shovels, vacuum cleaners, buffing machines and floor scrubbers; depending on the cleaning requirements of the facilities within each patch. They carried their equipment around in large trolleys on which they also had space to store waste materials for disposal. Each domestic was provided with a schedule containing lists of items that needed to be undertaken daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly and the expected outcome of the cleaning activity of each domestic was for the patch to be completely clean as audited by an independent department known as 'infection control'. These auditors could inspect a patch at any time but were required to give notice to all managers regarding when they were going to visit and which parts of the building they were going to audit. Individual managers could then decide whether to pass the information to their staff or to let the audit proceed with no warning. This communication policy did not come to light amongst domestic staff until an infection control auditor carried out a training session

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[20] 'PropCo' is a generic term used to describe a company that holds the assets for a parent company

with the domestics in March 2010 and was challenged by one of the domestics to explain why nursing staff[21] were warned of an imminent audit but domestics were not. The auditor explained the above policy and pointed out that the responsibility for communication was fully in the hands of each manager. The auditors, being the arbiters of what constitutes an area being 'completely clean', checked all surfaces in a patch and, starting with a score of 100%, reduced the score as each non-compliance was found. Implied within the system was an assumption that complete adherence to the cleaning schedule would prevent any non-compliance from occurring, but observations showed that no one actually followed the schedule.

Each domestic had the freedom to complete his/her tasks in any order he/she chose and there was little interference unless the audit score fell to less than 90%. If this occurred, the supervisor and/or team leader would get involved in the domestic's daily tasks to investigate why the audit was unsatisfactory and to assist in its improvement. However, there were occasions when a domestic was asked to not only carry out the cleaning of his/her own patch, but also to help in the cleaning of a colleague's patch when that colleague was absent. This practice, known as 'cover' and a major influence on the workers, was not unusual as absenteeism was high at the centre. However, the quality of the cleaning function was expected to remain at the same standard irrespective of this increase in workload, with the infection control auditors making no allowances for staffing problems amongst domestic staff and carrying out audits even when the domestics had been involved in cover.

As previously mentioned, early in the study a domestic generally remained allocated to his/her specific patch unless there was an operational reason to move him/her. These operational reasons would include a change in the usage of a facility, which might increase or decrease the workload for a specific domestic; and a change in personnel, which might see a full-time domestic replaced by a number of part-time workers. Early in 2010, management started to move domestics between patches with much more frequency and the patches were also redesigned. On occasions, the manager informed staff why the moves were taking place but, in the majority of the cases, no explanations were given. One of the drivers of these staff movements appeared to have been created by an increase in overall cleaning workload during the time of the study. The reduction in domestic hours (detailed in the overview) occurred at the same time as the clinic increased its room utilisation, both in terms of number of rooms in use and the number of hours per day these rooms were in use.

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[21] The infection control function audited all aspects of cleanliness, some of which were the responsibility of nursing staff, clinicians and laboratory assistants

4.2.1.1 Control of activities

Problems with the issue of controlling the quality of the cleanliness of the building could be seen from observing some of the points highlighted above. Indeed, although a poor audit score would trigger supervisory involvement in the cleaning process of an individual, there was no evidence of significant and lasting improvement in the performance of those individuals. Furthermore, the reasons behind this apparent failure to make improvements appeared to be complex: no one followed the provided schedule of activities; no one was ever disciplined for sub-standard performance; the constant requirement to provide 'cover' for absent colleagues was considered, by domestics, to be a reasonable excuse for low audit scores; management kept increasing workload even with high absenteeism; and absentees were never officially sanctioned. In addition, it appeared to some domestics that good performance ultimately led to increased workload, as these 'good' workers would be relocated to compensate for the inabilities of others. As will be covered in more detail later, work intensity was not high and my observations suggested that domestics were in a position to take on the additional work that management wished them to accept. However, most domestics felt that they were not in a position to increase their workload whilst believing management were covertly trying to increase it. Hence most were not inclined to cooperate.

Domestics were expected to practice recycling in the management of waste material but there was very little evidence of adherence to this requirement with much of the potentially recyclable material being disposed of with non-recyclable waste. However, this practice was not audited and, furthermore, many of the non-domestic staff who inhabited the building and created the waste made no attempt themselves to segregate it into the correct receptacles they were provided with. At the end of the shift (and sometimes earlier in the shift if necessary) each domestic would take their waste material to a room containing the waste skips and would return used mops and cloths to the wash room where he/she would segregate them and put them into the correct washing machine. If this activity did coincide with the end of the shift, the domestic would sometimes, but not always, replenish the trolley with materials ready for the next user.

The proportion of a domestic's shift spent performing the task of cleaning varied dependent on the contracted hours of the individual. Some 'paid, non-productive' time existed as a result of the contract to which an employee was linked; so full-time domestics were paid for their tea- and meal-breaks (1 hour/day) and part-time employees with 20-hour per week, or greater, contracts were paid for their tea-break (15 minutes/day). In contrast, domestics with contracts of below 20-hours per week were not officially entitled to any breaks, although they all took them. However, irrespective of the above theory, reality showed that the shorter the contracted hours, the higher the proportion spent on task. As stated in the overview, full-time

domestics were prevented from performing much of their work between the hours of 8.30am and 5.30pm – so they filled much of their time on social activities, often visiting colleagues elsewhere in the centre. Part-time workers on contracts of 20-hours or more per week appeared not to have sufficient work to keep them busy over their contracted time and they also indulged in visiting colleagues during their shift. This was even true, to a lesser extent, for the 15-hour per week part-time domestics, with only the newer 10-hour per week recruits loaded sufficiently with work to get close to filling their allotted times – but even they had sufficient time for a ten minute tea-break and an early finish. Notwithstanding the normal situation of all domestics finishing their work early, they finished considerably earlier when no supervision was on site. Indeed, the general activity suffered markedly on occasions when no supervision was present.

4.2.1.2 The effect of shift patterns on activities

As detailed above, in employment terms the domestics were not a homogenous group with not only differences between full-time staff and part-time staff, but also differences between variable hours part-time staff. The observation that the shorter the contracted hours, the higher the proportion of time spent on task was not lost on these groups and there was considerable resentment caused by this situation. Management were seldom forthcoming in communicating their plans but they did inform all domestics that their future recruitment policy was to employ 10-hour per week workers, an announcement that was poorly received by most domestics who saw it as potentially unworkable (because people would not want to work so few hours) and a development that would fragment[22] their work-group further. Part-time staff saw full-time staff as having a privileged position: receiving more pay; having paid breaks; having substantial idle time; being preferentially considered for overtime; and being allocated 'easier' patches. With some domestics, this resentment adversely affected their cleaning activity. Furthermore, when the new 10-hour per week recruits commenced work, management did not attempt to shape their approach to work such that the influences on their behaviour mainly came from the behaviour of the existing domestics – yet management had formulated this recruitment policy to alter this existing behaviour.

In addition, socialising with colleagues spawned other activities that had no relationship to the work. People bringing in cakes, pies and biscuits that they had baked themselves; two domestics running mail order catalogues; one employee selling cosmetics; and many swapping DVDs and books with colleagues, were examples of such activities that tended to enhance the social nature of the job at the expense of a focus on the task of cleaning.

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[22] Already seeing themselves as different from colleagues on different contracts, this perception was crystallised by one domestic who said 'we hardly know each other as it is but we'll never even see these new girls'

4.2.2 Interactions

4.2.2.1 The kitchen

All domestics, apart from the supervisor, signed their names in a book at the commencement of their shift in a large kitchen that housed their lockers, tables and chairs, a fridge/freezer, a larder, a kettle and a crockery/cutlery cupboard. There were many different start times so staff had, in theory, limited opportunities to meet with co-workers – but the kitchen helped to increase these opportunities. Normally, interactions would occur between colleagues who commenced and finished at the same time, colleagues who had arranged to spend their breaks together and colleagues who were designated to jointly cover the patch of an absent colleague (at some time in the shift) – and the kitchen acted as a focal point for the first two of these reasons. Many domestics would visit the kitchen on numerous occasions during their shift, not only for the motives stipulated above but also to remove items from their lockers, make telephone calls and facilitate their private activities such as swapping DVDs and selling their cosmetics. As such, the kitchen made possible much of the non-work activity practiced by the employees. In addition, it had an impact on the shift finish. Domestics would locate to the kitchen towards the end of their shift – considerably earlier than their official finish time – and there was a distinct impression of the value of 'safety in numbers'. On a number of occasions I was told that "we'd better not go yet, [name] won't be there" or "it's a bit early", but there was a tinge of relief when a domestic arrived and was not the first. This idle period tended to drift earlier and earlier, until the supervisor would intervene, and it appeared that the kitchen assisted this drift.

In addition, the kitchen environment delivered a positive influence on my acceptance as a legitimate co-worker by the domestics. Initially my being present during social interaction developed into me taking part in conversations about all kinds of both work and non-work related subjects.

4.2.2.2 The washroom

At the commencement of the study, the supervisor did not have her own bespoke office. Her desk, computer and filing cabinet were situated in a large washroom that also housed two washing machines (for the floor cloths and hand cloths), various cleaning equipment, cleaning materials and cleaning fluid dispensers. As a result of this, all the cleaning staff had to visit the office to collect materials, collect equipment and return used cloths for washing, a practice that forced contact with the supervisor without her needing to search for anyone. In February 2010, the supervisor was provided with her own bespoke office, far away from the washroom, with the existing room retaining its other uses. In consequence, the supervisor was required to seek out any member of her staff she wished to speak with and this resulted in a marked

reduction in supervisor/staff interaction. As mentioned above, the kitchen was the focal point of non-work related activities and the washroom, in contrast, was the focal point for work related activities. It was noticeable that, prior to February 2010, the supervisor would generally meet with every domestic at least once during a shift – but then, following this date, contact became far more intermittent. Indeed, I witnessed occasions – after the supervisor moved – when people tolerated unresolved issues because they doubted they would find her.

Domestics regularly met with each other at break times, often meeting in the kitchen, there being a number of these – official and unofficial – dependent largely on personal relationships and organised by domestics arranging their breaks to coincide with those of their friends. In addition to these unsanctioned interactions, domestics would officially need to co-operate with one another when undertaking 'cover'. This activity, organised by the supervisor and described earlier, was carried out to ensure every room in the clinic received attention every day. Two or three designated staff would agree to meet on an absent colleague's patch, at a time convenient to all parties, and would work together to bring said area up to standard. Indeed, management's issues with the control of break times made for conflicting messages to be passed to the domestics such that they were told that they had to remain on their own patches throughout the duration of their shift – unless they were covering for absent colleagues. Cover was so widespread that policing workers to stay in their own areas was unlikely and the directive was treated with disdain. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, domestics who finished their shift at the same time would meet in the kitchen between 10 and 25 minutes before the end of said shift when they would 'sign-out' and then sit and talk until they left.

There was a variable amount of interaction between domestics and their clients, depending on whether their clients were present when the cleaning was taking place and depending on how long the domestic had serviced that particular patch. Full-time staff tended to have more interactions with clients than their part-time colleagues, mainly because of the forced non-productive time mentioned earlier.

Two crucial relationships, both of which caused problems for the domestic function as a whole, were those between each of the supervisors and the manager of the function. The first supervisor had many of her decisions reversed by the manager when affected domestics bypassed her to query her decisions higher up the chain of command, including decisions on cover rotas, allocation of patches and holiday entitlement. This situation had the effect of increasing the interactions between individual domestics and the manager on topics that, correctly, should have been dealt with by the supervisor. Indeed, the situation did not improve when the second supervisor took over responsibility but, unfortunately, she was less skilled than her predecessor, so the overall effect on the employees was worse and morale suffered

as a result. Furthermore, the undermining of the authority of the two supervisors caused their effectiveness and morale to deteriorate.

4.2.3 Sentiments

Although many domestics took pride in what they did, appreciated that they were largely left to work alone and accepted that their remuneration was, as one domestic put it "a damn good pay rate for cleaning", there was a general consensus that patches were not split fairly. Many domestics felt that their particular patch was more onerous than those of their colleagues. This sentiment became more contentious in early 2010 when domestics were moved between patches more frequently. However, all domestics were able to complete their work comfortably in the time available with the more difficult patches resulting only in the domestics having less idle time.

4.2.3.1 Cover

Probably the major source of irritation to domestics was the need to 'cover' the work of colleagues when they were absent, as first mentioned in the activities section. This irritation was increased by the unwillingness of management to lower the inspection standards when this practice was taking place and was further compounded by the reality that absenteeism levels were very high – making cover more the norm than the exception. The domestic staff saw the practice as beyond the requirements of their job and some of the staff regularly articulated their displeasure. One popular objection to cover was the concern that it prevented an individual from cleaning his/her own patch to the standard he/she wished to achieve[23]. Indeed some domestics, seeing their patch deteriorate because of the need to perform other peoples' work, took this deterioration as a reflection of their own performance and became quite upset by how they thought they were perceived. In addition, there was conflicting opinion of how cover affected routine. The nature of cleaning involves the routine application of peoples' labour and, whilst the facilities were in a different state of cleanliness each time an individual started his/her shift, he/she usually carried through the work with the same unique routine. The routine manifested itself through people doing specific jobs on specific days, doing the daily work in a particular order and taking breaks at the same time on each day. Most domestics liked their routines and relied on them as a way of coping with the work, but the same people felt trapped by the routine and welcomed the opportunity to occasionally do something different – as one reported, "I get really bored by doing the same things day after day"; with the same person complaining that "cover plays havoc with your routine". Furthermore, there was a substantial difference in sentiment regarding the fairness of the practice. One domestic, who had been absent for over six months, complained about having to cover a colleague's activities a fortnight after her return to work, seeming to ignore

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[23] It should be noted that this standard might not be the standard required by the auditors. It will be the standard set within the individual's psychological contract

the fact that someone had covered her absence for a considerable time; whilst another openly admitted that she judged the amount of effort she would put in to be based on who she was covering. This latter sentiment permeated many of the staff to the extent that the patch of someone who was deemed to take sick leave without adequate cause would receive very superficial attention – because these absentees, as one person put it, "don't deserve our help". The way the additional work was allocated also caused dissatisfaction amongst the staff with some individuals believing that they were being asked to take on more of a burden than some of their colleagues; and there was evidence to support this sentiment with supervisors openly allocating cover to people they considered to be conscientious and overlooking those they considered poorer performers. Cover elicited a wide range of views, but even the most moderate of sentiments was a 'strong dislike' with its chronic nature being a powerful influence. As stated earlier, the need for cover was substantial such that, for the first two years of the study, I never saw a full complement of employees on site during my data collection periods.

The effect of cover on the team of domestics became more acute through to April 2010, mainly because absenteeism did not improve whilst staffing levels reduced by the 19% indicated earlier; thus fewer staff hours were available to share the burden. Management were still overtly trying to reduce staffing further, yet there appeared to be no effort being expended to reduce the amount of absence. There was a high degree of consensus amongst the more regular attendees that much of the sickness absenteeism was unjustified and that people were taking advantage because they believed that management was powerless to deal with the issue. As one domestic indicated, "stop the sick pay and you'd soon see an improvement. It's too easy to stay off work and get paid and they know they'll get away with it." The new supervisor was very worried about the deteriorating morale amongst her staff, but voicing this concern to the manager had no tangible effect other than a directive being given to the supervisor to reduce absenteeism in the ranks – a directive that she believed she had neither authority to implement nor ideas on how to go about it. Sentiments were divided regarding the reasons why management appeared to be reluctant to deal officially with absence with some domestics believing that they lacked the authority within the NHS system to effectively carry through a potential dismissal for the offence and others believing that they lacked either the will or the competence to do so, indicated by one respondent saying "he hasn't a clue how to run it [cleaning] and I'm not sure that he cares". However, as will be seen in the next paragraph, there was a perception management were willing to address the issue unofficially.

There was some conflict between individual domestics (dealt with further in 'symbols'), but it did not appear to cause any significant personnel related problems. It tended to revolve around an individual's perception of the performance of his/her colleagues, with grumblings

about absenteeism and standards of work, but remained as an irritation rather than a cause of fractured relationships. However, there were a small number of examples of serious rifts between management and individuals. As described earlier, there was no evidence of official disciplinary action being taken against any individual for inadequate performance – in either standard of work or attendance – but certain individuals with poorer records appeared to have been singled out for special attention from management with regards to the type of work they were allocated. Three domestics were given particularly heavy tasks to perform and these were perceived, by the individuals and some of their colleagues, to potentially exacerbate previous medical conditions. Whilst in each case the tasks were in the remit of what a domestic could be asked to do, there were suspicions that these heavy tasks were designed to assist in the removal of these employees and, indeed, each individual sought union involvement with one of the employees leaving and claiming constructive dismissal. Furthermore, although other domestics could see that these individuals were problematic to the organisation, there was criticism of the method being used, which served to undermine the perception of staff regarding management tactics. Staff who had been highly critical, to me, of these colleagues with poor performance records, became incensed by the tactics used and one voiced her concerns saying "they're doing it to them now, but they'll find a reason to get us later". Indeed, the second supervisor to hold the position commenced her reign with the intention of treating staff fairer than her predecessor, and appeared to try to follow this intention. However, a series of poor decisions in day-to-day dealings with domestics, along with a perception that she was willingly complicit in management tactics, significantly eroded her credibility. How much this outcome was caused by the limited supervisory experience she had when she commenced is unknown, but she was not provided with any training by management during the time of the study.

4.2.3.2 Non-homogeneity

At the commencement of the study, there was no contact between full-time and part-time domestics as can be seen from the shift pattern at that time in table 4.1. Three full-time staff members, including the supervisor, then transferred from permanent morning work to permanent afternoon work and regular contact commenced. This contact had a significant effect on the function with an observable difference between how full-time and part-time staff and, indeed, how the differently contracted part-time people perceived each other. Firstly, management stopped recruiting full-time staff and implemented a policy of recruiting staff on contracts of 15-hours per week, with the new people clearly seeing that they were paid less than both their full-time colleagues and those part-time colleagues who were contracted for more hours per week. Secondly, notwithstanding the unofficial breaks that domestics took (dealt with under 'symbols'), full-time staff had a better break/work time ratio[24] than part-time

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[24] In this context 'better' means they had proportionally more break time than their part-time colleagues

staff. Thirdly, most of the new part-time 15-hour per week recruits craved more hours; whilst they noted that the full-time workers, as well as those part-time staff on more hours per week, were more content with the contracts they had. This issue was quite important to these new recruits who perceived a portion of their job requirement as 'unfulfilled' (inadequate hours of work leading to inadequate remuneration) whilst working alongside colleagues who did not share that lack of fulfilment to the same extent.

Already perceived to be in a privileged position, mainly because they received the highest remuneration and appeared to have a high proportion of idle time, full-time employees appeared to be favoured in overtime allocation. This surprised part-time domestics as one of them pointed out, "they get paid time-and-a-half for overtime but we get paid normal-time, so it's costing more for them to do it!"

Following April 2010, the management exacerbated this problem further by changing their recruitment policy to employ new staff on 10-hour per week contracts. These new staff not only faced the three issues indicated above, but they were also comparing themselves to the 15-hour per week part-time staff who were relatively better placed than they were. Indeed, a number of these new recruits expressed a desire to work for 2 hours in the mornings and 2 hours in the evenings, if the opportunity arose, which would give them a 20-hour per week contract. However this was refused, in principle, by management but with no explanation as to why; a refusal made more contentious as one of the 15-hour per week evening domestics was known to have a similar job, at a nearby health centre run by the same management, from 6am – 8am each morning. Indeed, in January 2012, a vacancy arose in the 6am – 8am shift and, in a complete reversal of the original policy, evening shift domestics were given leave to apply.

All the above served to fracture any homogeneity of the group founded on the task of cleaning. Envy – of better pay and conditions; frustration – from knowing that opportunities to better their position were closed; and irritation – that they were expected to work relatively harder than some better positioned counterparts, were some of the emotions observed, suggesting that non-homogeneity was a significant factor in this case study.

A number of people reported having more than one job with 13 of the 43 people involved in the study possessing two jobs and a further 2 admitting to having three. Notably, most of these people were in the 10-hours per week cohort – the cohort that was seen as the future template for recruitment. Sentiments regarding the job proved to be problematic in this cohort with turnover being higher than those on any other shift pattern and applications for vacancies

becoming sparse. However for many of the domestics, irrespective of their contracted hours, the NHS had an attraction.

4.2.3.3 Working for the NHS

When the centre opened in 2006, most of the recruited domestics came from other NHS establishments and many of these had worked for the organisation for many years. Furthermore, those who were recruited from outside the organisation indicated that a major factor in their decision to take the job offer was the attraction of working for the NHS and, as suggested earlier, apart from the problem with the 10-hour-per-week employees, turnover was low (people retiring or leaving for personal reasons). It was apparent that a number of the domestics saw had no intention of leaving the NHS until they retired, but this attraction was fuelled by many different sentiments, some based on genuine affection and some work-related – the latter appearing to have the greater influence. Management started its attempts to increase work intensity soon after I started my study but, as indicated earlier, even after nearly 3 years of piecemeal increases, domestics still enjoyed considerable idle time – and many understood this. Although disgruntled by the increase in work intensity workers appreciated that they were considerably better off, not just financially, than people carrying out similar activities in other companies. The idle time enabled social activities to be carried out; no evidence of punishment for either poor performance or absenteeism existed; the facilities were of a high standard helping to minimise physical effort; and provision for their welfare was provided in terms of the kitchen and their access to medical advice – all of these lending weight to the attraction of remaining in the organisation. Further to these, until the very last stages of the data collection, job security was an appealing motive such that the potential change, which would see the cleaning function transferred to a separate company, had become a major debating topic amongst domestics with many fearing erosion of terms and conditions and even job losses.

More frequent relocation of domestics between patches and the redesign of patches, commencing in early 2010, resulted in an overall deterioration in morale. One individual who had worked on the same patch for over two years, and perceived herself to be a part of a team that included clinical staff within that geographical area, was quite visibly upset when she was moved. She accepted that she had not been promised that she could indefinitely clean that particular area, but she had expected to be able to remain there unless there were identifiable reasons to make changes and, although not only for this reason, left soon after being moved. Up to this time, the main reason for moving domestics between patches was usually perceived to be an effort to overcome poor workmanship and some staff were told, unofficially, that they were being moved because their predecessor was not performing adequately. Two people, in particular, felt they were being used to bring substandard areas up to acceptable levels and then being moved on. This practice caused substantial

dissatisfaction, the target being the management of the organisation – for not dealing with the issue – rather than the employees who were perceived to be carrying out the substandard work. Indeed, as detailed earlier, during the period of the study, no one was disciplined for substandard work although some staff were put under a monitoring regime after poor audit scores. This was not surprising, as the perceptions of the domestics concerning the standard of the work they were prepared to achieve appeared to be quite variable. One of the employees set herself a high standard such that she would be confident for any member of her family to be cared for in her patch, whilst another chose a more pragmatic view admitting that "I clean only what I think needs to be cleaned". Indeed, the practice of moving a domestic onto a patch to improve poor workmanship was a testament to this variability.

4.2.3.4 Disillusionment with management

Although never actually voiced by any domestic, I concluded that a sentiment possessed by almost all staff was one of disillusion with how management treated them. The majority felt they understood the requirements of the task of cleaning, but perceived that management did not share the same interpretation. Incidents such as management clamping down on number and length of tea breaks, issuing directives about the hoarding of cloths, moving people between patches without explanation, threatening action over early finishes, and changing recruitment policies to eradicate (what they considered to be) lackadaisical performance – all resulted in bemused responses; as one domestic said, "I can't understand why they mess us about. What does it matter if the work gets done?" Notably, the attitude of domestics to the threats and directives was one of temporary compliance with the knowledge that no follow up would be made to check on behavioural change. This opacity concerning what was expected of staff certainly contributed to a general animosity both from domestic to manager and, indeed, from manager to domestic.

4.2.4 Symbols

The title of 'domestic' was an important symbol to the staff. They perceived themselves as more than cleaners and referring to one of them as 'a cleaner' would be countered with a firm denial and a correction. The over-riding belief of most domestics was that their individual patches were of a generally high standard of cleanliness, at least during times when they were not required to cover. Indicative of this belief was a comment made by one of the staff who said "there isn't that much difference between the state of the place when I start to the state when I finish" and another who said "they [the nurses] look after the clinic and I just need to help keep it that way". In this respect, the workload was light and the domestics had a substantial amount of time to complete their tasks. Before the advent of the 10-hour contract employees, this situation was particularly reflected by two symbols of custom and practice. Firstly, most part-time evening shift workers and all full-time afternoon shift workers were contracted to finish at 10pm, but they packed away their equipment, washed their hands and were ready to leave by 9.35pm. Secondly, staff enjoyed a number of unofficial breaks within

their contracted hours, which they could take without the worry of being unable to complete their tasks. However, the latter symbol especially, was affected during times when cover was required, the result being a reduction in the amount of unofficial break time – which also reduced interaction between colleagues. These two symbols indicated the relative contentment of the domestics when cover was not necessary and their relative discontentment when cover was required.

A number of attempts to clamp down on break times were made by management during the study and these appeared to have been motivated by a need to exert some control over the domestics' activities which could not be achieved by the workload. None of these attempts resulted in any lasting reduction in idle time with the main observable effect being a change in habit (people taking their breaks in different locations, at different times, of different durations, more frequently or less frequently). Indeed, an almost universal reaction to a clampdown incident was verbal compliance followed by token adherence for a brief period. The clampdowns appeared to be opportunistic in their execution and were invariably targeted at all domestics, not just to those whose behaviour sparked the reaction. The inability of management to make any lasting improvement appeared to have some grounding in the observable lack of a coherent strategy to fundamentally change the practice. However, the move to 10-hour contracts was perceived as a move to increase the control over the domestics by filling their paid time with work and giving no opportunity for any significant idle time. This symbolic change resulted in some operational issues. One effect of the contact between employees having substantially different work arrangements arose soon after the first group of 10-hour per week recruits started at the clinic. Their finishing time was designated as 8pm and, initially, they were leaving the building at that time. However two of the existing staff, who both worked longer hours, also had finishing times of 8pm but they had left the building by 7.45pm. This had the effect of the new recruits moving towards the 7.45pm finish rather than the existing employees staying later – mainly because no managerial attempt was made to enforce the designated finish.

4.2.4.1 Team briefing

At the commencement of the study there was a scheduled monthly team-briefing session, carried out by the manager, at two set times (in order to catch all domestic staff) on the last Tuesday of every month. However, for a five-month period in 2009, this practice was suspended but, unfortunately, no official reason for the suspension was communicated to the staff who believed the team-briefings had been permanently abandoned. Indeed, many domestics were not surprised that the team briefings had been suspended, commenting that the tone of the meetings had deteriorated in the recent past and had become less like communication sessions and more like an opportunity to bring forward perceived grievances. More than one employee had told me that they believed the manager had become uncomfortable with the sessions and one even indicated that she had overheard a conversation

between the manager and the supervisor where the former was trying to delegate team-briefing responsibility to the latter. The sessions were eventually re-instated, and the reasons for the abandonment were communicated at the first session – ostensibly because the absenteeism had increased due to an influenza outbreak – but by the middle of 2010 the practice had discontinued with, again, no explanation given. The briefings never recommenced, with no official explanation given as to the reason for permanent curtailment yet, although it became a lost artefact that was seldom mentioned, people sometimes spoke about it affectionately with comments such as, "it didn't solve much, but at least we knew what was going on" and "I used to think they cared about us, but that's gone and I think they're frightened to hold the meetings now". Its loss appeared to be more important to most people than any benefit they received from the forum and it strengthened the perception that management had little commitment to their workers. One domestic said to me, "I understand that they felt it [team briefing] was a waste of their time – and we didn't help matters – but they could at least have shown some balls and told us they were ditching it!"

The cleaning equipment and materials were well maintained. Any substandard bins, mops, brushes, cloths and dusters were immediately disposed of and new items were ordered and quickly received. This mirrored the state of all the equipment, furniture and fabric of the building with any broken or damaged furniture, damaged carpets, damaged tiles, etc. removed and replaced rapidly. All domestics wore the same clean, well-maintained uniform and protective equipment. The only anomaly in this area concerned the availability of cloths.

4.2.4.2 Symbols of resentment

Dirty cloths were taken to the washroom where they were washed in the washing machines and then stacked ready for use by the oncoming employees. Everyone considered that there were sufficient cloths to meet operational requirements, yet there were times when the stock became exhausted because individual domestics were hoarding the cloths "just in case", as one worker admitted. This caused friction between shifts and, although the supervisor telling staff to stop hoarding occasionally improved the situation, it remained chronic. In a similar vein, responsibility for washing the cloths was not laid down officially but was left to 'common sense' and the 'spirit of cooperation' such that if a domestic's dirty cloths had the effect of filling the washing machine, he/she should start the automatic wash cycle. Notably, this necessitated minimal effort and time requiring an employee to merely add detergent to the machine and switch it on – but there were many occasions when this was not done and, indeed, there were times when not only was the machine not started, dirty cloths were left on the floor for someone else to deal with. No one ever admitted to me that they were culpable for this and everyone denounced the behaviour, yet it persisted.

A similar symbol could be observed by viewing the state of some trolleys at the commencement of a shift. As mentioned in 'activities', trolleys were used to hold and ferry the equipment for carrying out the cleaning. These trolleys were shared, by domestics on different shifts, usually by two people with patches that were geographically close to each other and there was a rule that an off-going employee would fill the trolley with consumable items ready for the next on-coming employee. During the study, conflict arose on a number of occasions due to perceptions that off-going domestics were not adequately replenishing trolleys with these consumables. On each occasion, instructions would be left to offending staff and improvements would be temporarily noticeable – but the problem, although intermittent, appeared to be chronic. Indeed, unlike the problem with washing the cloths, an aggrieved domestic usually knew the person who had been lax, which appeared to make the resentment more personal and therefore more likely to recreate the symbol in the future.

At the commencement of the study, all full-time domestics occupied the centre in the mornings and all the part-time staff populated the building in the afternoons and evenings. As mentioned in other sections, 'cover' for absent colleagues was a major issue amongst the staff. However, the procedure for allocating cover was such that part-time staff covered part-time colleagues and full-time staff covered full-time colleagues. Hence, if a substantial number of part-time staff were absent, the remaining part-time staff provided all the cover – even if all the full-time staff were present. The supervisor admitted that there she was not aware of any operational reason for this arrangement and it actually reduced flexibility, but it continued even into the arrangements for the new 10-hour contract employees, who only covered for other 10-hour contract employees. It served to raise the level of conflict between full- and part-time employees, especially as they were not aware of why the practice remained and were not aware why management would not address the issue.

Finally, as mentioned in 'activities', each domestic possessed a list of duties for him/her to carry out daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly. However, not only did no domestic adhere to the schedule, the supervisor did not enforce it. However, new starters were instructed to follow the procedure during their induction and therefore, notionally, it was in force. Indeed, a small number of employees expressed feelings akin to 'guilt', as one put it, "I should be doing this [the schedule] but I'd never finish" – and another made her feelings known to the supervisor but was told that as long as she met the audit requirements her performance would be adequate; a response that caused her to say to me "why have the damn thing if we don't need to do it?" Management's behaviour suggested that it was a guideline, yet its status as a symbol to a domestic was that of an instruction.

4.3 Application of the model to the clinic

4.3.1 Influencers

4.3.1.1 Job status

Job status was of major influence on the psychological contracts, with Ryan's warning against viewing part-time workers as a homogeneous group being relevant here. She suggested that the wants, needs and aspirations of part-time workers could be different from not only full-time employees, but also other groups of part-time employees (1998 p14) and contracts here saw employees working for 10, 15, 20, 25 and 40 hours-per-week. Indeed, many domestics perceived themselves as 'different' – based on these different contracts. In addition, of the 43 people employed at the clinic during the study, 13 people boasted second jobs with 2 admitting to a third, although most of these workers possessing the additional work commitments belonged to the new 10 hours-per-week group such that, of 11 people in that category, 8 performed work elsewhere. Making a link between the perception of difference in status and Feldman's (1990) 'main-job/second-job' had consequences in terms of performance as the strategy of the management was for the 10-hour employee to be the core of the workforce in the future but only 4 out of the 8, who indicated that they had other work, placed the clinic as 'main-job'. Furthermore underemployment (Feldman, 1996) at the clinic was status specific with none of the full time domestics having a perception of underemployment but 20 out of 24 part-time staff employed over the period of the study reporting that they needed more money. Indeed, over half of these 24 admitted that they took the job in the NHS merely as a way of gaining employment in the organisation with the intention of either getting away from cleaning as soon as the opportunity arose or increasing their hours substantially. Crucially, the 10 hours-per-week recruits discovered that this latter option was barred to them with many becoming disillusioned with their perceived inferior status and some leaving. Regarding the concept of dirty work (Hughes, 1958), employees appeared to practice 'reframing' as they saw the role of 'domestic' as superior to 'cleaner' and would react angrily if referred to as the latter. Furthermore some, who saw themselves as part of a team alongside nurses and doctors in their patches, 'recalibrated' their role to emphasise their importance with, for yet others, 'refocusing' being prevalent – domestics raising the importance of the amount of idle time they enjoyed, the relatively high pay for the type of job they did, the genuine affection in which they held their organisation (the NHS) and the advantages of being largely unsupervised whilst working.

4.3.1.2 Work Intensity

Work intensity was a pivotal factor in the management focus at the clinic and evidence suggested that management attempted to address performance by concentrating, totally, on this very narrow aspect. During the period of study, the labour hours allocated to cleaning the clinic reduced by 26% whilst the amount of (clinical) activity increased – with management employing two strategies to achieve this. Firstly, moving towards employing people for fewer

contracted hours and loading the new domestics with sufficient work to fill those hours – which initially meant replacing anyone leaving with a new recruit contracted for fewer hours with, later, a change in policy dictating that all domestics recruited after April 2010 were contracted to work 10 hours-per-week. Secondly, attempting to increase the amount of work carried out by existing employees – which was addressed by regularly moving people between patches and changing the physical make up of the patches. As one domestic said "they [management] are trying to confuse us by moving us around and changing the job. You just get used to one area and they move you!" Indeed, observations suggested that there was scope to increase work intensity, as there was substantial idle time in each person's shift as evidenced by the new 10 hours-per-week domestics who, even with such short shifts, had finished their work, stored their trolleys, washed their hands and were ready to leave sometimes 20 minutes before the scheduled end of their work period! However, throughout the data collection period, no one carried out a full list of their duties and all staff believed that the tasks required on that list of duties could not be achieved in the time available. Moreover, as an example, had the 10 hours-per-week domestics carried out all scheduled activities, they would have been unable to complete their work in such a short time. Work intensity did increase but, even by the end of the study, there was still substantial 'slack' apparent – an observation given weight by the evidence that no one left the job because the work was hard.

Indicating the importance of work intensity in the clinic was the contention from senior management that, given the opportunity, the most important working practice alteration they could make would be to clean the clinic during the night. They believed that, even with the enhanced shift premium, it would be a cheaper option because the clinic would be empty. However, when they were in a position to take advantage of an empty clinic, by employing the new 2-hour domestics between 8pm and 10pm, they were not prepared to do so because of the enhanced 'unsocial hours' pay this would have incurred.

4.3.1.3 Organisational Culture

Utilising the cultural model offered by Payne (2001), 'pervasiveness' was high with domestics being expected to view themselves as an integral part of the NHS, bolstered by extensive training in disciplines quite peripheral to their day-to-day activities; and to view themselves as more than cleaners, as seen by the job title of 'domestic'. However, 'consensus', although never high, diminished as the study progressed, mainly due to the move towards a workforce required for very few hours per week and a management that gave out mixed messages about what was considered to be important; for example, abandoning team briefing, appearing to accept high absenteeism (whilst rigorously auditing facilities) and discouraging staff contact (whilst expecting cooperation when providing cover). 'Psychological intensity' similarly followed a downward trend through the study with the constant requirement for cover causing many of the domestics to display behaviour more akin to compliance than unconscious belief. Looking at the organisation from Meyerson & Martin's (1987) model, the clinic displayed a culture that resembled 'differentiation', where there were "inconsistencies,

lack of consensus, and non-leader-centred sources of cultural content" and "differences may represent disagreements with an organisation's dominant culture" (1987, p630). Here, the tensions between the need for cleanliness, as determined by the auditors, and the perceived reality of what the domestics could achieve, served to highlight inconsistencies. Moreover, there was evidence of substantial cultural content coming from sources other than the supervisor, including conflicting messages emanating from managers above the supervisor; the many different shift patterns and the subsequent remuneration differences between domestics; and the idle time resulting from low work intensity. These all led to substantial activities that worked against the stated purpose of the function with excessive break time, furtive discussions about the way people were treated, early finishes and the tendency to form alliances with people on similar terms and conditions; alliances that became sub-cultures to be defended against threats. A symbolic example of the effects of these subcultures was the chronic problem experienced with the reusable cloths and mops. Although there were sufficient mops and cloths available to meet even an excessive demand, groups would hoard them causing problems to other groups and, even though managers tried hard to stop this practice, it persevered. Furthermore, assisting 'differentiation' was the distraction of the facility for domestics to congregate. The room where the domestics signed in at the start of their shifts – the kitchen – contained personal lockers, a refrigerator, a microwave oven and a table and chairs; people kept tea, coffee, sugar, breakfast cereals, fruit, cakes and biscuits in the room and made frequent visits to it throughout their shifts. Indeed, I often brought in chocolates and toffee – the ritual being to open them and leave them on the table for anyone to take. Conversations in this environment consisted of quite variable content – ranging from opinions about recent television programmes to voicing deeply held criticisms about management and fellow workers. I recall one particular event when I, and the domestic I was assisting, walked into the room to find nearly everyone on duty having an intense discussion about the perceived victimisation of a colleague. From an acceptance viewpoint it was satisfying to note that the conversation did not alter in my presence but, from a cultural viewpoint, it was also interesting to note that the conversation was able to continue for 20 minutes without any apparent pressure to return to work. Voicing grievances, in particular, appeared to prevail over work at the clinic.

4.3.1.4 Organisational Conflict

Firstly, task conflict (De Drue, 2004 p8) was at the forefront of a rift between management and the domestics with the perception that cover prevented them from achieving what they believed were the objectives of their contract; that allocation of work was not organised in an equitable way; and that policies and procedures were not applied consistently. An example of this latter issue that caused a great deal of anger amongst the evening part-time staff occurred close to Christmas 2011. In what appeared to be a relatively innocuous decision, the supervisor allowed two members of staff to come in to work earlier on one particular day, but would not extend the facility to anyone else. Notably, although this would cause some disturbance in most organisations, the strength of feeling this generated said more about the

depth of task conflict than the issue itself. Secondly, relationship conflict was also rife with some domestics taking issue with colleagues who, they believed, flaunted their absenteeism and others taking a dim view of colleagues who, given that work intensity was not excessive, had a lackadaisical approach to their work. Indeed thirdly, this relationship conflict also influenced affective conflict evidenced by examples of domestics refusing to partner certain colleagues to carry out cover and, in addition, a deterioration in LMX causing affective conflict aimed at the supervisor; worrying developments as Lewis et al contended that affective conflict "is debilitating and should be discouraged and resolved" (1997 p277). Furthermore, the amount of idle time enjoyed by employees made it easier for them to voice their frustrations in discussions with their colleagues.

This debilitating conflict also extended to management and supervision. Affective and task conflict was rife between the manager and each supervisor, mainly arising from the tendency of the manager to overrule the decisions of the supervisors and her failure to support each supervisor in day-to-day activities.

4.3.1.5 Perceived organisational support

The tension between the perceptions of the domestics at the clinic regarding what they could achieve and the requirements of the auditors, served to weaken the POS felt by the group. Many workers believed that the management[25], at best, did not understand the work that they did or, at worst, were too focussed on cost reduction to provide them with adequate support. It was the general lack of support felt by domestics that most affected their POS, manifested most acutely in the requirement to provide 'cover'. As described in 'sentiments' above, domestics believed that covering the patches of absent colleagues reduced the quality of the work carried out on their own patch – yet they were audited to the same standard no matter how much cover they were required to undertake. Cover was caused by high absenteeism and domestics saw the rigid, inflexibility of management's approach to auditing coupled with its inability, or unwillingness, to deal with the high absence as pointers to low POS. Indeed, although other factors (such as the relatively high remuneration, the pension provided and the sick pay) could have bolstered feelings of support, they apparently had insignificant mediation on this low POS. Indeed, certain events suggested that management had little interest in providing support. For instance, three separate part-time employees formally requested an increase in their hours but their requests were never acknowledged; no supervisory training was ever given to supervisors and team leaders even though all requested it; reasons for moving people between patches were seldom explained; and management refused to discuss the perceived unfairness of auditing domestics during the times they were providing cover.

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[25] To the domestics, 'management' was a nebulous concept. It did not include their supervisor or team leader but encompassed the levels above the supervisor as well as various managers from other functions who could affect their day-to-day activities such as clinical managers, nursing managers and doctors.

4.3.1.6 Leader-member exchange

The power of the supervisor at the clinic had less influence on the psychological contracts than the feelings of lack of support arising from the low POS covered in the last section. The supervisor in role from August 2008 through to March 2010 had a generally poor working relationship with many of the domestics, whereas her successor initially had a much stronger LMX and tried to bring what she considered to be a fairer allocation of work to the function. However, the successor's credibility deteriorated over time prompted by poor decision-making and perceptions of favouritism towards certain staff. Under both supervisors, the in-group tended to be made up of those people who had (relatively) little absence and the out-group of those whose absence records were poor. However, there was also a secondary split with full-time workers populating the in-group much more than the part-time domestics, with neither categorisation generating much surprise. From the operational view of both supervisors, those who attended were more useful than those who did not and those who worked longer hours were more able to assist her with pressing non-routine tasks, often high profile and urgent, than those contracted for shorter hours. Both supervisors were in a position to provide members of the in-group with favourable treatment regarding the cover they were required to do and were also able to give them conducive times for their work to be officially audited with, notably, both of these blessings being of importance to the domestics. However, notwithstanding these benefits, the willingness to cooperate – even of in-group members – appeared to be dependent much more on POS than LMX.

4.3.1.7 Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange

The domestics at the clinic saw a number of changes in their management with a change in the manager of the whole function, the introduction of team leaders, a change to the supervisor, a change in recruitment policy and a move to divorce a domestic from his/her unique patch. Over the same period they saw no improvement in absenteeism, no respite in the amount of 'cover' they had to undertake and a substantial reduction in the time available to clean the clinic. The irritation felt by all domestics regarding the cumulative effects that constant 'cover' had on their activities and the increasing changes to the patches on which they worked was such that relations were even more strained when effects of poor POS were being moderated by improved LMX (the new supervisor having a positive influence on work relations) than they were when LMX was reinforcing the poor POS (before the original supervisor left). The more recent developments in LMX saw a rapid deterioration in the relationship between the new supervisor and all her staff (not helped by the conflict between her and her manager) with a number of incidents that caused feelings of injustice within the workers. This third phase, a return to poor LMX reinforcing poor POS even further, has resulted in ever worsening psychological contract breaches.

4.3.1.8 Employee-organisation relationship

Although this inquiry does not have access to any of the senior management's decision making processes and can therefore make no assumption that any approach made was a conscious one, observations can be made concerning how the approach was seen from the viewpoint of the worker at whom the 'inducements for contributions' strategy was aimed. Indeed, with this particular construct, the characteristics of a specific practice are largely visible. Here, the approach was firmly one of 'overinvestment' (Tsui et al, 1997). Domestics were offered a range of standard benefits including a wage 21% higher than the minimum, most additional hours paid at a premium rate, sick pay and a contributory company pension scheme; but with some open-ended and broader benefits, including training courses on different topics that individuals could opt for and study towards in paid time; access to a job market restricted to only existing NHS employees; and access to health related advice and activities. However, management expected very little in return other than job/task conscientiousness and, even when domestics made suggestions about potential improvements to work scheduling and cover arrangements, attempts at organisational citizenship performance were discouraged. Indeed, some domestics believed that management felt that the high financial 'inducements for contributions' should be sufficient to engender compliance, thus obviating the need to make efforts to increase POS. It appeared that management even believed that their treatment of the 10-hours-per-week recruits fell into the 'overinvestment' category.

4.3.1.9 Exchange ideology

Evidence from the inquiry suggests that exchange ideology was not organisation dependent with examples of the effects of low and high exchange ideology at all sites. Up to April 2010 the general practice was to leave domestics in one area but, after this date, people were moved more regularly. The vast majority of staff perceived this as significantly poor treatment by the organisation but reacted in quite different ways with one long-service employee describing the practice as "a betrayal", significantly reducing her effort and finally leaving; and another feeling similarly violated yet accepting the change and working at the same level as before. Observations showed that most domestics took the latter approach and provided a consistent level of effort, at least whilst they were actually working. Indeed, for most people, the effect of the generally deteriorating LMX and the perceived low POS was to make them increase their idle time by seeking out and talking with colleagues more and having longer breaks – a development that they genuinely did not see as a reduction in their performance.

4.3.1.10 Organisational justice

Regarding distributive justice (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997), not only was there a belief that the patches were split unevenly, there was a perception that they were not allocated fairly with job status influencing where people worked. One manifestation of this was a belief, amongst part-time employees, that full-time domestics were given lighter duties and there was evidence to support this with full-time staff working in areas where clinical activity

prevented them from carrying out their duties during large parts of their shifts. It was notable that these areas were unused by clinical staff when part-time domestics were available, yet sound suggestions of operational changes, which would have helped to both even up workloads and put domestics in places where they could actually work, were ignored. Furthermore, there was a perception amongst the 10-hour per week recruits that their workloads were unfairly allocated, and there was compelling supportive evidence for this also. As detailed in the overview of the clinic, above, management were following a policy of reducing the number of labour hours they would pay for at the clinic and one outcome of this was that each new 10-hour recruit would be given a patch that had previously been cleaned in 15-20 hours per week; with, understandably, the existing domestics making their new colleagues aware of this. There were also issues under the umbrella of procedural justice (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997) where there was the perception that some harder areas were allocated as punishment – a practice judged unacceptable by the domestics. Punishment here was often used because of a person's absence record with evidence of management even ignoring medical advice to put people on 'light duties' by, instead, allocating quite heavy workloads. Notably, good attendees were irritated by the actions of their colleagues who were less conscientious than they were, but seeing work used as a weapon against those who appeared to have been genuinely incapacitated was frowned upon. In addition, many domestics who already believed that cover was an unacceptable task also believed that it was unfairly distributed and the evidence to support this was also powerful. The process by which cover was allocated revolved around domestics covering colleagues who worked similar patterns to themselves, meaning that, for instance, those working the 6am-2pm shift would only cover other domestics working the same shift pattern and those working 6pm-8pm would only cover others working 6pm-8pm. The outcome of this was that, if one shift pattern had a large number of people absent but another had everyone present, none of the people working on the latter pattern would be asked to assist – a scenario that occurred quite often. Furthermore, the allocation of overtime gave some domestics cause for concern with, again, the evidence appearing to support the concerns. On a number of occasions, when absenteeism was particularly acute and when non-standard cleaning jobs were required, overtime was given to full-time staff. These domestics were paid 'double time'[26] yet, when part-time staff members enquired about the possibility of overtime they were refused – even though part-time staff would only have received the normal hourly rate for their additional hours. As one employee pointed out "they're trying to save money but they put a full timer on the job? It doesn't make sense". Adding to perceptions of procedural injustice was one of the tactics used by management to reduce costs. They offered staff a voluntary reduction in hours – yet they expected them to carry out the same amount of work in the reduced time. No one took up the offer and everyone derided it with one domestic asking "do they take us for fools? Why would anyone agree to that?" In addition, under the umbrella of interactional justice (Colquitt et al, 2001), management at the clinic could boast

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[26] This means that they were paid twice the hourly rate for the work carried out.

that they attempted to provide information about all aspects of the cleaning function, but evidence of inconsistency sabotaged their efforts. An example of this arose at a training session[27] in 2010 on the subject of infection control audits, which are the means by which the NHS assures its cleanliness. Auditing of work was not restricted to the domestics with nursing staff, administrators and specialist staff such as physiotherapists and audiologists also being subjected to the practice. At this particular session, attended by all part-time domestics, one employee asked why all non-domestic employees were told when an audit was due but domestic staff were not and was given the answer that all managers were informed of an imminent audit, but it was their decision whether or not to pass the information on. This revelation caused a great deal of anger amongst all of the domestic staff and the employee/management relationship deteriorated markedly. A further example concerned the practice of team briefing, a widely used informational tool in the NHS, which was carried out monthly with all domestics until mid-2010. At that time it was temporarily abandoned with the reason given being unusually high absenteeism, but the practice was never revived. As one domestic summed up "at least we found things out when we had the team briefings. They'd get some stick if they started them up again, but they'd get a lot of brownie points for having the guts if they did". The interpersonal component (Colquitt et al, 2001) was more varied. Generally, staff felt that they were treated with respect and dignity, both by management and by their clients (the people they cleaned for) although the lack of consistency again thwarted these efforts as evidenced by the perception that some people had been treated shabbily after illness.

4.3.2 Core Concept

4.3.2.1 The psychological contract

As the model (figure 3.1) describes, the combination of the influences detailed above helped to shape each individual's psychological contract. Their idiosyncratic nature (Rousseau & Parks, 1993 p19) dictated that they were varied, but many employees appeared to be looking for the deal to be further down the continuum towards the relational dimension than management was prepared to accept. Indeed, the 'overinvestment' EOR (Tsui et al (1997) instigated by management made domestics believe that a more relational contract was on offer, but their unwillingness to take anything other than basic job/task conscientiousness in return negated this belief. Many of the domestics at the clinic had worked at the NHS for years and the newer recruits tended to see their commencement with the NHS as the start of a long relationship, even though the majority of these newer recruits perceived themselves as 'underemployed' in the role they were recruited for (notably, four of these newer domestics indicated that a major reason for taking the job was to open up opportunities for progression). Herriot et al concluded that moving to a more relational contract "is likely to fail unless Herzberg's hygiene factors (Hertzberg et al; 1959) have been met as part of a basic

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[27] I actually attended this session and witnessed the effects of the revelation

transactional contract" (1997 p161) and warned managers of the dangers of overestimating the influence on employees of the more relational aspects of psychological contracts (1997 p160). Management's failure to address this issue suggested that, even before individual influences took effect, the basis for the psychological contracts was weak.

4.3.2.2 Psychological contract fulfilment - mutuality

The unbalanced 'overinvestment' EOR meant that the employers were not even attempting to establish mutuality in their arrangements and one outcome of this was a tendency for people to remain in the job unless there were strong reasons to leave, with a major influence in the mutuality gap arising from the perceptions of the parties regarding absenteeism. Management expected employees to regularly attend work, but many of the domestics took substantial sick leave and this in turn led to other domestics having to cover for their absent colleagues – an undertaking that management saw as an obligation but domestics saw as unacceptable. Work intensity was relatively low at the clinic, which allowed management to believe that cutting the overall hours of the function was a legitimate undertaking, even going as far as asking people to reduce their hours with no reduction in workload, but the domestics did not share this understanding. Indeed, with reference to the cultural model posited by Payne (2001 p108-109), evidence pointed to a high degree of pervasiveness coupled with low consensus and low psychological intensity, a combination that led to a differentiation (Meyerson & Martin, 1987 p625) perspective – with the gaps in mutuality, of obligations of employer to employee and employee to employer perceived by both parties.

4.3.2.3 Psychological contract fulfilment - reciprocity

Here the major contributor to a reciprocity gap revolved around organisational justice in all its three dimensions – distributive, procedural and interactional. In the distributive dimension, domestics believed that a fundamental task of management was to provide the function with sufficient labour to enable the employees to carry out their daily tasks without them having to 'cover' other people's patches. The deterioration in LMX over the period of study and the low POS reflected the belief that management were not achieving this, with the overwhelming consensus amongst the staff that management were undertaking a process of reducing the numbers of workers (and the contracted hours of those workers) at the same time as being unwilling to tackle high absenteeism. In contrast, management believed that work intensity was so low that domestics could both clean larger areas and cover absent colleagues, thus legitimising their attempts to reduce cleaning labour costs. In terms of procedural justice, the composition of the work force and the differences in the expected behaviour of different hourly contracted staff had the greatest effect. The move by management towards recruiting 10-hour per week domestics was introduced to foster an obligation of getting more work per hour from these people than they were getting from existing employees. However, the belief amongst all the workers was that everyone should be expected to perform at a similar level, pro-rata based on their hours, no matter the terms of their contract. Meanwhile the interactional aspect was affected by domestics believing that management should

communicate with them, something they did via team-briefing before it was abandoned, but management seeing domestics as being obliged to carry out their daily tasks, move to new patches when directed and accept increased workloads without explanation being necessary. In addition, 'underemployment' (Feldman, 1996 p403) was only significant in the part-time group, but it did not equally affect people in that group. Many of the 10-hour per week recruits felt it to be incumbent on management to increase their hours if and when the opportunity arose, but management held the contention that 10-hour contracts gave the most efficient return and were unwilling to consider such outcomes (even though they did partially sabotage their own directive by recruiting a 15-hour-per-week employee). However, low exchange ideology amongst many staff did tend to moderate the gap.

4.3.2.4 Psychological contract breach and violation

As shown above, the possibility of fulfilment of the psychological contract was negligible and contract breach was noticeable in all 43 domestics who were employed during the time of the study, largely due to an absence of POS. The requirement to provide cover was the most significant cause of breach and, crucially, it was chronic. Falling into the area of violation amongst a number of domestics, who "hated" it; saw it as "frustrating [because I can't get my own work done]"; and "angry [because I was audited whist covering]"; it was seen as a symptom of management's inability or unwillingness to carry out a fundamental responsibility – to provide sufficient staff to carry out the task – even though it was the domestics' own high absentee level that contributed most to the problem! Considering this from the viewpoint of the employer, absenteeism was seen as a frustrating breach on the part of the employee, especially as the psychological contract was situated more towards the relational (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p659) end of the continuum (open-ended, less specific, highly subjective, implicit, socio-emotional agreements) and there was evidence that management attempted to deal with this in a way that was outside the employment contract (victimising high absentees on their return to work) – which in turn became a further breach by management in the minds of the domestics. Added to this was the also chronic breach by management reducing staffing levels in an opportunistic way as domestics left the organisation and even asking staff to voluntarily perform the same amount of work in fewer hours. Although management perceived this as legitimate, because of the low work intensity prevalent in the function, the employees did not share this view and, to further exacerbate the problem, the policy was implemented without communication. Indeed management abandoning team briefing, where these matters could have been discussed, was also perceived as 'reneging' (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). Indeed trust, generally, had been damaged to such an extent that no attempt at 'repair' (Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009), by either party, was apparent during the study. Not only did management make no effort to exonerate themselves from any negativity by blaming either external factors, uncontrollable factors or even trying to show that problems were only temporary (Weiner et al, 1987), they chose to make no communications whatsoever – convincing some domestics that, as one put it, "they don't care how we feel about them", or, as another said "I don't think they've got a clue what they're doing to us". Inversely, domestics

guilty of high absenteeism seldom changed their behaviour, seeming not to care whether their nonattendance in any way harmed their trustworthiness.

Adding to the list of breaches was the ever-worsening LMX, with even in-group members demonstrating reluctance to provide the supervisor with additional cooperation. Indeed, this LMX problem was, itself, partially created by psychological contract breaches felt by both supervisors about the treatment given them by management. Their expectations included the provision of supervisory training and, importantly, support for their decisions – neither forthcoming. The feelings of injustice felt by so many domestics and the supervisors made psychological contract beach and violation the norm rather than the exception.

4.3.3 Outcomes

4.3.3.1 Organisation-based self-esteem

Pierce & Gardner asserted that OBSE found its origins in work-related experiences (2004 p394), which suggests that any or all work experiences could contribute to a person's self perception of worth; and not all of these were controlled by the organisation. Indeed, there did appear to be a link, via the psychological contract, between OBSE and the coping mechanisms of dirty work – reframing, recalibrating and refocusing (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999) – such that the greater the magnitude of these coping mechanisms within the individuals, the higher the OBSE. There were a number of domestics who felt they were badly treated by management, including some who were refused light duties after illness; some who were refused additional hours without explanation – even though hours had been available; some who felt victimised because of their absence; and some who were required to undertake a disproportionate amount of cover. However, many of these domestics had high OBSE, seeing their influence on cleanliness as a critical factor to the well being of the NHS. One exception to OBSE not being organisation specific, revolved around the comparisons made between those domestics contracted for insufficient hours to earn a living and their better-paid colleagues. This aspect did have the effect of partially reducing the OBSE among the lower paid; a finding supported by Gardner et al's research (2004 p310).

4.3.3.2 Job satisfaction

The affective component of job satisfaction (Hulin & Judge, 2003) had contradictory aspects amongst many of the domestics. The positive aspects tended to surround experiences peripheral to the activities of cleaning, with people having affection for the NHS as an institution and people enjoying the company of their colleagues, although some gained satisfaction from the knowledge that by performing the work itself they were contributing to the well being of patients. In contrast, negative aspects revolved around the task itself with animosity towards management; boredom from the repetitive nature of the work; and dissatisfaction with requirements to cover for absence. Furthermore, the cognitive component (Hulin & Judge, 2003) also provided contradictions based on the same two criteria with the

relatively low work intensity allowing social activities to be part of the working shift. People would collect lottery money from their colleagues, buy and sell goods to each other, and biscuits and cakes would regularly be brought in and left in the kitchen for people to consume. Pay was also recognised as generous in comparison with other organisations, although this lacked some relevance for those who considered themselves 'underemployed' (Feldman, 1996), and general working conditions (two examples being sick pay and pension) helped to raise this cognition. However, constantly working against cognitive job satisfaction, as it did at the affective level, was the task of covering absent colleagues and the shared belief that management was trying to covertly increase work intensity by not replacing departing staff. Indeed job satisfaction, generally, deteriorated over the period of the study such that domestics took less pride in their work as time progressed.

4.3.3.3 Organisational commitment

Of Meyer & Allen's (1991) three components of commitment, only affective and continuance held relevance to the domestics. Firstly, affective commitment was quite strong, as many of the domestics had worked in the NHS for a considerable number of years with some having worked at two or three different sites before transferring to their current location. Indeed, although some of them demonstrated quite low job satisfaction to the extent that they were actively looking for alternative employment, very few looked outside the NHS. For example, a part-time domestic who had been looking alternative employment for over 18 months before being successful, never once looked outside of the NHS for his next post; and a full-time domestic who had personal issues with other staff members said "I can't wait to get out of this place but I'll never leave the NHS" – finally moving to another nearby clinic. Most of the staff felt a genuine affection for the organisation, but quite a few of the poor attendees openly admitted that their desire to stay was based on self-interest with the knowledge that, as one put it, "I'd never get away with it anywhere else" – two points borne out by the evidence that of the 19 domestics who left the function during the study, only 4 voluntarily left to join another organisation. Indeed, a number of the newer recruits indicated that part of the reason for applying for the position was to actually get into the NHS with no intention of staying as a domestic. Secondly, continuance commitment was also strong with almost all staff, including those who considered themselves 'underemployed', admitting that they could not afford to leave the job as they were highly unlikely to obtain adequate remuneration elsewhere. Indeed, of those 19 who did leave during the study, 15 either retired or were forced to leave because of changes in their personal circumstances.

4.3.3.4 Motivation

The above complexity in outcomes arising from the psychological contracts of the domestics assisted the effect of deflating the motivation of the employees. Intrinsically, there was very little to generate motivation with only a marginal difference between a patch before and after cleaning coupled with underlying perception that, because covering absent colleagues was such a large part of their activity, domestics would always be compromising the quality of their

own work. In addition, the perception that management lacked capability to manage the function, failed to communicate the constant changes, applied decision making inconsistently and the perception that people with different contracts were treated differently, served to nullify extrinsic facets. Indeed the main extrinsic contributor to motivation was the audit, which was felt to be an unfair reflection, by many of the staff, of the quality of the work undertaken – again mainly because of cover.

Many domestics appeared to be motivated more by non-work related activities than the task of cleaning, demonstrating more of a desire to socialise with other domestics (and other NHS staff) than to carry out their duties. Extrinsically, this was assisted by the relatively low work intensity and the sub-culture generated by means of having a place (the kitchen) where everyone could meet as well as the practice of such non-work related activities as selling cosmetics, selling mail order goods and exchanging books and DVDs.

4.3.4 Behaviour

4.3.4.1 Performance

By far the most complicated of the three cases, the 'overinvestment' employee-organisational relationship (Tsui et al, 1997) offered by the employers tended to push the psychological contract towards a more relational type, giving more opportunities for perceived breach and a wider range of influences on performance caused by these breaches. Accepting the more relational type of psychological contract, job/task conscientiousness was still the dominant performance requirement but, because of the high absenteeism and the strategy of management to reduce the hours budgeted to the function (a 26% reduction in hours with no perceptible reduction in absenteeism – during the time of the study), interpersonal citizenship performance leading to organisational citizenship performance were also important. Covering absent colleagues required domestics to closely cooperate with one another and maintaining the cleanliness of the building during substantial cost-cutting needed domestics to be prepared to cooperate with necessary restructuring of work for the well being of the NHS. However, although there was some evidence of interpersonal citizenship performance, management undermined this aspect by actively discouraging people from contacting each other. Furthermore, there was little evidence of citizenship performance directed towards the organisation. Perceived psychological contract breaches by the employer, partially due to the far wider-ranging obligations between these workers and their organisation, were numerous and chronic. For instance: team briefing was abandoned without explanation; holiday request procedures were altered without consultation; changes to rotas for covering absent colleagues were perceived to be biased; overtime allocation was perceived to be unfair; and audits, carried out overtly on clinical staff, were covertly undertaken on the domestics – the effects of these breaches agreeing with Robinson & Morrison's (1995) findings that organisational citizenship performance was reduced by perceived psychological contract breach.

Compounding this problem was the relatively low work intensity, which saw domestics able to complete their work and still have time and opportunity to meet with colleagues during scheduled and unscheduled breaks. Indeed, during perceived breaches, these meetings became lengthier, more furtive and more frequent, often becoming the dominant topic of discussion. As detailed above, there was some evidence of interpersonal citizenship performance but, as the main focus of that behaviour was cooperating with other domestics to cover absent colleagues (the main cause of ill feeling amongst staff), this cooperation was patchy. Furthermore, a distinct lack of interpersonal citizenship performance was apparent between some part-time and full-time employees – the former perceiving the latter as getting better all round treatment; conscientious workers and high absentees – the former limiting the help they were prepared to give to the latter; and staff working on different shifts but sharing the same equipment and materials – manifesting itself by staff leaving cleaning trolleys devoid of materials and even hiding clean cloths!

It was the job/task conscientiousness dimension, apparently the most important to management, that was the most variable and, in keeping with Robinson's (1996) findings, was reduced by psychological contract breach. Returning to the terms of the psychological contract, the content comprised 'fairness, trust and delivery of the deal' (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648; Guest, 1998 p661), with 'fairness' being the perception of the fairness of treatment received from an organisation – and this latter aspect was affected more by the actual organisation of the function than by management's treatment of employees. Unlike (as we shall see in chapters 5 and 6) employees working at the school and the hotel, the domestics did not comprise a homogenous group, such that workers ranged from being paid for 40 hours work per week (with shift enhancement), through 25 hours, 20 hours, 15 hours and down to 10 hours per week (with no shift enhancement). In addition, management had publicly stated that they expected to obtain a better return from the 10-hour employees than those working on more lucrative contracts, a comment that caused indignation especially from full-time staff. Whilst full-time domestics would not argue that they were fully utilised, they would argue that the forced idleness was not within their control – being operationally prevented from performing their duties due to the clinical and administrative functions being carried out when they were available to work. This perception of unfairness, combined with the 10-hour domestics already being underemployed (Feldman, 1996) yet being told that additional hours were unavailable, reduced the job/task conscientiousness to an extent that in a 2-hour shift these workers had usually packed their equipment away, washed their hands and were ready to leave 20 minutes before the official shift end – in effect, only reducing their job/task conscientiousness to a level where it resembled the level they saw from other employees.

A further fairness problem was caused by management's reactions to poor quality work. The only measure of job/task conscientiousness was the regular audit of a domestic's work area and domestics who received poor audit scores would, in theory, be retrained or disciplined. Indeed, instances of retraining did occur during the study, but there was no evidence of any disciplinary action being taken – even though some employees regularly produced sub-standard scores. There was, however, evidence of higher performers being moved into sub-standard areas; and being told that they were being moved, due to the inadequacies of their predecessors, to improve the areas. Whilst being recognised for skill and effort was rewarding to some chosen individuals, the overall effect was that of psychological contract breach with management perceived as failing to meet one of their responsibilities – that of fairly ensuring everybody met a minimum standard. Indeed, some of these higher performers consciously became poorer performers as a reaction to the fairness issue. The general consensus amongst domestics was that management were failing in the 'delivery of the deal' and maintaining 'trust' – "the critical ingredient in the relationship between psychological contract breach and subsequent employee reactions" (Robinson, 1996 p593) – had been largely lost.

Organisation-based self-esteem, whilst high among most staff who saw the NHS as their employer-for-life and who recognised that they were, as one said, "more than just cleaners", did not appear to have a positive effect on job/task conscientiousness – findings at odds with those of Brockner & Hess from studies of self-esteem and job/task conscientiousness in quality circles (1986 p620). Actually the reverse was more the case with a few of the domestics seeming to believe that working for the NHS meant that they did not need to work hard – a perception that was bolstered by the low work intensity that was already part of the culture/normative contract and the motivation to involve themselves in non-work related activities rather than carrying out their cleaning duties. In contrast, management appeared to believe that their 'overinvestment' EOR strategy (Tsui et al, 1997) gave them the right to expect compliance to their work intensity programme, recognising employee breach under two categories: excessive absenteeism and excessive time spent on non-work related activities, and their responses appeared to signal a collective feeling of violation. Some domestics who had demonstrated substantial absenteeism seemed to be treated differently in terms of their workloads. Examples of this included: a full-time domestic who had reported suffering from a shoulder complaint being asked to carry out work that occupational health had said would worsen her condition; a full-time domestic who had declared walking difficulties being given a patch split up by two staircases; and a part-time domestic who was instructed to use a heavy buffing machine on return from a wrist injury. In point of fact, all the above three employees left the NHS with a belief, amongst the other domestics, that they had been forced out of the organisation. Excessive time spent on non-work related activities also attracted ad-hoc, aggressive and poorly focussed warnings from management with staff being told to: stay in their own areas; stop congregating (two instructions that were difficult to follow because of the requirement to jointly cover the work areas of absent colleagues); reduce the

time spent on tea-breaks; and leave no sooner than 5 minutes before their official shift end. In response, staff would follow the instructions in the knowledge that no checks on behaviour change would be made and the normal practices would resume; as one domestic remarked "they clamp down like this from time to time but they don't know what they want. If the work's getting done, what are they bothered about?" Furthermore, the situation was considerably worse when supervision were not on site such that people extended their breaks even more and left even earlier. Indeed, the problem with the employer's responses to employee breach/violation was that it affected the content of the psychological contract – "fairness, trust and delivery of the deal" (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648; Guest, 1998 p661) – specifically trust to do what was right and trust that they knew how to manage. In return, possibly due to the breakdown in trust, domestics appeared to be in need of close supervision.

4.4. In summary

The 'overinvestment' employee-organisation relationship fostered psychological contracts that possessed many opportunities for contract breach and the evidence showed that many breaches did occur over the length of the study. Central to many of these breaches was the practice of covering for absent colleagues which domestics saw as not only beyond what they expected job requirements to be, but also interfered with their ability to deliver the required quality, even though these same domestics contributed to the requirement for cover by incurring substantial absence levels! In addition, management's reactions to low work intensity – a policy of reducing staffing levels as the opportunity arose and by opting to recruit new people on 10-hour-per-week contracts – interfered with the social activities that staff had come to enjoy and helped to build rifts between different groups. Coupling these with a lack of communication by management on work related decisions (made worse by the abandonment of team-briefing), a deteriorating LMX under both supervisors incumbent during the study, conflict between those same supervisors and management, instances of management using questionable tactics to deal with high absenteeism and substantial instances of affective conflict between those on different shifts as well as between those on different hourly contracts, served to deliver a level of performance that fell substantially short of expectation. The perception, amongst domestics, that management were either incapable of or unwilling to improve POS, as demonstrated by their unwillingness to deal with absenteeism, their practice of getting competent domestics to clean poor quality patches without applying discipline to the incompetent domestics who caused the problem, and their apparent view that financial 'overinvestment' was sufficient to gain compliance, became an underlying pressure that readily initiated contract breach. Indeed, the evidence suggested that psychological contract breach and violation was a permanent condition at the clinic as the initiators of said breaches and violations were always active and attempts at 'repair' were non-existent.

Of the three case studies undertaken, it was at the clinic that I believe I gained the deepest insights. The opportunities to get to know the domestics personally were more frequent here than at the school or the hotel – partly because of the higher incidence of idle time amongst

the staff, but also because there were so many instances of psychological breach and violation that individuals wished to voice. The animosity felt by the workers towards management was substantial and having someone, not employed by the clinic, with whom to air their grievances appeared to be attractive.

Chapter 5 – the school

This chapter contains an analysis of the school case study using the same template as chapter 4 – the clinic. However, there were two distinct data collection periods between which the old school was knocked down and a new school built; the two schools being serviced by two different cleaning companies. The narrative fluctuates between the two periods, the 'old school' and the 'new school', as appropriate.

5.1 Overview of the school cleaning function

The school initially received its cleaning service from a large cleaning services company, providing contract cleaning to retail, industrial, kitchen, office and public sector establishments. The company provided a number of different kinds of service ranging from mobile cleaning of small establishments to a dedicated workforce, including supervision, at larger premises. This case study involved a group of workers, falling into the latter category, who cleaned the high school in the North-West of England which, when at full strength, was made up of a supervisor and nine cleaners. I commenced regular visits on 23rd January 2009 and continued through to 27th August 2010, usually spending one shift per week with the workers at the school. The contract between the high school and the contractors required the cleaning company to clean all the inside of the school except the main staff room, the main offices and the reception area. The nine contract cleaners (also known as 'cleaners' and described accordingly throughout this summary) and the supervisor all worked an afternoon shift from 3pm to 6pm, Monday to Friday and, in addition, the supervisor along with two of the nine also worked a morning shift from 6.30am to 8.30am, Monday to Friday. Each cleaner had his/her own patch of classrooms, staff rooms, corridors and stairs – and this included the supervisor who, in theory, had thirty minutes (out of the two hours) in the morning and one hour (out of the three hours) in the afternoon for supervision – which required cleaning based on a list of daily, weekly, monthly and occasional requirements. The staffing level and the work requirement did not alter throughout the time of the study, although there were periods of understaffing at certain times. During the time of the study, twenty different people were involved with only three employees from the original team remaining in August 2010.

In 2010, building work commenced on a new school physically adjacent to the existing buildings and this new establishment opened in September 2011. The company contracted to build the school also won the contract to manage the estate facilities – including cleaning – and proceeded by transferring (under TUPE arrangements) the existing cleaners. Notably, the new facility was considerably larger than the old facility, having incorporated pupils from another closing school, but there was no increase in the number of staff or the number of hours worked; the only changes being the incorporation of an employee who, under the old arrangement, worked directly for the school, and the shift times altering to a 3.15pm start time and a 6.15pm finish time. I investigated this new setting between 20th June 2012 and 28th September 2012.

5.2 Categorised summary of the data from the school

As in chapter 4, the data has been categorised into 'activities', 'interactions', 'sentiments' and 'symbols' (Jones, 1991); with more significant observations have been identified in separate, indented paragraphs.

5.2.1 Activities

One of the key features of the study, at the old school, was the pragmatic nature of what constituted the successful delivery of the service. The contract was negotiated via a tri-partite agreement between the school, the local education authority and the cleaning company; but it was the school, in the guise of the headmaster, that decided if the quality was adequate. In an interview with me, the headmaster said that he wanted all areas "ready for learning in a fit and proper state" and he indicated that this was "non-negotiable" – which was different than saying that the areas needed to be totally clean. This approach allowed for some leeway on cleanliness, but gave him leverage to maintain a standard under varying conditions. For instance, a dirty window, chewing gum stuck firmly to a carpet or some papers stuffed down the side of a cabinet would not render a room 'unfit for purpose' at least as individual events. However, an un-emptied bin or a stained, un-mopped floor would result in that unsatisfactory situation and require action from the headmaster.

This pragmatic approach was at odds with the schedule of tasks describing the activities required by the cleaners. The schedule was designed to deliver a clean environment but was largely ignored as a working document by both the cleaners and the supervisor. Indeed, such was the variability of the task, with classrooms sometimes being in a particularly poor state, that following the schedule could have resulted in a portion of a cleaner's patch being overlooked as a result of another portion being given too much attention. The pragmatic view served to reduce tension between dealing with the variability of the task and operating the schedule, with the supervisor appearing to use the schedule only as a control mechanism to modify the behaviour of staff if they failed to maintain the subjective standard that she set. Staff who fell short of the standard were held to account, based on the schedule, with specific tasks being required and measured by the supervisor with a view to improving their performance. The headmaster, if he saw that his 'fit for purpose' requirements were being met, had little cause to get involved and, in consequence, managers in the cleaning company could distance themselves from the day-to-day activities. This appeared to strengthen the position of the supervisor who, with no formal training and no qualifications, had a high degree of autonomy in deciding how the service was provided.

The work was organised such that all the staff, including the supervisor, worked the same shift pattern and all the staff, except for the supervisor, were paid the same wage rate. Cleaners started their shift as soon as the children left the classrooms following the 3pm bell. They should have encountered classrooms with all the chairs and/or stools stacked on the

desks ready for them to start work but this was variable. The state of the classrooms was also variable – depending on the activities of the children on that day – but my observations, which were generally confirmed by the cleaners, suggested that some rooms were almost always received in a very poor state and these tended to be the ones where chairs/stools were left on the floor. Indeed, there appeared to be a strong correlation between the teacher in charge of the classroom and the cleanliness.

The main tasks in the toilets were the wiping of the washbasins and surrounds, the wiping of the toilet bowls and seats and the mopping of the floor with the toilets having priority over all other tasks. The main tasks in the classrooms and staff rooms were the emptying of waste bins and the cleaning of the floor; this latter task comprising the vacuuming of a carpeted floor or the sweeping/mopping of a tiled floor, and the combination of toilets, classrooms and staff rooms would usually take about two-thirds of the shift of each cleaner. The main tasks in the corridors comprised the sweeping and buffing of the floors, whilst the stairs required mopping and these tasks usually took a further half-hour. That left approximately thirty minutes during which time individuals selected less regular jobs – based on their perception of need or based on a routine they had set themselves – such as cleaning window sills, windows and walls. There were differences in the physical sizes of patches; the smallest patch consisting of six classrooms, one staffroom, one toilet, two corridors and one staircase and the largest patch being made up of ten classrooms, one staffroom, two toilets and two staircases. However, this did not automatically translate into different workloads with some staff on smaller patches maintaining an equivalent workload with their colleagues on larger patches by cleaning more thoroughly. In addition, there were substantial differences in the state of each patch on each working day with cleaners sometimes being faced with particularly dirty classrooms and toilets whilst, on other days, having relatively clean rooms to service.

5.2.1.1 Variability in patches and variability in effort

As stated above, the patches did not provide the cleaners with comparable workloads and the activities of the children could further widen these workloads. However, the approach of the individual cleaners also varied substantially. At the old school, certain employees would commence their shift immediately and provide such significant effort throughout the shift that it was difficult for me to see how they could work any harder. These particular cleaners would evaluate the patch in the first few minutes and then decide what they would be able to achieve in their three hours, thus organising themselves based on the scenario they faced. Indeed, when I worked with these cleaners I was aware that they assessed the capabilities of both of us and proceeded accordingly. In contrast, certain workers would make no assessment of the state of their patch and would carry out what they considered to be the essential (e.g. clean toilets, empty bins, mop stains, remove debris) jobs and would put in less than maximum effort. Again in contrast, when I worked with these cleaners I noted that they utilised me such that they could reduce their effort even further. It should be

noted that this latter group tended to be the more transient members of the workforce but it is also noteworthy that, although they delivered relatively less effort than some of their compatriots, the effort was quite often sufficient to render the rooms 'fit for purpose' and, hence, avoid the involvement of the supervisor. Aware of this behaviour, the supervisor would endeavour to raise the efforts of her poorer performers sometimes through increased supervision and sometimes through allocating a 'harder patch' to make the task less comfortable.

The activities at the new school, although ostensibly the same, were organised differently such that the cleaners were split into two teams, each controlled by a team leader. The responsibility for cleanliness, therefore, switched from the individual to the team and there was evidence to show that some cleaners used this to their own advantage, by putting in less effort than their colleagues, with the knowledge that any poor quality work discovered would not be traced back to them. We will see later that the supervisor's role changed markedly under the new regime but, even had it stayed the same, it would have been far more difficult for her to maintain – and improve – effort under this team working system. Notably, the combination of introducing team working and altering the role of supervisor had the most significant effect on the activity of the cleaning function of any effects that I saw over my study of the case. The deterioration in quality was evident throughout the school.

Absenteeism was not a chronic problem amongst cleaners at the old school. However, during the period of the study, when people left the job most did so without giving any notice, hence leaving the remaining cleaners with the added workload until a replacement was found. During these times the supervisor expected her staff to put in extra effort to complete their own patches earlier than usual and split the additional workload between everyone – although obtaining a replacement was usually quite rapid. Absenteeism was also not a problem at the new school and it was even easier to deal with people leaving as the school was open later in the evenings thus allowing other cleaners to work overtime if necessary

One important issue at the new school saw a marked change, regarding cleaning, in the role of the headmaster. At the new school the headmaster did not involve himself with the cleanliness of the school to the same extent that he had in the past, delegating this responsibility to a facilities manager who was employed by the new contract company.

5.2.2 Interactions

At the old school, before the shift started, all the cleaners reported to the supervisor, close to her 'patch', to register arrival and to be informed of any alterations to their duties. Individuals were asked to inform the supervisor by telephone if they were unable to attend work. They were not officially entitled to a break in the three-hour period, but most of them (not all) did take a 10-15 minute break at some stage each day. The supervisor was aware of this practice,

even taking a break herself, but she kept a close watch on the length of the stoppages and, occasionally, intervened to reduce the time spent idle. The supervisor did not officially condone these stoppages and, hence, not everyone took a break, with certain workers being aware that the others had the privilege but accepting the situation without any apparent irritation that they did not enjoy the same perk. However, there were times when certain staff felt that the workload arrangement (the uneven split described in 'activities' above) allowed some people to have a break whilst others were unable to. This perceived uneven workload split, made visible partly by the breaks, led to two members of staff choosing to transfer to another school after having substantial arguments with the supervisor.

There was little direct supervision of the cleaners at the old school, the work load itself acting to ensure that staff actually spent the bulk of their time performing their tasks; and there was little overt inspection of the areas by the supervisor – the appearance of the rooms, stairs and corridors being a testament themselves to the quality of the tasks undertaken. Teamwork was actively discouraged with each cleaner being instructed to remain on his/her patch.

Cleaners sometimes found teachers working in the classrooms or staff rooms when they wanted to clean the rooms and it was customary, in those circumstances, to ask permission to clean. Permission was not always granted and this did upset the routine in some cases. Certain teachers regarded their cleaner as the performer of an essential service and built up a professional relationship with the individual, but some had little or no dialogue with the cleaner and others ignored the presence of the cleaner altogether. There was no direct, official communication channel between cleaners and teachers, so any work related issues were directed via the supervisor by means of a complaints book in the main staff room. None of the teachers was aware of any mechanism for providing any positive response to a cleaner's efforts with one musing, "I once wanted to thank […] for sorting out a really filthy room but I didn't know how to and then it was too late". On occasions, children would still be in classrooms after 3pm and it was incumbent on the cleaner to alter their work pattern to leave those classrooms until later, although this usually caused significant difficulties in completing the task in the required time. Indeed, the school appeared not to consider the effects of school activity on the cleaning function, the cleaners always having to reschedule and wait for the opportunity to do their job.

All cleaners had mobile telephones and they were encouraged to not only leave them switched on, but to have the numbers of all the other cleaners in their contact lists. This enabled the supervisor to contact any cleaner on any issue during working time and it was quite an important communication medium for operational purposes. Unforeseen events could be discovered by the supervisor and contingency plans formulated and implemented without her needing to spend valuable time finding the necessary people to carry out those plans. The supervisor would note incidences that had the effect of slowing down her cleaners

and she would take action by redirecting staff who had finished early or by helping to complete the work herself. There was little evidence of cleaners taking advantage of having their mobile telephones close to hand and most used the device only for work-related issues.

5.2.2.1 Individual cleaning versus team working

As stated in the 'activities' section one of the major changes in the operation at the new school was the introduction of team working, which contributed to substantially more contact between individual cleaners (within each team). This additional contact tended to increase the conflict between individuals as the physical evidence of the work of the poorer contributors became observable and the problems caused by this conflict were exacerbated by a change in the status of the supervisor. Her role was now only administrative, with the supervision of staff being carried out by the head caretaker and with the additional involvement of the facility manager resident on site who was also active in day-to-day decision-making. The overall effect of the combination of these changes was to assist in making the cleaning less effective than under the old arrangement. At the old school, each cleaner was not only aware of what needed to be achieved, even though some only attempted to achieve the minimum acceptable, they knew that they could not blame anyone else if the minimum level was not reached. Furthermore, the insistence that each cleaner remain on his/her own patch meant that, other than at break times, staff would usually be isolated in their own work area making for minimal distractions from the work required. Indeed on one occasion, when I was working with a very conscientious employee, we had finished what she wished to achieve almost 20 minutes prior to shift end and she became quite agitated at the thought of "being caught doing nothing" so we did some more cleaning. The discouragement of interaction with fellow employees, certainly with some employees, helped to increase their efforts at cleaning. At the new school cleaners interacted throughout the shift as part of being in a team structure and some of them clearly used this situation to obscure their own contribution to the task. Spending effort on watching the work of their colleagues and sometimes arguing about perceived imbalances distracted some of the more conscientious workers and, as stated above, the supervisor was no longer in a position to deal with this dilution of effort. Indeed, an example of the destructive repercussions of this development involved the same worker who, at the old school, was worried about being caught doing nothing: whilst still performing better than many of her colleagues, she became more inclined to reduce her efforts when she became irritated by their tardiness.

5.2.3 Sentiments

The potential uneven workload split between the different patches (mentioned in both 'activities' and 'interactions' above) also affected sentiments amongst some of the staff. As detailed above, some staff utilised the three hours irrespective of the size of their patch whilst

others minimised their efforts no matter where they were working. Notwithstanding their personal approach to their tasks, the perceived inequity was a constant irritant to some of the cleaners even though others appeared to be unconcerned. Some felt that the supervisor used the larger patches as punishment to those cleaners who did not meet the standards she wanted and there was evidence to suggest that this did occur on occasions. The sentiment waxed and waned as staff came and went and, although the supervisor did move people around, on occasions, which served to dilute any growing tensions, it was something she did with reluctance.

Of the 20 staff who were observed within the time of the study at the old school, 13 possessed an additional job (2 of these each possessing a third job) and the other 7 were actively looking to increase their hours of employment/wages to the extent that none of the staff felt able to economically survive solely on the remuneration from the school. However, only one of the 10 staff who left during the study did so to achieve higher skilled employment and only one of the 7 people seeking a second job was successful in finding one. Not one of the employees would hesitate to move to another organisation in order to increase their wages, although there was little evidence of individuals actively seeking different employment. Many seemed resigned to their 'underemployed' (Feldman, 1996) position and saw themselves as either working in this job for this company or in a similar job elsewhere that would provide them with no better a solution. In addition, there were some stigmatised feelings towards the job, especially from the younger recruits. Two of the cleaners had attended the school as pupils and reported how certain teachers had expressed disappointment that they were performing such a task and others saw the job as temporary – as one put it, "I'm not staying in this dead end job forever". These sentiments were still strong at the new school with six of the ten staff observed having a second job and all still reporting that they could not earn sufficient money at the school to meet their needs.

At the old school and later at the new school, there was a substantial difference, between the cleaners, concerning the standard of the work they were prepared to deliver. Some cleaners delivered a high level of effectively directed effort for the full 3-hour shift whilst others put in as low an amount of effort as they felt they could and took every opportunity not to work. The supervisor soon identified people falling into the latter category and, when she had the power, spent time and effort in an attempt to improve their performance – sometimes moving a cleaner onto a more difficult patch. Indeed, during the time of the study, these individuals either improved or left. Three of the cleaners who did leave were severely affected by the perception of unequal workloads arising from the uneven split of the different patches and they actively directed their efforts to minimising their work effort and maximising their idle time. However, this supervision was lost at the new school because the power and the responsibility had been removed from the supervisor and, although she was aware of the poorer workers, she felt unable to improve the situation. Furthermore, when working

alongside individual cleaners over both periods of study, I noted two distinct approaches to my presence which reflected on the particular worker's willingness to expend effort; some workers used the additional help to enable them to get extra tasks done whilst others used the situation to provide them with additional idle time.

The supervisor discouraged contact between her staff during work time at the old school, which limited the opportunities for joint activities to helping with the carrying of waste materials to the disposal area, and occasionally obtaining cleaning materials for colleagues. Indeed, because staff were expected to remain on their own patch for the duration of the shift, cleaners responsible for smaller patches were prevented from helping colleagues with larger patches, unless the supervisor specifically asked for a particular cleaner to help a struggling co-worker. This focus on the individual did appear to generate some animosity between staff, visible when people were perceived to be underperforming, but this had the effect of raising overall performance as the pressure to conform was generally a pressure to improve and, in addition, poor quality work could be traced. The introduction of permanent team working at the new school theoretically removed the barriers from staff helping each other, but the conflict caused by the differences in work ethic appeared to outweigh this potentially positive outcome. There was evidence at the old school of some staff being prepared to put in additional effort directed towards the client (the school) with cleaners reacting to the needs of the school staff and pupils. This was evident during times of staff shortages when cleaners were asked to finish their own areas quickly in order to cover the absentee(s). In contrast, there was a general feeling that the contract company did not provide sufficient staff to cope with the workload and the sentiment of extra effort appeared to be firmly aimed at the school rather than the employing organisation. This sentiment had deteriorated somewhat in the new school as, whilst the feeling that there were insufficient staff to cope with workload was still strong, willingness to direct effort towards the school was less apparent.

5.2.3.1 Sentiments about the employing organisation

Unlike in the other case studies, cleaners worked for two different organisations over the data collection period and, as can be seen from the more general sentiments, employees' feelings about the companies were substantially different. Regarding the first company, so little was expected of management that even significant issues appeared to have little impact – as can be gathered from the following example. Towards the end of October 2009, a problem arose concerning the validity of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks of five of the cleaning staff. In the event, none of the five had the necessary clearance to work in the school and, although the fault lay with the administration department at the cleaning company, all five cleaners were laid off. It took six weeks to get all five cleaners back to work and none was initially paid for his/her absence. However, one of the five was a member of a trades union and he persuaded the union to put pressure on the company culminating in him receiving full pay for his absence – but the company did not extend this facility to any

of the others. Although this outcome resulted in a feeling of unfairness amongst the other four employees, the reaction was low key and did not appear to have a substantial effect on the efforts of those involved. All of the affected cleaners knew that the fault was with the company rather than with them, but they were so unacquainted with management that they had no focus for any anger. I had imagined that the supervisor would take the brunt of any ill feeling but she was not considered at fault by anyone, rather being judged to have lobbied on his or her behalf. This lack of expectation about any support from the company appeared to dampen both adverse and favourable sentiments towards the organisation. However, the same could not be said about the new company, also explained via example. Soon after the new company took charge they informed staff that they would be providing, as one put it, "the best equipment and cleaning material we can find". However, their actions were perceived by staff to be the opposite of this such that, although the company initially did purchase what were considered to be good materials, within months they had replaced them with sub-standard substances and had even allowed stock-outs to occur. The effect amongst the staff was to generate a perception that this made them unable to do their jobs properly and the reaction was significant – with one cleaner having a major row with the site manager, walking out in the middle of his shift and never returning. Part of the reason for the ill feeling towards the company appeared to come from the increased expectation that management engendered into the workforce – and then failing to deliver – but part of it was a more general perception that management did not know what they were doing. This perception, crystallised by one cleaner who said "they're a building firm for goodness sake…they don't know anything about cleaning, and it shows", was bolstered by the introduction of ineffectual team working and the orchestrated emasculation of the supervisor.

A strong reliance on routine was evident at the old school. Generally an individual, once settled within a particular patch, established his/her unique routine and, although the state of the patch was variable when he/she commenced his/her shift, there was desire to stick to that routine. Indeed, apart from the state of the patch when the individual arrived and the possibility of children or teachers still being in the classrooms, only the intervention of the supervisor requesting some additional work at the end of the shift would normally affect the routine – and that usually caused the cleaner to work faster, not alter the way he/she did the work. This had largely disappeared under the regime at the new school, as cleaners were dependent on each other regarding the work requirement with routine difficult to establish. Indeed, this difficulty in establishing routine, added to the conflict arising from perceptions that some cleaners were reluctant to provide adequate effort, resulted in people refusing to work with certain of their colleagues – a situation that management accepted and were prepared to reorganise teams to overcome. This had the effect of not only limiting the flexibility of the teams but also leaving conflicts unresolved.

At the old school, according to the supervisor, keeping what she described as "good staff" was quite difficult because of the low pay and lack of other benefits. She pointed out that, "the good ones find better work elsewhere" and was irritated by the disruption that was caused when she was given workers who were unable or unwilling to meet the required standard of the job. She suggested that management were unwilling to dismiss a cleaner when his/her probationary period showed him/her to be inadequate and believed this was because of the extra effort, time and money required to recruit staff. She held a strong belief that "I'm totally on my own here", but this isolation appeared to bolster her power and she used that power to influence the composition of her team. Indeed, she was successful in causing people who she felt performed inadequately to voluntarily terminate their employment. However, her power and influence largely disappeared when the new contract company took charge, but this had the effect of causing a vacuum of power with the head caretaker and site manager, who ostensibly took over supervisory control, almost relying on the task itself to manage the activity. What was still apparent was the difficulty to keep good staff, with some leaving because they felt the new company did not allow them to do their jobs properly.

Whilst there was no official deputy supervisor, at the old school one of the staff was perceived by the others to speak for the supervisor when she was not present. The supervisor relied heavily on this 'deputy' (one of only two other workers remaining when I completed the first portion of my study) for support and there was evidence that the deputy had sometimes imposed discipline on the other cleaners using her own initiative. It was apparent, when I returned to assess the new school structure, that this deputy had relinquished all of her notional influence. Indeed, the new structure of team leaders in charge of each team (neither of which being the said deputy) was unofficial and the incumbents were not given a job description, were paid the same as the other cleaners and had very little influence over how the task operated.

5.2.4 Symbols

Jones (1991) pointed out that symbols defined and identified an organisation and there were strong symbols at the old school that signified how focussed the cleaning company was on its contract to clean the establishment. The contract cleaning company had a policy of no sick pay and this policy was reflected in the low level of absenteeism. However, turnover of staff was high as evidenced by the observation that, of the nine people (except the supervisor) in the team at the start of the study in January 2009, only two remained by August 2010 with a total of twenty people having worked at the school over the period. There was no holiday entitlement for cleaning staff during school term time, thus obviating any need for holiday scheduling and ensuring staff were available when they were needed. The company paid its cleaning staff the minimum wage (£5.80 in May 2009) – although they did receive eleven weeks paid holiday per year, which was more than many similar occupations. In the event of absence, or indeed if someone left the company, there was a facility for overtime to be

worked in order to replace the lost hours – with virtually no disruption in service because the supervisor would bring additional staff into the school on the following morning before classes commenced. These overtime hours were paid at the standard hourly rate and, as there was no sick pay, this did not cost the company any more money. There was no company pension scheme, no personnel related advice facility, no training (apart from any specific equipment demonstration) and no planned communication sessions on any topic – including no induction and, with many of the new recruits, no interview for the vacancy! This absence of all peripheral activities made for clarity of purpose about what the workers were there to do – a purely unitary approach. However, the same focus could not be claimed at the new school. Although the pay and conditions were the same, the contract company had a wider remit than just cleaning and this appeared to distract the management from ensuring that the establishment was cleaned to an acceptable level. As one cleaner mused, "they haven't got a clue how to do this. [The old company] wouldn't have put up with what goes on now."

At the old school there was very little management presence on site apart from the supervisor. She was the symbol of authority in the firm; the decision maker for the vast majority of operational issues and was paid £1 per hour more than the staff she supervised. Occasionally the area manager would call in, but his infrequent visits were usually made to clean an area because of an unforeseen absence that he was able to assist with; a situation that tended to bolster the supervisor's power even further. In contrast, the emphasis on any management activity was minimal with no accommodation – office, desk or filing cabinet – available for the administration of the function. Paperwork on site was minimal and consisted only of recording how many hours each person had worked. This was written on a single sheet of paper, by the supervisor, at the end of each shift. In the new school the supervisor had a desk and a computer (with the head caretaker and the site manager having their own offices) and was expected to record data on the computer. The cleaners seldom saw her and, symbolically, this helped to diminish her relevance to the cleaners in their day-to-day work.

At the old school, equipment and facilities were functional but of a minimal standard. Storerooms consisted of spaces that were allocated to the cleaning function because the school had no other use for them – not because they provided adequate accommodation for the task. Indeed, many of the storerooms were inadequate in terms of size and location. There was no planned maintenance, cleaning or replacement schedules for the equipment and there was no time allocated to these activities. In consequence, mops and brushes were often stored without being cleaned and vacuums were emptied only when they were full. In contrast, consumable cleaning materials were of a high standard and I never witnessed a stock-out situation during the first portion of the study. Whilst this may initially appear to be a contradiction, there was a strong case to suggest that it did symbolise the way the company operated. Firstly the accommodation was provided, by the school, as part of the fabric of the buildings. All parts of the buildings deemed useful as school facilities were allocated to those

facilities and, by definition, any non-useful spaces were likely to be of poorer quality. The contract company could have spent their own money to improve these spaces, but that cost would have been peripheral to their core activity. Secondly, the equipment was of low technology, replaceable as the need arose; so any formal planning regarding the upkeep of the equipment was likely to cost more than it saved and, in consequence, waiting for a cleaner to ask for new equipment would be the minimum cost option. Thirdly, the cleaning materials were essential to the success of the undertaking. Whilst poor accommodation and basic equipment made an individual's job harder, sub-standard or unavailable cleaning materials would have prevented the job being done properly – making materials a core, not a peripheral cost. Fourthly, the workload was perceived to be beyond the capabilities of the workforce, by the workers themselves, and the contract company was seen as an employer that attempted to minimise costs by paying minimum wages for maximum effort. Finally, whilst it could be argued that sub-standard accommodation and equipment could affect morale, one need only look again at the other major symbols of no sick pay, no induction, minimum wage, no pension and no training to see that costs, which traditionally were seen to influence morale, were not deemed to be core.

This last observation would appear to be borne out by the recruitment methods used by the firm, which were at best haphazard. Individuals heard of a vacancy from the job centre, an existing cleaner or a member of the school staff; some were interviewed by the supervisor, the area manager or the regional manager; some were interviewed and started straight after the interview without references having been checked; and some started work without even having an interview. Indeed, this less than systematic approach to recruitment led to the major issue described earlier in this section where the company found that many employees did not have CRB clearances. Much of the above was still true under the new regime, although interviewing potential recruits and inducting successful ones was undertaken, but there was one significant symbolic difference concerning the cleaning materials. These materials were of a much lower standard than those provided by the previous company and there were a number of occasions when stock-outs occurred. Although there was no concrete evidence available to establish the reason for this change, cleaners believed that it was a cost-saving exercise. The general consensus was that the company had underestimated the cost of the service they were providing and, although when the new school opened the materials were of an acceptable standard, the quality soon fell. As the supervisor pointed out "they can't cut wages, they can't cut staff numbers and they can't take away our equipment, so the only thing that's left is the cleaning material" – and the effect on morale was substantial as was described in the 'sentiments' section above.

Clearly, in each case, the contract company's role, providing a service to the school on the school's premises, also symbolised its status with regards to power within the relationship. Cleaners had minimal influence regarding the difficulty of their tasks. If a room was not easy

to clean, which some at the old school – because of the way they were laid out – clearly were, there was no facility to ease this. If a cleaner wanted to get into a room when a teacher was working, he/she had to wait until that class was complete – but the 'fit for purpose' requirement had still to be achieved however little time the cleaner had to make it so. If a cleaner felt the need complain about the state of a room, there was no effective mechanism for him/her to make that complaint. As an example, there was evidence of one room being notoriously difficult to clean because of its shape, the amount of furniture in it and the poor state the cleaner found it constantly to be in. The supervisor spoke of the number of times she had tried to get the situation resolved but, as she said, "the shape couldn't be changed and the class needs that much furniture, so it's down to the teacher and he lets them run riot". Furthermore, although in the new school no rooms were badly designed, some teachers still allowed rooms to be left in a poor state and, because the pragmatic nature of the relationship between supervisor and headmaster had disappeared, cleaners were often worried about achieving the balance between quality and quantity – although this was assisted by the team working structure.

5.2.4.1 The appearance of the old school and the new school

The old school had been scheduled for demolition two years before I commenced the study. Consequently, little money was spent on the site with, apparently, only essential maintenance work being carried out, resulting in the appearance of the school that, at best, could be described as 'jaded'. However, the consensus amongst both the cleaning staff, the supervisor, the teachers and the headmaster was that it was as clean as it could be given its nature. As described earlier, the headmaster's requirement that it needed to be 'fit for purpose' could be seen to have been achieved if one walked around the establishment after the cleaners had finished for the day. In other words, if one looked very closely one could find evidence of relatively inaccessible areas having been overlooked but a general overview gave the appearance of cleanliness. In contrast, a little over twelve months into the life of the new school a different picture could be seen. Relatively accessible areas (underneath open stairways, in the corners of classrooms and on the tops for example) contained debris an overall impression of cleanliness was not obvious. Symbolically, the new school had deteriorated markedly and the cleaners themselves were aware of this. Indeed, whilst at the old school the supervisor was probably the main influence on the appearance of the school – and her influence had all but disappeared at the new school – the cleaners themselves gave the impression that it did not matter as much as it had in the past.

5.3 Application of the model to 'the school'

5.3.1 Influencers

5.3.1.1 Job status

Unlike the scenario at the clinic, where Ryan's warning about the dangers of treating part time workers as a homogenous group (1998 p14) was significant, all of the 10 employees (including the supervisor) at the old school worked the same 3-hour afternoon shift, although 3 of them also worked for 2 hours each morning at the same site. As such, the group did operate homogeneously and there was little to suggest that any problems arose due to some employees having the extra hours. Helping to support the homogeneity was the observation that, without exception, all of the 20 people employed during the time of the study were underemployed and were carrying out the job 'involuntarily', with all the cleaners readily admitting that they needed more money. Indeed, some of the staff appeared within the category under more than one of Feldman's five dimensions of underemployment (1996 p388), although the common thread of being 'involuntarily' employed linked all of them.

The fixed nature of the standard working week for employees at the school freed workers to have more than one job if they wished and, of the 20 cleaners involved during the study, 11 had two jobs, 1 had three jobs and 1 had four jobs with, in every case, the people still maintaining that they were not earning enough money to meet their outgoings. Indeed, every one of those with more than one job wanted full-time employment rather than the unsatisfactory arrangements that they had. However, the concept of which job was 'main-job', 'second-job' or even 'third-job' only had limited significance for the potential performance of workers here, as only the 2 people with more than two jobs looked on their employment at the school as 'second-job'. The main reason for the choice of main-job/second job made by the other 9 employees was that the school gave them the most hours and, consequently, the most pay, with all agreeing that they would allow the 'second-job' to suffer if choices had to be made. One other finding to note was the lack of any evidence, in this inquiry, to support Feldman's hypothesis that people juggling with two jobs were more likely to turnover than those with one (1990 p106).

Regarding the influence of the concept of dirty work, coping mechanisms at the old school were less established than those seen at the clinic, partly because there was little to base transformations on. Refocusing was difficult as, apart from working largely unsupervised, there were few non-stigmatised features; a 'fit' for purpose room was often not as clean as an individual cleaner would like, they were paid the minimum wage, any break they had was unofficial and could be taken away, their equipment was poorly maintained as was their accommodation and they seldom met any of the people who employed them. Recalibrating was equally difficult with little of the task open for highlighting as important; but there was some reframing with workers majoring on the importance of the classrooms being ready for

the children. Indeed, a major influence of job status on the psychological contracts of these 'agency-hired' cleaners at the school was their identification with the school rather than with the organisation employing them. Most staff would willingly undertake a task requested by a teacher, even at the expense of a scheduled task, because it aligned with what they felt they were trying to achieve – a fit for purpose classroom – and observations showed that performance in these tasks outstripped performance in the scheduled activities. However stigma was apparent, as evidenced by the example of teachers being disappointed at former school pupils becoming cleaners and by the way some teachers totally ignored the presence of the workers.

Unlike with many of the constructs that follow, there was little change in job status under the regime at the new school. The workers transferred to the new employers, were all still underemployed, were still a homogenous group and many still possessed second jobs. The only discernable changes concerned the area of the coping mechanisms used to deal with dirty work, as the definition of a 'fit for purpose' room had altered (it now needed to be 'clean'); the method had changed from individual responsibility to teamwork; and management was more visible (although less effective). The effects of these changes were to make coping mechanisms even harder to establish as the changes, respectively, gave little room for a pragmatic view of the requirements; resulted in divorcing effort from achievement; and brought perceptions of a lack of direction. Furthermore, the lack of strong, direct supervision appeared to have the effect of diminishing the perceived importance of the cleanliness of the school at the end of the shift. Although, at the old school, the supervisor did not inspect the work of the cleaners at the end of each day, they knew that she *could* do – and people did not wish to incur her wrath!

5.3.1.2 Work Intensity

Unlike the situation at the clinic, although still the pivotal focus of management, work intensity at the old school was already high when the study commenced and the emphasis was therefore on maintaining this high level. The cleaners commenced their activities at 3pm and usually finished at 5.55pm, as, although there were a few occasions where work continued for a further 10 or 15 minutes, the head caretaker was always anxious to lock the premises at 6pm. Cleaners could be faced with classrooms and toilets in a very poor state and would have to make a decision regarding the amount of cleaning they would undertake, with some days seeing the emptying of bins, the vacuuming of carpets and the wiping/mopping of toilets as the only activities carried out; but with an expectation that more peripheral tasks (wiping of desks, buffing tiled corridors, etc.) would be carried out on other days. (Notably, however, not all employees carried out this assessment and some found themselves unable to bring their whole patch up to a 'fit for purpose' standard). Thus, there was sufficient work to keep the staff fully occupied for the duration of the shift, accepting that, although there were no organised breaks, some of the staff did stop for 10-15 minutes mid-shift. Indeed all staff, including the supervisor, held the belief that the tasks required on the list of duties could not

be achieved in the time available and turnover was high partially because of the physical demands of the job. However, the supervisor was able to maintain acceptable cleanliness at the prevalent level of work intensity, even accepting that the full list of duties was seldom carried out, achieving this mainly by applying a pragmatic approach to the completed daily state of the premises and by practicing close supervision. This was helped by the headmaster being aware of what was achievable and being prepared to enforce a 'fit for purpose' standard that was understood, and generally accepted as achievable, by the cleaning staff.

A number of changes occurred under the new regime. The new contract cleaning company attempted to increase work intensity further when the new school was opened, by endeavouring to clean larger premises with the same number of staff – but cleaners responded by reducing their levels of performance and cleanliness deteriorated markedly. Staff now worked from 3.15pm to 6.15pm, but there was no longer any pressure to lock the premises – a development that served to change the mind set of the cleaners as they knew that this gave scope to deal with problems via overtime. Teamwork replaced individual responsibility – another development that changed people's mind-set and led to staff blaming each other for underachievement. In addition, close supervision was removed and although the requirement for the level of work intensity had not reduced, the standard of cleanliness appeared to suffer for this reason also.

5.3.1.3 Organisational Culture

Utilising the cultural model offered by Payne (2001), 'pervasiveness' was low at the old school with the parent organisation attempting to influence very few of its employees' behaviours and beliefs. Many of the cleaners reported that they had not even been interviewed for the job, suggesting that even basic personality traits were not queried, and this continued when none of them was given any induction or training and none of them was queried as to whether they had 'second-jobs'. They were expected only to attend regularly, be physically capable of performing the job and be prepared to perform it to the satisfaction of the supervisor without inconveniencing school staff and pupils. In contrast, 'consensus' was high with cleaners unable to meet the narrow range of behaviours/beliefs soon leaving and those remaining tending to accept the supervisor's authority and way of operating; but 'psychological intensity' was quite variable. Indeed, an example of the variability of this manifested itself in the way that different cleaners reacted when I helped them, with those low on psychological intensity using the extra help to finish their work early and those high on intensity seeing the help as an opportunity to do a more in-depth clean. Looking at the culture from the model posited by Meyerson & Martin, evidence from the school suggested that the culture fell largely into their 'integration' perspective, which they described as "consistency across cultural manifestations, consensus among cultural members, and – usually – a focus on leaders as culture creators" (1987). Indeed, the focus of the group was consistently aimed at the task of preparing for the next school day, with almost no peripheral activity, and the supervisor clearly directed that focus within the group.

Alterations in working practices and the supervisory changes tended to cause changes in organisational culture at the new school. Firstly, when viewed using Payne's (2001) model, 'pervasiveness' was seen to be rising with the new contract cleaning company attempting to influence more behaviours and beliefs than their predecessors – especially regarding teamwork. At the same time 'consensus' was falling, with the removal of the moderating influence of the supervisor but without an effective replacement of her influence. However, the culture still fell within Meyerson & Martin's (1987) 'integration' perspective, albeit weaker than before with, as an example, cleaners seeing that management were willing to compromise cleanliness by purchasing substandard materials. In addition, the team working structure also served to weaken the 'integration' perspective with staff being able to have conversations with colleagues about all manner of non-work related subjects – opportunities unavailable when cleaners worked in isolation.

5.3.1.4 Organisational Conflict

During the data collection at the old school, task conflict arose when cleaners believed that the organisation of work areas was inequitable and there was evidence that certain patches had more work content than others. Two patches, in particular, were generally accepted to be harder than the others and this led to affective conflict between the supervisor and some of the workers. However, such was the power of the supervisor that she refused to either move the complainants or change the constitution of the patches and conflict was usually resolved by the departure of any complainant and the arrival of a cleaner willing to undertake the patch. Some relationship conflict arose with certain cleaners disliking the supervisor's approach to the job, which allowed little scope for non-task related activity, and this occasionally spilled over into affective conflict with, again, the power of the supervisor resulting in retreat or departure of the complainant. Cognitive conflict, in contrast, was largely absent as was, notably, any conflict between the workers and the management of the contract company. This latter finding appeared to be mainly due to the absence of contact with any of the management, the supervisor having almost complete autonomy over the function. In addition, any conflict tended to be short lived, an outcome that appeared to owe much to the level of work intensity and the relative isolation of cleaners from one another. The former meant that cleaners had little time to dwell on non-work related issues and the latter dictated that they had little room to discuss them.

This scenario changed significantly following the opening of the new school. Cognitive conflict (Amason et al, 1995 in Lewis et al 1997), noticeable for its absence at the old school, was raised significantly under the new management. Cleaners believed that the new company had little understanding of how to run an effective cleaning function, as manifested by management making contradictory decisions about cleaning materials, cleaning equipment and work schedules, and ignoring any suggestions from staff. Affective conflict also began to influence the psychological contracts of cleaners with poor performance of certain individuals

becoming apparent to all. Reorganising the function such that people worked in teams (a move that had the effect of reducing task conflict) resulted in cleaners criticising the work of their colleagues, and the marginalising of the supervisor prevented her from dealing with any complaints or issues before they became toxic. Arguments and defamatory comments, largely absent in the old school, grew to cause rifts between staff; rifts resulting in staff refusing to work with certain others and affecting overall performance. Indeed, the new management allowed cleaners to dictate who they were prepared to work with and this had the effect of strengthening the perception that the new company lacked managerial capability. I witnessed arguments at the new school that would not have taken place at the old – mainly concerning perceptions of lack of effort being displayed – and with supervisory intervention being absent due to her being undermined, these arguments became pernicious.

5.3.1.5 Perceived organisational support

At the start of the study POS was, observably, very low amongst the cleaners – although the actual expectation of support was largely absent from the start of a worker's tenure with the company. As stated earlier, the organisation had little visibility to the staff as they never saw the premises of their employers, managers visited the school infrequently and there were no formal communication channels. In addition, there were no symbols of support as demonstrated by the absence of induction, training, sick pay and pension. Moreover, as the expectation of support being provided was so low, very little conflict was apparent between cleaner and employer, and there was little scope for any psychological contract breach. However, although POS remained low under the new regime, the actions of management when they took over responsibility for the function raised the expectation of support being forthcoming. Management promised improvements in working conditions, raw materials, cleaning equipment and consultation but failed to deliver on all of these and the lack of POS became a contributor to psychological contract breach.

5.3.1.6 Leader-member exchange

LMX, highly influential regarding the maintenance of job performance at the old school (by the way it tended to stabilise the psychological contracts of most cleaners) became a negative influence in the new school due to the removal of the supervisor's power. At the old school most members of the out-group did not survive in the job for very long. The supervisor set her own standard of effort, which required her staff to physically work for all but 5 minutes of the 3-hour shift and to work effectively. People who accepted that standard, endeavoured to perform at that level and thus became part of the in-group, it could be argued, did no more than the contract required; but experience showed the supervisor that many of her recruits fell short. As she pointed out, "a lot of them don't want to work, so when I get someone who does I want to keep them" and she would reward those people by allowing certain unofficial freedoms such as smoke breaks and tea breaks – as long as their work continued to meet her standards. Such was her power that those who failed to meet her standards gained little support from their colleagues and were faced with the options of either continual criticism or

relinquishing their position. Indeed, as most of these out-group members took the latter option, the in-group tended to be full of cleaners who, whilst meeting the basic requirements of the contract, were going beyond the norm of the average recruit for that kind of job. However, following the opening of the new school, the supervisor's role involved far less supervision – this responsibility being taken over by the site manager and the head caretaker, neither of whom were particularly conversant with the people and the requirements of the job. This resulted in a reduction in the level of direct control of staff and a subsequent deterioration in the levels of effort displayed by some cleaners, with the removal of the pressure on poor performance enabling the out-group to grow in numbers. Indeed, such was the change in the supervisor's role at the new school that LMX became almost a non-existent construct. Neither the site manager nor the head caretaker involved themselves directly in the activities of the cleaners, which left a vacuum for LMX causing it to have almost no relevance to the employment relationships.

5.3.1.7 Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange

Evidence suggested that LMX was a key influence on this group as the supervisor initially organised activities, controlled the staff personally and focused closely on the requirements of the old school – with her job being made substantially uncomplicated by the pragmatic requirements of the function and the almost total lack of interference from her higher management. All the cleaners were fully aware of what was expected of them, none was subject to contradictory or ambiguous instructions and all instructions emanated from the same person. Thus, in contrast to the relative influences of POS and LMX at the clinic, LMX was by far the stronger influence on the working relationship at the school. This finding, that LMX was almost independent of POS at the school, does not support research undertaken by Wayne et al (1997 p89) who suggested that although the two were distinct constructs, they were empirically linked with LMX reflecting POS. After the opening of the new school, LMX was initially the more influential of the two, but it soon began to wane. Cleaners lacked belief that the function was being organised effectively, with the void created by the supervisor's marginalisation not being adequately filled by either POS or LMX from the new management.

5.3.1.8 Employee-organisation relationship

As at the clinic, there was no access to any of the senior management's decision-making processes, so no assumption could be made regarding whether the 'inducements for contributions' strategy was consciously made. However, the apparent approach at the school was the 'quasi-spot contract' leaning towards 'underinvestment' (Tsui et al, 1997). At the commencement of the data collection it first appeared to fall into the quasi-spot category, as the contract cleaning company fully specified what their expectations were: the employees would turn up regularly for work, would follow a restricted, well established set of work instructions and, in return, would be paid the minimum wage. However, the leaning towards underinvestment came from the observation that they were sometimes expected to be flexible in their hours and even work extra hours with no warning (to account for unforeseen changes

in school activities) yet they would receive no further benefits, with even extra hours being paid at the standard rate. Indeed, there was a perception amongst the staff that they were expected to deal with any and all eventualities with the only recompense being said basic wage – and this did not change appreciably when the new company took charge.

5.3.1.9 Exchange ideology

As stated earlier, evidence suggests that exchange ideology was not organisation dependent with examples of the effects of low and high exchange ideology at all sites. At the old school an event occurred that has particular relevance to this construct. Due to an oversight in the personnel function of the contract cleaning company, five cleaners were sent home, without pay, because they did not have certificated Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance to work in the school. Resolving this issue took approximately six weeks during which time the employees were receiving no pay and, on return to work, one of the cleaners took up the matter with his trades union and successfully received his full pay for the idle period. However, none of the other cleaners was treated in the same way yet, although all felt very badly treated by the company, most maintained the same standard of effort that they had delivered before the incident. A minority of others, displaying a high exchange ideology, markedly reduced their effort and cooperation for a temporary period but returned to their previous standard eventually. Psychological contracts were breached, and even violated in some cases, yet the effects were mainly felt at a personal level and only marginally affected performance. However, performance did suffer at the new school even though there was no evidence to suggest that the range of high and low exchange ideologies had changed. It is my contention that working in close proximity with other cleaners, itself helping to cause affective conflict, also had some influence on exchange ideology such that poorer performers effectively reduced the efforts of better performers.

5.3.1.10 Organisational justice

At the old school, everyone considered that the patches were not split evenly such that, of the nine[28] patches, three were considered 'easy', three were considered 'hard' and the other three were deemed to be 'OK'. Consequently, some cleaners viewed being allocated to one of the hard patches as a punishment and, indeed, these patches were sometimes used that way – to test out an employee who appeared not to be performing as well as the supervisor required – with the practice being seen as acceptable by the majority of workers. However, ambivalent feelings of distributive injustice tended to arise when everyone was performing at an acceptable level with some of the cleaners unhappy when they were chosen to clean those harder areas – an issue compounded by the policy taken by the supervisor of choosing not to rotate people around the various sections. Furthermore, the incident with the criminal records bureau checks where some staff, but not all, lost wages through no fault of their own, helped to weaken perceptions of procedural justice – although all accepted that the

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[28] This excludes the patch cleaned by the supervisor. Her patch was smaller than all the others to allow for her supervisory duties

supervisor had no fault in this – and foster the perception that interactional justice was completely absent. Workers had almost no interaction with the organisation that employed them and the lack of the two components, 'informational' and 'interpersonal justice, was most apparent when the problems with the CRB clearances arose. Affected staff were immediately told to go home and fill out the required forms, but were not provided with forms by the company, were given no information about how long the process would take and, indeed, were not contacted by anyone from the parent company until the organisation wanted them back at work. Any feelings of being treated with 'dignity' and 'respect' – both words describing the interpersonal aspect – were significantly absent from the treatment received.

At the new school, the policy of team working helped to improve the distributive justice aspect, but at the expense of affective conflict (described earlier). Indeed, all three justice components had markedly improved at the new school, but these improvements did not translate into performance improvements apparently because the influence of other constructs – including the increase in conflict, the deterioration in LMX and the perception of poor POS – outweighed these improvements.

5.3.2 Core concept

5.3.2.1 The psychological contract

The expectation of both parties was for the deal to be fundamentally transactional in nature (as suggested by the 'quasi-spot contract' strategy of the employee-organisation relationship), a finding that supported Stiles et al (1997) and Herriot et al (1997), the latter suggesting that transactional contracts were more attractive to workers such that they emphasised Hertzberg et al's (1959) hygiene factors rather than motivators. Underpinning the psychological contracts here was a paucity of expectations on both sides; with the employers expected little from their employees except an adherence to the required task, not expecting staff to remain with the organisation for long and knowing that a minimum wage, paid for only fifteen hours per week, was unlikely to be sufficient to satisfy most potential workers. Furthermore there was no promotion route and, as management had virtually no contact with any employee, there were no opportunities for cleaners to show off any abilities. This lack of expectation was reflected by the lack of reciprocation offered by the organisation in that the only benefit offered was the wage and, from the employee's viewpoint, the observational evidence pointed to a complete lack of a relational dimension with all employees possessing purely transactional contracts. However, the deal did alter when the new contract company took charge, albeit mainly due to the actions of management who increased expectations (such as working with reduced supervision and abandoning any pragmatic approach to cleanliness) but diminished their own obligations (such as purchasing substandard materials).

5.3.2.2 Psychological contract fulfilment - mutuality

At the old school, 'quasi-spot' leaning towards 'underinvestment' certainly left little scope for ambiguity about how each party – employee and employer – saw the obligations of the employer to employee. Tsui et al (1997) described 'quasi-spot' as 'balanced' so at least the organisation attempted to target the relationship by matching expectations with rewards, the leaning towards underinvestment being the only territory for doubt. Indeed, mutuality was also assisted by POS being shown to be very low, with cleaners both having and expecting virtually no contact with anyone from the contract company employing them; and LMX being relatively high, at least amongst those cleaners who did not quickly leave the organisation, with most cleaners populating the in-group. Further support for mutuality arose from the culture: shown to possess a high degree of consensus (Payne, 2001) regarding the understandings people shared (Sathe, 1983) about the requirements of the work itself – again amongst those who did not quickly leave; have low pervasiveness (Payne, 2001) of expected behaviours; and a conclusion that the culture fell largely into an integration (Meyerson & Martin, 1987) perspective. Consequently, the obligations of employer to employee and the obligations of employee to employer – as seen by either party – had little scope for any substantial gaps. The outcome of this scenario was a set of psychological contracts owned by workers who were dissatisfied because they were underemployed but were willing to deliver what the supervisor demanded for what the company was prepared to offer them. However, this mutuality altered as the tenure of the company engaged at the new school progressed. The main changes were influenced by the deterioration in LMX without any improvement in POS, resulting in a belief amongst workers that shared beliefs regarding the specific terms of the exchange agreement had been compromised by management's inability to run the function effectively. A major example of the change in mutuality between the two schools was the change from pragmatism to absolute cleanliness. It had been tacitly accepted that it was impossible for a cleaner to do all the jobs on his/her list in one session, so he/she had to make quite complex decisions every day. The supervisor did not tell them exactly what to do, but relied on each individual to bring the area up to an acceptable level. Thus, although management of the company had detailed what they consider to be a complete set of tasks to achieve the job, they were not enforced. Therefore, a charade was constantly being played out where cleaners did what they could knowing that their best efforts would not meet the standards set by their organisation, but that it would meet the standards set by their supervisor and the headmaster. At the new school, this mutuality had been replaced by the tension of cleaners still believing there was too much work but no longer being in a position to judge and perform the more important tasks, rather relying on a teamwork ethic that did not exist.

5.3.2.3 Psychological contract fulfilment - reciprocity

In contrast to the degree of mutuality, which showed a substantial balance at the old school but less of a balance at the new, reciprocity was not balanced under either regime – although it too was worse at the new school. Firstly, accepting the consistency across the cultural manifestations, which was implied by 'integration' (Meyerson & Martin, 1987), issues regarding distributive justice (Scandura, 1999), arising from perceived inequity of workloads at the old school, led to some task, relational and affective conflict (De Drue, 2004; Lewis et al, 1997). Indeed, although distributive justice was improved under team working at the new school, affective conflict increased between the cleaners. Furthermore, under both regimes, the high level of work intensity (Green, 2001) helped to raise this conflict further with a pervasive belief that it was being impossible to adequately clean the premises in the time available. This conflict tended to widen the gap between the planned workload the employers deemed to be fair and the effort the employees felt it was fair to deliver, although the pragmatic approach at the old school worked as a mitigating factor that helped to make this work-intensity-fuelled-reciprocity-gap less contentious than it was at the new school. Indeed, the supervisor's approach served to mediate this reciprocity gap and most workers appeared to relegate the influence of the reciprocity gap to below her requirements – until she was undermined. Secondly, the decision at the new school to compromise the effectiveness of the function by purchasing inferior materials leading to the wider perception that management were failing to reciprocate cleaners' efforts by lacking competence, provided a gap that did not even exist under the old regime. Thirdly, the job status that saw all employees believe that they were 'underemployed' (Feldman, 1996) – hence always looking to increase their remuneration – served to make the tenure of employment at the school relatively short, with the employers finding that their obligation of providing a wage was not adequately reciprocated by the employees remaining with the company. Thus, although the very limited obligations felt by both parties tended to limit the effect of the overall gap in reciprocation, and the low exchange ideology demonstrated by many of the cleaners further limited effects on performance, deterioration not observable at the old school was observable at the new.

5.3.2.4 Psychological contract breach and violation

During the initial data collection period the relatively narrow gaps in mutuality and reciprocity and the highly transactional (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p659) nature of the psychological contract (closed, specific, objective, explicit, economic, narrow scope exchanges over a finite and often brief period of time) made for fewer opportunities to breach or violate; with the main contributors being the work intensity issue of certain work patches being impossible to adequately clean in the time available and the laying off of staff without pay – both perceived as the company 'reneging' (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000) on its obligations. Moreover, the short-lived effect of this latter incident was at variance with other research findings (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1995) and I was interested to try to discover why what appeared to be a major occurrence did not have long lasting repercussions. One reason

appeared to be the work intensity, which gave each employee little time to do anything but the task itself. It was readily apparent to any observer if a particular patch had been inadequately serviced and, irrespective of each cleaner's personal feelings about the CRB debacle (which were aimed at the company not the supervisor), he/she was always faced with the supervisor's requirements and it was difficult for anyone to flout her wishes. Indeed, the lack of expectation that each cleaner had regarding anything from the company was in stark contrast to the abundance of expectation that the supervisor had of him/her – and her influence mediated the feelings of breach and violation. More generally, certain cleaners felt that the supervisor treated them unfairly but they tended to react to this breach by leaving and, with most of the others, the clarity of purpose of the supervisor tended to assist psychological contract fulfilment rather than breach. Furthermore, she was able to practice repair of trust (Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009) mainly by convincing cleaners that events that had damaged trust were down to either external or uncontrollable factors (Weiner et al, 1987) thus, at least, maintaining trust in her.

In contrast the new school, whilst maintaining the highly transactional nature of the contract, nevertheless increased the opportunities for breach by altering the mutuality and reciprocity dimensions. Teamwork allowed cleaners to perceive the shortcomings of their colleagues whilst (essential) supervision became removed from the activities, enabling breaches to increase and performance to suffer (with no repair efforts). In addition, enforcement of an absolute measure of cleanliness was perceived to be impossible by the cleaners – and the decision to purchase poorer materials compounded this perception.

5.3.3 Outcomes

5.3.3.1 Organisation-based self-esteem

As at the clinic, there did appear to be a link, via the psychological contract, between OBSE and the coping mechanisms of dirty work – reframing, recalibrating and refocusing (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999) – but the link was much weaker here and only reframing was evident. Cleaners at the old school had minimal contact with the management of the contract cleaning company but those few demonstrating OBSE tended to build it on their ongoing ability to make the classrooms fit for purpose after each cleaning shift; in other words, reframing the task to make it more positive. Indeed, it was noticeable that those cleaners who demonstrated low OBSE did not remain in the job for very long. OBSE was dealt a blow by inability of the workers to reach adequate standards at the new school and some teachers were unhelpful, ignoring the efforts of the cleaners, two even voicing their disappointment at ex-pupils doing the work and others having scant regard for how school activities might interfere with the cleaning function.

5.3.3.2 Job satisfaction

Throughout both data collection periods, the affective component of job satisfaction (Hulin & Judge, 2003) was largely absent amongst the cleaners, except for the contentment generated by preparing the classrooms for the children, although even this was tempered in some by the cognition of their underemployment (Feldman, 1996) – resulting in their inadequate remuneration; the high work intensity – requiring them to put in extensive effort; and the uninteresting and repetitive nature of the task – causing them to complain about being bored. Indeed, any contribution to the affective component of job satisfaction appeared to have little dependence on where an individual worked with a range of satisfactions across the clinic, the school and the hotel. However, regarding the cognitive component, the work intensity did not appear to have a negative influence on job satisfaction, but nor did it enhance it. Cleaners acknowledged that the level of activity was high but appeared to be prepared to accept it and they also accepted the minimum wage for their efforts, yet an interesting development occurred following the opening of the new school. The change to team working affected some cleaners in a positive way and others negatively such that the less competent/ less efficient workers welcomed the change and tended to increase their satisfaction whilst the better performers took the view that their efforts were diluted by the new structure and resented the procedure. Indeed, the better performers saw a decrease in their affective satisfaction, originally derived from the reward of seeing their efforts translate into providing a classroom fit for learning, because they no longer linked their individual effort to the outcome. In effect, whilst overall job satisfaction did not significantly alter, with many welcoming the social aspect of team working, its make up across the group did change with the better performers suffering the most and it did lose some of its focus on the task itself.

5.3.3.3 Organisational commitment

Of the three components of organisational commitment: affective, continuance and normative (Meyer & Allen, 1991), only continuance was detectable throughout both data collection periods. Every employee, although underemployed, could not afford to leave the job without having alternative employment to substitute and continuance commitment was, therefore, very strong. Indeed, this outcome was an important influence in moderating the effect of contract breach and preventing it from developing into violation – as evidenced by the event when six cleaners were excluded without pay for an administrative error in criminal records bureau checks, through no fault of their own, which only caused violation in one employee. Regarding the other components, the contract cleaning company at the old school was so invisible to employees (they seldom met anyone from management other than the supervisor) that they had no target with which to build a bond and the situation was little different at the new school where the new contract company had spent little effort to build a relationship – leaving a distinct lack of affection and obligation. To a limited extent, the school itself became the focus for the affective commitment of some of the workers with one cleaner summarising the perception when she said "I work at […] School, not for […] Cleaning Services". However,

even accepting this affection, very few felt any obligation to remain with either of the two companies, as was demonstrated when people left by simply not arriving at work or by failing to work any notice.

5.3.3.4 Motivation

Most recruits, even though tenure was relatively short (only three of the original group at the start of the study were still in place at the conclusion), remained with the company for a sufficient time to build a meaningful psychological contract and, through its outcomes, demonstrate some motivation towards the job. Mitchell defined motivation as "the degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain specified behaviours" (1982 p82) with the supervisor at the old school providing much of the extrinsic energising and extrinsic focussing on the 'specified behaviours' required of the cleaners; and the intrinsic energisers coming from an individual's satisfaction gained by seeing the physical effects of his/her labour at the end of a shift. Psychological contract breach, caused by the uneven workload split and the high work intensity of some patches, did serve to reduce intrinsic sustainability and, in the case of two individuals, caused violation resulting in those people leaving the school. However, overall motivation dropped considerably when the arrangements at the new school effectively removed the supervisor's influence from the group. The absence of her extrinsic energising and extrinsic focussing left only intrinsic factors as contributors; factors that were limited by such ongoing issues as high work intensity, low POS, underemployment and, in the case of some cleaners, the perception that this employment was not 'main-job'.

5.3.4 Behaviour

5.3.4.1 Performance

The cleaning function carried out at the old school operated in such a way that interpersonal citizenship performance had little opportunity to develop. Cleaners were encouraged to remain on their own patches for the duration of their shift – making contact with other cleaners difficult – and helping one another was actively discouraged. Only once a year, during the summer holidays, did they work as a team. Organisational citizenship performance also had little part to play with the organisation having almost no relevance to the employees. What was clearly wanted by the organisation was a focus on job/task conscientiousness, a requirement that was also observable in all the contacts between the cleaners and their client – the school. This job/task conscientiousness was high amongst the cleaners at the old school who derived some affective satisfaction (Hulin & Judge, 2003) from the work itself and the supervisor was active in trying to keep workers who fell into this category and making life difficult for those who did not. Indeed, she worked towards a culture/normative contract where meeting the pragmatic requirements of making the classrooms 'fit for purpose' became a basic underlying assumption (Schein, 2004) and she largely achieved this goal. The organisation promised to deliver no obligation other than the minimum wage to the cleaners in return for little more than the job/task conscientiousness demanded by the supervisor, which

made for narrow gaps in mutuality and reciprocity within the psychological contract. In consequence there was little scope for contract breach and, even though both parties were guilty of instigating breaches, the outcomes proved to have a limited effect on the function. Indeed, although Atkinson asserted (citing Herriot & Pemberton, 1996; and Pate et al, 2003) "that a psychological contract becomes more transactional after a breach" (2007 p229), the cleaners at the school were so near to the transactional end of the continuum that there was little change either party could make. Indeed, the employee-organisation relationship described as 'quasi-spot' (Tsui et al, 1997) was designed to be very close to the transactional end whilst being 'balanced' and, therefore, minimising potential breach. Employee breach occurred when employees failed to turn up for work but, because there was no entitlement to sick pay and there was a flexibility within the function to get the necessary work done at no additional cost (remaining staff working overtime at basic rate), the employers took a relaxed view knowing that the worker would either soon return (because they needed the money) or would leave the company. Employer breach occurred when staff were laid off without pay, due to a CRB error, but their exchange ideology was so low that they maintained their job/task conscientiousness when they returned – with one employee suffering psychological contract violation yet still maintaining his performance. Perceived employer breach was also apparent amongst certain staff who believed that some work patches were harder than others, the magnitude of this breach being exacerbated by the already high work intensity. However, even this did not result in a reduction in job/task conscientiousness amongst most of the affected cleaners, although it did lead to some of them leaving. In addition, organisation citizenship performance was too low at the old school to confirm, or otherwise, Robinson & Morrison's (1995) finding that perceived psychological contract breach reduced this facet of performance.

Regarding the major problem of underemployment (Feldman, 1996), this constant inhibiter of organisational-based self-esteem and job satisfaction did not appear to affect the day-to-day performance although it did assist in a high turnover of staff. Indeed this underemployment facet of job satisfaction, affecting all the staff, was diametrically opposed to the need to remain with the organisation, also affecting everybody, demonstrated by the high continuous commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Following the opening of the new school, some of the influencers serving to minimise psychological contract breach altered and, by changing, increased the occurrence of contract breaches and led to deterioration in performance. Some strong influences did not change (underemployment, continuous commitment), but the introduction of teamwork opened up the need for interpersonal citizenship performance, with cleaners needing to rely on each other rather than having complete control over the achievement of their own quality, at the same time as power was removed from the supervisor (the latter development also necessitating an increase in organisational citizenship performance). Evidence suggested that the combination

of these two developments, along with the lack of pragmatism regarding cleanliness, were most influential in the deterioration in performance. The culture was affected in that two well-established 'basic underlying assumptions' (Schein, 2004) were removed – with the new methods not being seen to work by the cleaners – and this had the effect of causing affective conflict about the task amongst the group. Adding the loss of LMX, with no discernable improvement in POS, exacerbated the problem and raised the potential for psychological contract breach with some staff believing that management were not providing them with an environment conducive to good performance – a perception given weight by the provision of substandard materials. Organisational citizenship performance had never been present under the old regime and the new company had put nothing in place to change that. Consequently the absence of both citizenship aspects of performance left no mediation of the deterioration in job/task conscientiousness – the result being a noticeably shabby school environment within nine months of opening. Indeed, the gap between what the cleaners believed they could achieve and what the company expected of them was so wide as to foster the belief that achievement of requirements was impossible – and a shabby school was not a surprise to the cleaners, one pointing out that "it was bound to get worse because there's not enough of us and the cleaning stuff's shite!"

5.4 In summary

The emphasis of the contract cleaning company at the old school, through its 'quasi-spot EOR (Tsui et al, 1997) strategy, clearly delivered a set of psychological contracts amongst the cleaners that possessed very little content. Helped by a culture that had low 'pervasiveness' (Payne, 2001) yet fell into the 'integration' perspective (Meyerson & Martin, 1987), this provided an environment where the gaps in mutuality and reciprocity (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004) between company and cleaner were narrow which, in turn, gave little opportunity for contract breach and/or violation (Rousseau, 1989). Indeed, such was the focus on delivering a service at the lowest possible cost that the company provided no other benefit than the minimum wage to the cleaners; asked only for the job/task conscientiousness dimension of performance; and employed a supervisor who had the ability to enforce compliance to that requirement. Furthermore, the influencers appearing to have the greatest effect on the psychological contracts tended to favour this strategy. POS was at a minimum; LMX was generally high; conflict was managed by forcing unwilling workers to leave; work intensity was so high as to keep staff fully occupied for the duration of the shift; and there was homogeneity in job status. However, evidence suggests that the contribution of the supervisor was probably the pivotal reason for the relatively successful undertaking. Her willingness and ability to accept her autonomy and power; her willingness to use that power to marginalise unsuitable workers; her adherence to the agreement with the headmaster to take a pragmatic view of cleanliness; and the tight control she maintained over the day to day activities, all supported the emphasis on the unitary requirements. Furthermore, whilst she represented the management of the company to the cleaners, she was able to maintain her distance from the organisation and was perceived to support the workers rather than follow its maxim – a

position that mediated much of the potential psychological breach and violation. Although the outcomes of the psychological contracts did not deliver high job satisfaction or organisational commitment, the motivation to perform was helped by her contribution to extrinsic energising and extrinsic focussing aspects (Ellemers et al, 2004; Locke & Latham, 2004) of the cleaners.

Although this case study involved a single group of people, the change from the old school to the new school had such a profound effect as to make them almost into two different cases. Changes in the influencers significantly affected the psychological contracts of the cleaners, which resulted in poorer performance and, in turn, deterioration in the cleanliness of the facility. LMX, probably the most significant contributor, was severely eroded by taking away the supervisory requirements and the power of the supervisor – removing an important control mechanism at the same time as team working was being introduced. Indeed POS, which had little part to play at the old school, became important here as promises were made about improving the function, but they were not kept. Team working altered the dynamic of the operation such that the job/task conscientiousness dimension now needed the two citizenship dimensions to be efficient, especially interpersonal citizenship performance – a change that affected the content of the psychological contracts and provided more opportunities for breach/violation – but no incentives were provided to foster this change and, indeed, compliance was assumed not managed. Adding to these the increase in work intensity imposed by the same number of staff having to clean larger premises and the move to lower standard cleaning materials (a specific POS issue that caused substantial anger) would make poor performance less of a surprise.

Whilst my acceptance by the cleaners at the school did not reach the level attained at the clinic, there was nevertheless evidence of a noteworthy extent to it. Being invited to tea breaks at the old school when, officially, they did not exist was possibly the most significant manifestation, but being welcomed back for a second period of study twenty months after completing the first spell also indicated a willingness of people to cooperate. I contend that being willing to work on my own to help out, during the six weeks of disruption caused by the CRB problem documented earlier, was important in facilitating this position and that careful management of the relationships built with the cleaners helped to cement it.

Chapter 6 – the hotel

The third case study – the hotel – is also analysed by the use of Jones (1991) model. In addition, there is a brief summary of chapters 4,5 and 6 (6.5) as a forerunner to chapter 7.

6.1 Overview of the hotel cleaning function

The hotel is situated close to a motorway on the outskirts of town. It comprises 78 bedrooms (on three floors), a restaurant, a bar and lounge area, a leisure centre, conference facilities and functional areas (offices, storerooms, etc.). Forced into administration in the summer of 2008 – a legal status that curtailed expenditure on all but the bare essentials required to keep the hotel operating at a basic level – the business remained in that precarious position throughout the study running from 16th September 2010 through to 7th May 2012; and an emphasis on cost minimisation determined decision-making in all aspects of the day-to-day activities. This case study involved me working for one morning per week in the hotel housekeeping department, which was tasked with cleaning the whole of the hotel – except for the leisure centre. At full strength, housekeeping would boast a head-housekeeper and five housekeepers with the function forming part of the hotel's structure.

September 2010 saw some major problems in the hotel. The head-housekeeper suddenly left the business when certain irregular activities came to light and the hotel manager temporarily took up the duties of running the housekeeping function. At that time, there was already a vacancy for a housekeeper and, when two more left within a week of the head-housekeeper's departure, the manager had to temporarily utilise kitchen staff to clean rooms after serving breakfasts. A new head-housekeeper and one new housekeeper were recruited in early October, but turnover continued to be a problem throughout the study as the following table of personnel changes shows.

Date	Incident	Housekeeping strength (6 = full strength)
September 2010	Head-housekeeper dismissed and two housekeepers left	3
October 2010	Head-housekeeper and one housekeeper recruited	5
December 2010	One housekeeper left, two housekeepers recruited but each one lasted only a day	4
January 2011	Two housekeepers recruited	6
February 2011	One of the two January recruits left	5
March 2011	Head-housekeeper dismissed, one 'weekend-only' housekeeper recruited, one housekeeper promoted to head-housekeeper	5
April 2011	'Weekend-only' housekeeper left	4
May 2011	One housekeeper recruited	5
June 2011	One housekeeper left	4
July 2011	One housekeeper has accident requiring 3 months sick leave	3
September 2011	One housekeeper recruited	4
October 2011	Absent housekeeper returns	5
November 2011	One housekeeper left, one housekeeper recruited, one 'weekend-only' housekeeper recruited	6
December 2011	One housekeeper left, one housekeeper recruited, one 'weekend-only' housekeeper left	5
January 2012	Head-housekeeper left, one housekeeper left	3
March 2012	One housekeeper recruited	4

Table 6.1 – Housekeeping recruitment/retention difficulties over data collection period

As can be seen from the above table, the staffing of the function showed substantial volatility over the period of the study with only two very brief periods when the full staff complement of 6 was in evidence. This was largely due to three main reasons: very few people showed an interest in applying for vacancies and some of those lost interest when they discovered what the job entailed; some recruits left the job very soon after starting (out of 15 different people employed at some time during the study, 7 fell into this category); and there was an apparent inability/unwillingness to operate at a staffing level that management agreed was optimum (for the size of the hotel and the guest throughput generated). Indeed, the first issue caused management to employ 2 recruits who were incapable of making beds and 2 recruits who could only work weekends; with the last issue being indicative of the obsession with cost as evidenced by, from March 2012 to the end of the study (almost three months), no further staff being recruited – leaving the hotel devoid of housekeeping supervision and short of one housekeeper.

6.2 Categorised summary of the data from the hotel

As in the previous two chapters, the data has been categorised into 'activities', 'interactions', 'sentiments' and 'symbols' (Jones, 1991); with more significant observations have been identified in separate, indented paragraphs.

6.2.1 Activities

Housekeepers would normally commence work at 9.30am, so as not to disturb sleeping guests too early, with the amount of hotel guest activity determining how many housekeepers would be required and the number of hours those people would be required to work for that day. Indeed, one of the characteristics of the job was that the labour requirement was variable and hence housekeepers were necessarily unaware of how much they would earn each week. The hotel was open for 365 days per year and the housekeeping function's remit was to ensure guests were accommodated in their own clean, prepared room and could partake of clean, prepared facilities throughout the rest of the hotel. The amount of time the housekeepers were allowed to carry out their cleaning function was such that the workers were almost fully utilised from the start of their shift to the end of their shift. No break time was allocated and, other than answering the odd telephone call on his/her mobile telephone, a housekeeper would spend the whole of their time cleaning. Furthermore, management would occasionally add activities without checking to see what effects these might have. A relatively complex function, in comparison to requirements at the clinic and the school, cleaning of the guest rooms and the rest of the hotel were distinct tasks.

▪ Guest rooms

A housekeeper cleaning the hotel guest rooms would be given a work sheet containing all the room numbers, on a particular floor, with one of five possible entries against each room number. If 'departure' was the entry, the guest(s) would be leaving and the housekeeper would carry out a complete room clean, involving: removal of the used linen and replacement with fresh linen; vacuuming the floor; removal of all rubbish and room service crockery; removal of used towels and replacement with fresh towels; washing of used cups/cutlery; cleaning of the toilet/bathroom; and replenishment of soap, shampoo, tea, coffee, sugar and milk. 'Stay-over', the guest(s) staying the current night, would require the housekeeper to carry out all the above except for the first two tasks – changing the linen and vacuuming the floor – it being necessary to straighten the bed and only vacuum if it appeared necessary[29]. However a 'stay-over x 5', the guest(s) staying the current night as well as the four previous nights since the linen had been changed, would be dealt with exactly as if it was a 'departure'. The fourth possible entry, 'arrival', new guest(s) booked into the room that had been cleaned as a 'departure' on a previous day, would see the housekeeper check that the room had actually been cleaned and all the necessary accoutrements had been provided. Fifthly and

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[29] This was a subjective judgment and was deemed 'necessary' on very few occasions when I was present

finally, a 'blank entry', signifying the room had been cleaned as a 'departure' on a previous day and there was no 'arrival' due, would need no action from the housekeeper.

At the commencement of the shift, the housekeeper would obtain the housekeeping trolley and vacuum cleaner, for the particular floor being serviced, from the storage area. He/she would then check the trolley for materials (bed linen, towels, soap, etc.) and make a note of stock requiring replenishment before visiting the laundry to collect a dirty linen basket. Having obtained an empty basket, which had wheels for ease of movement, the housekeeper would fill the basket with the necessary linen stock, which would comprise: pillowcases, single duvet covers, single bed sheets, double duvet covers, double bed sheets, hand towels and bath towels (in polythene wrapped bundles) before taking it back to the relevant floor and unloading the laundry stock onto the housekeeping trolley. He/she would then obtain soap, milk, tea, etc. from the housekeeping office, if necessary, and would then be ready to commence cleaning the rooms. The work sheet also contained spaces for linen usage and the housekeeper was tasked to indicate the dirty linen removed from each room[30].

On completing the rooms of a particular floor, the housekeeper would take the housekeeping trolley and the vacuum cleaner back to the storage area; any room service crockery to the kitchen; all waste to the rubbish skips; and the dirty linen basket to the laundry where he/she would separate the linen into sheets, pillowcases, duvet covers and towels – depositing the different linens into individual transport cages ready for collection by the third party laundry. This latter activity often needed to be carried out twice in a shift because the amount of dirty linen generated was too great for one journey. Depending on the number of rooms sold, this could be the end of the housekeeper's work for the day. However, he/she could either start the process again – on a different floor – or could go to assist one of his/her colleagues who would be working on another floor.

The theoretical system, applied by hotel management, allowed a housekeeper 20 minutes to undertake a 'departure' and 10 minutes to undertake a 'stay-over' with no allowance given for an 'arrival'. Furthermore, no time was allowed for collecting the trolley and the vacuum cleaner, no time for replenishment of materials and collecting the linen basket, no time for taking crockery to the kitchen and no time for rubbish disposal. However, in practice this system was not fully enforced, such that 20 minutes were allowed for 'departures' and 20 minutes were allowed for 'stay-overs' – but with no allowance for 'arrivals' or any of the peripheral activities, listed above, at the start and end of the shift.

The above details what constituted the 'normal' cleaning of the hotel rooms. In addition to this normal activity, housekeepers were expected to: check each room's bed-bug monitor weekly

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[30] These records were kept to check laundry costs as all dirty linen was washed by a third party

and report adverse results; dust pelmets and wardrobe tops weekly; turn over each mattress every month; replace pillows when necessary; and replace shower curtains when necessary. No time was allowed for any of these activities and, indeed, as at the school and the clinic, none of the housekeepers followed the list of duties and none believed that it was physically possible to do so.

- General hotel facilities

Apart from guest rooms, there was other necessary cleaning to be carried out. Firstly, there were the corridors, stairs and landings forming a part of the guest room complex. These areas were allocated to the housekeepers involved with the guest rooms who were required to vacuum the areas as necessary, usually weekly, with no allowance given for the activity. Secondly, there was the rest of the hotel (excluding the leisure centre) comprising the restaurant, the bar and lounge area, the conference facilities and the non-guest areas. These facilities were cleaned by a housekeeper whose title was 'front-of-house'. This individual lived permanently in the hotel, possessed a full-time contract, was also responsible for a number of non-housekeeping duties and helped out the other housekeepers when he could.

6.2.1.1 The focus on activities

Over the period of the study, occasions arose that saw the housekeeping activities being carried out by what can be described as 'non-standard housekeepers'. These could be kitchen staff, weekend only staff or staff who had insufficient skills to carry out the complete task – and each brought problems to the activities. Housekeepers appeared to cope with the high workloads partially by adopting their own systematic approach to the job and the need to accommodate additional staff into their routines could disrupt the efficiency of the operation. Indeed, accommodating me as a housekeeper contributed to this disruption as I operated (relatively) slowly and I therefore was given only a portion of the complete task. With some of the housekeepers this amounted to removing linen from beds and vacuuming the floors, whilst with others it involved this plus making beds with fresh linen. The consequence of employing staff who were incapable of fulfilling the complete housekeeping function was, therefore, a masking of the performance of the function with management making no allowances for the detrimental effect of these untrained people. The housekeepers were aware of this and it tended to obscure their focus on maintaining both speed and quality of cleaning; as one put it to me "it's frustrating when I have to work with [untrained people] as it messes up my figures and makes it look like I'm slacking. It makes me feel like not bothering"[31]

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[31] Fortunately this frustration did not apply, to me, when I was assisting the housekeepers, as my labour was not added to the figures. Hence, although I was a disruption to routine, I was able to facilitate a speedier throughput and my presence was generally appreciated but always tolerated

6.2.1.2 The workload

Housekeepers tended to commence their shift very soon after arriving at the hotel, waiting only to receive their worksheet for the day and listen to any further instruction from the head-housekeeper (or whoever was fulfilling that function as this role was not always in force). They would then usually work solidly until the work was complete, partaking of a tea break only infrequently. Furthermore, the work was physically demanding – the linen trolleys were very heavy, the beds were difficult to move and speed was essential – and this led to many recruits sampling the work and deciding it was too hard. One recruit left half way into her first shift, some lasted a week and others just failed to report with the workload and the uncertainty of how much money they would earn each week being the catalyst for leaving. Significantly, those housekeepers who remained beyond an initial period were all established housekeepers having applied their trade in other hotels. Apparently they had an expectation of the heavy workload and, as we shall see later in 'sentiments', the chronic understaffing dictated that they would be required for a significant number of hours per week.

6.2.2 Interactions

Those housekeepers involved with guest rooms met the head-housekeeper daily at the commencement of their shift and also at the completion of their work. There were occasions when the head-housekeeper sought out individuals to give them instructions about changes in their work schedules or to exchange other work related information; and housekeepers were sometimes contacted by reception staff to enquire about the status of a particular room. In addition, a housekeeper would contact, or be contacted by, the maintenance operative in the event of some fault in a room; and he/she occasionally saw guests in the corridors, or he/she spoke to a guest who had not vacated a room when he/she was trying to get access to clean it. However, apart from meeting the head-housekeeper at the start and end of a shift, the other interactions were few and far between such that, on many occasions, a housekeeper could go through a whole working shift with no contact with any other individuals. The exception to this were: the 'front-of-house' whose duties were likely to bring him/her into contact with receptionists, management, waiters and guests regularly throughout the day; and the occasions when guest room housekeepers were directed to work together to even out the workload.

6.2.2.1 Cooperating with other housekeepers

As mentioned earlier, there were occasions where two housekeepers needed to work together. These occasions tended to occur either towards the end of a shift (when each housekeeper had completed his/her own 'floor') or during times of staff shortages (when housekeepers were joined by staff who did not possess the skills to carry out the whole task) – and they were liable to be awkward occasions. It was noticeable that housekeepers had a propensity to be critical about the work of their

colleagues. Indeed, although they appeared to be friendly from a non-work perspective, they did not cooperate well with each other. I noted evidence of this on a number of occasions with one party reneging on an arrangement to meet another party to carry out some joint work; one party leaving all the rubbish bags for her colleague to take to the skip; one party telling her colleague that she had cleaned a room when she had not done so; and regular instances of linen trolleys being left containing very little stock. Furthermore, cooperation between housekeepers and those not trained to carry out all the tasks was almost universally poor – although I should note that I appeared to be the exception to this rule because, I believe, my labour was 'free' in that it was not recorded in the labour per room figures – which brings up an interesting issue regarding my acceptance.

Of the three cases, opportunities for interaction with my co-workers were most difficult here. There were very few housekeepers, very few tea breaks and work intensity was so high as to force concentration on the task of cleaning. However, as I was always able to make the task of an individual housekeeper easier by removing labour content without reducing time available, I was providing personal benefits to them individually. I broached the subject of my limited skills with some of my colleagues but they all agreed that helping them was to their advantage as they could concentrate on the toilet/bathroom whilst I made the beds. Indeed I was told, by one of the supervisors, of good-natured vying for my services amongst the housekeepers.

6.2.3 Sentiments

Two head-housekeepers were dismissed within six months of each other and a third left after ten months in the job. The first was dismissed for irregular activities and was replaced by someone who had previous experience of being a head-housekeeper, having been recruited from a similar position at another hotel. This second incumbent was charged with improving what the hotel manager described as "a lackadaisical group" by bringing the costs of the function down to the equivalent of the cost of 20 minutes per room and generally improving staff motivation. However, although the head-housekeeper attempted to address these issues, recruitment of staff proved difficult and the hotel manager decided to employ an ex-member of staff who had previously had personality clashes with other housekeepers – against the advice of the new head-housekeeper. This returning member of staff resisted the attempts of the head-housekeeper to improve the systems in the housekeeping function and a confrontation between the head-housekeeper and the hotel manager about his new recruit resulted in the dismissal of the head-housekeeper and the promotion of the new recruit to be the third holding the position in six months – albeit under different contractual arrangements and substantially poorer remuneration. The general belief held by the other housekeepers was that the hotel manager had engineered the sacking because he did not believe that improvements were being made and he felt that the supervisor was incapable of making the

changes. This sentiment was bolstered by stories from the housekeepers of how the manager undermined the head-housekeeper's efforts.

This (third) head-housekeeper soon clashed with the weekend housekeeper, who immediately left the job, and later clashed with one of the longer standing housekeepers, who also left specifically because of the clash. The altercations were work related and indicated a major change in style such that where, previously, improving motivation was an aim, the only issue was the tight control of costs through enforcement of the '20 minute per room' rule. However, although the head-housekeeper fulfilled what she saw as her part of the arrangement (keeping costs down via strict supervision) there was no improvement in what she saw as the manager's responsibility (recruitment of new staff, improvement of facilities, maintaining the purchase of materials) and, after fulfilling the role for only 10 months, she resigned. Following her resignation, in January 2012, the hotel did not fill the position in the hope that another ex-housekeeper could be persuaded to return to the hotel to carry out the role. However by the end of the study period, in May 2012, she had not responded positively to the offer. Further clashes occurred between housekeepers – some feeling that their colleagues were not working hard enough, and between housekeepers and management – some feeling that management used bullying tactics to coerce work from them. Moreover, feelings ran so strong with some disgruntled housekeepers that, on deciding to leave, they left mid-shift.

6.2.3.1 Tenure of employment

The variability of guest throughput affected the number of cleaning hours required at the hotel, which, in turn, meant that housekeepers would not know how many hours they would be required to work each week and, hence, how much they would be paid. This caused difficulty for some of the housekeepers, but not all. In addition, new recruits were generally surprised at the amount of effort required to perform their duties and some were prepared to accept this, but not all. Indeed, those who left quickly all left because they could not accept the uncertainty of their weekly wage, or they felt misled about the job, or they were not prepared to work so hard for the money on offer. All longer serving leavers left due of the outcome of specific, identifiable events – not because of their sentiments about the job itself. Furthermore, the housekeepers who did not leave the job quickly tended to share an enjoyment of cleaning, a preference for working on their own, a firm focus on the task and a lack of desire for doing anything else – even though many had skills in other areas. However, there was an issue surrounding the uncertainty of the amount of pay. As can be seen from the number of workers in the department over the period of study, a full complement occurred for only two short periods. This suited both the management of the hotel, by reducing overheads, and also the housekeepers themselves because it meant that the work was shared between fewer employees, thus raising their average remuneration. In contrast, there were times when the staff were complaining of being

tired because they were able to have very little time off and there were times when staff were seconded from other departments to assist. Operationally, therefore, housekeeping was compromised by ignoring an established labour level because it suited the sentiments of all parties involved in the decision making process. This was confirmed by the hotel manager who, in an interview with me at the end of the study, said he had taken the views of the housekeepers into account by asking them if they felt they needed more staff. Their response was in the negative and he chose to follow those wishes even though he admitted that it was causing problems of tiredness and variability in room cleanliness, with evidence that some rooms cleaned later in the day were of a poorer quality than those cleaned earlier – an observation that probably, partially, accounts for the popularity in having my help and the consequential enhancement of my acceptance as co-worker.

Although this precarious position did not reach a critical point during the term of my study, it did appear to be coming close. Between January and March 2012, not only was the actual complement of staff 3 instead of the required 6, there was also no head-housekeeper. Sentiments amongst the existing workers were such that they suspected that the lack of recruitment was less of an oversight by management and more of a plan; one of them saying to me "there's something going on…I think they're going to contract out the cleaning" and another musing "it's [the hotel] going to shut". However, none of the 3 was in a position to leave, even though they wanted to do so. Had one, or more, left then crisis point would have been reached and it is difficult to envisage what contingency could have been followed to ameliorate the outcome.

Housekeepers were not entrusted to make operational decisions. An example of this occurred when one of the housekeepers was tasked with temporarily installing a cot in a guest room. She noted that the room was too small for the additional furniture, to the extent that it would be dangerous for the guests and suggested that a different room be used. She was told to follow the instructions given and not to question them and it was only later in the day, when the guests complained about being unable to walk around the room, that they were given a larger suite. Other instances point to the same conclusion, such as a time when a couple of rooms had been left in very poor state by some young footballers. The housekeeper took 40 minutes to clean each room having put substantial physical effort into moving all the furniture, wiping all the walls and scrubbing the windows – only to be criticised by the hotel manager for "ruining my figures".

6.2.4 Symbols

Weekly staff rotas, for the current week and the following week, containing the names of all the housekeepers and the seven days of the week, were kept on the wall of the housekeeping office. These working documents would contain information regarding who was due in on which days, the latest known departures, stays and arrivals, and they would be

updated daily. Staff were, however, acutely aware that these documents were only an indication of the work load required of the department and, as room bookings were constantly being taken, a housekeeper could be asked to work at short notice or to work longer hours than was at first envisaged.

6.2.4.1 The ramifications of administration

The fabric of the buildings was in need of substantial refurbishment. Many of the guest rooms had marks and tears on the wallpaper and needed redecorating – and there was an urgent requirement to replace most of the carpets, which were threadbare in places and torn in others. In addition, the soft furnishings had been allowed to deteriorate with pillows losing shape, duvets fraying and valances tearing as well as holes appearing in chair coverings and beds losing castors – none of which received any attention. In fact the latter issue caused two additional problems, making beds difficult to move and causing damage to carpets when beds actually were moved. Even when money was spent on replacements, little thought appeared to be given to the expenditure with mattresses purchased that were too small or too large for the beds and curtains bought that did not match the pelmets. Indeed, although housekeepers were largely able to keep rooms clean, small maintenance tasks such as replacing broken curtain hooks, replacing broken lamps in light fittings and replacing missing hangers in the wardrobe, were often left until a guest asked for a particular job to be done. Many of the housekeepers regularly commented about the state of the hotel, sometimes expressing embarrassment at how the rooms looked even when they had prepared them to the best of their abilities. Furthermore, consumables were sometimes exhausted causing more embarrassment by resulting in litterbins having no bin-liners, half-empty shampoo bottles being 'topped up' and used soap being provided for new guests.

Two guest rooms were completely redecorated at the end of 2010 by hotel staff. This was an initiative devised by the maintenance operative where he and one other employee would redecorate one room at a time – over approximately three years – and the hotel would only need to pay for the materials. Management stopped the initiative after two rooms because it "was difficult to get the money" – an outcome that had a substantially negative effect on the housekeepers' perceptions of the ability of management to run the operation effectively. The functional areas had even more acute problems with broken window frames in the staff dining room, leaking roofs in the housekeeping store and store-rooms full of broken furniture, old paperwork, obsolete kitchen equipment, old bar equipment and hundreds of broken fluorescent tubes. This last item was indicative of the cost emphasis taken by management such that these broken fluorescent tubes were kept in storage because it would cost money to have them properly disposed of. However, the untidy state of the functional areas was also an indication of the lack of a coherent approach to running the hotel

as some of this unwanted clutter could have been regularly loaded into the general waste skips with day-to-day waste – had there been a will to so do. The attitude generated by the hotel being in administration appeared to manifest itself in its shabby appearance. Indeed, the atmosphere suggested that people were waiting for something concrete to happen, with the impermanence of the situation affecting the culture.

Housekeeping equipment was of a poor standard. The basket of one of the three dirty linen trolleys was badly torn when the study commenced and, although it deteriorated over the time of the study to a state where it was no longer fit for purpose, it was never repaired. Vacuum cleaners were underpowered for their purpose such that debris was often left behind and would need to be picked up by hand before the room was deemed to be clean. Stock-out situations, of soap, tea, coffee, milk, etc., were common – as stock would be run down low before orders were placed; and planning was sometimes poor with numerous instances where clean, prepared rooms were scheduled as departures and dirty, departure rooms were not scheduled for cleaning! Sometimes these planning errors were discovered as new guests arrived, causing disruption and panic as housekeepers were redirected to correct the errors. Moreover, there was evidence that management were prepared to sacrifice quality for short-term gain. On at least two occasions I witnessed rooms that had been removed from availability, because they were substandard and awaiting repair, being brought back into service due to the hotel being full. Additionally, again during high room utilisation, housekeepers were told not to vacuum any carpets unless it was absolutely necessary, "just for today".

The two head-housekeepers, who were dismissed during the time of the study, were both employed with full-time contracts. However, the third head-housekeeper was promoted from the ranks of housekeeper yet was only employed on an hourly basis, with the number of hours she worked being dependent on the number of rooms used. As stated in the 'activities' section, only the 'front-of-house' was employed on a full-time contract. Housekeepers were paid the minimum wage (£5.93 in November 2010) and the hotel had a policy of no sick pay. There was no company pension scheme, no personnel related advice facility, no training (apart from any specific equipment demonstration) and no planned communication sessions on any topic. Indeed, there was evidence that guest satisfaction surveys were undertaken during the time of the study, yet not one of the housekeepers saw any survey results.

6.3 Application of the model to the hotel

6.3.1 Influencers

6.3.1.1 Job status

Ryan's warning about the dangers of treating part time workers as a homogenous group (1998 p14) was probably as relevant here as at the clinic but for different reasons. Although all housekeepers operated on part-time contracts, they worked in response to the hotel utilisation, which meant that they worked for different numbers of hours each week and also for different numbers of hours than their colleagues. Indeed, some housekeepers worked only at weekends, some could only perform part of the task and some refused to work at certain times due to other commitments. Thus, work patterns tended to be idiosyncratic and there was generally little identification as a group except at periods of very high workload, which were infrequent. Taking Jacobson's (2000) 'hours of work' and linking it with Feldman's (1990) 'voluntary/involuntary' dimension, of the 8 housekeepers who remained for more than three weeks, 4 fell into the 'voluntary' category – satisfied with the work they had chosen to do and earning sufficient money to meet their economic needs. Indeed, these 4 individuals were the longest serving housekeepers during the study with the voluntary nature of their employment status appearing to contribute to this longevity – a finding not supported by Eberhardt & Moser (1995 p106) who reported no link between turnover and voluntary/involuntary status. Furthermore, Feldman's (1990) 'main-job/second-job' dimension was germane here as a second job would cause substantial operational problems to the housekeeping function because the length of each working day was fluid (due to the uncertainty of guest occupancy) and the number of days of work per week was variable (due to the uncertainty of the housekeeping strength). Indeed, this did cause problems such that every housekeeper holding a second job found that it interfered with housekeeping duties and contributed to all of them leaving the hotel.

Regarding the influence of the concept of dirty work, coping mechanisms were apparently strong amongst the more long serving housekeepers. Refocusing could be detected with employees gaining esteem through working unsupervised and being able to follow their own methods, with reframing being apparent from housekeepers' awareness of their potential to affect a guest's experience. This latter perception, as will be seen in the next section, was compromised by management's focus on work intensity, although there was evidence that some housekeepers fought against compromising room cleanliness as exampled by the housekeeper who took 80 minutes to clean two rooms and said "I knew I'd get into trouble, but it needed doing". Furthermore, recalibrating was evident with housekeepers comparing their jobs with those of, for instance, shop workers who were paid higher hourly rates. In the eyes of the housekeepers, the stress of high workload at busy times and the bad treatment received from difficult customers in a shop outweighed the poorer pay at the hotel in terms of comparative disadvantage. Notably, all of these longer serving employees had worked as

housekeepers in other hotels and appeared to view the job as their profession, minimising the effect of the concept of dirty work because they did not consider it to be so.

6.3.1.2 Work Intensity

As with the other two cases, work intensity was pivotal to the management focus and, like the school, was already high when data collection commenced. Indeed, although this was the most work intensive case in the inquiry, the demise of one of the head-housekeepers was largely due to her apparent inability to increase intensity even further. The housekeepers commenced their activities on arrival and had no organised breaks unless they worked in excess of 5 hours – in which case they could take (although they often declined) a 15-minute tea break. All the staff struggled to meet the 20-minute rule for a room clean and the more irregular tasks (mattress turning, bed-bug checks, corridor vacuuming, shower curtain change, etc.) tended to be ignored with housekeepers choosing to deliver the best room they could within their time constraints – an outcome that had significant implications for job satisfaction and performance. No effort was made by management to improve performance in any other way – no skills training, no expenditure on equipment and no guest room improvements. Indeed, it was difficult to see how any further improvements in performance could have been made, unless management had been prepared to investigate a different approach, as there was no further room for any work intensification. Consequently, labour turnover was high with 7 of the 15 staff employed during the study remaining in the job for less than three weeks – all citing how hard the work was as a major determinant of their leaving. McCormick & Cooper found that increasing work intensity to a level where it became work overload was a major determinant of mental ill health (1988) and others established a correlation between increased work intensity and increased stress (Burke et al, 2010 p347; Green, 2001 p71). Indeed, although there was no evidence of mental health problems at the hotel, the willingness of management to operate with fewer workers than their own accepted staffing level affected staff morale and caused increased levels of stress when staff were unable to take scheduled days off – plus, even though many housekeepers tried to avoid this, there was evidence that rooms cleaned later in the day were cleaned to a lower standard than those cleaned earlier.

6.3.1.3 Organisational Culture

With reference to Meyerson & Martin's (1987) cultural model, the picture here was somewhat similar to the 'integration' perspective seen at the school, with the housekeepers focussing almost totally on getting the rooms ready for the incoming guests and partaking in very little peripheral activity. Indeed, the quality of the work undertaken by the housekeepers was so transparent (it was obvious to even a cursory inspection if an adequate standard had not been met) that the work itself, along with the high work intensity, appeared to keep the focus on the cleaning function. Moreover, viewing the culture through Payne's (2001) cultural model, supported this finding in that 'pervasiveness' was low – the company wanted nothing more from the housekeepers than to carry out the cleaning activities; 'consensus' was high – at

least amongst those who did not quickly decide to leave; and 'psychological intensity' was high – again amongst those who stayed long enough to accept the hard work and who shared the focus on delivering well prepared guest rooms. However, the culture did appear to be affected by the hotel's status of being in administration. 'Basic underlying assumptions' – the set of aspects that were held and taken for granted by group members because of their repeated success (Schein, 2004 p31) – at least in the broad features of running the hotel, had been brought into question; clearly what had worked in the past was failing to deliver success and there was no evidence to suggest that what they were doing now would lead to any revival. Consequently, although housekeepers were carrying out their cleaning activities, effectively, within an 'integration' perspective, there appeared to be an underlying doubt that their efforts were totally valid – a doubt bolstered by the hotel manager when he told me that "we are on a downward spiral with…staff losing heart".

6.3.1.4 Organisational Conflict

The source of task conflict was mainly management not worker, perhaps not surprisingly as all the housekeepers had very similar work content – 20 minutes per room – but none of them actually believed that they could achieve the necessary standard in that time scale. Consequently said task conflict was generated by management who were constantly pushing the head-housekeeper and the housekeepers for improvements; conflict that contributed to the sacking of one of the three head-housekeepers who held the position during the study and made for the reluctant compromise by housekeepers sacrificing some quality in order to meet targets. A combination of relationship conflict and affective conflict was also evident at certain stages, but only occasionally[32] between housekeeper and housekeeper and more often between different levels (housekeeper/head-housekeeper, housekeeper/ manager, head-housekeeper/manager) with management unwilling to involve housekeepers in any form of decision-making. However there was one source of relationship conflict, caused by the use what could be termed 'non-standard workers' – specifically the recruitment of 2 people who only had the capability to strip linen from beds, vacuum and remove rubbish; the recruitment of 2 weekend-only people; and the practice of utilising untrained kitchen staff during times of staff shortages. Although in the former two cases recruiting these people arose because no fully suitable people applied for vacancies, existing housekeepers were irritated that they were paid the same wages and it was conceivably fortunate, from a conflict viewpoint that these people did not remain for very long. What was surprising, perhaps, was the compliance of the housekeepers who appeared to accept their position whilst being unable to satisfy management's targets but, as was reported earlier, those objecting to the work intensity usually left the hotel quickly. Furthermore, this compliance appeared to negate any cognitive conflict as could be seen in an example where a housekeeper reported that a temporary bed would not fit into the room allocated – she was instructed to do as she was told, and she did!

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[32] During times when they had to work together, cooperation was variable

6.3.1.5 Perceived organisational support

Working strongly against the 'integration' bias (Meyerson & Martin, 1987) of the organisational culture at the hotel was the lack of POS. Housekeepers, willing to prepare guest rooms to a relatively clean standard, were faced with poor quality fixtures and fittings, damaged carpets and worn out decorations – and were also aware that management had refused to support a plan to improve the rooms at a very low cost. In addition, important consumable items (soap, bin liners, toilet rolls) were often in stock-out or near stock-out condition, broken equipment (linen trolleys, vacuum cleaners) would not be mended and quality was sometimes compromised by instruction from management. Such lack of POS, bolstered by little evidence of management providing anything but the basic wage to the housekeepers, served to undermine the consent of the housekeepers to maintain their efforts to deliver quality guest accommodation. Compounding this was the perception that management had little acumen in the running of the hotel as evidenced by their inability to recruit adequate numbers of housekeepers and the number of mistakes they made in assessing the status of the rooms (too often scheduling already clean rooms for attention and too often selling rooms that had not been scheduled for cleaning since the last departure).

6.3.1.6 Leader-member exchange

LMX suffered from the head-housekeeper having less scope to reward her in-group and less scope for her to put pressure on those not performing – the latter because it was so difficult to recruit, and indeed keep someone once recruited! The work intensity at the hotel required the housekeepers to physically work for the whole of their shift (apart from a short tea break if there was in excess of 5 hours work required) and the only effective power of reward available to the head-housekeeper

was the rota, which she could manipulate to advantage her in-group. The problem she had in applying this power was the aforementioned inability of the hotel to recruit housekeepers, which meant that she needed to make every effort to keep all of her staff, unless they really were incapable of doing the job. In fact this situation served to undermine her position, as new housekeepers were able to dictate which days they were prepared to work and some existing housekeepers had cause to be aggrieved at the head-housekeeper's manipulation of the rota against their wishes. All the above comments would be applicable to all three head-housekeepers who held the position during the study, but with an accumulating effect of staff feeling that each one had less power than her predecessor. Indeed, such had been the treatment of the various housekeepers that LMX as a concept had a very weak influence on the psychological contracts of all the housekeepers employed.

6.3.1.7 Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange

Both of these constructs were weak, with housekeepers believing that management would offer virtually no support (low POS) and the head-housekeeper having little power (low LMX) to influence their day-to-day working lives. Significantly, management made no attempt, at any stage of the data collection, to change the housekeepers' views of the support they could

expect, but each head-housekeeper did try to improve LMX as part of her strategy for managing the staff. The fact that each head-housekeeper was largely unsuccessful in achieving any improved LMX appeared to be borne out by almost no discernable change in the effectiveness of housekeeping function (negatively or positively) in the period after the last head-housekeeper had left the hotel. However, this could also be explained by the perception amongst the housekeepers that they knew exactly what was expected of them and held this focus from their history in other hotels. Unlike at the school and the clinic, the long serving housekeepers appeared to be career cleaners.

6.3.1.8 Employee-organisation relationship

As with the other two case studies, it is unclear how conscious management's approach to this construct was. However from the viewpoint of the worker, at whom the 'inducements for contributions' strategy was aimed, the apparent approach at the hotel was 'underinvestment' leaning towards 'quasi-spot contract' (Tsui et al, 1997). It appeared to fit into the underinvestment category as housekeepers were expected to accept that they would follow a rota such that they would not know, until the start of a week, which days they would be working; and they were expected to arrive for work each morning with no indication of how many hours they would have to work in that day. The result of this arrangement was that staff would not know how much money they could expect to receive each week and, in return, they would receive only the minimum wage for the hours they actually did work. Furthermore, they were expected to deal with the pressure of working without a full complement of housekeepers, which necessitated in them working on their scheduled days off and they were expected to raise the cleanliness of each guest room to the same standard, irrespective of the original state of the room, in 20 minutes. Indeed, the only leaning towards quasi-spot contract arose because the work itself was well specified and required little deviation from standard working practices.

6.3.1.9 Exchange ideology

As applied to those boasting a tenure of more than three weeks, this was generally low with housekeepers maintaining effort and focus on the task – even in light of the low POS, the low LMX and the high task conflict generated by management's indifference to providing the employees with an effective working environment. Evidence of higher exchange ideology came from only one housekeeper who, perceiving unfair treatment regarding the allocation of work via the rota, reduced her effort significantly, but even she soon returned to her normal level although the issue was never resolved. However, I can only discern from those who quickly left the job that the level of their exchange ideology was such that they believed the value of their labour outstripped the benefits received to such an extent that the employment was not worthwhile.

6.3.1.10 Organisational justice

Of the three cases in the inquiry, only the housekeepers maintained a positive perception of distributive justice. Work was organised such that, apart from the limited times when staff who could not make beds were employed, there were no grounds for staff to consider any inequity in the resources they were given and the work they were allocated, with each housekeeper given the same amount of time to clean a room and each being furnished with similar equipment to carry out the task. Furthermore, work intensity was so high that there was little else, under this component of justice, for housekeepers to consider. Procedural justice at the hotel appeared to be quite positive with only a small number of isolated incidents where certain housekeepers felt the rota had given them a disproportionately low number of hours. However, the evidence did not support these contentions and ill feelings soon dissipated. It was under the umbrella of interactional justice where all three organisations scored poorly, but for different reasons. At the hotel the housekeepers did have interaction with the management, but it was largely unsatisfactory and there were examples of both components of this aspect. Regarding the informational component, housekeepers were never given guest surveys to review so any initiatives arising from surveys came through as directives; and updates on room usage were often not communicated to the housekeepers, with subsequent errors occurring concerning what work was required in certain rooms – this latter example being a major irritant to all housekeepers who felt it was a sign that they were viewed as unimportant. Reinforcing this feeling of unimportance was the interpersonal component with an example already mentioned under the construct 'cognitive conflict' where a housekeeper reported that a temporary bed would not fit into a room and was instructed to do as she was told. To quote her response "I felt two inches tall!"

6.3.2 Core concept

6.3.2.1 The psychological contract

The expectation of both parties was for the deal to be fundamentally transactional in nature (as suggested by the 'underinvestment' strategy of the employee-organisation relationship), a finding that supported Stiles et al (1997) and Herriot et al (1997), the latter suggesting that transactional contracts were more attractive to workers such that they emphasised Hertzberg et al's (1959) hygiene factors rather than motivators – but even some of these were missing. The hotel, having been in administration throughout the data collection period, engendered no job security and lacked any guarantee in terms of number of hours a housekeeper would be required each week, leaving even Hertzberg et al's hygiene in a precarious position. Indeed, staff received very few signs that they were anything but temporary staff, even though they were contractually permanent. In return, management appeared to expect high turnover and, judging by their failure to support the efforts of one of the head-housekeepers in her attempts to improve morale, felt a need to exercise a rigid control system to monitor work.

6.3.2.2 Psychological contract fulfilment - mutuality

Tsui et al's (1997) 'underinvestment' employee-organisational relationship, dictating that the organisation expected more than they were willing to give, suggested that the management of the hotel were not even attempting to establish mutuality in their arrangements. This contention was supported by the tendency of new recruits to leave soon after experiencing the high work intensity and the fluctuating weekly wage. Furthermore, the high degree of task conflict (De Drue, 2004) caused by management constantly pressurising housekeepers to meet cleaning times that the housekeepers believed to be unattainable, also opposed mutuality. Although low POS and low LMX did not operate to significantly increase the mutuality gap in terms of the obligations of employee to employer, as the requirements of the work itself (apart from its intensity) tended to be mutually understood, the same could not be said about obligations of employer to employee, as the housekeepers believed that the apparent acceptance by management of sub-standard facilities (broken light fittings, frayed duvets, threadbare carpets, torn wallpaper) was completely different from their rhetoric. Here, with reference to the cultural model posited by Payne (2001), evidence pointed to medium degrees of consensus, pervasiveness and psychological intensity, which, although showing a different pattern than that of the school, nevertheless fell largely into an integration (Meyerson & Martin, 1987) perspective – but management's overwhelming focus on cost-minimisation worked to contradict the mutuality that integration provided. Indeed, management's failure to support the initiative of room refurbishment strengthened this contradiction. Notably, as with the school, there was little evidence that any effort was made by the employer to provide the housekeepers with anything but the minimum wage although, unlike with the old school, what was expected in return was in no way pragmatic. In this case large gaps did exist between the perceptions of both parties regarding the obligations of the employer to employee, although less so regarding the obligations of employee to employer.

6.3.2.3 Psychological contract fulfilment - reciprocity

The major influence of the gap in the reciprocity dimension stemmed from the work intensity and how management dealt with it. Firstly, management chronically failed to recruit and maintain adequate staff to meet guest throughput whilst expecting existing staff to cope with any fluctuations. All the head-housekeepers who fulfilled the role during the study made management aware of the negative effects on staff of not meeting this obligation whilst they were insisting on pressurising staff to meet a target of cleaning a room adequately in 20 minutes – already believed by housekeepers to be impossible. Secondly, a tendency to increase the gap came from a perception from the housekeepers that they would provide their labour with some advanced warning of how many hours per day and how many days per week they would be needed. However, management regarded workload planning as a low priority and made little attempt to reciprocate their employees' needs by avoiding unforeseen housekeeping requirements to such an extent that the work schedule was seldom accurate – even on the day it referred to. Another major gap in reciprocity concerned the physical state

of the premises and how management dealt with that. Housekeepers were expected to provide a guest with a room that was of good quality, but were in a position to do nothing about symbols such as threadbare carpets and torn wallpaper. This aspect of a good quality room – the responsibility of management – was not matched.

In addition underemployment (Feldman, 1996), although not as pervasive as at the school, had the effect of the employers finding that their obligation of providing a wage was not adequately reciprocated by the employees remaining with the company and a high proportion left soon after recruitment. Notwithstanding all of the above, the exchange ideology exhibited by many of the housekeepers had the effect of reducing the influence of any reciprocation gap, at least on job/task conscientiousness.

6.3.2.4 Psychological contract breach and violation

Such was the paucity of the content of psychological contracts that opportunities for breach and violation were limited. Employees did not expect to receive support for the job that they did and even situations such as a linen trolley being unfit for purpose for the whole of the study; the continuing deterioration in the hotel fabric; absence of soap and toilet rolls; and poor room-usage information, having only limited impact – even though they were fundamental breaches to expectations. Indeed, criticism for attempting to perform beyond the basic requirements of the task, as evidenced by the treatment given to the housekeeper who reported that a temporary bed would not fit into a room ("do as you are told") and the housekeeper who took twice the amount of allowed time to clean some dirty rooms ("you've ruined my figures"), which could have caused violation in some employees, resulted in only minor irritation. Generally, such was the absence of any meaningful contact between management and the housekeepers, compounded by the transience of the head-housekeepers, that any evidence of trust repair (Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009) was absent. Management appeared to believe that housekeepers' possessing the knowledge that the hotel was in administration was sufficient to justify any and all obstacles preventing effective cleaning. Hence, even improving such a relatively simple aspect as room-usage information was not dealt with. However, breach (accepting that a psychological contract was just being formed) had its greatest effect amongst new recruits who, it would appear, started their employment with a perception of the requirements of the job but quickly found that it was not what they expected – 7 out of the 15 staff employed during the study leaving within a fortnight of starting. These people left because they felt either that the work intensity was misrepresented by the management, the organisation of the allocation of hours was unfair, they would receive variable wages or the working conditions were not what they expected (i.e. they were expected to forgo tea breaks and they were expected to give up their scheduled days off when needed). Apparently, people surviving this initial realisation of the true nature of the job possessed both a low exchange ideology and an expectation of very little content within their psychological contracts. The most significant violations occurred in the psychological contracts of two of the three head-housekeepers. The second incumbent felt

undermined in her attempts to improve motivation, resulting in her dismissal, and the third departed partially because she became disillusioned by the failure of management to recruit staff.

6.3.3 Outcomes

6.3.3.1 Organisation-based self-esteem

Working largely unsupervised and having an influence on guests' experience were dirty work coping mechanisms (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999) that contributed to OBSE but, possibly of greater importance in this particular case, was the way that the longer serving employees viewed the actual task of housekeeping. Seeing it as a profession, all having worked in hotels previously, these workers gained esteem from their identification with the job. Indicative of this was the housekeeper at the hotel who reported feeling "two inches tall" after being instructed to do as she was told when she reported that a temporary bed would not fit into a particular room. The housekeeper in question actually possessed high OBSE, feeling worthwhile to the organisation in spite of management's treatment.

6.3.3.2 Job satisfaction

The affective component of job satisfaction, as with the OBSE above, tended to be linked to housekeeping itself rather than housekeeping at this particular hotel. All longer-term employees demonstrated quite high affective job satisfaction – which owed much to the freedom they enjoyed whilst carrying out their duties and, as with the cleaners at the old school, much from seeing the physical effects of their labour. However, the cognitive dimension had conflicting influences. The constant pressure to meet a target of 20 minutes per room, which had the effect of compromising room cleanliness because irregular tasks were left undone, was perceived as a contract breach by the housekeepers, as was management's poor work planning efforts, their failure to spend money on housekeeping equipment and the fabric of the building, their inability to keep new recruits and their demonstrated unwillingness to give recruitment any priority. But, although they received only the minimum wage, many of them had worked in more stressful environments and appreciated knowing exactly what was expected of them. Even the contradictory effects of the hotel being understaffed (causing them to work more hours than normal), fluctuating room usage (lowering their hours during low occupation levels) and the compromise of room cleanliness tended to cancel out the effects of cognitive satisfaction with tiredness from heavy workloads being countered by increased remuneration and rooms being at least visually clean.

6.3.3.3 Organisational commitment

Continuance commitment was high amongst all housekeepers, as all would have endured substantial financial hardship had they left the hotel. Indeed, the only housekeeper who left because of contract breach leading to violation did have a second job to go to. However,

normative and affective commitments were largely absent. None felt any obligation to remain at the hotel, as all perceived that management would not hesitate to remove them if the necessity arose and all could see how little effort management appeared to expend on the housekeeping function. Furthermore, although there was some affection for a well-known local site where some of their friends and relations had stayed as guests, this was generally quite a weak bond. Curiously, affective commitment was detectable in the longer serving housekeepers but it was an affective commitment to housekeeping as a profession and suggested that these people would probably try to remain in housekeeping even should they leave this particular hotel.

6.3.3.4 Motivation

Intrinsic energisers and intrinsic sustainers (Ellemers et al, 2004; Locke & Latham, 2004) were high amongst the longer serving housekeepers and these appeared to arise from the satisfaction of the work itself which, as stated earlier, owed something to their link to housekeeping as a profession. Indeed, a high extrinsic focuser arose from the fact that the quality of a cleaned room was so easy to recognise (rather than any supervisory pressure that could have been brought to bear) and achieving this quality enhanced affective satisfaction even though housekeepers were tacitly aware that they had not carried out the full list of duties on their job description. However, the perceived contract breach of expecting the rooms to be cleaned in too short a time, which justified the compromise on cleanliness, and the perceived breach of management failing to carry out their responsibility to adequately maintain the hotel, tended to have a detrimental effect on motivation via its influence as an extrinsic sustainer.

6.3.4 Behaviour

6.3.4.1 Performance

As with the old school, the dominant performance requirement was job/task conscientiousness although there were more opportunities for interpersonal citizenship performance than at the early manifestation in that establishment. Although housekeepers tended to commence their shifts by working in isolation, the variability of guest activity often required cooperation later in the shift. In addition, organisation citizenship performance was more important to the hotel management as they wanted staff to be willing to be flexible with the hours that they worked each day and be willing to forgo, at short notice, scheduled days off. However, accepting the need for all three dimensions, possibly the most significant performance problem faced by the hotel management was recruitment. Almost half of the housekeepers employed during the study left within a fortnight of commencing and this could be viewed as employee breach or employer breach. Viewing it firstly as employee breach in that the employees merely failed to turn up for work, the outcome caused a significantly greater problem for the hotel than it did for the school. The cleaning firm at the school was able to quickly replace the leavers but it also had a system in place to deal with the problem;

two solutions not possessed by the hotel. Consequently, performance was severely affected by this employee breach. Taking a different view, although the short time scale gave little opportunity for people to construct a meaningful psychological contract, they left because of perceived contract breaches by the employer. These took the form of misrepresentation of the work intensity (every employee believed that cleaning a room adequately in 20 minutes was not possible), unrealistic working conditions (being expected to forgo tea breaks, even after 5 hours work) and management reneging on their responsibilities (it was readily apparent that, however well the room was cleaned, the poor quality of the furniture and fittings would detract from their efforts) – this latter example indicative of the almost non-existence of POS. Again, seeing it from this viewpoint also identified it as a significant curtailment of performance. Indeed, housekeepers who overcame these initial breaches and remained at the hotel were heavily influenced by their continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) – such that the need to stay outweighed the desire to leave; their affective commitment to housekeeping as a profession – irrespective of specific problems arising at the hotel employing them; and their exchange ideology (Redman & Snape, 2005) – which delivered performance in spite of breach.

Remaining with these longer tenure staff, job/task conscientiousness was quite high with the affective job satisfaction (Hulin & Judge, 2003), provided by the work itself, serving to negate the effects of the constant pressure to meet the 20-minute deadline. However, interpersonal citizenship performance was poor with housekeepers being uncooperative with each other when working together and demonstrating affective conflict (Lewis et al, 1997). Examples of this negative behaviour included housekeepers trying to 'cherry-pick' the easy work in a guest room, leaving rubbish bags to be cleared by others, blaming sub-standard work on a colleague and being tardy in joining colleagues to carry out joint activities – problems not helped by the many changes in head-housekeeper over the study which served to confuse the culture (Schein, 2004) and make LMX, at best, difficult to achieve or, at worst, non-existent.

In contrast, organisational citizenship performance appeared to somewhat better, but this appeared to be more about continuance commitment and affective commitment (to the profession) than a desire to help the organisation. Organisational citizenship behaviour revolved around the willingness of housekeepers to be flexible about the hours and the days they would work, and the evidence pointed towards them being willing to meet that requirement. However, many saw this as a psychological contract breach with the management reneging (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000) on its obligations to both maintain adequate staff and to plan and communicate the guest room activity, with that breach turning into violation for two of the employees. Whilst these two appeared to demonstrate the organisational citizenship performance that was sought, by always altering their personal plans to meet hotel requirements, there came a time where the feelings of violation

outweighed the continuance commitment with one going off sick and one leaving the company – outcomes that mirrored Robinson & Morrison's (1995) findings. Atkinson asserted (citing Herriot & Pemberton, 1996; and Pate et al, 2003) "that a psychological contract becomes more transactional after a breach" (2007 p229) and the evidence from the hotel would tend to support that contention. Indeed, there was some evidence that the already transactional nature of the contract served to make the two citizenship dimensions beyond what some housekeepers were prepared to offer. However, in direct contrast to this evidence, there appeared to be an influence on performance arising from the job status of the longer serving housekeepers who saw themselves as 'career-housekeepers' and maintained their performance, certainly in the organisational citizenship and job/task conscientiousness dimensions if not in the interpersonal citizenship dimension, based on that premise rather than any influence from the hotel itself.

6.4 In summary

The minimal attention paid by hotel management to the employment relationship was evidenced by the 'underinvestment' EOR (Tsui et al, 1997), the low POS and the low LMX. Indeed, such was the imbalance of the content of the psychological contract, in terms of what management expected from housekeepers in contrast to what they would provide in return, that many potential recruits refused to accept it – resulting in a chronic inability to maintain an adequate workforce. Moreover, with such a small workforce, this was possibly the greatest threat to performance as losing even one of the longer serving housekeepers could have forced a crisis. However, concentrating on those who accepted the imbalance in their psychological contract and remained employed at the hotel, their behaviour was influenced by contradictions. Although contracts possessed very little content, assisted by a culture with low 'pervasiveness' (Payne, 2001) falling into the 'integration' perspective (Meyerson & Martin, 1987), there were still opportunities for mutuality and reciprocity (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004) to be compromised by management. Compromise they did, often failing to provide accurate information on work requirements, allowing stock-outs to occur on consumable materials, sending messages to vary quality during high room utilisation, demanding a work intensity that housekeepers felt to be impossible and allowing the fabric of the hotel to deteriorate. This last compromise – made significant because it affected the job satisfaction (Locke, 1976) in that, however hard a housekeeper worked to clean a room, he/she could do nothing about the torn wallpaper and the threadbare carpet – was exacerbated by the knowledge that management had the means to, but 'reneged' (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000) on, making improvements.

These contradictions saw breach and violation occur, but with limited consequences. Housekeepers were aware that cost minimisation over-rode all other considerations, understood the precarious position that the hotel was in by being in administration, and approached their work from an almost fatalistic viewpoint. This manifested itself by a concentration on job/task conscientiousness that arose more because of their job status as

'career housekeepers' and because of the very high work intensity imposed on them by management's focus on it and the chronic understaffing. Indeed, the effects of breach and violation were more noticeable in the absence of interpersonal citizenship performance – cooperation when the need arose being poor; and organisational citizenship performance – it being encouraged in terms of housekeepers being flexible with their time, but being actively discouraged in all other instances. Moreover, the most significant examples of breach and violation came in management's dealings with the head-housekeepers, the first causing the violation via gross misconduct, the second having her contract violated by management failing to support her efforts to improve morale and the third reacting to management breaking their promise to recruit adequate numbers of staff – the latter two of which served to all but destroy LMX.

The evidence gained here was probably the weakest of the three studies. Whilst the planning and organisation of my time followed the same template as the other two, the opportunities to build strong relationships with the housekeepers were fewer – the idle time enjoyed by the employees being much shorter with no tea breaks and an almost total focus on the task throughout the shift. Exacerbating this was the chronic insecurity of continuing employment caused by the persisting status of the hotel being in administration and the debilitating effect of the housekeepers being on 'zero-hours' contracts – therefore having the uncertainty of how much each weekly wage would amount to. However in contrast, people were willing to share experiences with me and the camaraderie generated during the session following the football team visit did serve to help my cause.

6.5 Summary of chapters 4,5 and 6

The contentions put forward in chapters 4,5 and 6 would suggest that, in answer to the research question ('*To what extent do the psychological contracts of cleaners in the workplace contribute to their performance?')*, there is a significant link between the contract and performance. Furthermore, evidence gathered from the three case studies implies that, although each group of employees were ostensibly carrying out the same activities, the effects of the influencers on the psychological contracts of the workers delivered quite different outcomes and, hence, performance.

In chapter 7 I will compare the three cases, under the headings of each construct of Guest's model, and highlight the differences and similarities before dealing with the overall aim of the study ('*To expand our understanding of the link between an individual's employment relationship and their performance in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments'*) by assessing the potential issues, for management generally, that these variances in psychological contracts could present.

Chapter 7 – Comparing the three organisations

Although accepting the idiosyncratic nature of the psychological contract, I believe that the findings documented in the last three chapters – particularly arising from the application of Guest's (1998) modified model to the case studies – has shown that much of a person's psychological contract is influenced by the constructs identified in the model and that the said psychological contract will impact on performance. Furthermore, it appears that individual influencers have variable impact on the contracts making for variability in their fulfilment, breach and violation – and, hence, delivering dissimilar performances. This chapter returns to Guest's modified model to contrast the clinic, the school and the hotel (7.1) and summarises with details about how the three managements tackled relationships and a general observation about the difficulties in securing the citizenship dimensions of performance (7.2).

7.1 Comparison of the three case studies

This section follows the same template as sections 4.3, 5.3 and 6.3 – application of the model to the clinic, school and hotel respectively

7.1.1 Influencers

7.1.1.1 Job status

Firstly, homogeneity of the groups was organisation dependent. Clearly there was a distinct absence of a perception of a unified group at the clinic with splits between workers contracted for 10, 15, 20, 25 and 40 hours-per-week. Indeed, the status of the 10 hour-per-week domestics was such that they perceived themselves as vastly inferior, regarding their treatment by the organisation, than employees on better contracts. Homogeneity was more evident at the hotel, although some housekeepers working only weekends and others performing only part of the task served to blur this and it was only at the school – in both its guises (old and new) where the cleaners could describe themselves as a group with many similarities. Secondly, underemployment did not appear to be organisation specific, but rather remuneration specific. Full-time domestics and some better-paid part-time domestics were satisfied with their earnings and even some of the housekeepers felt that they were compensated sufficiently for their needs; but all of the cleaners at the school and many of those domestics contracted for fewer hours were dissatisfied with a high proportion reporting 'second jobs'. Thirdly, domestics, cleaners and housekeepers perceived the concept of dirty work differently, with domestics seeing their role as superior to the other two and gaining kudos from being NHS employees; some housekeepers perceiving housekeeping as a profession but being disappointed by the shabby nature of the hotel; but cleaners having very little to base coping mechanisms on – both at the new school and at the old.

7.1.1.2 Work Intensity

Not only was a focus on work intensity pivotal to the management tactics in all three organisations, although the level of intensity was different in each, nowhere did management and worker share a belief concerning its legitimacy. The highest was observable at the hotel, set at such a level that many new recruits preferred to quickly relinquish the employment rather than accept the requirements. Furthermore, the intensity at the old school was only slightly less with cleaners needing to work almost all of the 3-hour shift in order to render their patches 'fit for purpose'. Indeed, it was only at the clinic that domestics were able to indulge in non-work activities during their shifts and still maintain an acceptable quality – but even here management were gradually and covertly reducing the labour hours available and were focussing on making the lowest paid domestics deliver the increased magnitude. One similarity between all three cases was the observation that no one followed the list of duties specified by management with everyone holding the perception that the list of duties was unattainable in the time available. However, of particular importance was a marginal, yet unplanned and unforeseen, reduction in work intensity between the old school and the new. The introduction of teamwork saw a decrease in effort from the more conscientious cleaners, which led to a relatively new school beginning to look shabby less than one year into its enterprise.

7.1.1.3 Organisational Culture

Describing culture using Meyerson & Martin's (1987) model, the clinic displayed a culture that resembled 'differentiation' with the school (again in both its guises) and the hotel exhibiting forms that bore hallmarks of 'integration'. However the three certainly had different characteristics regarding stability, as can be seen by viewing them using Payne's (2001) model. Firstly, the hotel displayed a high degree of stability with low 'pervasiveness', high 'consensus' and high 'psychological intensity' – at least amongst those whose tenure lasted more than three weeks. Secondly, the culture at the old school also demonstrated stability with low 'pervasiveness', high 'consensus' but, contrastingly, variable 'psychological intensity' (mainly due to cleaners demonstrating variable conscientiousness – an option that could not be enjoyed by a housekeeper due to the transparency of a clean hotel room) – yet this stability became threatened when the new school opened. Introducing team working and altering the role of the supervisor pressurised 'pervasiveness' to rise and 'consensus' to fall – a step change. Thirdly, and in contrast, the culture at the clinic was not stable but was altering gradually; already classified as 'differentiation' it was becoming more fragmented as the effects of management's inattention to the day-to-day running of the function escalated. Applying Payne's (2001) model 'consensus', never high, was diminishing and 'psychological intensity' was following a downward trend, assisted by the pernicious effect of cover, the toxicity of absenteeism, the covert erosion of labour hours and management's mixed messages about what was important.

7.1.1.4 Organisational Conflict

Conflict was present in all three organisations, but it manifested itself in different forms and had dissimilar impact on the functions. Of least effect was conflict at the old school, there being little opportunity for it to arise, with the cleaners working largely isolated, virtually no contact between cleaner and company management and the supervisor having power and skill to nullify it – although this changed when the new regime took control and allowed affective and task conflict (De Drue, 2004) to arise when they introduced team working and neutralised supervision. In comparison task conflict was at the forefront of a rift between management and domestics at the clinic, the latter believing the requirement for cover fundamentally prevented them from achieving their undertaking and, in addition, relationship conflict was rife between domestics who thought some of their colleagues took unfair advantage via excessive absenteeism and/or a lackadaisical approach to work. Furthermore, the conflict had a significant effect on the psychological contracts of the domestics – an outcome that could not be concluded from the hotel. As with the clinic, there was evidence of a rift between management and housekeepers caused by task conflict and arising because of a strong perception, on the part of housekeepers, that cleaning a room in 20 minutes was impossible. This perception was aggravated by the poor appearance of the rooms, even when cleaned, caused by the unwillingness of management to remedy the signs of wear and tear. However, possibly due to the low expectation of the housekeepers regarding what management would provide, this conflict caused significantly less trouble here.

7.1.1.5 Perceived organisational support

None of the three organisations studied could boast significant POS but, apparently, it was the expectation of support that was of more importance. Firstly, at the old school there was essentially no expectation of any support from the company and, indeed, the company made no effort to generate any POS – providing the minimum wage, no other discernable benefits and almost no contact with any of the cleaners. Compare this with the new school where POS was no different but where the company had promised improvement in a number of areas yet had delivered on none, making the impact of the lack of POS far greater under the new regime. Secondly, there was a justified lack of expectation of support at the hotel. Management provided the minimum wage and little else; failed to meet the basic requirements of maintaining the building, the staffing levels and the consumables; and appeared give little thought to scheduling work effectively. Yet, although this undermined the efforts of housekeepers to provide quality guest rooms it had only a limited negative impact. It was in the third case, the clinic, where lack of POS had the greatest impact. Here there was an expectation that support would be available but management's failure to deal with absenteeism, its approach to cover and its inflexible stance on auditing, resulted in quite damaging effects on the psychological contracts of the domestics.

7.1.1.6 Leader-member exchange

This construct varied from being a negative influence on psychological contracts at certain places to being possibly the dominant determinant at one of them. At the old school the supervisor's power and influence was second to none in terms of how people performed, via her impact on individual psychological contracts, to the extent that some cleaners actually left the employment rather than remain in the 'out group'. The removal of this influence at the new school damaged the control that had been such a notable sign of how the function worked and caused a significant change in the psychological contracts. Indeed, this latter vision of LMX bore much resemblance to that observed at the other two sites. At the clinic two supervisors spanned the study period and neither could boast high LMX. The first was seen by many to treat her staff unfairly and the second, although trying to remedy this, also generated the same feelings in the domestics with, in addition, neither receiving much support from management. There did appear, however, to be an 'in-group' and an 'out-group' – the former populated by those displaying good attendance but also favouring full-time staff. Meanwhile it was at the hotel where the construct had perhaps the least effect, with three different head-housekeepers fulfilling the role, none receiving support from management, none having much power to influence a housekeeper's circumstances and a workforce so small as to make the 'in-group'/'out-group' concept irrelevant.

7.1.1.7 Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange

Combining the two constructs shows that, in certain scenarios they were acting against each other and in the others reinforcing each other – but with POS always being poor. Firstly, at the old school LMX was strong, boasting a heavily populated in-group, and POS, although weak, had little effect because cleaners had little expectation of support from the company – strong LMX opposing weak POS. Compare this with the new school. LMX was all but nullified at the same time that expectation of support was raised but not realised – the two working in tandem to negatively influence psychological contracts. Secondly, at the clinic POS was always a negative influence on contracts but, for a short time, one of the supervisors attempted to strengthen LMX. This was short lived and the negative reinforcement not only returned even stronger, but also continued to grow. Thirdly, the hotel could boast only negative reinforcement of the two constructs with head-housekeepers perceived as powerless and the prevalence of very weak POS.

7.1.1.8 Employee-organisation relationship

Tsui et al (1997) suggested that the approaches companies made to their relationship with employees could be categorised into four different types: 'mutual investment', 'quasi-spot contract', 'overinvestment' and 'underinvestment'; the former two being balanced[33] and the latter two unbalanced. They further suggest that performance was optimised with the 'mutual

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[33] 'Balanced' here refers to a suggestion that the company offers benefits that match the returns expected from employees

investment' approach – one taken by none of the organisations studied. Indeed the school, in both its forms, was the only one offering a balanced approach – 'quasi-spot' leaning towards 'underinvestment'. The problem at the hotel – 'underinvestment' leaning towards 'quasi-spot' was not significantly different except that the work intensity/unpredictable wage axis made for the inability to recruit adequate numbers of people. Indeed, it was the clinic, delivering an 'overinvestment' strategy of relatively high benefits whilst requiring a dearth in return, where the imbalance was most observable.

7.1.1.9 Exchange ideology

Evidence collected in this study suggests that exchange ideology was not organisation dependent with examples of the effects of low and high exchange ideology at all sites. However, taking an overview of my time at the three sites, I would suggest that more people demonstrated behaviour commensurate with low rather than with high exchange ideology. The 'overinvestment' EOR did not encourage an improvement in performance amongst domestics, but the requirement for 'cover' only indirectly worsened performance. Similarly, the CRB incident at the school violated psychological contracts, but the cleaners still made the rooms 'fit for purpose'. It is possible however, certainly at the hotel and perhaps at the school, that those with high exchange ideology were those who quickly left, discouraged by the low level of the benefits on offer – the companies not even meeting their basic exchange threshold.

7.1.1.10 Organisational justice

Domestics at the clinic generally perceived injustice in all three dimensions 'distributive' – unfair allocation of work with full-time staff receiving preferential treatment; 'procedural' (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997) – work being used as a punishment; and 'interactional' (Colquitt et al, 2001) – domestics receiving unfair treatment in the communication of audits and having team briefing abandoned without explanation. Furthermore, these feelings of injustice raised quite strong emotions making psychological contract violation not unusual. Compare this with the justice elements at the old school. Distributive and procedural injustice elements arose with cleaners being allocated harder patches as punishment, and there was virtually no sign of interactional justice as there was virtually no interaction between cleaner and company! However, although some cleaners were irritated when no punishment was required yet they were given hard patches to clean, none of these justice failings led to outrage, making justice aberrations low key. Perhaps perversely, all justice dimensions improved at the new school yet neither performance improvements nor psychological contract enhancement was achieved.

Quite a different picture was apparent at the hotel. Distributive justice was generally positive – the allocation of work deemed equitable except for the problem with untrained staff; as was procedural justice – the rota considered fair; and it was only the interactional component that

irked the housekeepers – having guest surveys withheld from them and being treated with a lack of respect.

7.1.2 Core Concept

7.1.2.1 The psychological contract

Although accepting the idiosyncratic nature of the psychological contract (Rousseau & Parks, 1993), the make up of the contracts of the people studied did appear to be heavily impacted by the influencers detailed above. Taking EOR (Tsui et al, 1997) as a major aspect in the design of this make up, results at the three venues were markedly different. The 'overinvestment' approach at the clinic suggested a more relational contract was on offer and many of the domestics bought into what they thought involved open-ended, less specific agreements that established and maintained a long-term relationship – yet the same 'overinvestment' saw little emerging from management in return; a scenario ripe for contract breach. However, the make up was substantially different at the school and the hotel. At the old school, the quasi-spot nature of the EOR served to deliver psychological contracts fundamentally transactional in nature where both sides understood not only that little was offered for little return but also that there was little ambiguity in these reciprocations. An un-negotiated alteration to this understanding, causing unrest, did not arise until the new school increased their expectations of the cleaners whilst reducing their own obligations. Meanwhile the 'underinvestment' strategy cultivated at the hotel put that organisation in a precarious position, as many people were not even prepared to form psychological contracts. Even those who did saw little sign that they were treated as anything but temporary employees – although they were on permanent arrangements.

7.1.2.2 Psychological contract fulfilment - mutuality

At the clinic large gaps in mutuality, of both obligations of employer to employee and of employee to employer, were evident – with overinvestment EOR signalling that the organisation were not even attempting mutuality. Management expected domestics to attend work regularly – but absenteeism was rife; domestics expected management to minimise absenteeism – but management used cover to mask absenteeism; and management believed that work intensity was low enough to legitimately reduce staffing – a belief not held by domestics. Indeed the culture, resembling 'differentiation' (Meyerson & Martin, 1987) worked against mutuality. Gaps were also observable at the hotel with, as above, the company not even attempting mutuality as demonstrated by their 'underinvestment' EOR. Here, management expected housekeepers to deliver a quality guest experience, but absolved themselves from having any part to play in that achievement. Even the focus on the task delivered by the culture of 'integration' was undermined by management failing to deliver on such obligations as accurate room scheduling and building maintenance. However, these gaps in mutuality were much less apparent at the school. The old school not only boasted an 'integration' perspective, with an almost total focus on the job of cleaning the school, but also

could point to the company requiring and receiving very little from the cleaners at the same time as they were offering little in return. Notably, these mutuality gaps did increase under the new regime as evidenced by management abandoning pragmatism regarding cleanliness, but cleaners feeling unable to meet the new requirements.

Already mentioned above with respect to the clinic, one quite specific and observable gap in mutuality was evident in the perception of both sides regarding work intensity. In every case (although not quite as apparent at the old school as at the rest) the behaviour of management implied a belief that they could legitimately increase work intensity; even at the hotel, where work intensity was at its highest, management continually forced the 20-minute-per-room ruling. In contrast, also in every case, the behaviour of employees signalled a conviction that work intensity could not be increased. Whilst it could be argued that this is prevalent throughout all sectors of employment, it is of particular importance here because increasing work intensity, without addressing mutuality, was each management's main thrust for improvement!

7.1.2.3 Psychological contract fulfilment - reciprocity

The gaps in reciprocity at the clinic tended to revolve around organisational justice, at least from the views of the domestics. Many felt that management failed in distributive justice terms – to provide sufficient labour to avoid the requirement for cover; in procedural terms – to allocate work fairly rather than expecting a higher return from lesser paid domestics; and in interactional terms – to be more frank about why they instigated changes (such as abandoning team briefing and increasing the movement of people between patches). However, management also believed reciprocity was absent as evidenced by people failing to come to work regularly, partaking in non-work activities and being unwilling to undertake cover – when they were being paid a wage substantially higher than the norm. Gaps were also noticeable at the school with, at the old school the perceived inequity of workloads and the pervasive belief that it was impossible to adequately clean the patches in the time available – this latter made more acute at the new school by management's decision to purchase inadequate cleaning materials. At the old school the supervisor mediated the gaps via her pragmatism and tight control, but that mediation was lost at the new. It was at the hotel where reciprocity was most acutely felt. Management failed to provide a wage that matched the workload, they failed to provide a work rota that was accurate to help housekeepers plan their commitments and they failed to provide rooms that they could be proud to clean. Yet, accepting these significant gaps, the effect on performance at the hotel was still less than at the clinic.

7.1.2.4 Psychological contract breach and violation

The gaps in mutuality and reciprocity suggested that fulfilment would occur less than breach and violation, and this was certainly true at the clinic. Central to breach and violation from the domestics' viewpoint was the requirement for cover caused by the high absenteeism with,

interestingly, the high absenteeism causing the main exasperation of management – and this is particularly significant because the two features were permanent phenomena. Adding to the above the lack of perceived justice – management's covert reduction in staffing, its use of heavy work as punishment, the low POS, deteriorating LMX and abandonment of team briefing – along with domestics' focus on non-work related activities, their hiding of mops and their early finishes, one can see that breach and violation was rife. In contrast, although breach did occur at the school, the content of the psychological contracts was so modest that there was less scope for it. POS was almost non-existent, LMX was high with a heavily populated in-group and even the effects of the major dispute caused by the CRB issue had only temporary repercussions. However, this did deteriorate at the new school where teamwork uncovered poor standards achieved by some cleaners with LMX unable to mediate. A similar picture was apparent at the hotel, the paucity of the content of the contracts leaving little to breach – at least with those housekeepers who lasted beyond an initial period. Expectation was so low that even management reneging on providing an acceptable building fabric almost became an acceptable, albeit irritating, state of affairs. Here, breach and violation was more apparent between management and the different head-housekeepers! Interestingly, attempts to repair trust (Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009) – which could have served to reduce breach and violation – were largely absent at all three sites, with only the supervisor at the old school making any efforts to address the issue. Complex as the reasons for this might be, I would suggest that high on the list of explanations could be: a lack of managerial skill; a perception that it should not be necessary; and a perception that relations were such that it would be an exercise in futility.

7.1.3 Outcomes

7.1.3.1 Organisation-based self-esteem

There was little evidence of OBSE being organisation specific with two exceptions. Firstly at the clinic, those domestics contracted for insufficient hours to earn a living demonstrated poorer OBSE when comparing themselves with their better-paid colleagues. Secondly housekeepers at the hotel, considering themselves as professionals in their line of work, possibly had the highest OBSE of all. However, all tended to use the reframing, recalibrating and refocusing mechanisms of dirty work (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999) to raise their self-esteem.

7.1.3.2 Job satisfaction

Only the hotel could boast staff who gained significant affective job satisfaction from performing the task itself – possibly arising from them seeing housekeeping as their profession. However, even this was tempered by the very high workload, the low POS, the poor LMX and the poor state of the rooms. In contrast domestics gained substantial affective satisfaction from the non-work related, social aspects – aspects that, because of the lower work intensity, formed a larger part of their activity than was the case at the other two venues. Evidence at the school suggested that affective satisfaction was low as there was little non-

work activity and even a 'fit for purpose' room was sometimes far from 'clean' – a lack of satisfaction that continued for the more conscientious staff in the new school when they felt that teamwork diluted their efforts. A lack of cognitive conflict tended to affect people who could be categorised as underemployed (Feldman, 1996) wherever they worked, but the low POS present at all three sites did little to mediate this – even for the few who did not fall into the underemployed category.

7.1.3.3 Organisational commitment

Of the three components of commitment, continuance was strong in all three organisations. Almost everyone would have generated considerable hardship had they decided to leave their organisation without having another job to go to – and these alternative jobs were scarce. Perhaps this is an obvious conclusion concerning those in a position of underemployment, as many of those were struggling to meet financial commitments with the jobs they had (some having second and even third jobs). However, it was also largely applicable to those who were not underemployed, a group comprising mainly of full time domestics; although possibly this is also not surprising as everyone knew that the remuneration was better than they could get for the same arrangements elsewhere. In stark contrast, normative commitment was absent in all organisations with no-one feeling any obligation to stay – perhaps unsurprisingly considering the low POS prevalent throughout – and it was only affective commitment that appeared to be organisation specific. The clinic boasted quite a high affective commitment – but to the NHS in general rather than the job – as evidenced by people being very reluctant to leave even after psychological contract violations; whilst this facet was almost completely absent at the school and the hotel.

7.1.3.4 Motivation

The complexity in outcomes arising from the psychological contracts of the domestics assisted the effect of deflating the motivation of the employees. Intrinsically, there was very little to generate motivation and, extrinsically only the audit appeared to have real impact. Indeed, it was in the non-work related activities that motivation appeared to lay. In contrast, extrinsic motivation in the guise of the supervisor was the main influence at the old school and it was, observably, very effective – as could be seen by the detrimental effect when her role was changed under the new cleaning company. Moreover, even the intrinsic motivator of being personally responsible for transforming a room to become 'fit for purpose' at the old school ceased when team working was introduced. In further contrast, motivation at the hotel appeared to be a combination of intrinsic – owing credence to housekeepers seeing themselves as professionals; and extrinsic – the cleanliness of a room being so transparent to the guest who would occupy it. However, motivation was negatively impacted by the state of the hotel and the low POS.

7.1.4 Behaviour

The broad composition of the psychological contracts were different in each case study (indeed, this was even true within the case of the school where the change between the old school and the new school resulted in, almost, a new scenario) with the effects of POS, LMX and work intensity – for example – being quite dissimilar at the clinic, the school and the hotel. Moreover, even the EOR pursued by the three organisations fell into different categories. Thus, in addition to the composition of the psychological contracts being divergent, fulfilment, breach and violation was highly dependent on where an employee worked. As an ethnographic enquiry, this provides a rare insight into the hidden workforce and shows how much employment relationships, and hence performance, can differ between organisations.

7.1.4.1 Performance

The management at all three organisations studied had an almost exclusive focus on the job/task conscientiousness dimension of performance, either ignoring the importance of the citizenship dimensions or assuming that they would be delivered by employees as and when they were needed. Firstly taking the clinic, the content of the psychological contracts was such that the opportunities for breach were considerable. Taking "fairness, trust and delivery of the deal" (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648; Guest, 1998 p661) as issues regarding contract fulfilment, it was apparent that domestics had numerous, chronic issues about all three aspects: fairness – some domestics were victimised, lower paid workers were expected to provide a better return; trust – management were covertly reducing hours, team briefing was abandoned; and delivery of the deal – management failed to tackle absenteeism, management failed to handle cover. Consequently, domestics had little confidence in the willingness and, importantly, the ability of management to adequately administer the function. Indeed, the relatively low work intensity allowed employees to constantly grumble to their colleagues about the state of affairs and, in detriment to job/task conscientiousness, turn their attention to non-work related activities. However, notwithstanding these issues, it remains that management did nothing to secure either interpersonal citizenship performance or organisational citizenship performance from the domestics. Regarding the former, the non-homogeneity of the group (in terms of contracted hours) itself raised barriers between staff, but management's divisive treatment of them exacerbated the problem and led to issues such as hiding mops and failing to load stock to trolleys for their colleagues. Meanwhile it appeared that management merely expected the latter behaviour to naturally occur, yet none of their tactics assisted its acquisition – as evidenced by the expectation that domestics could be moved without explanation, lower paid staff could be given more work than their predecessors and labour hours could be reduced opportunistically.

At the school, the focus was also totally aimed at job/task conscientiousness. However, certainly at the old school, this strategy appeared to yield results. Management at the contract

cleaning company established the organisational framework, put a supervisor in place who they felt they could trust and let her manage the activity almost unhindered. They set out to build very little into the psychological contract, leading to few opportunities for breach, but they did ensure that work intensity would be very high and they accepted that their approach would lead to high turnover and, therefore, that organisational citizenship behaviour from the cleaners was probably unlikely. Indeed, their tactic of isolating cleaners in their own patches and discouraging any contact suggested that they were making a conscious decision to forego any interpersonal citizenship behaviour. Moreover, as suggested above, their strategy met with success, yet this was largely down to the skills of the supervisor as can be seen from the changes in fortune following the take over by the new company. There was no evidence that the new company did anything different regarding their approach to performance, still attacking only job/task conscientiousness, with their change to team working merely assuming that interpersonal citizenship behaviour would be a natural consequence. However, they underestimated how ingrained both solo working and close supervision were in the psychological contracts of the cleaners and hence the breaches that teamwork and the removal of her authority would bring. Interestingly, there was evidence that organisational citizenship performance did exist at the old school – but aimed at the school rather than the contract company – such performance dwindling due partly to the negative effect of teamwork at the new.

Finally at the hotel, the focus on job/task conscientiousness caused work intensity to be so high that many potential workers would not even formulate a psychological contract, leaving soon after they realised how hard the job was going to be. Perhaps the focus on cost-minimisation caused by the hotel being in administration, understandably, led to such pressure on work intensity, but being unable to boast an adequate workforce for all but a very short period had a detrimental effect on the housekeepers. In a similar way to the school, the company aimed to influence very few activities in establishing the psychological contract, indeed the 'underinvestment' EOR demonstrated that they were not even attempting to establish any mutuality, but they also reneged on "fairness, trust and delivery of the deal" (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006 p648; Guest, 1998 p661) – especially 'delivery of the deal'. Being either unwilling or unable to meet their responsibilities in providing housekeepers with undamaged hotel rooms, consistent supervision, adequate cleaning equipment, an accurate cleaning schedule and sufficient consumables meant that breach was almost the permanent status of the psychological contracts here. Somewhat perversely, the professionalism of the housekeepers tended to mediate these breaches and maintain job/task conscientiousness. But, again as with the other two cases, without attempting to address them management appeared to expect the two citizenship performance dimensions to be available when needed.

7.2 In summary

Although each organisation carried out, ostensibly, the same activity (cleaning a room or another part of a building) the findings of this study suggest that there were vast differences,

not only between the three cases but also between the old school and the new school, in terms of psychological contract content and also the extent to which breach and violation occurred. Importantly the environment in which the task of cleaning was delivered appeared to have a significant effect on the way that management went about their role in the function, yet noticeably all ignored any attempt to influence the citizenship dimensions of performance choosing only to affect job/task conscientiousness – via strategies of increasing work intensity with no mutual belief between worker and management that this could be done – and all demonstrated poor POS. The cost-minimisation obsession of the hotel, the precarious nature of the cleaning contract at the school and the belief, at the clinic, that domestics were capable of much more than they were actually delivering were crucial contributors to the environments and perhaps these dictated the obsession with work intensity at the expense of all else. However, although ignoring citizenship dimensions does appear to have consequences (Chen et al, 2009; Muse & Stamper, 2007; Organ, 1997; Van Dyne et al, 1994), findings here suggest that certain traits of psychological contracts and their outcomes – arising from the influencers described – may make them inaccessible to functions like these. Furthermore, whilst attempting to make no definitive list, I can suggest – based on the evidence – some traits of which management should be aware. Firstly, if management makes no attempt to build a relationship with its employees – in other words if it follows an 'underinvestment' or 'quasi-spot' EOR approach – then there is likely to be insufficient content of the psychological contracts of those employees to deliver citizenship performance. Secondly, poor Perceived Organisational Support (POS) will provide opportunities for employees to doubt the commitment of the company to the task they are carrying out and hence heighten the possibility of contract breach. Thirdly, 'underemployed' workers tend to be looking for alternative employment (making for short tenure) and/or have second jobs – all distractions from the two citizenship dimensions. Fourthly a lack of homogeneity amongst staff, with workers having differences in pay and conditions whilst carrying out the same task, favours a disparity in the willingness to provide the required performance elements. Fifthly, psychological contract violation and breach, which may have more opportunity to occur in contracts with high content, deflates citizenship behaviour; and finally, firms operating an overriding strategy of cost-minimisation are unlikely to be able to commit sufficient managerial resource to provide an environment for citizenship behaviour.

In addition, the evidence from the case studies suggested that the more opaque management appeared to be concerning their motives, the less cooperative were the staff. Whilst this is a broad generalisation, the focus on the task at the school and the hotel, albeit helped by the high work intensity, did overcome many negative aspects of the work, but the lack of clarity at the clinic, likewise assisted by the low work intensity, rather magnified tensions. Indeed, although I have no definitive evidence to claim a conscious approach, management at the old school appeared to not only have a clear picture of what they wanted from their employees and what they were prepared to offer in return, but also made that clear to all concerned.

Contrast this with, especially, the clinic and the new school where it was certainly not the case. At the clinic, for example, there appeared to be an unstated assumption by management that the 'overinvestment' EOR entitled them to compliance from domestics on many aspects of the job – an entitlement never reciprocated! Meanwhile, at the new school, changing from individual working to team working (expecting compliance merely by directive) had an effect opposite to that anticipated. Finally, the underestimation of the effect on performance of an obsessive concentration on work intensity, with worker and manager having significantly different beliefs about its legitimacy, was ubiquitous.

Finally, the evidence does not suggest that management should endeavour to engender the citizenship dimensions of performance in their employees. It may cost[34] too much to make it a viable prospect. The evidence suggests only that management should be aware of the implications of the tactics they employ.

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[34] Here I use 'cost' not only in monetary terms but also in the expenditure of management resource which may not be adequate or available to achieve such an outcome

Chapter 8 – Conclusions

The research question was, '*To what extent do the psychological contracts of cleaners in the workplace contribute to their performance?*' with the overarching aim being, '*To expand our understanding of the link between an individual's employment relationship and their performance in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments.*' Consequently, there was a need to obtain information about employment relationships and performance (8.1) in order to answer the question (8.2) and meet the aim and objectives (8.3). The anticipated contribution to knowledge (8.4) also required review, as did the limitations of the research (8.5). Furthermore, concluding observations have been incorporated as a reminder of the uniqueness of the case studies (8.6).

This study collected evidence concerning employment relationships from activities being carried out in three different organisations but, although the organisations where these activities occurred were involved in different primary activities (providing healthcare, teaching children and accommodating guests), the actual function under study was the same in each case – the application of labour to clean the facilities in a building – using similar skills, similar equipment and similar materials. Subsequently, information about the performance of these functions, and the people in them, was obtained by the application of a behavioural model to the evidence; a model that was designed to establish said performance through building pictures of the psychological contracts of the people working in the three organisations.

8.1 Employment relationships and performance

Many organisational factors impinged on the simple function of cleaning to cause these similar activities to appear to be quite different from each other. These included: whether the organisation was public or private, whether the activity was in-house managed or contracted, the financial well being of the organisation, what benefits the organisation was prepared to offer its employees, the homogeneity of the workforce, the expectation regarding cleanliness, the expectation regarding work intensity and the quality of supervision and management. Indeed, through analysing the data via constructs in the model that included organisational culture, organisational conflict, POS, LMX and organisational justice it was possible to build a picture of how psychological contracts looked in each case study. Moreover, although by definition the psychological contract is idiosyncratic, the evidence here showed that these organisational constructs served to mould it such that there were discernable differences between the contracts of workers in different organisations – and this contributed to discernable differences in the performance of each organisation.

At the clinic, the mismatched 'overinvestment' EOR (Tsui et al, 1997) led to the content of the psychological contracts being high, especially from the management viewpoint – expecting domestics to readily cooperate with any necessary changes in return for generous (in comparison with other cleaning jobs) remuneration. In contrast, domestics expected a high

degree of social content (in the job) in return for delivering only job/task conscientiousness. This resulted in large gaps of mutuality and reciprocity in the contracts and consequently numerous opportunities for contract breach and violation – the antithesis of the mutuality and reciprocity required for improved individual performance (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004). Thus, whilst management followed a strategy of increasing work intensity by removing labour from the function, domestics responded with high absenteeism, increased affective conflict and a general unwillingness to cooperate. In comparison, the content of the psychological contracts was much less at both the school and the hotel. Fostered by the 'quasi-spot' and 'underinvestment' EOR strategies (Tsui et al, 1997) used by the two organisations, respectively, the gaps in mutuality and reciprocity were smaller, which gave less scope for psychological contract breach or violation – although such was the effect of the 'underinvestment' EOR at the hotel that inadequacy of recruitment prevented people from staying long enough to even formulate a psychological contract, and this was probably the main obstacle to overall performance at that site. In addition, at all sites, it is questionable whether the focus on work intensity as a way of addressing job/task conscientiousness was wise accepting that there was no mutuality about its legitimacy.

Not only were incidents of psychological contract breaches and violations high at the clinic, the effects of them were substantial. Management's response to high absenteeism bordered on victimisation and their response to poor cooperation when increasing workloads was to fundamentally change their recruitment strategy. Domestics' response to the need for cover led to conflict with their colleagues and their response to increased workload was poorer job/task conscientiousness. In contrast, maintaining the existing workload at the school, not increasing it, still generated breaches but they had only minor effects on performance. Even at the hotel, where increasing work intensity was an objective, housekeepers tended to accept the need for it to happen without believing it was achievable.

Maintaining psychological contract fulfilment was not helped at the clinic by the poor POS – with domestics believing that management were reneging (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000) on their obligations by not dealing with absenteeism and not managing the problem of 'cover'; and the poor LMX – with supervisors undermined by higher management and being given neither training nor job descriptions. Poor POS was also present at the old school and the new school but, because there was little expectation of support, it had limited effect. In contrast, the deterioration in LMX experienced by cleaners at the new school did have a marked effect on contract breach – and hence performance – because the strong LMX present at the old school had become an important expectation of the cleaners such that removing it whilst anticipating the people would work as a team was hard to accept. In further contrast, POS and LMX were both poor at the hotel but, as at the school, there was so little expectation of their influence in the psychological contracts of the housekeepers that they caused only limited problems.

Notwithstanding the state of the psychological contracts, what was readily apparent throughout all the case studies was the absence of any attempt by management to influence the two citizenship dimensions of performance – yet they expected them to be available if needed. For instance, interpersonal citizenship performance was expected: at the clinic when covering the work of absent colleagues; at the new school with the move towards team working; and at the hotel during times when workload was uneven – whilst organisational citizenship performance was anticipated: at the clinic when domestics were required to clean patches in less time than their predecessors; at the new school with the removal of supervision; and at the hotel when housekeepers were obliged to forgo rest days during high room utilisation. However, when these dimensions were not needed, employees were expected to revert to only job/task conscientiousness.

8.2 The research question

'To what extent do the psychological contracts of cleaners in the workplace contribute to their performance?' Drucker wrote that management was the organ through which the organisation performs (1995 p218) and, as can be seen from the literature on performance in chapter 2 (section 2.2.4.2), performance theoretically requires employees to deliver all three dimensions – job/task conscientiousness, interpersonal citizenship performance, and organisational citizenship performance. However, only the first of these three was addressed by the present management practices in the three case studies, with all focussed on increasing or maintaining work intensity as the sole strategies for running their functions. All their efforts were therefore designed to influence the activity of cleaning, with evidence pointing to them having an expectation that the two citizenship dimensions would be rendered when they were needed. Indeed, the example from the new school, when team work was introduced, saw management merely tell staff that this was their new way of working with apparently no thought given to the interpersonal citizenship performance this required; and the example from the hotel, with staff required to show organisational citizenship performance by giving up their rest days at short notice, yet not use their initiative when it came to cleaning particularly dirty rooms. Indeed, the states of the psychological contracts at all three sites operated against the delivery of the citizenship dimensions. At the clinic the contracts appeared to be in an almost permanent state of breach or violation, whilst at the school and the hotel, the content of the contracts was so sparse that citizenship behaviours did not appear in the expectations; as evidenced by cleaners at the old school knowing almost nothing about the company they worked for!

It would therefore appear that improving performance would necessitate fundamental changes in both the composition (particularly at the school and hotel) and the breach/fulfilment state (particularly at the clinic) of the psychological contracts as well as fundamental changes in the focus of the management of the functions. Firstly, changing the composition of the psychological contracts at the school and the hotel is likely to cost money

– such was the recruitment difficulty at the hotel, and such was the turnover at the school, that having people remain long enough to build effective contracts is improbable. Increasing the hourly rate may have an effect on recruitment/retention, but opposing it would be the underemployment (Feldman, 1996) status of many of these workers who would need more hours, in addition to a better hourly rate, to remain. However, the hotel is in administration and the margin (revenue – cost) at the old school was so critical that the company lost the contract even though it was very efficient, and both paid the minimum wage; so increasing the wage bill could have caused the hotel to close and could have made the company cleaning the school lose its contract earlier. Secondly, changing the breach/fulfilment state of the contracts at the clinic would require management to address two known toxic issues – absenteeism and 'cover'. The evidence showed that these two linked problems were the main causes of breach/violation and, because they were chronic, were increasing the intensity to such an extent that any improvement would need them to be solved as a prerequisite. However, management does not appear to have the will, the authority or the ability to effectively deal with the requirement. Thirdly, changing the focus of management away from job/task conscientiousness towards the citizenship dimensions needs their ability to do so, but none of the findings suggest that any of the three managements have that ability. Those at the clinic had already shown their limitations by their approach to absenteeism and cover, whilst hotel management had overlooked the opportunity to improve guest rooms and those at the new school had emasculated the supervisor without effectively replacing her function; all suggesting unacceptable limitations in managerial skills. Indeed, only at the old school was there evidence that management accepted that they were relatively powerless to influence the citizenship dimensions, relying on the supervisor's abilities to maximise performance in her own way.

Finally, a warning – the high level of work intensity performed by the cleaners at the school and the housekeepers at the hotel whilst carrying out well-established methods, using known and stable technology, and requiring relatively low skill levels, delivered two (relatively) efficient functions. The evidence, therefore, suggests that attempting to address the two citizenship dimensions of performance, whilst theoretically important, may not have universal applicability. The uncertainty that could be brought from attempting to alter the psychological contracts, to such an extent as to make interpersonal citizenship performance and organisational citizenship performance become behaviours arising from such contracts, may make such an undertaking dangerous.

8.3 The aim

'To expand our understanding of the link between an individual's employment relationship and their performance in low pay, low skill, low technology and methodologically stable environments.' The first three of the four objectives[35] were achieved via answering the

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[35] See section 1.4

research question, leaving the last – looking to test out what was comparable and translatable to other groups and disciplines – to be dealt with here. Bryman believed that "it is the quality of the theoretical inferences that are made out of the qualitative data that is crucial to the assessment of generalisation" (2004 p285) and those made below are interpretable and are merely pointers to assist in the making of informed choices. This whole project has been aimed at understanding the complexity of psychological contracts and their resultant behaviour – so the generalisations made below are limited to those that unambiguously, to me, arose from the study.

The most critical finding of this research is that addressing the two citizenship dimensions of performance can range from being difficult to almost impossible in certain environments and job/task conscientiousness, in these environments, may need to dominate management's strategy. I have found seven recognisable features that could affect people's willingness to supply one or more of these citizenship dimensions. Firstly, organisations following an 'underinvestment' or a 'quasi-spot' EOR strategy (Tsui et al, 1997) would find it difficult to generate enough content in the psychological contracts of their employees for them to deliver either citizenship performance dimension. Indeed, 'quasi-spot' where the employer offers short-term, purely economic inducements in exchange for well-specified contributions by the employee and 'underinvestment', which expects the same but offers even less (Tsui et al, 1997) almost preclude employees from going beyond any basic job requirements. Secondly organisations displaying low POS, specifically if this manifests itself by the perception that the contributions of employees are not valued (Eisenberger et al, 1986) will tend to increase the reciprocity gap (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004) in the psychological contracts and give added opportunities for breach. Thirdly, expecting citizenship behaviours from workers who consider themselves 'underemployed' (Feldman, 1996) may not be feasible in many situations. The more 'underemployed' a person feels, the more likely they are either to be looking for alternative employment (making their tenure short), or to be looking for a second or third job (distracting them from fulfilling the needs of each position they hold) – with both of these potentially hindering citizenship performance. Fourthly, expecting similar behaviours from a non-homogenous group of employees as would be expected from one that was homogenous could be dangerous. Carrying out similar duties alongside people with better pay and conditions (full-time alongside part-time, permanent alongside temporary) serves to affect the fairness aspect of the psychological contract (Atkinson & Cuthbert, 2006) and leads to an increase in the reciprocity gaps of some employees. Fifthly, organisations showing evidence of high incidences of psychological contract breach and/or violation (Rousseau, 1989) will suffer from inadequate citizenship performance from those experiencing these incidences, an observation mirroring the findings of Atkinson (2007) who asserted that a psychological contract becomes more transactional after a breach. Sixthly, envisaging adequate time and resource being given to building the kind of (more) relational psychological contracts where citizenship would flourish by a company whose environment puts it in a position where cost-

minimisation has to be central to all decision-making, is implausible. Such would be the managerial input required and such the change in current thinking required, that cost-minimisation would become untenable – and that may not be an option for companies in such an environment. Finally, organisations targeting work intensity as a means to improve performance may need to assess the discrepancy between what they consider to be achievable and what their workers deem to be achievable. Indeed, this last feature is a specific item of mutuality in the psychological contract – but I include it here because of how significant an item it proved to be in this research.

Furthermore, it did appear that, in addition to the seven above, instances of poor LMX and high work intensity would also be likely to preclude successful alterations to psychological contracts – but the evidence was insufficient to make these claims. However, the learning obtained from this ethnographic study does suggest that transparency in what an organisation wants from its employees and what it is promising, or indeed what it can promise, in return, are central to dealing with performance issues. Looking across the cases, performance was better when employees knew what was expected of them and knew what to expect in return – even when they felt that the return did not meet their needs.

8.4 Contribution to knowledge

The contribution to knowledge arising from the ethnography itself focuses on how different the employment relationships were between three groups of people who, ostensibly, carried out the same function. The prevailing influencers on the psychological contracts of the employees had variable effects in each organisation, making for substantially diverse contracts and, consequently, significantly different performances. Notably, even though all three managements endeavoured to expedite only job/task conscientiousness, mainly via a concentration on work intensity, this did not serve to converge these performance differences. Comparing these particular cases revealed, spuriously, individual performance to be inversely related to benefits received and directly related to work intensity. This suggests that managers need to be aware of the complexity of the stimuli affecting performance and apply their efforts based on their continuous analysis of the effects of such stimuli.

However, although cleaning the workplace was a useful research topic in its own right (discovering these differences between companies employing the hidden workforce) the motivation to undertake it lay in its potential to inform about performance generally. If the stimuli affecting performance are complex, failing to take note of the prevailing psychological contracts when applying any management activity is dangerous. The content of the psychological contracts as well as their fulfilment/breach/violation will, this research suggests, have a significant effect on the success of any management approach. The significant contribution to knowledge is the conclusion, established in chapter 7, that the availability of interpersonal and organisational citizenship performance to a company is significantly dependent on the state of the psychological contracts of its workers.

8.5 Limitations and future research

The constructs forming the set of influencers and outcomes of psychological contracts in the model were incomplete and arguments could be made to use a different set of constructs. Such research would be possible using the existing data and may form the basis of future publications. In addition, the strength of the influences of the constructs used will be different for each individual and thus the psychological contract inferences and performance inferences obtained are generalisations only. However, although this is a limitation, only broad pictures are necessary, so I would suggest that it provides an adequate representation for the purposes of this research.

Limitations also arose from the methodology. The choice of organisations to study was made, not from a predetermined plan, but from opportunism. Studying the cleaning of a factory, a large office block or a football stadium may have provided more variety in terms of psychological contract content, breach and violation and could have led to stronger or weaker conclusions. In addition, the data was collected from organisations in two towns within East Lancashire. Results could have been different in organisations situated in large cities or in different areas of the country – although constructs including underemployment, work intensity, job satisfaction and psychological contract breach and violation would still potentially influence behaviour in a similar way. Moreover, spending only one shift per week in each case study allowed for much of the data to be lost but, unfortunately, time and resource constraints dictated the restrictions. Again, if I were undertaking the research again with no constraints, I would spend more hours per week in each organisation. Further still, the arbitrary nature of exit from the studies could be criticised. Whilst exit from the school and the hotel was based on 'theoretical saturation' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), exit from the clinic owed something to a fear of over-subjectivity through immersion and there was an argument that prolonging my participation could have provided even deeper insights.

In a more general context, investigations of other categories of employees who work in organisations demonstrating cost minimisation, 'underinvestment' or 'quasi-spot' EOR strategies, low POS and low LMX; hold psychological contracts that have little content or are often in a state of breach/violation; and who fall into the category of being underemployed or possessing more than one job, could help to test the findings of this study. Workers in call centres, carers in nursing homes, teaching assistants, local government clerical staff and retail salespeople could all conceivable be examples of people who would be faced with one or more of the criteria that, according to this research, would influence performance. Indeed, longitudinal studies using survey methods into some of these environments could help to triangulate the findings of this study by not only looking at different types of job, but also by using a different methodology with a quantitative analysis supporting the ethnography. Finally, there is the question of the quality of the data collection along with its interpretation and

analysis; in other words my skills as researcher. Future attempts at participant observation could improve these skills as could further study into human behaviour.

8.6 Concluding observations

Notwithstanding the contribution to knowledge above, it is important not to lose sight of the uniqueness of the case studies – it being possible to realise the shortcomings of management strategies by spotlighting particular aspects. One could argue, from the evidence collected here, that certain organisational factors hindered cleaning as a function, with the contract cleaning company at the old school having the greatest focus on the task and the clinic having the least. The hindrance at the old school was quite low due to: cleaning being the sole function of the contract cleaning organisation, which allowed for little peripheral activity; the homogeneity of the workforce, which allowed for little conflict within the group; and the quality of LMX, which provided power and authority at a point close to the operation itself. However, the hindrance at the clinic was much higher because cleaning was peripheral to the main function; the workforce was made up of a number of sub-groups that attracted conflict; and management could not – or would not – deal with important issues. If one takes Donaldson & Hilmer's contention that management should identify the facts and then reason from them (1998 p18), then the elimination of these hindrances should have been central to management activity, which would have had the effect of making the three case studies resemble each other much more closely (clearly the buildings needed cleaning and the underlying method was the same in each case). On the contrary, if one accepts Smircich's view that culture is a root metaphor for organisation (1983 p347), these organisational factors were inevitable and management was constrained to work largely within them. Indeed, linking Smircich's view with Meyerson & Martin's (1987) classification of cultural perspectives, the integration focus of the school and the hotel would appear to be one reason why management was able to maintain workers' focus on the cleaning task much more than the management of the differentiation perspective at the clinic was able to achieve. In other words, the management in the two former cases were, generally, not working against what Smircich identified as the self-image of the culture (1983 p348), whereas in the latter case they often were.

Moreover these two scenarios, based on the evidence, do not appear to be contradictory. Managers could still have managed by reasoning from the facts (Donaldson & Hilmer, 1998) if they accepted the constraints of the particular situation in which they were operating. At the old school, the most successful of the three organisations in terms of achieving the behaviour that management wanted, there was no attempt made to provide cleaners with anything but the minimum the law allowed, so success was not built on people being valued – as could be seen from the high turnover. Management understood that they could offer nothing more if they were to keep the contract. However, this relative success relied heavily on the skill of the supervisor and, as there was no infrastructure in place to deal with what would happen should she leave, it was a very precarious situation. Indeed, as can be seen from the evidence at the

new school, the removal of her power caused substantial problems. At the hotel, where there was some success in achieving the required behaviour, but terms and conditions were so poor that maintaining sufficient housekeepers to effectively carry out the function was impossible, the manager admitted that "we are on a downward spiral with rooms deteriorating, staff losing heart, guests receiving unacceptable accommodation and money getting tighter". However, the obsession with cost-minimisation prevented management from finding ways to reverse this spiral – ways that were available even if they were difficult to undertake. On the other hand, had management spent the money to stem the deterioration, the administrators could have closed the hotel down immediately! Finally, at the clinic, the least successful of the three in terms of achieving the required behaviour, domestics were given a range of benefits much higher than workers carrying out comparable work in other establishments, but they perceived that they were poorly treated in other aspects of their employment. In addition, they cleaned in a high quality environment and had plenty of time to carry out social activities as well as their job task. Unfortunately, management had little conception of how they wanted to achieve the well-documented level of cleanliness and appeared not to understand what were true constraints and what were obstacles that needed managerial acumen, and effort, to overcome – they did not 'reason from the facts' (Donaldson & Hilmer, 1998).

The problem with obtaining a broader contribution to performance (through citizenship) in this inquiry is that the present reality of the organisations may prevent it, as may the idiosyncrasy of the psychological contracts of the people employed. For instance, taking job satisfaction, the cleaners at the old school could not be described as satisfied, with underemployment leading to high turnover, yet their productivity was far superior to the (in some ways) more satisfied domestics at the clinic. As detailed above, the evidence from this inquiry suggests that delivering improvements by widening performance to include citizenship dimensions may not be appropriate, at least in these specific cases. Furthermore, there is cause to suggest that certain generalisations can be made about the traits of other organisations also (see 8.3 above). Attempts to generalise beyond this evidence would be mere speculation, similar to that made by Brunsson when she mused, "perhaps…there exist in practice only a vast number of different types of management, all depending on the situation of a particular organisation and on the position and personality of the individual manager" (2008 p42).

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