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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND LAW

Southampton Business School

**Dealing with the tensions and dilemmas of management:
a value conflicts perspective**

by

Sarah Lee

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

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Dealing with the tensions and dilemmas of management: a value conflicts perspective

Sarah Lee

Dealing with competing demands and expectations is an essential feature of management work. Positioned between reportees and senior leaders, managers hold multiple accountabilities and allegiances; responding to day-to-day dilemmas is likely to call personal values and priorities into question. This thesis conceives such dilemmas as value conflicts, arising when managers' values and priorities are at odds with the values and expectations of the organisation and others.

The research explores four key questions: What types of value conflict do managers encounter? How do they respond? How do personal values, role-related factors and the organisational context shape their responses? What are the implications of the conflicts and responses for managers and the organisation?

Adopting a critical realist paradigm and a multiple case study methodology, the research seeks to understand and explain interpreted events within the socio-structural context of the organisation and the management role. Critical incident technique was used to gather value conflict accounts from managers in four private-sector organisations. Empirically-based findings derive explanatory support from theory on personal values (Schwartz, 1992), cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) and self-determination of behaviour (Deci and Ryan, 1995).

The thesis presents four main findings. First, it identifies the sources of value conflict and a values-based typology of responses. Second, it demonstrates managers' use of multiple, different bases of legitimacy to justify their responses: self, others, role, and censure/sanction avoidance. Third, it relates personal and organisational outcomes to response-justification patterns. Finally, through analysis of personal values, role expectations and the organisational context, it uncovers the complex interplay of factors underlying managers' responses.

The research contributes new, explanatory insights by applying a value conflicts perspective to management tensions and dilemmas, with implications for leadership and management practice. Furthermore, it uncovers a neglected aspect of management work in values-led organisations: dealing with mismatches between espoused and enacted organisational values. The thesis contributes a viable analytic approach to qualitative values scholarship, and suggests fruitful avenues for future research.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, **Sarah Lee**

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

Dealing with the tensions and dilemmas of management: a value conflicts perspective

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission.

Date: 1 March 2015

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis explores from a value conflicts perspective how managers deal with the tensions and dilemmas of their role. Managers have a special status in organisations, as employees themselves and as representatives of executive management. They operate at the centre of a web of accountabilities and allegiances, and must reconcile the demands of the organisation with their expectations of themselves as managers and individuals (Mintzberg, 2009; Watson, 1994). As near or “close” leaders (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1995; Shamir, 1995), first-line and middle managers are expected to espouse and enact organisational values and mobilise employee effort towards organisational goals (Huy, 2002; Martin & Wajcman, 2004). Yet detached from the senior leadership team by one or more levels of hierarchy, most have limited autonomy and little influence over the strategic decisions that they must implement.

Developing strategies to deal with the multiple, often conflicting demands and expectations that arise from their “betwixt and between” position (Hallier & James, 1997, p. 707) is an essential and often neglected facet of management work. In examining this aspect within the framework of personal and organisational values, the research offers new insights into how managers respond to the inner tensions and dilemmas they encounter at work, and the implications for them as individuals and for the organisation.

1.1 Background to the research

The research was motivated by the researcher’s personal and empathetic interest in the challenges and tensions of the management role. Previous Human Resource (HR) management and project management experience had given her an insight into – often conflicting - management, employee and executive level perspectives of organisational events. In particular, she had observed different ways in which managers reacted to difficult situations, both personally and publicly, particularly when implementing organisational change or decisions that they personally disagreed with. The researcher had a “hunch” that exploring their reactions in detail could yield fresh explanatory insights into management work: what were the personal, role-related and organisational level factors at play in these situations, and how did these shape their responses?

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The adoption of a values perspective to explore these questions was in part stimulated by the researcher's previous research on managers' organisational commitment (S. Lee, 1999). In that study, respondents had articulated the concept of personal standards and values, which that they felt defined them as an individual and influenced their behaviour over and above any role demands or organisational expectations. Moreover, academic study at Masters-level had challenged the researcher's hitherto taken-for-granted, unitarist view of organisational culture, leading her to question the role and effectiveness of organisational values and associated human resource management practices.

Finally, the evident interest from practising managers during informal discussions about the topic supported the view, shared by the researcher, that management research should be capable of informing practice (Corley and Gioia, 2011; Starkey and Madan, 2001; Huff, 2000; Pettigrew, 1997; Hambrick, 1994).

1.2 Significance of the topic

Values are a pervasive feature of contemporary organisational life, and are held to exert a powerful normative and motivational influence at individual, institutional, societal and cultural levels (Posner, 2010b; Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Argandona, 2003; Rohan, 2000; Rokeach, 1979). As an integral part of organisational culture, shared values shape attitudes and behaviour, foster a sense of cohesion, and engender commitment to organisational goals (Schein, 2010; Hofstede, 2001; Collins and Porras, 1996; Peters and Waterman, 1982). For individuals, values have ongoing significance, because they are experienced as personally owned and provide a sense of continuity over time and across situations (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). Values are intimately tied up with our sense of self, and represent what we deem to be ultimately important (Sims, 2003; Verplanken and Holland, 2002; Schwartz, 1996; Rokeach, 1973).

Influenced and given impetus by the work of Rokeach (1973) and, in particular, Schwartz's (1992) circular values model, values research is characterised by the use of survey measures and experimental approaches (Maio, 2010; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998), often involving large populations and cross-national comparisons (e.g. Vecchione et al., 2015; Posner, 2010b; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2001; Schwartz and Sagiv, 1995). Reviews of values research (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Rohan, 2000) point to difficulties arising from the lack of a consistent taxonomy, and the conflation of related concepts such as beliefs, norms and

attitudes. Moreover, the relationship between values and behaviour is imperfect and highly mediated (Maio, 2010; Robertson and Callinan, 1998). As abstract cognitions, values are not observable and thus we can only make inferences about values manifested in action (Hechter, 1993) or rely on people's conscious awareness of their values and their ability or willingness to articulate them.

The idea of value conflicts is accepted by a number of values researchers (Sverdlik, 2012; van Harreveld et al., 2009; Rohan, 2000; Schwartz, 1992; Kristiansen and Matheson, 1990; Tetlock, 1986), but the concept has not been explored in relation to lived experiences, nor has it been applied to the tensions and dilemmas of management work. Research on values in organisations is "in nascent stages" (Cha and Edmondson, 2006, p. 58) and there is a scarcity of organisational case studies that take a values perspective in their analysis. Values are more typically considered in the context of management and leadership ethics (e.g. De Cremer et al., 2011; Groves and LaRocca, 2011; Brown and Trevino, 2006); authentic and charismatic forms of leadership (Gardner et al., 2011; Sosik, 2005); and in research on person-organisation fit (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998).

This research addresses the call made by Meglino and Ravlin (1998, p. 385) for "research and theory that addresses the intra-individual aspects of values-based decision making...and emotional responses to such decisions", which has not yet been adequately addressed in values research. By considering how managers deal with conflicts between their own values and the values and expectations of others, the research also responds to Rohan's (2000, p. 267) observation that a major issue for values research is "how people reconcile what they want with what others want, and whether optimal reconciliation is related to people's value priorities". Most studies of personal and organisational values rely on surveys which require individuals to consider values in the abstract rather than in connection with particular events and experiences. This suggests that a more contextualised and qualitative approach is needed to shed light on the subjective experience of values in organisational settings, particularly where events give rise to awareness of a lack of alignment between personal and organisational values.

Because values are closely associated with the self-concept and the fulfilment of psychological needs (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Ryan and Deci, 2000; Sagiv and Schwartz, 2000; Maslow, 1943), managers' responses to value conflicts are likely to have implications for them as individuals. Moreover, research on first-line and middle managers increasingly underlines their importance to the successful

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implementation of strategic change and Human Resource Management practices by aligning employee effort with the organisation's values and purpose (Rouleau and Balogun, 2011; Wooldridge et al., 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Hutchinson and Purcell, 2003). Therefore, given the pivotal role of managers in the organisation, the prevalence of values in organisational life, and the challenges of "being oneself with skill" (Higgs, 2003, p. 280), the ways in which managers deal with value conflicts in their role emerges as a promising avenue of research.

1.3 Research questions and methodology

The research aims to explore from a value conflicts perspective how managers deal with the tensions and dilemmas of their role. This is articulated through four research questions:

1. What types of value conflict do managers encounter in their day-to-day work?
2. How do they experience and respond to these value conflicts?
3. How do personal values, role-related factors and the organisational context shape their responses?
4. What are the implications of the conflicts and responses for managers and the organisation?

Conceived within a critical realist paradigm (Sayer, 2000; Bhaskar, 1989), the research was conducted as multiple case-study of managers within four private sector organisations with strongly espoused values. The multi-case research design, informed by a range of case-study literature (Easton, 2010; Yin, 2009; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake, 2000; Stake, 1995), enabled the development of findings at incident, manager and organisation levels as well as comparison between settings.

In contrast with the predominant quantitative paradigm used in values research, qualitative methods were selected for their potential to provide detailed descriptions and reveal complexity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Critical incident technique (Chell, 1998; Flanagan, 1954) was used in interviews with first-line and middle managers to gather experiential accounts of value conflict incidents. Interview data were supplemented by a personal values survey (Schwartz et al., 2001), researcher observations and organisational documents. The analytic strategy was adapted from Eisenhardt (1989), and the data analysis was inspired

by Miles and Huberman's (1994, p.12) interactive model and data handling techniques, involving data reduction; data display; and conclusion drawing and verification.

Two theoretical lenses were used to interpret the findings: cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) and self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995). Together with insights from the values literature, these enabled a fuller understanding of the affective, cognitive and behavioural processes involved in value conflicts and their outcomes.

The research contributes to theory by applying a value conflicts perspective to explain how managers experience and deal with the tensions and dilemmas of their role. It defines and classifies value conflicts in management work, and delivers an empirically derived process model of value conflicts, including responses, justifications and outcomes and their interplay with personal, role-related and organisational factors. In addition, the research also speaks to the management and organisational values literature by identifying "values gap" repair as a facet of management work in organisations with strongly espoused values. The findings have implications for management and organisational practice in the areas of values implementation, leadership and management development.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The thesis comprises eleven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature to establish the theoretical grounding of the research. The philosophical paradigm that informs the research is described in Chapter 3, followed by a discussion of the methodology and exposition of the research design in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 introduces the four case organisations and describes the implementation of the research, including a summary of the interviews held and the data collection timescale. Chapter 6 describes how the data analysis was carried out in practice and introduces a key process model as a single point of reference to which the detailed findings relate. These findings are presented in the three subsequent chapters, corresponding to the study's three levels of analysis: (a) the value conflict incident level findings in Chapter 7, based on analysis of managers' interview accounts; (b) the manager level findings in Chapter 8, derived from analysis of values stated in interviews, value survey responses and perceived role expectations; and (c) the organisation and cross-

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organisational level findings in Chapter 9, where the analysis of contextual characteristics is integrated with the incident and manager level findings. In Chapter 10, the findings are discussed in relation to the values and organisational literature to develop further explanatory insights. Finally, Chapter 11 summarises the key findings in relation to the research questions, pinpoints the contributions of the research to theory, methodology and practice, and suggests areas for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction and overview

The literature reviewed in this chapter is organised into four main sections, which together provide conceptual and theoretical grounding for the research: (a) Values and the self; (b) Values in the organisation; (c) Value conflicts and responses; and (d) The nature of the management role. A concluding section provides an integrative summary of the literature review and pinpoints the gaps in existing research, which this study aims to address.

The framework shown in Figure 1 below was developed to help guide the literature review and structure the research. The uppermost block of the framework represents the overall values perspective of the study. The focus of the research – managers' experience of value conflicts, their responses, and the outcomes – is shown at the centre of the figure. This focal area is conceived within three contextual layers: individual, role and organisation.

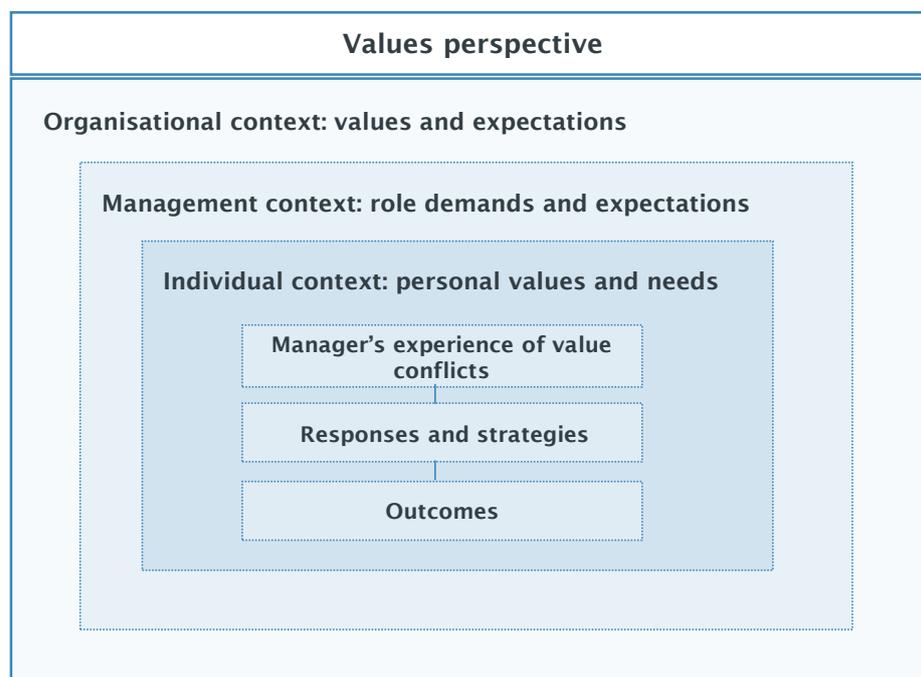


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Viewed from a values perspective, each of the layers is associated with different values and expectations, which are likely to impinge on the manager's experience and response to value conflicts. This idea is taken up in the literature review, whose four main sections are introduced in brief below.

Chapter 2

2.1.1 Outline of literature review

Values and the self (Section 2.2)

The review of the personal values literature draws on the work of prominent theorists (e.g. Schwartz et al., 2012; Schwartz, 1992; Rokeach, 1973) to explore the conceptual and operational challenges that characterise the field. A functional perspective is adopted in establishing the significance of personal values and their relationship with the self-concept. Contrasting conceptions of personal value systems are examined by drawing parallels between them and different views of the self. The association of values with motivational goals and the fulfilment of needs is discussed with particular reference to Schwartz's (1992) value theory and self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995), highlighting the psychological desirability of acting in accordance with one's values.

Values and the organisation (Section 2.3)

This section highlights the relevance of values in the organisational context through two main strands of literature – organisational culture (e.g. Schein, 2010), and person-organisation values fit (e.g. Edwards and Cable, 2009). It identifies the challenges to these concepts and the limitations of existing approaches to studying organisational values. The literature shows empirical support for the premise that the alignment of individual and organisational values is associated with positive work-related attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, while lack of values alignment is associated with negative organisational outcomes (e.g. Posner, 2010a; Edwards and Cable, 2009; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Kristof, 1996).

Value conflicts and responses (Section 2.4)

The literature reviewed in this section gives conceptual credence to the idea of conflicts between values. Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) is then introduced as an interpretive framework for considering the psychological tension likely to arise from value conflicts and the relevance of values in dissonance arousal and reduction. Finally, potential responses to value conflicts are identified from cognitive dissonance, decision-making and organisational research streams.

The nature of the management role (Section 2.5)

The tensions and dilemmas arising from the multi-faceted and particular nature of the management role are identified in this section. These relate to managers' central position in the organisation, their potentially competing loyalties and allegiances, and their role as agents of the organisation, as well as to the

pressures and uncertainties of contemporary corporate life (e.g. Teague and Roche, 2012; Mintzberg, 2009; Hales, 2005; Watson, 1994). A prominent theme emerging from the literature review is that value conflicts are inherent to the management role: managers must reconcile the values and expectations of the organisation and others with the exigencies of their personal values and self-expectations, with implications for themselves and for the organisation

The four topics outlined above are expanded in the following sections.

2.2 Values and the self

2.2.1 Introduction

Sims et al. (1993) describe values as what people care about; what is ultimately important. However, the authors raise a concern about whether the term can be anything more than a “trivial simplification of the activity of human beings caring about what they are doing” (ibid., p. 305). Indeed they question whether the concept of individually-held values is valid, given the social and collective influences on what people hold to be important. Reviews of values literature (e.g. Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Rohan, 2000; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998) emphasise the problematic nature of the field and the complexities arising from the lack of a universal definition. Perhaps the difficulty in operationalising the construct accounts for the relative lack of focus on personal values in mainstream organisational behaviour literature, where values are more often linked to discussion of organisational culture (Schein, 2010; Brown, 1998) or cross-national cultural comparisons (Hofstede, 2001) rather than examined in connection with motivation, individual differences and behaviour.

There appears to be a level of acceptance that values are important, linked in some way to behaviours, and of relevance of our understanding of what it is to be human (Rohan, 2000). Nevertheless, an appreciation of the “problem” with values, as set out below, provides a context for the subsequent discussion of other themes in the values literature.

2.2.2 The problem with values

Calls for a universally agreed definition of the values construct have been made by values scholars over a number of decades (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Rohan, 2000; Connor and Becker, 1979; Kluckhorn, 1951), and different theoretical

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approaches within fields such as psychology, sociology, philosophy and political science have contributed to what Erickson (1995, p.123) calls “the profusion of definitions-by-discipline” and separate streams of research.

In addition to the lack of a consistent definition, values are often conflated with attitudes, traits, norms, needs, ideologies and beliefs (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Rohan and Zanna, 2001). Becker and Connor (1994) raise a further issue: values are conceived and measured at different levels, such as person, group, society or culture, and with varying degrees of specificity, such as work values, moral values or general values. Values research is characterised by the use of survey-based measures and experimental methods (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). As Higgs (2009) points out, there is a proliferation of value taxonomies and survey instruments, including the Schwartz Value Survey (1992); the Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001); Kahle’s List of Values (1996); Rokeach’s Value Survey (1973); the Basic Values Survey (Gouveia et al., 2014) and proprietary measures. Surveys typically require participants to rank or rate abstract value words or descriptions, as in Rokeach’s (1973) and Schwartz’s (1992) instruments, although some use a less abstract format, such as descriptive individual prototypes (Portrait Values Questionnaire; Schwartz et al., 2001).

Hitlin and Piliavin (2004) highlight limitations arising from the reliance on self-report mechanisms and people’s questionable ability to access and relate to abstract values. In addition, they comment that value labels may be interpreted differently by survey participants, and the context is likely to affect people’s responses even though values are regarded as trans-situational. Variability in survey responses as a result of situational primes has been demonstrated by Seligman and Katz (1996) in their experimental studies.

The utility of the values construct in the study of behaviour has been the subject of considerable debate. On the one hand, Rokeach (1973) argues that values constitute the organising principles for thousands of beliefs and attitudes, and that they directly affect attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. On the other hand, Williams (1979) comments vividly that *only a maniac or a saint* will always act consistently in terms of a simple, prearranged hierarchy of value preferences. Kristiansen and Hotte (1996) comment that the notion of values as guiding forces for more specific attitudes and behaviour is intuitively appealing but difficult to demonstrate empirically. Their critique of Rokeach’s (1973) studies concludes that the relations between values, attitudes and behaviours are often small, and Murray et al. (1996) point out the largely correlational nature of the work.

Interestingly, Kluckhohn cautions that “sometimes what a person says about his [*sic*] values is truer from a long-term standpoint than inferences drawn from his actions under special conditions... people often lie by their acts and tell the truth with words” (ibid., p.406).

More recent scholarship (reported in Rohan, 2000; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998) acknowledges the reciprocal influence of experience and social or situational factors on values and behaviour. For example, Robertson and Callinan (1998) portray values as one of a number of variables involved in cognitive-affective mediating processes which, together with a number of other fixed or situational factors, influence behaviour. This conception highlights the difficulty for researchers in relating values, which are abstract cognitions (Schwartz, 1992; Rokeach, 1973), to context-specific attitudes and situationally-based behaviours. Values may be regarded as latent variables: they are not observable and thus we can only make inferences about values manifested in action (Hechter, 1993) or rely on people’s conscious awareness of their values and their ability or willingness to articulate them.

Psychological values research (e.g. Maio et al., 2009) aims to overcome this issue by priming specific values under experimental conditions in order to identify values-behaviour linkages. However, researchers acknowledge that in practice, values often operate implicitly, guiding behaviour effortlessly, with little or no conscious awareness (Schwartz, 1996; Feather, 1995; Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995). Seeking values-based explanations of behaviours or attitudes may only elicit truisms that lack cognitive support, and are used as socially or personally acceptable ways of justifying actions or attitudes (Maio et al., 2001; Maio and Olson, 1998).

2.2.3 Making sense of the values construct

It is evident from an analysis of commonly cited value definitions (see Appendix A), that they comprise different combinations of properties, characteristics and functions. Their variation in emphasis perhaps suggests greater definitional divergence than actually exists. For example, Schwartz (1994, p.21) defines values as “desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity”. This includes properties (trans-situational, varying in importance, desirable) and a function (used as a guiding principle). Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p.551) list five elements commonly found in the values literature: “Values are (a) concepts or beliefs, (b)

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about desirable end states or behaviours, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance.”

Accepting the basic premise that values are cognitive concepts or beliefs, six other defining characteristics or properties are identified in Table 1 below, with illustrative examples from the definitional literature.

Table 1: Descriptive characteristics and properties of values

Properties/ characteristics	Indicative examples
Abstract and trans-situational	A value “has a transcendental quality...transcends specific objects and situations” (Rokeach, 1973, p.18). “global beliefs” (Connor and Becker, 1979, p.72). “abstract, trans-situational” (Schwartz, 1994, p.21). Values are abstract cognitive structures (Feather, 1996).
Relatively stable	“enduring” but not completely stable (Rokeach, 1973, p.5).
Almost universal and finite in number	“All men (<i>sic</i>) everywhere possess the same values to different degrees” (Rokeach, 1973, p.3). “the number of values human beings possess is assumed to be relatively small” (Rokeach, 1973, p.11). There are a finite number of universally important value types (Schwartz, 1996).
Organised in a hierarchy reflecting their relative importance	Varying in importance (Bilsky and Schwartz, 1994; Schwartz, 1994). “ordered by relative importance” (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, p.551). “hierarchical organisations along a continuum of importance” (Rokeach, 1973, p.25).
Have affective components	“A value is affective in the sense that [a person] can feel emotional about it, be affectively for or against it” (Rokeach, 1973, p.7). “emotion-laden conceptions of the desirable” (Hitlin, 2003, p.132). “a union of reason and feeling” (Kluckhorn, 1951, p.400).
Can be verbalised	“almost always potentially expressible in rational language” and “eminently discussable” although normally implicit (Kluckhorn, 1951, p.397).

Values research has been criticised for its emphasis on cognitive rather than affective elements (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). However, although values are cognitive structures, they also have strong emotional associations (Feather, 1999). Interestingly, Maio and Olson (1998) argue that while values are psychologically important, their importance does not derive from cognitive support: inducing people to focus on the reasons why they place importance on a particular value can result in value change. Instead they suggest that particular values become important because people attach strong, positive feelings towards them. Their experimental studies relating to self-transcendence values supported this hypothesis, finding a strong correlation between participants' ratings of the importance of these values and the strength of their feeling toward the values. As a result, they suggest that values are supported primarily by affective information and secondarily by behavioural information from past experience. Moreover, as Leary (2007) comments, people's thoughts about themselves are strongly linked to their emotions. Given that values are experienced as self-defining (Hitlin, 2003), then they, too, must be associated with affective responses as well.

Having identified the key characteristics of values, a potential source of confusion over values terminology needs to be clarified. Drawing on Rohan (2000), the definitions adopted in the present study are as follows:

A **value structure** is a set of universally held **value types**, as depicted in Schwartz's (1992) model, with stable and predictable relations among the types reflecting conflicts and compatibilities between values (see Section 2.2.7.2, p. 21).

Value systems are hierarchical organisations of values which reflect the relative importance of particular values to individuals or groups (that is, their value priorities).

Value priorities differ between individuals and between groups but value types are universally present to a greater or lesser degree.

2.2.4 A functional perspective

The different functions of values are now explored. The functional approach is common in attitude research (Maio and Olson, 2000); Katz (1960) defines it as "an attempt to understand the reasons people hold the attitudes they do...*at the level of psychological motivations*" (emphasis added). Indeed the challenges Katz

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identifies in attitude research, such as the complex relationships between attitudes and behaviour, can equally be applied to the field of values.

Rokeach (1968, p.132) states that the function of all values is to enhance “the sentiment of self-regard”. Elsewhere, he suggests two other functions: their normative role in behaviour and decision-making, and to express human needs (Rokeach, 1973). These ideas are combined in his later work:

The ultimate function of values is to provide us with a set of standards to guide us in all our efforts to satisfy our needs and at the same time maintain, and, in so far as possible, enhance self-esteem, that is, to make it possible to regard ourselves and to be regarded by others as having satisfied societally and institutionally originating definitions of morality and competence. (Rokeach, 1979, p.48)

It is notable that Rokeach appears to differentiate between the motivational drive to satisfy needs, and the cultivation of self-esteem, even though the latter is itself defined as a fundamental human need (Maslow, 1943). The motivational function of values in support of the satisfaction of human needs may, therefore, be regarded as a super-ordinate or meta-function. This is discussed further in Section 2.2.7 (p. 20). Meanwhile, five more specific value functions are identified below, which were developed from the values literature and with reference to Katz’s (1960) fourfold classification of attitude functions (instrumental, adjustment or utilitarian; ego-defensive; value-expressive; and knowledge):

1. Interpretive function:
to structure perception and experience and to provide meaning;
2. Guidance function:
to act as standards to guide behaviour and decision-making and to evaluate the self and others;
3. Adjustive function:
to gain acceptance, recognition and affiliation within social contexts;
4. Self-defining function:
to define and express the individual’s sense of self; and
5. Rationalisation function:
to account for past, present or future decisions or actions to oneself or others.

These functions represent the purposes served by values *for the individual* rather than for institutions, cultures or society, although these are inevitably related.

The nature of each function is outlined below.

2.2.4.1 Interpretive function

Values provide a means of understanding and interpreting the environment: personal value systems cause people to view the world in a particular way (2001; Rohan, 2000). The interpretive function has some similarities with the “knowledge” function of attitudes, which is described as “the individual’s need to give adequate structure to his universe” (Katz, 1960, p.170).

The idea of values as a perceptual lens through which we interpret external phenomena is a long-standing feature of the values literature (e.g. Williams, 1979; Allport, 1955) and reflected in more recent work (Higgs and Lichtenstein, 2009; Hitlin, 2003; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). Robertson and Callinan (1998) suggest that values, along with expectancies, beliefs, affects, and goals lead individuals to select particular features of situations for attention, and to think and feel about them in a characteristic way.

Fazio’s (1990) research on attitudes identifies a similar effect on the perceptual process. He suggests that certain attitudes may be activated automatically by a particular situation or object. The attitude affects the way in which the situation is perceived and leads to spontaneous behaviour which is congruent with the attitude. It is conceivable that the interpretive function of values operates in a similar way.

2.2.4.2 Guidance function

This important function relates to the role of values as standards to guide ongoing activities; to evaluate and judge the self and others; and, as a form of “map or blueprint”, to resolve conflicts and make decisions (Rokeach, 1973, p.14). As “criteria or standards of preference” (Williams, 1979, p.16) values serve to guide people’s judgement of desirable or undesirable ways of behaving or about the desirability or otherwise of general goals. This has been demonstrated in experimental research which identifies a connection between value preferences and preferred courses of action (Feather, 1996; Feather, 1995).

According to Rokeach (1973), value systems also guide people’s choice between alternatives in order to resolve conflicts and make decisions, and only a subset of values is activated in a given situation, so that only relevant values are consulted.

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Lord and Brown (2001) suggest that it is the *working self-concept* (Markus and Wurf, 1987) which operates to constrain the particular values that are salient at a particular time. According to Verplanken and Holland (2002), some values may be “chronically accessible”, or made salient by a situation or values-relevant information.

2.2.4.3 Adjustive function

The content of some values, such as obedience, conformity, tolerance and respect for tradition, reflects a desire for social acceptance. This is not surprising, because values are socially transmitted and conditioned (Rogers, 1951)¹. This function is similar to the instrumental or adjustment attitude function (Katz, 1960), which is based on the premise that people seek to maximise rewards and minimise penalties in their environment through giving preference to certain attitudes.

People may also adopt or internalise the value priorities of a group or institution as a means of maximising their opportunity for (socially sanctioned) advancement and recognition, or to derive a sense of security and acceptance (Meeussen et al., 2014). This internalisation is encouraged in organisational socialisation processes (Chatman, 1991; Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

2.2.4.4 Self-defining function

Hitlin and Piliavin (2004, p.383) assert that values are “intimately tied to the self”, a view espoused in value scholarship over the decades (Verplanken et al., 2009; Feather, 1992; Hermans, 1987; Maslow, 1959; Rogers, 1951). Rokeach (1973; 1968) conceives values as a central component within the self’s total belief system, clustered around the innermost self-concept. He argues that because values serve as standards to evaluate one’s self, as well as others, contradictions involving values are especially likely to implicate self-conceptions. The relative stability of an individual’s value priorities expresses a sense of coherence of the self over time and across situations (Rokeach, 1973). A person’s idiosyncratic set of value priorities is generally regarded as in some way expressive of his or her identity: Maslow (1962) states that the search for identity is effectively a search for one’s intrinsic and authentic values. Writing three decades later, Watson

¹ Although recent research has identified some potential genetic influences on value priorities based on studies of twins (Knafo and Spinath, 2011).

(1994, p.74-5) also links values with identity: “to say who you are is closely related to saying what it is you believe in”, an idea that has been explored in identity research (e.g. Gatersleben et al., 2014; Hitlin, 2003).

2.2.4.5 Rationalisation function

Rokeach (1973) describes values as standards to rationalise beliefs, attitudes, and actions; they are used to bolster personal feelings of morality and competence. Memorably, he comments further that “needs are cognitively transformed into values so that a person can end up smelling himself, and being smelled by others, like a rose” (ibid., p.20).

Likewise, Rohan and Zanna (2001) argue that people employ situationally-appropriate ideologies² to frame decisions in a particular way to suit the situation or social context. Because ideologies contain value priority associations, people use them to convince themselves and others that they are acting in accordance with sound moral or ethical principles. The rationalisation process may be conscious or unconscious (Rokeach, 1979); directed at the self or others (Rohan, 2000); and may relate to past, present or future decisions or behaviour (Williams, 1979).

This function has some similarities with the ego-defensive function of attitudes (Katz, 1960) to maintain a positive self-image and present oneself to others in a favourable light. It is also particularly related to the meta-function of self-esteem maintenance or enhancement. This is regarded as a fundamental self-motive (Sedikides and Gregg, 2008; Baumeister, 1998).

2.2.5 Differentiation from other constructs

The functional analysis demonstrates that values are implicated in core psychological, behavioural and social processes, even though their impact is difficult to isolate, given situational and other variables. The properties and functions of values identified in the preceding sections also help to differentiate values from attitudes and personality. First, Schwartz (1992) states that values differ from attitudes in their generality and in their hierarchical ordering by importance. Rohan (2000) suggests that the term attitude should be used to refer

² Defined as “value-laden linguistic constructions that are used in or after decision-making” (Rohan, 2000 p. 270).

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to the evaluation of specific entities, to distinguish it from values, which are regarded as trans-situational guides. Finally, Rokeach (1973, p.18) stipulates:

Values are standards but attitudes are not: favourable or unfavourable evaluations of numerous attitude objects and situations may be based upon a relatively small number of values.

Bilsky and Schwartz (1994) argue convincingly for conceptual differentiation between values and personality traits, despite some common characteristics such as their relative stability across time and situations and the fact that both can be used to classify and compare individuals. Like Roccas (2002), they reason that values are consciously-held goals which are experienced as demands one places on oneself, whereas traits are external attributions of features that distinguish among individuals. Higgs' (2009) analysis of relevant values and personality research demonstrates an inconsistent pattern of relationships between the two constructs, although he comments that comparisons between studies are hindered by the use of a different measures of values and personality, and that there is a need to focus on values systems rather than on single value types. Based on their empirical study of executives, Higgs and Lichtenstein (2010) conclude that personality traits and the underlying needs and personal values are separate constructs.

2.2.6 Conceptions of the self and personal value systems

The earlier discussion of the self-defining function of values (Section 2.2.4.4, page 16) indicated that they are closely associated with the self-concept. It is, therefore, understandable that different perspectives on the self appear to influence the way in which values are conceptualised in the literature. In particular, a contrast may be drawn between two broad perspectives: those who regard the self as largely autonomous, having an integrative tendency, and providing a sense of continuity, uniqueness and purpose (e.g. Deci and Ryan, 1995; Maslow, 1970; Rogers, 1959); and those who focus more on the interplay between the self and the social environment, conceiving the self in terms of multiple self-representations or social identities which become salient according to the social context and situational factors (e.g. Stets and Burke, 2000; Banaji and Prentice, 1994; Higgins, 1987; Markus and Wurf, 1987; Markus and Nurius, 1986; Tajfel and Turner, 1985). This section relates these two broad perspectives on the self to two contrasting conceptions of values:

1. The **single personal value system perspective**, grounded in a needs-based, integrative and developmental approach to the self, with particular reference to self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995) and the work of Maslow (1970; 1955; 1943).
2. The **multiple value systems perspective**, with reference to theorists who adopt a more socially focused and situationally-contingent approach to values and the self.

These two approaches are summarised in Table 2 below and then elaborated in the subsequent sections.

Table 2: Conceptions of the self and personal value systems

Theoretical perspective of the self	Indicative self-theorists	Related conception of value system	Indicative values theorists
1. Needs-based approaches		Single, personal value system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth oriented and active; largely autonomous • Integrative; seeking unity and coherence • Strives to meet needs and to achieve self-actualisation and the fulfilment of potential 	Maslow (1962; 1943); Rogers (1961); Deci and Ryan (2002).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively enduring • Trans-situational • Expresses the “true” or “core” self • Linked with human needs and motivations. 	Rokeach (1973); Schwartz (1992); Maslow (1970); Kasser (2002).

Theoretical perspective of the self	Indicative self-theorists	Related conception of value system	Indicative values theorists
2. Multiple selves or identities		Multiple/ dynamic value systems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-faceted and conceived at different levels • Extends beyond the individual • Roles or identities that become salient according to the situation • Prime motive is to maintain a positive self-image (self-enhancement motive) 	Brewer and Gardner (1996); Tajfel and Turner (1985); Stryker (1980); Stets and Burke (2003); Markus and Wurf (1987).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple value systems that relate to different levels of identity • Different value priorities relating to different situations or issues • Associated with different facets of the self 	Seligman and Katz (1996); Rohan (2000); Hitlin (2003); Verplanken et al. (2009).

2.2.7 Value systems and needs-based approaches to the self

2.2.7.1 Maslow's needs-based theory and values

Maslow (1943, p.371) states that the “integrated wholeness of the organism” is a core theoretical assumption in his theory of motivation, which is based on the inherent human drive to satisfy basic, universal needs. Elsewhere, he describes his theory as “a theory of the ends and ultimate values of the organism” (1970, p.35). He asserts (ibid., p.148) that people’s value priorities relate to their needs priorities in the hierarchy, and indeed Kasser (2002) points out that Maslow often uses the terms values and needs interchangeably. Higgs (2009) comments that operationalisation of the concept of values systems is informed by Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow (1943) needs are universal, and therefore it may be logical to assume that values are also universal, and that, like needs, they differ in priority and importance between individuals.

According to Rokeach (1973), values do represent needs but they also represent societal or institutional demands, which are internalised through socialisation and cognitively transformed into values. However, it can be argued that the tendency to construe such demands as values - “shared conceptions of the desirable”

(Rokeach, 1973, p.20) - is simply a means of satisfying the need for belongingness and acceptance (Maslow, 1943).

2.2.7.2 Schwartz's values theory

Like Maslow, Schwartz (1994; 1992) makes a connection between values and universal needs in his influential values theory. Bilsky and Schwartz (1994) explain that the feature differentiating one value from another is the **motivational content** of the value: the particular motivation or goal that it represents. Human needs directly lead to, and are influenced by, these broad goals (Bilsky and Schwartz, 1994). This idea represents the theoretical underpinning of Schwartz's (1992) values theory, where values are classified into ten types, each representing a cluster of single values, based on the overarching motivational goal they express³. Bilsky and Schwartz (1994) relate Maslow's (1955) distinction between "growth" and "deficiency" needs to these ten motivational value types.

Schwartz's circular model, shown in Figure 2 below, represents value types in a circular structure which depicts the relationships between the value types. Values which express complementary motives are placed in adjacent positions, and values that express conflicting motives are placed opposite each other.

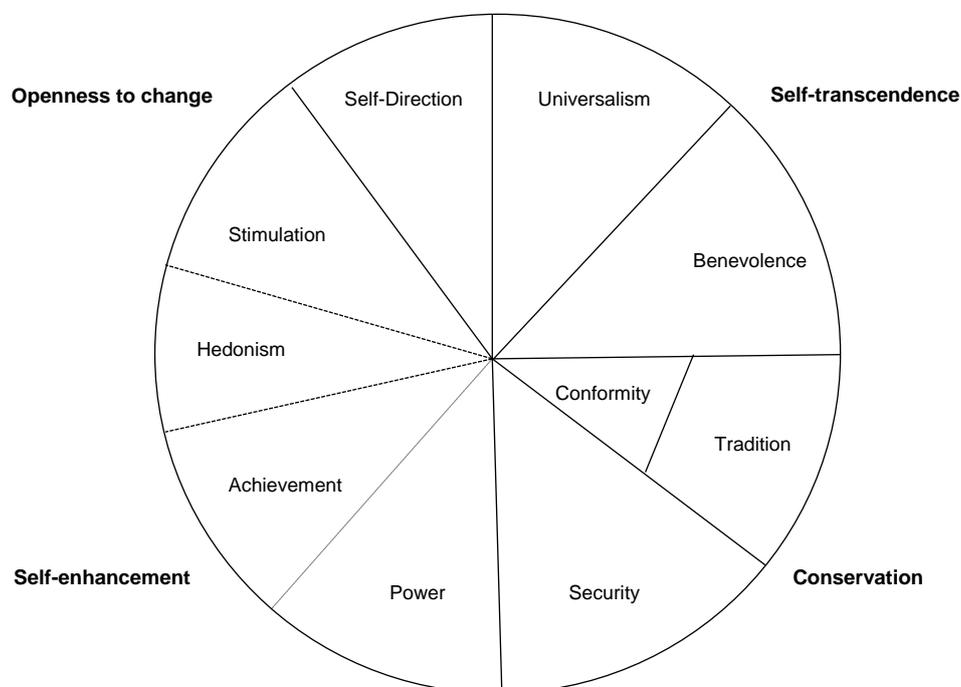


Figure 2: Schwartz's (1992) value structure.

Source: adapted from Schwartz (1992).

³ A list of the value types and related values is shown in Appendix B.

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Two motivational dimensions are also shown in Figure 2 above. These are described by Rohan (2000) as fundamental human problems which express conflict between opposing higher order value types or orientations. One dimension contrasts self-enhancement values, which promote self-interest, and self-transcendent values, which emphasise the welfare of others. The second contrasts conservation values, which focus on certainty and the status quo, with openness values, which are concerned with pursuit of self-directed interests in unpredictable or uncertain directions. Higgs (2009) states that an important premise of Schwartz's value typology is that individuals make "trade-offs" among competing values, as reflected in their values priorities. Likewise, Rohan (2000, p.262) draws attention to the essential tension between value types when she comments, "the relative importance people place on each value type reflects their choices about what they are prepared to lose a little of to gain a little more of something else".

As Schwartz (1996) points out, an integrated structure of value priorities has greater utility than lists of values, such as in Rokeach's (1973) work, because it enables systematic predictions to be made about the consequences of high priorities on one value type for priorities on other value types. This has undoubtedly contributed to the widespread adoption of the model by values researchers⁴, and the cross-cultural validity of the model and its associated survey instruments has been empirically demonstrated (e.g. Schwartz et al., 2001; Schwartz, 1994).

Schwartz (2014, p. 247) emphasises that the circular arrangement of values in the model represents a "continuum of motivations":

Because the ten values have fuzzy boundaries, some items inevitably also express elements of the motivations of adjacent values on the continuum (Schwartz et al., 2012, p. 668).

The partitioning of the continuum into ten separate, measurable value types is described as arbitrary (Schwartz, 1992) and done for scientific convenience (Cieciuch et al., 2013): the only critical constraint when partitioning the

⁴ For example, the Schwartz value structure has been used to predict the effect on other values of priming another value based on their relative positions within the model (Maio et al., 2009), and to predict the relations between values and other outcomes such as well-being (Joshani and Ghaedi, 2009); trust in institutions (Devos et al., 2002); reasoning (Bernard et al., 2003); and decision making (Feather, 1995). A short version of the Schwartz Values Survey has been included in all four rounds of the European Social Survey (Davidov et al., 2012).

continuum is preserving the order of motivations around the circle (Schwartz, 2014). Indeed, Schwartz et al. (2012) recently refined the original value theory by partitioning the circle into 19 more narrowly defined values (see Appendix B), whose discriminant validity has been demonstrated using a series of large and cross-national samples (Cieciuch et al., 2013; Cieciuch and Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). The authors posit that the refined theory will increase the predictive and explanatory capability of values in relation to behaviour, but that this has not yet been empirically demonstrated.

2.2.7.3 Self-determination theory and values

Self-determination theorists share Maslow's (1970) conception of the self as actively seeking to fulfil its potential and to satisfy its innate, motivational needs in support of healthy psychological functioning (Ryan and Deci, 2002; Ryan, 1995). Focusing on psychological rather than physiological needs, an essential proposition of self-determination theory (SDT) is the psychological desirability of behaviour which is experienced as intrinsically motivated and in accord with an integrated and coherent self.

Early empirical work (Deci and Ryan, 1985) differentiates between different types of motivation and highlights the psychological desirability of behaviours that arise from natural inclinations and interests, and goals that are pursued for their own sake (*intrinsic* motivation) rather than for reasons external to the self (*extrinsic* motivation). Intrinsically motivated behaviour represents a prototype of *self-determined behaviour* (Ryan and Deci, 2002). It best fulfils the three psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy⁵ (Ryan and Deci, 2003), and is associated with healthy psychological functioning and "optimal self-esteem" (Kernis and Goldman, 2003)⁶.

⁵ Deci and Ryan (2002, p.7) define these as follows: (a) Competence: feeling effective in one's ongoing interactions with the social environment; experiencing opportunities to exercise one's capacities; (b) Relatedness: feeling connected to others, accepted by others and the community; and (c) Autonomy: experiencing behaviour as an expression of the self; acting from interest and integrated values rather than to comply with external direction.

⁶ Kernis' (2003) influential paper draws a contrast between optimal (genuine, true, stable and secure) and negative (defensive, contingent, unstable and fragile) forms of high self-esteem. This embraces Deci and Ryan's (1995) distinction between true and contingent self-esteem: the former is a sense of self-worth that does not depend upon achieving specific outcomes or continual validation, and the latter is associated with preoccupation with achievements and meeting own or other's expectations.

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Rather than positioning intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as opposing or antagonistic concepts, SDT posits that extrinsic motivation can be conceived as a continuum. As such, behaviour can vary in the extent to which it is experienced as autonomous and authentic. This is of particular interest to settings such as organisations where individuals do not have complete freedom to choose their activities (Gagné and Deci, 2005). Organismic Integration Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) is a component of SDT that considers these different types of extrinsic motivation and the social contextual factors which support or inhibit autonomy and self-determined regulation of behaviour. It states that external rules and norms may be internally assimilated through a process of internalisation, so that they become self-regulated and ultimately integrated into the individual's sense of self and personal values.

Different forms of behavioural regulation and the extent of their internalisation can be arranged along a “self-determination continuum” (Ryan and Deci, 2003), as shown in Figure 3 below.

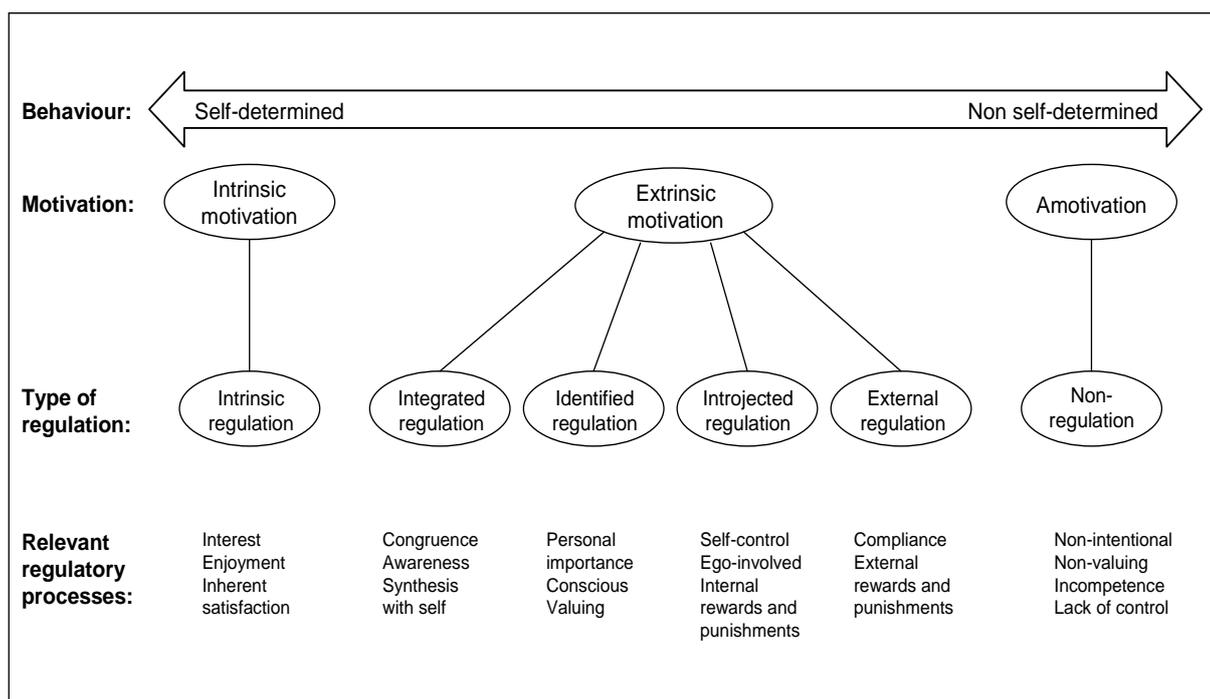


Figure 3: The self-determination continuum.

Source: adapted from Ryan and Deci (2002; 2000).

The types of extrinsic motivation shown in Figure 3 above are as follows:

1. *Integrated regulation* of behaviour is the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. It occurs when identified regulations are fully assimilated to the self, are congruent with other values and needs, and experienced as self-determined (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.73). Although it is similar to intrinsic

motivation, it is extrinsic as it is done for personally important outcomes, rather than purely for inherent satisfaction (Ryan and Deci, 2002).

2. *Identified regulation* occurs when the individual consciously endorses the personal value and significance of a behavioural goal or regulation, and the behaviour has a sense of purpose and volition.
3. *Introjected regulation* is described as a partial internalisation (Ryan and Deci, 2003). The individual takes responsibility for regulating his or her behaviour through intra-psychic means to avoid guilt or anxiety or to maintain a positive self-view or avoid loss of self-esteem. As such, the behaviours are not experienced as self-determined or accepted as part of the self.
4. *Externally regulated* behaviours are the least autonomous and self-determined in that compliance with external demands is for instrumental reasons, to avoid sanction or gain (extrinsic) reward or recognition.

At the extreme right of the diagram, amotivation is conceived as passivity or lack of intention to act, arising from a lack of perceived competence or because the individual does not value the activity or the outcomes it might yield (Ryan and Deci, 2002).

SDT has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on the independent aspects of the self, at the expense of collective or interdependent aspects (Simon and Kampmeier, 2001). Although it stresses the need for relatedness, SDT is largely rooted in an autonomous sense of self, and its conception of innate, universal needs has been criticised by those who regard the self and identity as a product of social interaction (Casey, 1995). Nevertheless, SDT's focus on different forms of motivation and their implications for performance, self-esteem and well-being, has perhaps contributed to its continuing application to a wide range of fields, including management and organisational behaviour (e.g. Aryee et al., 2015; Van den Broeck et al., 2014; Deckop et al., 2010; Gagné and Deci, 2005).

SDT is particularly relevant to the current research for a number of reasons. First, the theorised relationship between values and motivational needs is a prominent theme in the values literature (Rohan, 2000) and has influenced important conceptualisations of values (Schwartz, 1992; Maslow, 1970). As a needs-based theory, SDT aligns with these ideas. Indeed, Kasser explicitly links the self and values within SDT through the concept of motivational needs when he comments:

One way to understand the attempts of the self to grow by engaging in behaviours that are intrinsically motivating is to say that the self seeks

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out activities that it values...both valuing and values are cognitive/affective tools by which the self can fulfil its aims of growth and need satisfaction. (Kasser, 2002, p.125-7)

SDT is also relevant to the current research in that it emphasises the importance of the social context (e.g. the organisation) in helping or hindering the individual's ability to act with autonomy and self-integrity. Sagiv and Schwartz (2000) draw on inferences from SDT to conclude from their empirical research that the extent to which people can realise their values is related to subjective well-being⁷. This suggests that acting in accordance with personal values, in an environment that is conducive to doing so, leads to more positive personal outcomes, an idea that is relevant when considering value conflict responses in the present study.

Lastly, the notion of acting with authenticity and in accord with one's true or core self, which is fundamental to SDT, is of contemporary relevance to authentic leadership research (Cianci et al., 2014; Gardner et al., 2011; Avolio et al., 2009). Therefore, SDT is used as a theoretical lens in the discussion of findings in Chapter 10 (Section 10.3.2, p. 229).

2.2.8 Multiple selves, multiple value systems

In contrast with the idea of an integrated, growth oriented conception of the self presented above, the "multiple selves" approach, adopted by many contemporary self-theorists, emphasises the central importance of social structures or groups in shaping the [multiple] ways in which individuals categorise themselves (Banaji and Prentice, 1994). A further distinction is made between three levels of self-representation within the self-concept: the individual, relational and collective levels of identity (Brewer and Gardner, 1996). The personal level of identity is the categorisation of the self as a unique entity distinct from other individuals. The relational self contains aspects of the self-concept that are shared with significant others and based on personalised bonds of attachment including role relationships (Sedikides and Brewer, 2001). Linking the multiple-selves idea with values suggests that individuals may be able to draw on different value systems according to the self-categorisation or level of identity that is salient in a given situation.

⁷ Subjective well-being comprises a person's feeling of happiness and sadness (an affective aspect) as well as a person's satisfaction with life (a cognitive aspect) (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2000; Ryff and Keyes, 1995).

2.2.8.1 Value systems and different levels of identity

Verplanken et al. (2009) claim that their experimental studies provide evidence that different identity levels or “domains” of the self are associated with different value priorities, which have different consequences for cognitive processing and decision making when activated. Their starting point is the theory that clusters of cognitions relating to different domains of the self (personal and collective) are stored in separate locations in memory and that different selves (and their associated cognitions, including values) may be activated or primed by cues that relate to their respective domains. Verplanken et al. (2009) conclude by speculating that an individual may cope with an important value being compromised by switching to another self domain. It must be noted, however, that their studies only considered two of the Schwartz (1992) value types (achievement and benevolence) to represent values associated with personal and collective self-construals. Evidence of a comprehensive set of value priorities for each level of self has not been established.

Further, albeit theoretical, support for the idea of multiple value systems can be found in the work of Lord and Brown (2001) in relation to leadership influencing behaviour. They argue that the individual, relational and collective levels of identity are associated with different value priorities which, in conjunction with identities, have a strong self-regulatory effect on goals and behaviours when activated. The authors suggest that leaders can influence follower self-regulation of behaviour by making salient particular values or identities and by ensuring that the types of values and identity level stressed are consistent.

2.2.8.2 Value systems and self-categorisations

From a **social identity** perspective, the collective (or social) self is categorised in terms of shared characteristics of the relevant “in-group” and distinction from those of the “out-group” (Tajfel and Turner, 1985), and the underlying motive of such categorisations is self-enhancement – to maintain or enhance a positive self-image. As Haslam et al. (2000 p.327) comment, the self is treated as context-sensitive and variable: “no one level of self-categorisation is inherently more appropriate or useful than another, and hence none is in any sense more fundamental to who or what the person is”. These authors proceed by arguing that the nature of needs and motivation will change depending on the level of self-categorisation that is salient. The theorised close association between values and needs suggests that different value systems may be associated with different

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self-categorisations, however, Haslam et al.'s (2000) empirical research does not explore at this possibility.

2.2.8.3 Value systems and self-states

In contrast with Haslam et al. (2000), Seligman and Katz (1996) focus explicitly on multiple value systems. Drawing on the idea of multiple self-representations or self-views (Higgins, 1987; Markus and Nurius, 1986), they asked subjects in their study to rank Rokeach's (1973) terminal values from the perspective of their "actual" self ("as you actually use them") and from that of their "ought" self ("as you feel you ought to use them"). Subjects varied in the extent of discrepancies between the two values rankings, and the extent of the discrepancy correlated positively with the level of negative affect. This is similar to the negative affect predicted by self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) in the case of discrepancy between the actual self (described as the current self-concept) and the ought self (one's own or a significant other's beliefs about one's duties, responsibilities, or obligations).

It could be argued that the Seligman and Katz (1996) study simply highlights that that we do not live up to our values: that as conceptions of the desirable (Kluckhohn, 1951), values are experienced as aspirational and are never fully realised. An individual's value system may be more closely associated in cognition with an "ideal" self-concept (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Higgins, 1987), rather than existing as multiple value systems in connection with different self-representations. Alternatively, the study may instead be highlighting a difference between what Argyris and Schon (1978) term *espoused values* (that is, values which are endorsed to conform with social norms or expectations but not necessarily internalised) and "values-in-use" (which reflect one's actual or real value priorities) rather than the existence of separate value systems.

Seligman and Katz (1996) also argue that individuals reorder their value system, or at least some key values, dynamically in different situations. Value priorities are only stable, they suggest, in a particular domain, so that, for instance, different value systems exist for abstract issues and for specific social, ethical, political or personal issues. They found that different rankings were produced when subjects were asked to rank values both as general principles and in relation to a specific issue such as the environment or abortion. This led Seligman and Katz (1996) to suggest that value systems may be stored cognitively within

schemata⁸ along with related beliefs and attitudes, and that when an issue arises for which an individual has a schema, the person does not refer to an abstract set of values but those specifically related to the relevant schema.

2.2.8.4 Personal and social value systems

A different conception of multiple value systems is provided by Rohan (2000), who distinguishes between *personal* and *social* value systems, both of which are intra-psychic cognitive structures. Rohan proposes (ibid., p.265) that social value systems represent the individual's *perception* of others' value priorities – and that while people have only one personal value system, they are likely to have multiple social value systems, which may include work group, family and team.

Interestingly, Dobewall et al.'s (2014) recent research on self-other agreement leads them to conclude that people can assess values of others whom they know well with “remarkable accuracy” (ibid., p.1). Drawing a parallel with concepts from social identity theory, Rohan (2000) argues that social value priorities as well as personal value priorities will influence perceptions and behaviour. There appears to be an important difference between Rohan's conception of personal and social value systems, and the multi-level approach to the self as described by Haslam et al. (2000), where no one level is more fundamental to who the person is. As Rohan comments:

If personal and social value systems exist, then people must decide whether to behave *in line with others' expectations* – consistent with social value priorities – or in line with their own value priorities...a major issue that the personal-social distinction highlights is *how people reconcile what they want with what others want*, and whether optimal reconciliation is related to people's personal value priorities. (2000, p.266-7, emphasis added)

Thus, according to Rohan, behaving in line with social value systems may compromise, to a certain degree, the individual's own value priorities, where these priorities differ.

⁸ Schemata are defined as generalised cognitive representations derived from past experiences which organise and guide the processing of information relating to a current situation or context. Self-schemata are used by individuals to make sense of their own past behaviour and to direct the course of future behaviour (Markus, 1977).

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2.2.9 Section summary

The aim of this section of the literature review was to clarify the definitional, methodological and conceptual issues that dominate the values literature. The functional analysis of values (Section 2.2.4) highlighted the significance of values to interpreting situations, guiding decisions, rationalising actions and gaining social acceptance; and their fundamental connection with the self-concept. The connection between values and motivational needs was emphasised, particularly in the discussion of Schwartz's (2012; 1992) value theory (Section 2.2.7.2) and Deci and Ryan's (1995) self-determination theory (Section 2.2.7.3). Two contrasting conceptions of personal value systems, as either single and stable or multiple and dynamic, and the different perspectives of the self to which they relate were presented in Sections 2.2.7 and 2.2.8. These are relevant to interpreting managers' responses to value conflicts, and are revisited in the discussion of findings in Chapter 10 (Section 10.4.1). In the next section of this chapter, attention turns from personal values to the significance of values in the organisational context.

2.3 Values and the organisation

2.3.1 Introduction

This section provides the context for the later consideration of value conflicts within the organisation. Section 2.2 above focused on personal value systems and the functions they serve from the individual's perspective. However, as Rokeach (1979) comments, values are just as much sociological as psychological concepts, and they may be applied equally to groups, organisations and other institutions as to individuals – the two aspects are “opposite side of the same coin” (ibid., p. 50). In this section, the discussion first relates values to the overall culture of the organisation, and their supposed normative effects on behaviour are considered. The link between organisational culture, values and identity is introduced to highlight their potential importance to the individual, and the positive outcomes associated with alignment between individual and organisational values are discussed with reference to literature on person-organisation fit.

Organisational values are relevant to the current research because they are deemed to play an important role in guiding and directing the functioning of the organisation and the behaviour and decision-making of its employees (Shapiro

and Naughton, 2015; Dobni et al., 2000). The values of the organisation and its executive leaders feature strongly in discussions of organisational culture and charismatic leadership (Schein, 2010; Berson et al., 2008; Cha and Edmondson, 2006; Sosik, 2005; Collins, 2001a; Conger et al., 2000), business ethics and ethical leadership (Stouten et al., 2013; Verhezen, 2010; Brown and Trevino, 2006; Porter and Kramer, 2006) and leadership effectiveness (George, 2003; Collins, 2001b; Lord and Brown, 2001; Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999; Hambrick and Brandon, 1988). Another significant body of research considers the impact of “values fit” on employee attitudes such as commitment and job satisfaction (Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al., 1991).

2.3.2 Values and organisational culture

Values are a major component of organisational culture (Schein, 2010; Hofstede et al., 1990; Deal and Kennedy, 1988) and feature, along with shared norms, shared beliefs, customs and ways of behaving, in number of definitions of the concept (Schneider and Barbera, 2014). The normative functions ascribed to organisational culture, such as to guide behaviour and foster social cohesion, can equally be applied to values, and indeed an organisation's values are often used interchangeably with or as a proxy for its culture (Dobni et al., 2000). A prominent typology of organisational culture (the Competing Values Framework; Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983) categorises organisations on two dimensions (internal-external and flexibility-control) according to their value priorities. Organisational values, together with other components of culture, provide a sense of meaning and a shared interpretive or sense-making framework for employees (James et al., 1990).

Shared values are likely to contribute to common interpretations and understanding of situations at work, thus facilitating interpersonal communication and minimising conflict (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). For Collins and Porras (2000; 1996), values of visionary organisations are timeless guiding principles which reflect how the organisation “should” behave, albeit according to the organisation's own definition of what is right. Core values represent continuity in the midst of changes to operating practices, goals and strategies (Collins, 2001a). The importance of leaders' personal values and convictions in influencing follower behaviour and performance beyond expectations is an important feature of the charismatic leadership literature (Sosik, 2005; Conger et al., 2000; Shamir et al., 1993). Leaders' personal values are also involved in the

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social influencing processes associated with authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2011).

Schein (2010) argues that the organisation's espoused values, which are derived from the values of the leader or founder, are themselves manifestations of culture, and serve along with norms and rules as day-to-day operating principles for the group. He describes the organisation's espoused values as "articulated, publicly announced principles and values that the group claims to be trying to achieve" (Schein, 2010, p. 15). However, the organisation's **espoused values** may differ from an individual's perception of its **enacted values** (Shapiro and Naughton, 2015; Askun et al., 2010; Rohan, 2000).

2.3.3 Challenges to the concept of shared values

A number of writers challenge the idea of commitment to shared values within a unified organisational culture (e.g. Morgan, 1986; Reichers, 1985; Smircich, 1983). Reichers (1985) conceives the organisation as only one of a number of factions or entities which present competing and often conflicting demands on the individual's energies and loyalties. Cultural analyses often fail to recognise the existence of multiple organisational sub-cultures or counter cultures (Goffee and Jones, 1998; Smircich, 1983), which are described by some writers as the private rather than public faces of the organisation (Morgan, 1986) or interpreted in terms of unofficial and official discourses (Casey, 1995; Watson, 1994). Morgan's representation of organisations as political systems, comprising "a loose network of people with divergent interests who gather together for the sake of expediency" (1986 p. 166), presents an alternative to the cultural metaphor of the organisation as a set of shared values and common frames of reference. A similar critique is offered by Golden (1992), who challenges the normative potency of organisational culture, arguing that while it plays a role in constraining and limiting individual action, individuals have the capacity to comment critically on their situation.

Hofstede et al. (1990) criticise some US culture management literature for failing to distinguish between the values of an organisation's founder or leaders, and the values of its employees. Pruzan (2001, p. 272) suggests that even leaders themselves suspend their personal values when at work in favour of corporate values, describing this as a modern form of schizophrenia. Furthermore, the use of organisational values in day-to-day decision making has been questioned (Johnson et al., 2008; Urbany et al., 2008; Murphy, 1995). Similar doubts have

been raised as to whether published values statements reflect the values actually practised within the organisation: such statements serve more of a symbolic role as part of an externally-oriented public relations strategy (Stevens et al., 2005). Indeed, values statements may give rise to employee cynicism and expose senior management to accusations of hypocrisy if they fail to live up to the stated values (Cha and Edmondson, 2006; Urbany, 2005).

A further issue is that the values associated with the organisation's culture may be publicly adopted but not internalised by its employees. In this way, organisational values act as a form of social control (O'Reilly, 2008; O'Reilly et al., 1991); there is strong pressure to publicly express and validate values whether or not they are held internally (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p. 356).

2.3.4 Culture, values and identity

O'Reilly et al. (1991) link the role of values in organisational culture to the psychological process of identity formation. Drawing on Ashforth and Mael (1989), they argue that individuals seek a social identity to provide meaning and connectedness with others and, at the same time, to help define who they are and who they are not. Joining an organisation which appears to have similar values to one's own is a form of values expression and may be regarded as a self-defining act (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991). Ongoing membership of an organisation and acceptance of its goals and values implies its incorporation within the individual's collective self-concept (Brewer and Gardner, 1996). Furthermore, organisational practices designed to foster a strong and cohesive culture effectively serve to reinforce and make salient this social identity or collective level of self, which may serve as a source of self-enhancement for individual employees. From the organisation's perspective, social identity salience is associated with increased organisational loyalty and extra-role behaviours (Haslam et al., 2000; Tyler, 1999).

Ashforth and Mael (1989) differentiate between identification and internalisation when they assert that an individual may define him or herself in terms of the organisation that he or she works for, while disagreeing with the prevailing values, strategy and systems of authority. However they accept that organisational goals and values may become internalised through socialisation and other processes.

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In contrast with the social identity-based interpretation of organisational values and culture, Goffee and Jones (1998) state that organisations “require us to leave, in varying degrees, parts of our authentic selves outside the office door” (p. 209). For these authors, fitting into a particular organisational culture inevitably involves some level of compromise to the individual’s “true” identity (ibid.). The decision of what and how much the individual is willing to compromise is, they argue, a question of personal value priorities. Thus, an individual’s decision to join or to remain with an organisation is not simply matter of choosing a match between his or her own values and the culture and values of the organisation; rather, it represents a trade-off between what the individual wants or needs and what the organisation’s culture can offer.

2.3.5 Alignment of individual and organisational values

In spite of challenges to the concept of shared values, the idea that alignment of employee and organisational values leads to desirable outcomes finds expression in the considerable body of literature on person-organisation fit, which is typically operationalised through values survey instruments (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Kristof, 1996). Person-organisation *values* fit is defined as “the congruence between patterns of organisational values and patterns of individual values” (Chatman, 1991, p. 45). The term generally refers to employee assessments of the organisation’s values, rather than to its formally espoused values.

Kristof (1996) comments that the use of values to assess person-organisation fit enables each entity to be assessed using the same or comparable content domains; values make sense both at individual and collective levels of analysis. However, some of the values in the Schwartz (1992) and Rokeach (1973) typologies may be regarded as irrelevant or defined at too high a level of abstraction (van Rekom et al., 2006). Only a subset of values may be relevant to organisations and likely to become salient in the work context (Schein, 2010; McDonald and Gandz, 1992). Conversely, research focusing on a narrow range of values, often organisation or industry specific, risks potential omission of values which may be relevant, and present difficulties for generalisations and cross-study comparisons – issues which characterise the wider values literature (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Rohan, 2000). A further complexity is that studies which rely on employee’s assessment of organisational values (e.g. Urbany, 2005)

necessarily assume that respondents are able to interpret their organisation in values terms

Nevertheless, there is empirical support for the idea that employees are attracted to and selected by organisations on the basis of their fit with the organisation's characteristics and culture (Yu, 2014); and that fit affects the individual's intention to stay with the organisation and actual turnover (Kristof, 1996). Recent values fit research also identifies a range of positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Kim et al., 2013; Boon et al., 2011; Borg et al., 2011; Hoffman et al., 2011; Lavelle, 2010). Meglino and Ravlin (1998, p. 380) conclude from their review that findings "tend to be very consistent with theory that proposes that operating in an environment consistent with one's values is a more positive experience on many levels". The positive outcomes associated empirically with values fit in these studies are listed in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Positive outcomes associated with person-organisation values fit.

Attitudinal outcomes	Behavioural outcomes	Other outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job satisfaction. • Organisational commitment. • Organisational identification. • Sense of personal success. • Sense of work group cohesion. • Met expectations. • Optimism about organisation's future. • Intention to quit (negative relationship). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational citizenship behaviours. • [Self-reported] teamwork. • [Self-reported] tendencies toward ethical behaviour. • Length of service. • Organisational turnover (negative relationship). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career success (promotions, salary increases). • Lower [self-reported] stress.

Given the positive outcomes associated with values fit research shown in Table 3 above, it seems likely that a *lack* of values fit will have negative implications for the individual and detrimental outcomes for the organisation.

2.3.6 Section summary

Taken together, the streams of literature outlined in this part indicate the complexity inherent in the interplay between individual and organisational values, at the same time as highlighting the centrality of values in discussions of culture and organisational membership, and the positive outcomes associated with values fit. However, role and situational demands, as well as personal and external circumstances such as the need to maintain a certain level of income and the availability of alternative jobs, may constrain the choices available to employees who experience a lack of values fit. A sense of misalignment may thus pervade the employment relationship and conflicting values may be brought to the fore by particular events or actions. Looking beyond the culture and values-fit literature, therefore, the next section of the literature review considers other approaches to explore the concept of value conflicts.

2.4 Value conflicts and responses

2.4.1 Introduction

This section of the literature review explores the concept of value conflicts with reference to personal values theory (Schwartz, 1992). Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) is introduced as means of understanding the undesirable psychological effects likely to arise from value conflicts, and the consequent motivation to reduce them. The role of values in dissonance arousal and reduction is considered with reference to the five functions of values introduced previously in Section 2.2.4, and dissonance reduction strategies are identified. Finally, decision-making and organisational literature relevant to the idea of value conflicts (e.g. Hewlin, 2003; Tetlock et al., 1996) is examined as a source of further conceptual insight.

2.4.2 The conflicting nature of values

According to Schwartz (1992), conflict between values is inevitable, because it is integral to the structural relationship between different value types. His values model (see Figure 2, p. 21) represents “the relations of conflict and compatibility among values” (ibid., p. 3), and he describes the higher level dimensions (openness to change-conservation and self-interest-self-transcendence) as two major value conflicts (Schwartz, 1996). Moreover, in formulating a personal value

system, the individual must make choices about the relative importance of different and potentially competing values, and these choices represent trade-offs or concessions – giving priority to a particular value at the expense of another (Tetlock, 1986).

Rokeach's (1973) notion of a relatively stable personal value system, which guides behaviour and decision-making, often without awareness, perhaps belies the reality of everyday decisions and dilemmas which have value-based implications and cannot easily be resolved: confronting value conflicts may involve making a choice supportive of one or more values but opposed to others which are also important to the individual (Rohan and Zanna, 2001). Because values are central to the self-concept and are seen as self-defining (Verplanken and Holland, 2002; Erickson, 1995), value conflicts surely present a challenge to one's sense of self.

It may be intuitively appealing to act in accordance with higher principles, which represent best possible living (Rohan, 2000) and ideal self-standards (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998), but in reality, normative pressures and other situational factors may intervene. When faced with a difficult decision and multiple, competing pressures, values, as *abstract* conceptions of the desirable (Kluckhorn, 1951), may not be of practical use. Additionally, people may differ in their awareness of their value priorities (Rohan, 2000), just as they differ in clarity of self-concept (Campbell et al., 1996), which may affect how conflicts are experienced and resolved.

In addition to conflicts involving personal value priorities, conflict situations may arise from a discrepancy between an individual's personal value system and his or her perception of others' values (social value systems; Rohan, 2000). Faced with such a conflict, people must seek to reconcile differences between personal and social value systems (Rohan, 2000). Allport (1955, p. 39) describes the reconciliation of "the personal" and "the tribal" as an ongoing process, and Rohan and Zanna (2001) suggest that the consequences of such reconciliation are a fundamental issue for values research.

Internal conflicts have been examined in relation to personal values in studies using the PVQ (Schwartz et al., 2001) alongside other measures. Sverdlik and Oreg's (2009) research on value priorities and reactions to voluntary and imposed change led them to conclude that values in the same higher-order dimension of the Schwartz (1992) values structure could be brought into conflict; however, the

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conflict was assumed from value survey results rather than being overtly acknowledged by participants. Sverdlik's (2012) later research focuses more specifically on defining internal conflicts. He posits that these comprise concrete (thematic and situational) and abstract (needs, motivation or values-related) facets. Based on his analysis of subjects' written descriptions of conflicts they were currently facing, their interpretation of two specific work-family dilemmas, and various survey measures, Sverdlik (2012, p.41) concluded that personal value priorities play a role in predicting the subjects or themes that cause internal conflict, and also how the conflict was interpreted (i.e. which values were perceived to be in conflict). The findings give conceptual support for the idea of value conflicts in the current study. However, in Sverdlik's (2012, p.41) research, subjects were university students and working parents, which necessarily affected the themes identified, and the research did not explore their responses to value conflicts or the outcomes, nor the psychological effects of value conflicts.

2.4.3 Cognitive dissonance theory: an interpretive framework

Although generally studied in relation to behaviour and attitudinal change, cognitive dissonance theory (CDT; Festinger, 1957) offers a theoretical means of interpreting value conflicts and CDT research into dissonance reduction strategies highlights possible responses. After a summary of the basic theory, its relevance to values is discussed in this section, and strategies of dissonance reduction are presented and explored as potential responses to value conflict.

2.4.3.1 Causes and consequences of dissonance

According to CDT, a discrepancy between two cognitions creates psychological discomfort; a form of inner tension that motivates individuals to act to reduce or eliminate the discrepancy. Cognitions may include attitudes, beliefs and values relating to oneself, others, or the environment (Harmon-Jones, 2000). One cognition acts as a standard against which other relevant cognitions may be judged as either consonant (consistent) or dissonant (inconsistent). The amount of dissonance experienced varies according to the number and importance of the relevant consonant and dissonant cognitions.

Dissonance effects are typically studied in experimental settings, where a cognitive discrepancy is induced by asking subjects to undertake a particular behavioural act. For example, subjects are asked to advocate a counter-attitudinal belief (Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959), to make a choice between two alternatives

(Brehm, 1956), or to role-play a situation (Wicklund and Brehm, 2004). This has led to the widespread view of dissonance as a function of cognitions about a particular action or behaviour, where the individual feels a sense of responsibility for the behaviour (Stone and Cooper, 2001, p. 229). However, Festinger (1957) originally proposed that dissonance is the result of any inconsistent set of cognitions. The prospect of taking a counter-attitudinal action may also arouse dissonance (Kidd and Berkowitz, 1976). Although most studies focus on dissonance arousal as a result of the individual's *own* behaviour, dissonance may also arise vicariously, as a result of observing or even knowing about the actions of others which violate one's own values, where the others are part of a group with which the individual identifies (Glasford et al., 2008; Norton et al., 2003).

Festinger (1957) states that individuals employ one or more justification strategies to reduce the discrepancy and the accompanying undesirable psychological state of dissonance:

- Add new consonant cognitions or decrease the number of dissonant cognitions; and/or
- Increase the importance of consonant cognitions and reduce the importance of dissonant cognitions.

The academic literature on cognitive dissonance is characterised by a number of proposed revisions to the original theory. A number of these argue that the self plays a critical role in the dissonance process. Interpretations which are of particular relevance to the later application of dissonance theory to value conflicts are summarised in Table 4 below, and explained more fully for reference in Appendix C.

Table 4: Revisions to cognitive dissonance theory

Revisions to CDT	Why discrepant cognitions lead to dissonance	Response to reduce dissonance
Self-consistency theory Aronson (1997; 1969)	Holding discrepant cognitions is seen as inconsistent with self-expectations and thus threatens the desired positive and consistent self-concept	Direct strategy: Change an attitude or belief to reduce the discrepancy and restore positive and consistent view of self

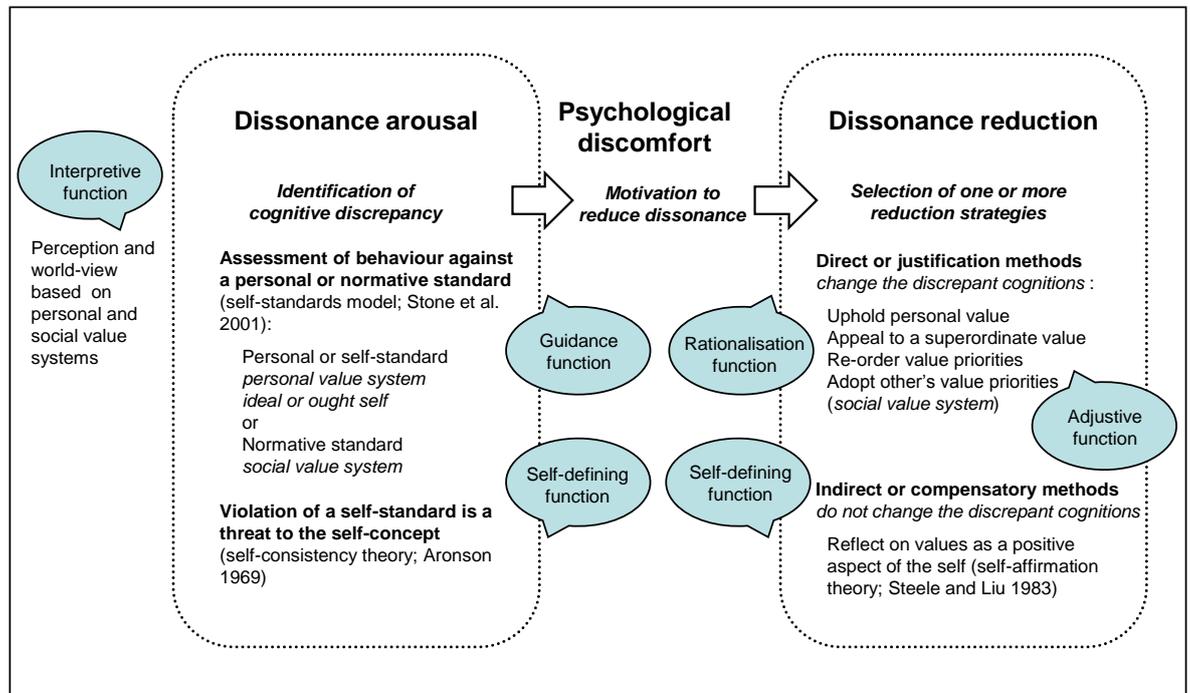
Revisions to CDT	Why discrepant cognitions lead to dissonance	Response to reduce dissonance
Self-affirmation theory Steele (1988; 1983)	Holding discrepant cognitions threatens positive self-concept	Indirect strategy: Use another aspect of the self as a buffer or resource: affirming an important but unrelated aspect of the self-concept (e.g. values) restores self-integrity without the need to change the original discrepant cognitions
Self-regulation explanation Harmon-Jones (2000), McGregor et al. (2001)	Discrepant cognitions imply self-regulatory breakdown and uncertainty	Indirect strategies: Adopt more extreme attitudes to an unrelated social issue to give sense of certainty Adopt more clearly defined value priorities and increased commitment to projects consistent with values and identity.
Self-standards explanation Stone and Cooper (2001)	Individual assesses his or her behaviour as falling short of personal or normative standards or others' expectations.	Direct or indirect strategies depending on the relevance, valence and accessibility of particular self-attributes in the "working self-concept". The self acts flexibly either as a <i>resource</i> that can help buffer threats to the self-concept (as in self-affirmation theory), or as a <i>standard</i> against which the individual judges his or her behaviour (as in self-consistency theory).

2.4.3.2 Values and the dissonance process

Dissonance theory applies to value-related discrepancies or conflicts because values, like attitudes and beliefs, are cognitive concepts. It offers an explanation of why discrepancies between a value and other cognitions will give rise to psychological discomfort, and suggests potential responses which may be relevant to field-based research. Moreover, as well as featuring in dissonance arousal, it seems likely that values are involved, whether implicitly or explicitly in the strategy adopted to reduce dissonance. The association made between values

and the self (see Section 2.2, p.9) suggests that self-based theories of dissonance may be particularly pertinent. The apparent relevance of CDT to value conflicts is portrayed in Figure 4 below, followed by an explanation of the figure with reference to the five value functions introduced in Section 2.2.4, p. 13)⁹.

Figure 4: Values as part of the dissonance process



(a) The self-defining function and self-affirmation:

Self-affirmation theory explicitly applies the theorised link between values and the self-concept to dissonance reduction. In Steele and Liu's (1983) empirical work, subjects' self-important values are used as a positive and global self-affirming symbol, unrelated to the specific cognitive inconsistency, in order to mitigate dissonance effects by restoring a sense of self as competent, coherent, and autonomous (Steele, 1988).

When an individual's action violates a central, self-defining value, he or she will act to compensate for this violation by making values-congruent choices in a subsequent situation (Verplanken and Holland, 2002). Tedeschi (1971) argues that maintaining a positive and consistent self-concept may be achieved by

⁹ The five value functions are: (a) self-defining - acting as an important part of the self-concept; (b) guidance - values as evaluative standards; (c) interpretive - values used to understand the environment; (d) rationalisation - values used to justify decisions; and (e) adjustive - to gain acceptance and a sense of security.

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upholding one's values, even if this involves engaging in socially or culturally inappropriate behaviours. Others assert more strongly that some people ignore personal safety or even give up their lives to express or uphold their value priorities (Rohan, 2000; Murray et al., 1996). Because at least some values are central to the self-concept, an individual may in some cases choose to uphold self-defining value priorities, even to his or her personal detriment or social sanction.

Like Aronson (1969), Rokeach (1973) regards cognitive discrepancies as a threat to a positive self-concept. He reasons that contradictions involving values are particularly likely to implicate self-conceptions, since values are used as evaluative self-standards. Central to his value self-confrontation method of attitude change is the premise that awareness of discrepancies between particular personal value priorities and those of a respected reference group causes a state of self-dissatisfaction. In order to reduce this, he explains, the individual will change his or her value priorities, either to bring them into line with those of a positive reference group, or to ensure they no longer align with those of a negative reference group. Notwithstanding the later criticisms of the method's long-term effectiveness and suggestions of methodological issues with the original experiments (see Grube et al., 1994; Sawa and Sawa, 1988; Schwartz and Inbar-Saban, 1988), the idea remains that changing one's own value priorities and adopting those of significant others may in some circumstances be used to restore a positive self-concept.

(b) The guidance function and value-based standards:

The role of values to evaluate the self and others (Rokeach, 1973, p. 14) is particularly relevant to the dissonance *arousal* process: a value may act as the standard against which other cognitions are judged as consonant or dissonant. Given that values are abstract concepts (Schwartz, 1994), often acting to guide behaviour without conscious awareness (Schwartz, 1996; Feather, 1995; Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995), dissonance may not necessarily be attributed directly to a values discrepancy or conflict, but rather experienced a behavioural or attitudinal dilemma arising from a particular situation.

As internalised self-standards (Rokeach, 1973), values are involved in the self-regulation of behaviour – not living up to one's values may be interpreted as a dissonance-producing inconsistency between one's ideal and actual self (Higgins, 1987). If circumstances inhibit the individual from acting in accordance with value priorities, or involve conflicting value priorities, there will be ongoing dissonance

and negative implications for self-esteem, because violation of important values has negative, self-relevant consequences (Kluckhorn, 1951). Taken to extreme, “value crisis” (Hermans and Oles, 1996), characterised by loss of a clear sense of identity, the inability to make decisions and other deleterious psychological effects, arises when an individual is unable to organise his or her personal value system or reconcile different value priorities.

As well as personal standards, Stone and Cooper (2001) indicate that normative standards may be referenced when the individual assesses whether dissonance has occurred. Drawing on Rohan’s (2000) distinction between personal and social value systems (perceptions of others’ value priorities), the normative standards referenced may be the social value system of a particular reference group.

(c) The interpretive function and the need for coherence:

Values help structure our worldview and the perception and interpretation of stimuli (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Williams, 1979; Allport, 1955). In their study of leadership decision making, Illies and Reiter-Palmon (2008) cite Maclagan (1998) and Reiter-Palmon et al. (1998) when they note that values influence how a problem environment is perceived, and that values play a role in the problem-construction process. If, as Katz (1960) suggests, values systems provide a sense of coherence and adequate structure to one’s view of the world, it follows that discrepancies in value priorities, which call into question the consistency of one’s worldview, are likely to give rise to dissonance.

(d) The rationalisation function in dissonance reduction:

The use of values to justify attitudes and past or prospective behaviour to oneself or others is acknowledged by a number of values scholars (Rohan, 2000; Kristiansen and Zanna, 1994; Tetlock, 1986; Williams, 1979; Rokeach, 1973). Values or values-based ideologies (Rohan and Zanna, 2001) may be employed in dissonance reduction to justify or to bolster support for a particular cognition. Values may also be invoked in the strategy of appealing to a superordinate cognitions or principle (Burris et al., 1997).

(e) The adjustive function in dissonance reduction:

The adjustive function reflects a desire for acceptance in the institutional, social and cultural environment. People may adopt the value priorities of a group or institution to gain advancement and recognition, or to derive a sense of security (Rohan, 2000). Thus, in the face of conflicts between one’s own and others’

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values, internalisation of others' values for adjustment purposes may be used to reduce dissonance.

2.4.3.3 Dissonance reduction strategies

The dissonance reduction strategies shown in Table 5 below were identified from the dissonance literature. Stone et al. (1997) conclude from their study of responses to hypocrisy that people prefer to confront discrepancies using direct strategies if these are available, and that more than one strategy may be used at a time (Stone et al., 1997).

Table 5: Dissonance reduction strategies: potential value conflict responses

Direct strategies: change cognitions relating to the discrepancy	
Change a discrepant attitude or other cognition (may include a self-belief).	(Elliot and Devine, 1994; Aronson, 1969; Festinger, 1957)
Alter future behaviour to align with an espoused view - "practise what was preached."	(Stone et al., 1997)
Reinforce a belief that has been disconfirmed or compromised or seek social support for the cognition - behavioural bolstering and belief intensification.	(Festinger, 1957)
Decrease the importance of a discrepant cognition - trivialisation.	(Simon et al., 1995)
Find external justification for, or distort perception of, the circumstances that led to the discrepancy - such as unforeseeable outcome or low volition.	(Stalder and Baron, 1998; Cooper and Fazio, 1984)
Deny responsibility for a discrepant behaviour (no justification).	(Gosling et al., 2006)
Non-verbally distance self from the discrepant behaviour as a means of neutralising or "cancelling out" the behaviour - for "self-insulation" rather than tactical motives.	(Fleming and Rudman, 1993)
Appeal to a superordinate cognition - justify discrepancy using a higher principle - transcendence.	(Burriss et al., 1997)

Indirect or compensatory strategies: reduce dissonance without altering elements of the discrepancy	
<p>Reflect on another positive aspect of the self (represented by important values).</p> <p>May include adopting more clearly defined value priorities and increasing commitment to projects consistent with the self and identity.</p>	<p>(Steele, 1988; Steele and Liu, 1983)</p> <p>(McGregor et al., 2001)</p>
<p>Wrongly attribute the cause of the psychological discomfort to something other than the discrepancy – “misattribution.”</p>	<p>(Zanna and Cooper, 1974)</p>
<p>Distraction or mood-enhancement – consume alcohol, listen to a humorous tape, or express positive affect.</p>	<p>(Steele et al., 1981; Kidd and Berkowitz, 1976; Zanna and Aziza, 1976, cited in Stone et al. 1997)</p>

A range of factors affect which of the above strategies are chosen, including:

- The importance of relevant cognitions (Festinger, 1957)
- The degree of resistance to change of the cognitions, influenced by the fixedness of the underlying behaviour, the “cognitive embedment” of the relevant cognitions, and environmental constraints (Festinger, 1957, p. 27)
- Whether the discrepant behaviour was public or private (Stone et al., 1997; Scheier and Carver, 1980)
- The relative ease of implementation of available strategies (Stone et al., 1997; Elliot and Devine, 1994)
- Accessibility of particular cognitions in the working self-concept (Stone and Cooper, 2001)

Festinger (1957) implies that once dissonance is resolved in one way or another, equilibrium is restored and the individual ceases to feel psychological discomfort. However, the dominant, experimental dissonance research paradigm has the potential limitation of only measuring short-term effects and responses. Furthermore, imposed experimental conditions do not recreate the social and environmental influences that may affect the availability and choice of strategy in real-life dilemmas. Relatedly, Harmon-Jones (2000) points out that owing to the cognitive emphasis of CDT, the role of affect is relatively under-researched.

2.4.4 Value conflicts and decisional dilemmas

Research on decision-making also suggests potential responses in the case of value conflict. Tetlock (1986), researching in the context of social and political policy decision-making, specifically considers value conflicts in his model of trade-off reasoning, and the ideas have more recently been extended to the organisational context (Patil and Tetlock, 2014). Tetlock's basic assumption that value conflict is psychologically painful and a threat to self-esteem draws directly from dissonance theory. He argues (1986) that people prefer modes of resolving value conflicts that require minimum cognitive effort while restoring self-esteem. The simpler strategies he identifies - denying the positive aspects of one value and bolstering the other value - are familiar from dissonance research. When important values of equal priority are brought strongly into conflict, he argues, more sophisticated, cognitively demanding reasoning is required, which involves recognising the positive and negative aspects associated with an issue (differentiation) and considering ways of coping with trade-offs among desired values or goals (integration).

A later version of the model (Tetlock et al., 1996) takes into account factors such as the meanings that people attach to the *content* of the values in conflict and the accountabilities of the decision-maker: "people do not make decisions in a social vacuum; they live and work in complex webs of accountability in which they frequently wonder '*How will others react if I do this or that?*'" (ibid., p. 35). Additional strategies in the revised model include decision avoidance tactics such as buck-passing and procrastination; disengagement from the issue; and telling people what they want to hear. The prospect of making trade-offs between "sacred values" - those generally regarded as inviolable as they are based on moral or ethical principles (Tetlock, 2003) - is particularly aversive, and elicits strong negative feelings of distress and disturbance (Hanselmann and Tanner, 2008). Furthermore, the cognitive effort involved in complex, trade-off reasoning is exhausting (Patil and Tetlock, 2014).

Similar responses and strategies are to be found when strongly-held, conflicting attitudes are implicated in decision-making (van Harreveld et al., 2009). Maio et al. (2010, p. 19) assert that conflicted attitudes may originate from opposing value types, since at least some attitudes are value-expressive: "Values pull attitudes in opposing directions, creating feelings of conflict and indecision" (Maio, 2010). Although van Harreveld (2009) and Tetlock (1996; 1986) highlight decision-making complexities not featured in CDT, this does not detract from

CDT's value in accounting for the negative psychological effects likely to arise from value conflicts, whether these are experienced as decisional dilemmas or as a consequence of taking a particular action. Tetlock (1996) also acknowledges that an understanding of different responses to value conflicts needs to take social and situational circumstances into account. Therefore, organisation-based research was scrutinised as a further source of information on potential responses to value conflicts.

2.4.5 Value conflicts in organisational settings

The idea of lack of fit between individual and organisational values was introduced in Section 2.3.6. Hewlin (2003) suggests that financial pressures, environmental forces, or a change in senior leadership may contribute to a perceived shift in organisational culture and values, which in turn alters the pattern of values congruence. Circumstances such as organisational change and restructuring, an executive decision or a new policy initiative have been identified as likely to trigger moral or ethical dilemmas (Illies and Reiter-Palmon, 2008; Ford and Richardson, 1994; Jackall, 1988) and doubts about which action to take in the face of competing demands or commitments (Reichers, 1985). There appears to be a dearth of organisational research that specifically interprets such events in terms of value conflicts. However, case studies which describe employee reactions to situations likely to bring values into conflict, such as restructuring, work intensification and culture change, document a range of negative psychological responses and behavioural strategies such as:

- impression management to present a favourable picture to senior managers (Hallier and James, 1997) or to give the appearance of long working-hours (Scase and Goffee, 1989);
- intensification of efforts to maintain boundaries between work and home life (Rothbard et al., 2005; Perlow, 1998; Collinson and Collinson, 1997); and
- presenteeism and visible displays of commitment prompted by fears for job security (Newell and Dopson, 1996; Scase and Goffee, 1989).

However, the role of values in shaping these responses is implied rather than stated. Nor is it possible to discern whether employees experience and interpret these different demands in terms of competing or conflicting values. Finally, the responses identified above represent patterns of behaviour established over time as a result of a series of events, rather than to specific value conflict incidents.

2.4.5.1 Façades of conformity

In his analysis of moral dilemmas in managerial work, Jackall (1988) suggests that organisational survival and success depends partly upon how effectively employees are seen to conform to the values and norms of the organisation. Hewlin (2003) identifies a specific form of self-presentation in response to conflicts between personal and organisational value systems. She states that some employees create “façades of conformity” by suppressing their own values and pretending to embrace organisational values. This behaviour, she argues, requires considerable cognitive effort and is likely lead to negative psychological and emotional outcomes, and it is prompted by a range of fears or concerns, such as progression and job security as well as social acceptance and recognition. Limited empirical work based on Hewlin’s theoretical concept has found examples of façades of conformity among university faculty staff (Stormer and Devine, 2008), and has identified positive correlations between façades of conformity and intention to leave, mediated by the level of emotional exhaustion (Hewlin, 2009).

2.4.6 Section summary

This section of the literature review focused primarily on cognitive dissonance theory as a framework for interpreting value conflicts and responses. CDT states that the individual will use different cognitive and behavioural strategies to try and alleviate the psychological discomfort that is experienced as a result of conflicting cognitions (in this case, opposing value types). If dissonance is not reduced, CDT implies that negative psychological affect will continue.

Because values function as cognitively-held self-standards and as a source of self-definition (see Section 2.2.4), conflicts involving values will, almost inevitably, have implications for one’s sense of self. Although dissonance may be triggered by competing values, insights from more recent dissonance theorists suggest that personal values can also be invoked to reduce the unpleasant effects of dissonance, either as self-affirming symbols to restore a positive sense of self, or to rationalise or justify past or future behaviour. In addition to dissonance research, findings from decision-making research (Tetlock, 1986) highlighted a range of potential responses to reduce dissonance-like effects.

The organisational studies discussed in Section 2.4.5 above suggest that when employees face demands or work in environments which are at odds with their

personal values, they will enact a range of behaviours in an attempt to assert their personal values. If they are unable to do so, the behaviours adopted instead indicate largely deleterious consequences both for the individual and the organisation.

Attention turns in the final section of the literature review to the nature of the management role, and the implications of its demands for those in management positions. The management and leadership literature is scrutinised to consider the role's structural position in the organisational hierarchy, its multiple accountabilities to the organisation, employees and others, and the particular expectations associated with being a manager.

2.5 The nature of the management role

2.5.1 Introduction

This final section of the literature review considers what characterises managers as an occupational group distinct from other employees, and whether the nature of the role itself is likely to contribute to the experience of value conflicts within the organisation. A brief introduction to the origin of the management role and its sources of legitimacy set the scene for the ensuing discussion of the multi-faceted nature of the work. The interactions between managers, the organisation and its component groups illustrate the complexity and tensions that are inherent in the management role.

The title of *manager*, as used within organisations, reflects significant variation in the scale and scope of the role, representing diverse levels of responsibility and both generalist and specialist functions (Mintzberg, 2009). For simplicity, the term is used here broadly, to describe those who are responsible for a discrete unit, function, or team of people. It includes first-line managers (those who have responsibility for employees who are not managers) and middle managers, who have other managers reporting to them. This is distinct from the term senior manager, which is used to denote those operating at executive level or equivalent.

2.5.2 Agency, legitimacy and the special status of managers

The requirement for a managerial function to control and co-ordinate the work of others can be traced to industrialisation and the separation of ownership from

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control. The need for a special kind of wage labourer to command and maximise the output from labour established a unique role for managers as agents of the owners of capital (Anthony, 1986; Parker, 1981). The allegiance and effort exerted by managers on behalf of the owners of capital entitled them to a special status and elite position, set above and apart from the labour power which they commanded (Grint, 2005).

In the bureaucratic organisation, managerial rationality and expertise legitimised the right of control over [irrational] workers through a centralised system of procedures and rule-based action (Salaman, 1979). As managing emerged as a central organisational activity, the special status of managers followed not only as a consequence of their allegiance to those above them in the hierarchy, but also in recognition of their ability to make rational plans and decisions, and to provide work tasks, order and structure for ordinary workers (Grint, 2005).

Human relations approaches to management (Roethlisberger, 1939; Mayo, 1933) provided a further legitimacy; the effective manager was now an enabler of employee motivation and self-fulfilment at work, and ordinary workers were credited with emotions, wants and needs. The assumption remained that managers were concerned with maximising returns for the organisation, albeit that now they were concerned with workers' psychological well-being. Anthony (1977) argues that a sense of legitimacy and moral authority is important for managers: to be truly effective, they need and want to believe that the effort they themselves are making, and the effort they are exhorting from others, is for a valid cause. This implies a particular form of attachment to the organisation and to managerial work itself. Whyte's (1956) "organisation man", located in the large corporation, with one foot on the corporate career ladder and the other in suburbia, articulates such a sense of mutuality and moral involvement with the organisation:

Be loyal to the company and the company will be loyal to you. After all, if you do a good job for the organisation, it is only good sense for the organisation to be good to you, for that will be best for everybody. (ibid., p. 123)

Management work has long been regarded as providing a particular form of identity, containing a set of values, expectations, rights and obligations (Gouldner, 1954), a theme that has variously been taken up by identity theorists (Alvesson, 2010; Clarke et al., 2009; Carroll and Levy, 2008; Kreiner et al., 2006;

Ashforth, 2001; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991). Furthermore, managers are less likely to have external professional affiliations relating to their role as a manager (Anthony, 1990). As a result their sense of identity may be more closely aligned with, or dependent upon, membership of their organisation and its values than those in other occupational or specialist roles.

2.5.3 Inherent tensions

The view that the management role is concerned with balancing inherent tensions and conflicts is a recurrent feature of management literature over a number of decades. Barnard's (1938) view that the executive must reconcile conflicting forces, interests and ideals (p. 21) is echoed by more recent scholars (Mintzberg, 2009; Hill, 2003; Watson, 1994). These authors indicate a number of challenges arising from the nature of the work itself and the position of the role in the middle of the organisational hierarchy. Examples of the challenges identified in the literature are summarised in Table 6 and discussed below.

Table 6: The inherent tensions and conflicts of management

Deal with short-term, operational issues	v	Make medium and long-term plans
Manage others	v	Be subject to management control
Exercise leadership	v	Have limited decision-making autonomy
Be an agent of change	v	Maintain continuity of operations
Promote organisation's values and expectations	v	Reconcile personal values and expectations
Be skilled in self-presentation	v	Be authentic and act with integrity
Manage emotions of reportees	v	Manage own emotions
Be loyal to the organisation	v	Be loyal to reportees

2.5.4 The multi-faceted nature of managerial work

Diary based, structured observation, and ethnographic studies of managers (Watson, 1994; Kotter, 1982; Mintzberg, 1973; Stewart, 1967) generally present a

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picture of managers who are very busy, frequently interrupted, and engaged in a wide variety of activities. Mintzberg's (1973) influential analysis of management work in large organisations directly challenged the traditional view of managers as rational planners, organisers, co-ordinators and controllers of resources (Fayol, 1949). It is notable that Mintzberg's research was confined to chief executives rather than middle or first-line managers, as were subsequent replication studies that report similar findings (Tengblad, 2006; Kurke and Aldrich, 1983). However, his recent research (Mintzberg, 2009) considers managers of varying seniority, including first-line and middle managers, within a range of organisations, and reveals that the characteristics of their work bear striking resemblance to that of the executives in his original study. For example, he refers to managers' overwhelming focus on "live" communication methods such as meetings, phone-calls and informal conversations; the brevity and diversity of their activities; long working hours; the unrelenting pace and quantity of management work; and managers' widespread internal and external networks.

Such a profile reveals the tension between the need to make medium or long-term plans, and the immediate demands of short-term, operational priorities, where decisions must be made quickly and on the basis of incomplete information (McConville and Holden, 1999). Stewart (1986) portrays management decision-making as more of a political rather than a rational process, reflecting individual hopes, wishes and biases, and different factional interests. Mintzberg (2009) observes that managers' priorities are often built around ongoing issues and intractable, messy problems rather than arising from systematic planning.

2.5.5 Managing the individualised employment relationship

Although the fundamental nature of management work appears not to have changed significantly over time, Hales (2005) does identify a broadening in scope of the first line manager role. This entails not only greater functional responsibilities but also more people management activities, arising partly from widespread de-layering and also from the devolvement of specialist personnel functions to the line (Teague and Roche, 2012; McConville and Holden, 1999; McGovern et al., 1997). People management has always been a component of line and general management (Keenoy and Anthony, 1992). However, the so-called *high commitment* management practices (Walton, 1985) embraced in the human resource management (HRM) literature have significant implications for the role and organisational expectations of line managers. Through normative practices

such as recruitment, career development, appraisal and employee involvement, and an emphasis on unmediated communication with employees, HRM emphasises a more individualised employment relationship. Senior managers are responsible for creating a common vision for the organisation, but the onus is on line managers to apply human resource practices and to engender commitment to shared norms and values. This requires strong interpersonal relationships and leadership behaviours (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Guest, 1998; Coopey, 1995). The line manager thus plays a “pivotal role...in setting the context for individual performance as well as the delivery of human resource management in the organisation” (Higgs and McBain, 2010, p. 5). Evidence suggests that employee perceptions of managers’ leadership behaviours, and their effective performance of HRM practices, are an important, although not the sole, contributing factor to organisational commitment, employee engagement and job experience (Alfes et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2013; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson and Purcell, 2003). Therefore, the ways in which managers broker the employment relationship and enact leadership have significant individual and organisational implications.

2.5.6 Managers as leaders

The relationship between leadership and management has been the subject of longstanding debate (Carroll and Levy, 2008), with the two concepts often presented in terms of their essential differences (Yukl, 2006; Kets de Vries, 2001; Kotter, 1999). Management is typically associated with more routine, operational activities and known problems and leadership with setting direction and vision, developing new solutions, inspiring and motivating people (Young and Dulewicz, 2008). The narrative accounts of managers in Carroll and Levy’s (2008) study describe leadership as more nebulous and intangible, yet more emotive and challenging than *just* management, which is described by one participant as akin to comfort food.

Because leadership has a more positive cultural valence (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002), managers’ conceptions of themselves as leaders may represent nothing more than the “extra-ordinarisation of the mundane” (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003, p. 1435). Similarly, Hales (2001, p.54) observes that in spite of the “contemporary hype” about leadership, management is a more accurate description of what occurs in practice. While it may be possible to distinguish conceptually between the two, for example in terms of competencies (Young and

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Dulewicz, 2008), activities (Kotter, 1990) or identities (Carroll and Levy, 2008), Mintzberg (2009) argues that the value of the distinction in practice is questionable.

The view adopted in the present study, like that expressed by a number of practising managers (Mintzberg, 2009; reported in Hill, 2003; Watson, 1994), is that leadership is a necessary component of the management role, and is specifically concerned with facilitating and influencing peoples' effective functioning in support of organisational goals:

Instead of distinguishing managers from leaders, we should be seeing managers as leaders, and leadership as management practised well. (Mintzberg, 2009, p. 9).

In shared or distributed leadership models (Pearce et al., 2008; Gronn, 2002) leadership is conceived as a dynamic process, which may be shared between members of a group or team rather than localised within one individual or associated with a specific status or job role. This theme, together with research that focuses on social exchange relationships between leaders and followers (Uhl-Bien, 2006), perhaps contributes to a shift in emphasis away from leadership as the preserve of top executives, and from financial performance as the primary measure of leadership effectiveness (Avolio et al., 2009; Young and Dulewicz, 2008). Arguably, for close or nearby leaders (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2001; Shamir, 1995), forging relationships that do not rely on positional authority is particularly important.

Higgs (2003) brings together these and other strands within contemporary leadership thinking in an emerging model of effective leadership, which comprises areas of competence and personal characteristics: leadership is "being yourself with skill" (ibid., p. 280). The authenticity, integrity, self-awareness and self-belief components of Higgs' model are also central to authentic leadership theory (Gardner et al., 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Ilies et al., 2005). Proponents stress the desirability of acting in accord with one's values, preferences and needs rather than acting falsely, to please others or for instrumental purposes (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). In doing so, they argue, authentic leaders develop genuine, transparent relationships with followers and make balanced and principled decisions rather than acting for political ends or to conform to others' expectations (Gardner et al., 2005). For the individual, authenticity is associated with healthy psychological functioning and optimal self-

esteem (Wood et al., 2008; Kernis and Goldman, 2003). From an organisational perspective, authentic leadership is held to foster trust, engagement and well-being in followers, which in turn supports sustained and veritable performance outcomes for the organisation (Gardner et al., 2005). However, unlike chief executives, typically cited as exemplars of authentic leadership (George, 2003), first-line and middle managers may not have the authority to act on their principles, nor the freedom to be their “true self” at work.

2.5.7 Managers as role models

Being a positive role model for employees is regarded as an important leadership influencing process (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Shamir and Eilam, 2005; May et al., 2003). However, because managers themselves are managed by those more senior in the organisation, they are the object of HRM and culture change initiatives as well as the “designer and deliverer of [their] repercussions” (Legge, 1995, p. 134). Those whose personal values no longer align with the new culture or way of working may feel under pressure to conceal their true feelings, and to engage in a form of emotional labour¹⁰ (Hochschild, 1983). Clarke (2007, p. 94) argues that this leaves managers with “a restricted emotional repertoire, having to balance the needs of the organisations with the needs of their employees, while also being constrained in their voice”.

Huy (2002) points out that good acting is a prerequisite to progression within management, and indeed, Watson (2008) suggests that *all* employees must assume various corporate “personas”, which are likely to differ from, and be in conflict with, the personas they adopt in other parts of their lives. However, he regards this as a particularly acute challenge for managers:

Managers cannot simply “be themselves” at work. They have to act as the voice or face of the corporation. They must be seen as knowledgeable, authoritative and, above all, “in control”. Yet, at the same time, they must present themselves to others as credible human individuals. Without this they would be unable to establish and maintain the interpersonal relationships on which successful performance of their jobs depends.

(Watson, 2008, p. 122)

¹⁰ Emotional labour is defined by Hochschild (1983/, p. 7) as “the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display”, designed to engender particular responses in others. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993/, p. 90) refer to it as “the act of displaying the appropriate emotion” in order to separate the behavioural expression of emotion from any underlying experience of emotion.

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Certainly, managing in accord with personal values and convictions seems likely to present challenges for those managers who are expected to motivate others without necessarily agreeing with the direction set by the executive team.

2.5.8 Managers and morality

Personal values and convictions also feature in discussions of managers' ethical decision-making and behaviour (Fisher and Lovell, 2009; MacLagan, 1998). Watson (2006) states that managers' work cannot be morally neutral, because it occurs in the context of relationships where there is an imbalance of power. Nor do managers have sufficient authority, he argues, to do their job without and considering how their acts and decisions are likely to be judged by others. The rationale that managers, as agents of the organisation, are employed to do what is best for the long-term future of the organisation is of little practical utility, given an organisation's multiple stakeholders and the fundamentally differing views on right and wrong (Fisher and Lovell, 2009).

For Macintyre (1981), management is essentially manipulative and instrumental, treating people as means to achieve ends, and Jackall (1988) suggests that managers have no choice but to leave their personal values and moralities at home if they are to survive in the corporate world. At the same time, he and others (Clarke et al., 2009; De Graaf, 2005; Bird and Waters, 1989) indicate that managers *are* concerned with the moral and other implications of their day-to-day decisions and actions. For example, managers in Dukerich et al.'s (2000) study refer to being personally affected by "moral" problems – issues involving people and personal feelings – and describe their concern in terms of rights, fairness and justice. Case study evidence (De Graaf, 2005) suggests that managers whose jobs are associated with a profession tend to refer to external professional codes of ethics in evaluating the rightness of their decision-making¹¹, while managers in Clarke et al.'s (2009) study refer to the importance of being professional in legitimising their actions. However, Watson (2006; 1994) observes more generally that managers seek to act on the basis of what *feels* right, based on their sense who they are as a person, their views of fairness and right and wrong, and their own ideas about what will work in the particular context: a marrying of principles and pragmatism.

¹¹ Mintzberg (2009; 2004) argues that management should not be regarded as a profession, but rather as a practice that requires experience and insight, rather than formal and codified knowledge.

In adopting a value conflicts perspective, the concern of the present study is not to comment on the ethical implications of managers' decision-making, nor to interpret their responses in terms of ethical theory. As Mumford (2003) comments, ethical issues are not the only complex organisational dilemmas that managers must face. However, the treatment of values in the ethics literature as representing fundamentally opposing viewpoints (Fisher and Lovell, 2009) reinforces the premise that for managers, reconciling personal value priorities in the face of multiple, potentially competing accountabilities is unlikely to be easy.

2.5.9 Multiple allegiances and complex relationships

The inherent tensions of management work may be exacerbated by managers' many relationships and accountabilities within and beyond the organisation, including peers, employees, senior managers, customers and business partners. Because they are reliant on other people for information and to get things done, managers need to develop and maintain a network of informal and formal connections (Hill, 2003; Carroll and Teo, 1996; Kotter, 1982), and indeed, peers and more experienced managers may be a source of moral support. However, as a result of their position in the hierarchy, managers have responsibilities and accountabilities to senior management as well as to their reportees. To the last group, they may personify the organisation and consequently, be held at a distance: "management is often less a 'we' and more a 'they'" (Pruzan, 2001, p. 279). At the same time, managers need employees' co-operation and commitment to achieve results. For some managers, however, personal relationships are the basis of their commitment rather than loyalty to the organisation as an entity (Wajcman and Martin, 2001).

The tensions arising from this web of social and structural relationships are perhaps most marked at middle management level (McConville, 2006). It falls to middle managers to strike a balance between maintaining day-to-day operations and implementing restructuring or new initiatives (Huy, 2002). Their pivotal position in the hierarchy, store of organisational knowledge and wide, informal networks enable them to act as a hub through which information flows (Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992). In this way they bridge between strategic concepts and operational realities (Mintzberg, 2009; Mantere, 2008). Middle managers interpret events for employees and more senior managers, creating meaning and drawing attention to significant information, and thereby playing a significant role in

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organisational sense-making (Beck and Plowman, 2009; Balogun and Johnson, 2004). However, this sense-making is often fraught with difficulties:

Middle managers suffer the double ignominy of having to create a sensible story to protect those who work for them from meaninglessness, and then trying to protect those same people again when the sensible story is turned into nonsense by their own managers (Sims, 2003, p. 1196).

At the same time, some managers are ready to subvert the organisation's formal aims or policies for their own ends (Jackall, 1988). For example, a study of middle managers in the air traffic control sector (Hallier and James, 1997) reveals that they attempted to position themselves more favourably with senior management than their colleagues, managing contact with senior management to convey a positive impression of their achievements and concealing employee dissatisfaction. This jostling for favour and willingness to conceal the true situation perhaps suggests that loyalty to the organisation may be overtaken by strategies for self-preservation and survival.

A critical feature of the management role is balancing the values and demands of the organisation, as represented or enacted by its senior managers, with the different values and expectations of their reportees. As employees themselves, managers are subject to measurement and control (Ogbonna and Wilkinson, 2003), and held accountable for the work and performance of others. As agents of contract fulfilment (Hallier and James, 1997, p. 707) for the promises made to employees by senior management, they have to deal with the consequences if these promises are not met. McConville (2006) states that inconsistencies between the expectations of the organisation and those of reportees give rise to a form of role dissonance for managers. Unlike Festinger's (1957) concept of cognitive dissonance, she argues, resolution in this context is beyond the capability of the individual, for this dissonance is inherent to the management role. Watson's (1994) description of the insecurity and angst expressed by some managers, and the outbursts of frustration and bad temper he witnessed during his ethnographic study of a telecommunications company, perhaps illustrates the emotional consequences of this unresolved dissonance. As well as dealing with their own emotional reactions, managers are closer to the emotional responses of their reportees (Brotheridge and Lee, 2008). Huy (2002) describes how managers as a group performed a collective form of emotional balancing during a three year change programme in a large organisation: some calmed employees by listening

to their concerns, helping to preserve continuity of operations, while others elicited enthusiasm and support for change.

However, organisational structures typically emphasise differentiation between functions, rather than integration and collaboration (Schlesinger and Oshry, 1984), and the constant competition for resources and promotion amongst peer managers means that their friendships are “somewhat barbed” (Sims, 2003, p. 1202). Concern for self-promotion, personal achievement and career progression may hinder supportive relationships within management peer groups.

The managers’ relationships and commitments outside work, such as family or community, and friendships which extend beyond work, may also represent conflicting allegiances for managers, because they impinge on relationships inside the organisation (Morgan, 1986). In a case study of organisational change (Clarke et al., 2007), managers’ concern about the consequences of a redundancy programme, in which they felt implicated, for their reportees, their families and the local community represented a significant source of anxiety. The tensions and gendered effects arising from the competing demands of work and family life are also well documented (Sturges and Guest, 2004; White et al., 2003; Scase and Goffee, 1989). Long hours cultures, and pressure to be available by telephone or email when not at work, are regarded by some authors as having greater negative implications for female managers’ lives and careers (Collinson and Collinson, 1997; Wajcman, 1996; Watson, 1994). Boundaries between home and work are often blurred, and physical and psychological separation of work and home is difficult to achieve (Rothbard et al., 2005; Ashforth et al., 2000; Perlow, 1998; Hochschild, 1997).

2.5.10 Threats to the special relationship

It was suggested in Section 2.5.2 that managers have traditionally held a special relationship within the organisation. This form of managerial *psychological contract* (Cullinane and Dundon, 2006; Rousseau, 1995) has been characterised as endorsement of the organisation’s values and ways of working, and readiness to motivate others in pursuit of organisational goals, in return for career progression, employment security, status and rewards. However, managers are widely regarded as having been among those most dramatically affected by strategies such as downsizing, de-layering and business process re-engineering in pursuit of greater efficiency, and those that remained were left with declining opportunities for predictable, upwards career progression (Wajcman and Martin,

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2001). Ironically, managers are the prime implementers of the new flexible organisational forms that put their own careers in jeopardy (Martin and Wajcman, 2004). A number of studies have indicated fundamental changes in managers' relationships with the organisation, such as shift in allegiance from the organisation towards a greater concern for the interests of their own team (Hallier and James, 1997; Willmott, 1997), and a more critical assessment of the aims and values of the organisation, accompanied by disillusionment and low morale (Hallier and Lyon, 1996; Heckscher, 1995). Scase and Goffee's (1989) seminal study of British private sector managers portrays them as *reluctant managers* who attempt to limit their emotional involvement in work:

[Reluctant managers] are more careful, perhaps, than in the past, about becoming completely "psychologically" immersed in their occupations and seek, instead, to obtain a balance between their work and private lives. (ibid., p. 179)

Some authors suggest that more devolved and flexible structures have presented opportunities for increased responsibility and autonomy, higher potential rewards and acquisition of new skills (Balogun, 2003; Thomas and Dunkerley, 1999; Newell and Dopson, 1996). Nevertheless, for many writers, managers are subject to increased pressures and are "highly disposable" (Collinson and Collinson, 1997, p. 376). Several case studies, typically in the context of organisational change and restructuring (e.g. McCann et al., 2008; McConville, 2006; Ogbonna and Wilkinson, 2003; Sims, 2003; McConville and Holden, 1999; Hallier and James, 1997; Newell and Dopson, 1996), attest to the impact of such changes on the management role. These include decreased role security, increased workload and pressure to work longer hours, broader responsibilities and fewer promotion opportunities.

Long working hours for managers is not necessarily a new development (Kanter, 1977), but increased regulation of their behaviour and the extension of work into the home, facilitated by new technology, leads some authors to suggest that managers have become controlled employees rather than controllers of others (Collinson and Collinson, 1997), with some resorting to strategies such as leaving jackets on chairs or spare sets of keys on desks to give the impression they were still at work. The managers interviewed in Newell and Dopson's (1996) study of downsizing were expected to demonstrate their support for organisational goals and values through public behaviour, such as being willing to forego holiday at short notice or being positive in front of more junior employees. Here, being

visibly committed was regarded as a contributing factor to career success - as one respondent commented: "You can never undo your tie, never relax and the key measure of success is the number of hours worked" (Newell and Dopson, 1996, p. 13).

2.5.11 Passion for the job

The widespread accounts of increased stress and insecurity are somewhat counterbalanced by other managers' expressions of a sense of achievement, challenge and fulfilment from managing in complex and often highly political organisational environments. Amid the reported pressures and long working hours, there are also references to the enjoyment or buzz that managers get from their jobs (Thomas and Linstead, 2002, p. 86). A number of studies of organisational commitment (reviewed in Meyer and Allen, 1997) and employee engagement (Alfes et al., 2010) report higher levels of expressed willingness to exert effort on behalf of their organisation, and to go the extra mile, amongst managers than other categories of employees, and greater stated identification with the organisation's goals and values. Posner's (2010a) survey of US managers does identify a shift in orientation towards home and personal priorities and away from work and career as a major source of life satisfaction. However, most of the managers interviewed by Watson (1994) and Mintzberg (2009) relish the pace and variety of their job, the sense of being able to influence outcomes (to a certain extent) and the satisfaction of leading others, and accept the negative aspects of their role as necessary parts of the job.

2.5.12 Section summary

The discussion of the management literature in this section has identified a number of tensions and potentially competing demands arising from managers' role as agents of the organisation, their structural position in the organisation, and the characteristics of their work. These factors contribute to the particular loneliness of managers (Sims, 2003) and may leave them with few sources of support when conflicts arise. The contrast between portrayals of reluctant managers and of those that thrive on the challenge and variety of their job suggests that individual managers respond in diverse ways to the tensions and multiple demands of their role. In order to be effective leaders, managers need to *be themselves with skill* (Higgs, 2003). However, the literature suggests that this feat is by no means straightforward for managers who have to balance the needs

and demands of multiple constituencies and seek to reconcile “the inescapable conundrums of managing” (Mintzberg, 2009, p. 157).

2.6 Summary of literature review

This summary brings together the literature discussed in the preceding four parts of this chapter. It highlights the key conceptual and theoretical points of reference that inform the research questions and research design. It also identifies gaps in extant literature and the opportunity for the current research to make a contribution in a number of areas.

The main topics explored in the literature review are shown in Figure 5 below with indicative theorists. This is followed by a summary of each topic.

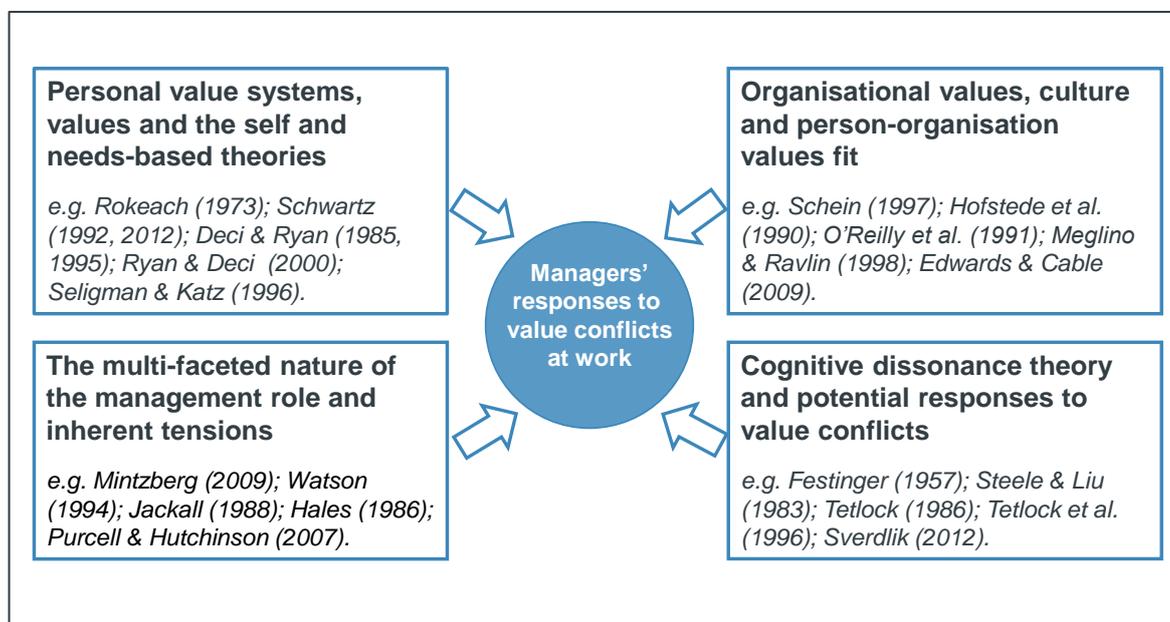


Figure 5: Conceptual and theoretical grounding of the research

Values and the self (Section 2.2)

This part began by acknowledging key difficulties in values research, arising from lack of definitional clarity, the abstract nature of values and the highly mediated link between values and behaviour. Values were defined as trans-situational and universally-held cognitions that express desirable end goals or behaviours, ranked according to individual priorities (Schwartz, 1992; Rokeach, 1973). Five functions were identified from the literature to demonstrate the significance of values for individuals. Values may be used to gain acceptance, recognition and affiliation within social contexts; to structure perception and provide meaning; to guide behaviour and evaluate oneself and others; to rationalise past, present or future decisions; and as a source of self-definition.

The breadth, depth and persistence of values scholarship suggests that values are relevant and important in a range of fields, and yet commentators (e.g. Rohan, 2000; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998) agree that their effects are hard to isolate and that discussion of values may elicit only socially-acceptable sounding truisms. Schwartz's (1996) view that values are likely to be activated and to enter awareness in the presence of *value conflicts* suggests that research on value conflicts may give resonance and clarity to otherwise abstract and hard-to-access cognitions.

Schwartz's (1992) empirically-derived model, which shows the structural relationships between ten universal value types arranged on two motivational dimensions (Figure 2, p. 21), was introduced as particularly influential to contemporary values research, which is dominated by a quantitative and survey-based research paradigm (Rohan, 2000) This suggests the need for more contextualised and experientially based understanding of values in use. Moreover, such an approach would allow exploration of affective as well as cognitive aspects.

Two contrasting perspectives on the self, as either integrative and needs-based or multi-faceted with different levels of identity, were used to illustrate different conceptions of personal value systems: single and stable, or multiple and dynamic. Within the first perspective on the self, the influence of needs-based theories of motivation on values scholarship was noted, and self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan and Deci, 2002) was identified as a useful theoretical lens for the current research. SDT emphasises the desirability of autonomous, self-regulated behaviour rather than behaviour that is induced or controlled by external demands, threats or rewards, and states that autonomous, self-determined behaviour lead to healthy psychological functioning and optimal self-esteem (Kernis and Goldman, 2003; Deci and Ryan, 1995).

The discussion of contrasting conceptions of personal value systems suggested different implications for how individuals may experience and respond to value conflicts. However, the nature of personal value systems has not been considered in relation to value conflicts.

Values and the organisation (Section 2.3)

Values were identified as a pervasive feature of contemporary organisational life and an important part of organisational culture and leadership. Shared values reinforce the desirability of particular attitudes and behaviours, and foster a

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sense of cohesion and commitment to organisational goals (Schein, 2010; Hofstede, 2001; Peters and Waterman, 1982).

The literature on person-organisation values fit (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998) shows empirical support for positive organisational and individual outcomes associated with congruence between individual and organisational values. Lack of fit or conflict between the individual's and the organisation's values is likely to lead to negative psychological and behavioural outcomes such as lower job satisfaction, higher self-reported stress and higher turnover intentions (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al., 1991). However, the values fit literature is dominated by survey methods of values measurement, and the problems associated with capturing relevant and comparable values are widely acknowledged (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). These issues suggest that gaining more experientially-based understanding of value conflicts between the individual and the organisation could yield meaningful insights relevant to the concept of values fit.

Value conflicts and responses (Section 2.4)

This section introduced the idea that conflict between values is inevitable, due to the opposing nature of different value types and the interplay between personal and other people's value priorities (Rohan, 2000; Schwartz, 1992). However, the way in which people deal with such conflict is not well understood, and Rohan (, p.266-7) identifies "how people reconcile what they want with what others want" as a major issue for values research.

Cognitive dissonance theory (CDT; Festinger, 1957) was introduced as an interpretative lens for value conflicts. It was argued that values are implicated in the dissonance arousal process as they are cognitive concepts, they are bound up with one's sense of self, and operate as standards to evaluate one's own and others' behaviour. CDT research documents a range of dissonance reduction strategies, as does Tetlock's (1996; 1986) work on decision-making. Such research is dominated by experimental studies and quantitative methods, and it primarily focuses on cognitive and structural, rather than affective and situational, aspects of values and behaviour. This suggests that a qualitative, in-depth understanding of affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects of value conflict responses, situated in real-life experience, would complement the dominant research paradigm.

Within the organisational literature, the lack of organisational case studies adopting a values-based perspective in their analysis suggests that such an approach would contribute new insights into events and situations that bring values into conflict, and their implications for managers and the organisation.

The nature of the management role (Section 2.5)

The management literature highlighted the inherent tensions and competing demands of the role (e.g. Mintzberg, 2009; Watson, 1994; Hales, 1986; Stewart, 1986). These arose from a range of factors, including: managing others while being subject to management control; the role's position in the hierarchy in between senior managers and non-managerial employees; multiple relationships and allegiances within and outside the organisation; conflicting role expectations e.g. authenticity and self-presentation; and psychological and emotional investment in the work and the employing organisation. Together, these factors suggested the particular likelihood of encountering value conflicts in the management role.

The discussion the impact of organisational change and restructuring on the manager-organisational relationship painted a pessimistic picture. At the same time, there was considerable support for the notion that many managers love their jobs, thriving on the variety and pace of the work, and relishing the experience of leading and influencing others (Mintzberg, 2009; Watson, 1994). These contrasting perspectives suggest that there is a need for better understanding of how managers deal with tensions and dilemmas at work, and the types of situation which are experienced as value conflicts. The interplay of personal, role-related and organisational expectations is likely to contribute to managers' experience of value conflicts, and to their responses.

2.6.1 Opportunity to contribute to knowledge

The potential for this study to contribute to knowledge emerges from the gaps in the literature and the limitations of the dominant research methods, as summarised above. The potential contribution areas are delineated in Table 7 below:

Table 7: Opportunities for this study to contribute to knowledge

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Contribution:	Type:
A contextualised, experientially based understanding of value conflicts.	Theoretical/empirical
An empirically-grounded, theoretical framework to classify and explain managers' responses to value conflicts	Theoretical
Synthesis of insights from different strands of research (e.g. self-determination theory, cognitive dissonance theory, values theory) with empirical findings to explain value conflict responses and their implications.	Theoretical
Use of qualitative, case study methodology in contrast with the predominant quantitative, survey-based values research paradigm	Methodological
Values perspective applied to organisational settings to give new insight into the challenges and dilemmas of management work.	Theoretical/empirical
Raise awareness that dealing with value conflicts is integral to management work: potential for use in management development.	Inform practice

The next chapter describes the research philosophy, methodology and research design that were developed address the research questions and the potential contribution areas shown above.

Chapter 3: Philosophy

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the philosophical assumptions and research paradigm that inform the approach adopted in this study. The research paradigm is regarded as a key component of the research design, as it brings together philosophical assumptions with their methodological implications, thus informing subsequent design choices (Creswell, 2007). Figure 6 below, which was developed from the researcher's review of the research design and methodology literature, shows the basic sequence of choices that are described in this and the subsequent chapter. These form the building blocks of the research design.

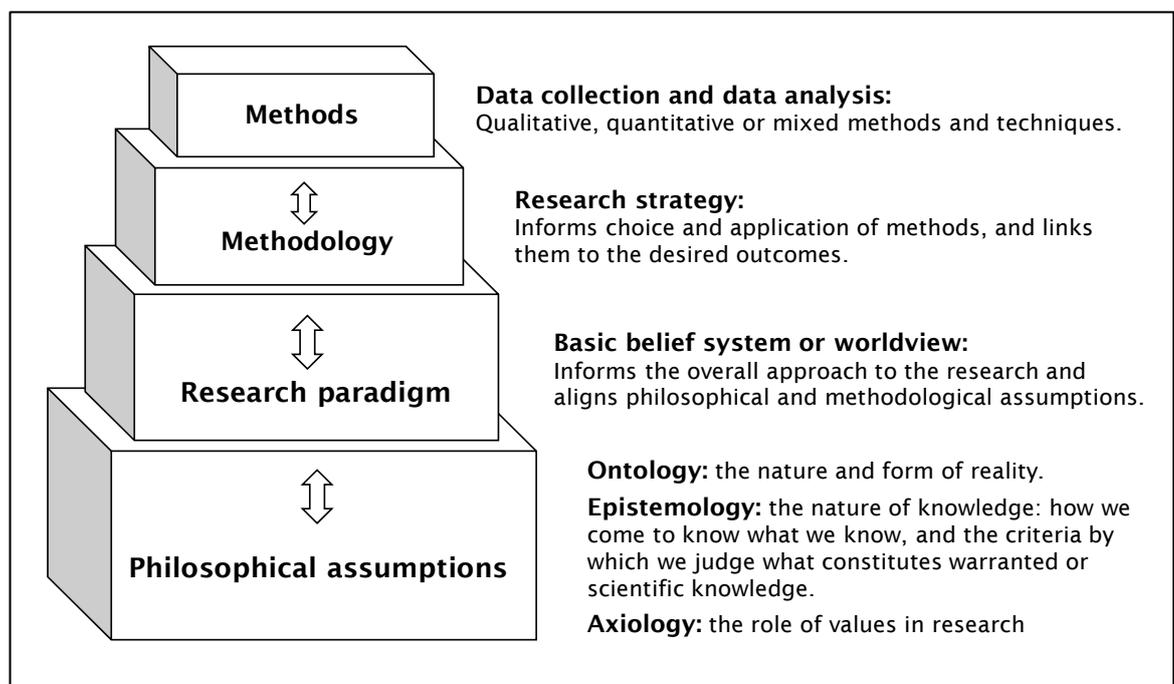


Figure 6: Basic research design components

As shown in Figure 6 above, the philosophical assumptions and research paradigm underpin the choice of methodology and methods of data collection and analysis methods. Saunders et al. (2009) represent the principal elements of a research design as a series of overlapping circles, akin to the multiple layers of an onion. In their conception, the design begins with philosophical assumptions and progresses from the choice of strategy or methodology through to methods and techniques of data collection and analysis. The authors emphasise that choices and overlaps exist at each layer, rather than there being pre-determined or linear paths to particular research methods. The research design was

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approached in this spirit, as a series of interrelated choices. Attention was paid to methodological congruence (Richards and Morse, 2007), that is, alignment of the purpose, questions and methods of research so that the study appears as a cohesive whole.

3.2 The importance of philosophical assumptions

The importance of positioning research within a philosophical framework is stressed by a number of authors (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Silverman, 2005; Johnson and Duberley, 2000; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Underlying beliefs about knowledge, truth and the nature of reality influence the framing of research questions; the ways in which data are gathered and interpreted; the claims that are made about the research findings; and, crucially, the criteria for judging the validity and credibility of the research.

Making philosophical assumptions explicit is perhaps particularly important for researchers using qualitative methods. In the face of the predominantly quantitative scientific tradition, qualitative researchers have typically sought to establish legitimacy for their approach based on its philosophical grounding, drawing a contrast with largely taken-for-granted positivistic assumptions (Bryman, 2008). A number of writers conclude that presenting quantitative and qualitative research as a dichotomy is unhelpful, particularly in the light of the increasing use of mixed methods research (Klenke, 2008; Creswell, 2007). However, the plethora of research typologies and inconsistent use of terminology can present a somewhat confusing picture when trying to distinguish between different research traditions.

3.3 Research paradigms

The concept of research paradigms proved to be a useful sense-making device in considering the overall approach to the research and the implications of different philosophical positions. Their conception as a shared set of beliefs and assumptions about the nature of reality and the conduct of scientific research is generally associated with Kuhn (1970). He argued that such a consensus of ideas and methods emerges primarily as a result of social influence processes within a community. It establishes a distinctive conceptual, scientific language and defines the context within which research is undertaken and evaluated.

In stressing that observations and their meaning are bounded within the social conventions of the paradigm, Kuhn directly challenged the positivist idea that science could give a direct, unmediated account of “truth” or reality in neutral observational language (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Kuhn concluded that research conducted within one paradigm cannot rationally be judged according to the criteria of a different paradigm, because each represents inherently conflicting epistemological assumptions: scientists operating in different paradigms are effectively “practising in different worlds” (Kuhn, 1970, p.150). The adoption of a certain paradigm cannot be defended on the grounds that its philosophical assumptions are correct or ultimately true: basic beliefs are, by their nature, not open to proof (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

In spite of Kuhn’s view that dialogue between paradigms is ultimately fruitless, the tendency of researchers to claim the superiority of one paradigmatic stance by criticising another has been characterised as the “paradigm wars”. Bryman (2008) suggests that such debates are rendered all the more intractable because they are founded on philosophical differences. A central issue has been the contrast between the paradigmatic extremes of positivism on the one hand and constructivism on the other.

3.3.1 Positivism and constructivism: two opposing traditions

In broad terms, the positivist paradigm in social science research assumes that social reality is external and objective, and that its properties can be measured using objective methods. From a position of value-freedom, its intention is to derive fundamental laws and causal relationships through hypothesis testing and deduction. The researcher remains independent from the object of study, and can observe and report accurate reflections of an external, independent social world using a theory-neutral observational language. In practice, positivistic research is associated with the use of experiments and quantitative methods (Saunders et al., 2009; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Johnson and Duberley, 2000), although, as argued by Silverman (2005), the view adopted here is that the distinction between qualitative and quantitative is made most usefully at the level of *methods* rather than at the paradigmatic level.

The term constructivism is employed by some writers as a general descriptor for a “loosely coupled family of methodological and philosophical persuasions” (Schwandt, 1998, p. 221), which are effectively anti-positivist. Other writers refer to phenomenology (Saunders et al., 2009; Ackroyd, 2004), social constructionism

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(Easterby-Smith et al., 2008) or interpretivism (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) for this purpose. Although each position is in itself multi-faceted and has distinct theoretical origins¹² (Crotty, 1998), Guba and Lincoln's (2000) conceptualisation of constructivism is adopted to here to draw a broad contrast with positivism.

Constructivism emphasises the individual or social nature of understanding, thus aligning with the Kuhnian view of active, community-based scientific knowledge construction (Phillips, 1995). In contrast with positivism, constructivism aims to interpret social phenomena from the individual's subjective perspective, emphasising understanding rather than causal explanation, and favouring inductive rather than deductive approaches. Proponents of constructivism reject the idea of an independent, external reality in favour of multiple, subjectively constructed and potentially conflicting realities, elements of which may be shared between individuals or groups. With a concern for in-depth, subjective meanings and naturalistic settings, constructivism regards the researcher as an active participant in the research process rather than detached observer (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). The researcher constructs an interpretation of others' meanings and experience, and the findings reflect the values and prior experiences of the researcher and the social and cultural context of the research.

It has been argued that different paradigms are best regarded on a continuum, and that in practice, few researchers adhere to a single, archetypal position (Creswell, 2007; Silverman, 2005). However, this advice is less satisfactory if, as Burrell and Morgan (1979) argue, paradigms represent distinct and fundamentally incompatible ontological and epistemological positions. It is also less helpful to the researcher who wishes to navigate the "marsh of wishy-washy scholars who add a little bit of nature to a little bit of society and shun the two extremes" (Latour, 1992, p. 276), in order to articulate a coherent paradigmatic position which occupies the middle ground.

3.3.2 Critical realism

Critical realism (CR) appears to offer such a position by combining the interpretive emphasis of constructivism with positivism's concern for explanation and rigour. There is increasing acceptance of CR as a fully-fledged inquiry

¹² For instance, Crotty (1998) makes a useful distinction between constructivism and social constructionism. The former emphasises the unique experience of individuals and the meaning-making activity of the individual mind, while social constructionism places particular emphasis on the collective generation and transmission of meaning, and the importance of language in this meaning-making process.

paradigm (Ackroyd, 2004), and numerous examples illustrate its adoption in organisational and leadership research and in other disciplines (e.g. Edwards et al., 2014; Mingers et al., 2013; Kempster and Parry, 2011; Boal, 2010; Easton, 2010; Fleetwood and Ackroyd, 2004; Lawson, 2003; Healy and Perry, 2000). CR is particularly associated with the work of Bhaskar (1989; 1986; 1978) and Sayer (2000; 1992), and although described in general terms as a post-positivist paradigm (Guba and Lincoln, 1994), it has distinctive philosophical and methodological implications (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Table 8 below contrasts key paradigmatic tenets of CR with positivist and constructivist paradigms.

Table 8: Comparison of positivism, constructivism and critical realism

	Positivism	Critical realism	Constructivism
Ontology	Realist. Naive realism: a “real” and discoverable reality.	Critical realist. Reality is stratified and imperfectly apprehendable. Socially real entities exist and are not reducible to discourse. Reality is imperfectly apprehendable.	Relativist. Local and specific constructed realities.
Epistemology	Objectivist Findings are true. What can be observed is real; the status of the non-observable is doubtful.	Subjectivist Findings offer provisional descriptions and accounts of phenomena. They are subject to critical examination and always open to revision.	Subjectivist Findings are created through interaction among investigator and respondents.
Axiology	Value-neutral; research is independent of human interests	Values aware. Science is a social activity that is in a continual process of transformation	Value-laden nature of research.

	Positivism	Critical realism	Constructivism
Methodology	Experimental / controlled conditions; verification of precise hypotheses. Deductive approach and quantitative methods.	Critical multiplism: Multiple data and contextual information are required. Quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods.	Focus on natural settings. Inductive approach and qualitative methods
Inquiry aim	Explanation through demonstrating invariable, statistical relationships.	Explanation through systematic discovery; identification of causal mechanisms whose operation in given cases will vary	Understanding and reconstruction of previously held constructions. Extended and accurate description.
Place and role of theory	Ideal theory is a set of laws or well-founded generalisations from which conclusions can be deduced.	Theory is a conjecture about the connectedness of events and their causal sequences.	If used, theory has a general meaning as a perspective, genre or approach; or with reference to 'local' generalisations and identification of patterns.

Sources: Ackroyd (2004, p. 150-151), Guba and Lincoln (2000; 1994), Johnson and Duberley (2000).

As Table 8 illustrates, critical realism differs from positivism and constructivism in a number of ways. The distinctive features of CR are discussed below.

3.3.3 A stratified view of reality

First, CR's ontology contrasts with positivism's view that reality consists of what can be observed and measured. Bhaskar's (1978) notion of a stratified ontology distinguishes between three different strata or domains: (a) Empirical: where

observations are made and experienced by individual observers; (b) Real: underlying structures and inherent capabilities or powers of entities, which may not be observable but which have causal effects; and (c) Actual: where events occur; these may, which may not be observed at all or may be understood quite differently by observers. (Easton, 2010, p. 123):

Thus, reality goes beyond observable phenomena to consider often unobservable but nevertheless “real” structures or entities. As Fleetwood (2004, p. 32) explains, entities may be:

- *materially* real: existing independently of what we do, say or think;
- *ideally* real: conceptual or discursive entities, such as ideas, beliefs and understandings;
- *artefactually* real: created or “quasi-objects” which may be interpreted/used in different ways e.g. computers; or
- *socially* real: they are dependent on human activity for their existence; but are not reducible to discourse e.g. relationships, practices, and social structures

According to Lawson (2003, p. 79):

Social reality...comprises not only actual events and states of affairs, some of which we may directly experience, but also deeper structures, powers, mechanisms and tendencies, etc., which produce, facilitate or otherwise condition these events and states of affairs.

Thus, underlying entities or structures are considered real not because they are observable but because they have actual consequences: “something is real if it has an effect or makes a difference” (Fleetwood, 2004, p. 29).

3.3.4 Causality and retroductive reasoning

Unlike positivism, causality in CR is not established through a cause and effect relationship or constant conjunction between variables. Instead, critical realism focuses on the explanatory potential of the underlying causal powers of entities in accounting for certain events or outcomes (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). The occurrence of observable events, or apparent regularities of outcomes, is held to be contingent on these causal powers being activated under particular conditions. As Sayer comments (2000, p.15), “in the “open systems” of the real world, the

same causal power can produce different outcomes”. This is illustrated in Figure 7 below:

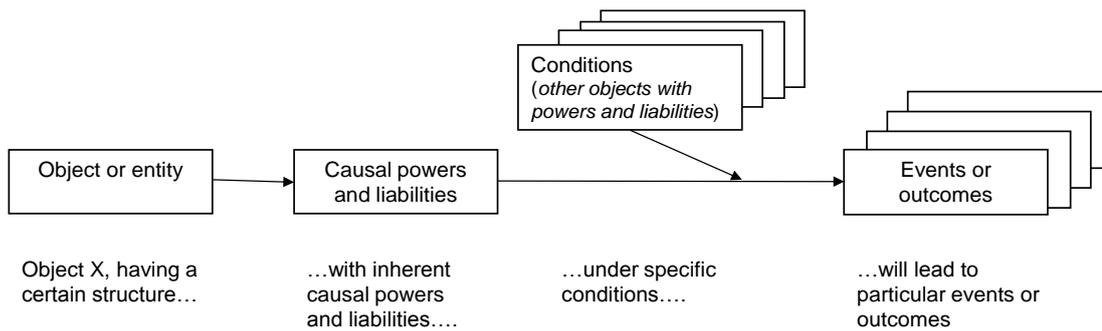


Figure 7: Critical realist causation.

Source: adapted from Sayer (1992, p. 109).

Because underlying entities and causal powers, as shown in Figure 7 above, cannot be directly observed, they have to be theoretically constructed and modelled using *retroductive* reasoning. Sayer (1992) describes this as a mode of inference which proposes the underlying entities and conditions that could have generated the phenomenon or event being researched: retroduction asks: *What, if it existed, would account for this phenomenon?* (Johnson and Duberley, 2000), and through multiple iterations between data and theory, it develops the most plausible explanation of the mechanisms¹³ at work.

3.3.5 Fallibility of knowledge and capacity for critique

For critical realists, all knowledge is fallible. However, it does not follow that it is all equally fallible (Sayer, 1998). Rather than seeking generalisations based on statistical significance, CR aims to develop plausible and practically adequate explanations of reality (Sayer, 2000). These may be deep explanations across a narrow range of contexts, or shallower explanations across a wider range of contexts (Harrison and Easton, 2004). Furthermore, explanations remain provisional, and subject to new information or re-evaluation. Multiple data and interpretations are sought in order to develop the most plausible explanation.

The term *critical realism* refers in part to its capacity to evaluate competing knowledge claims or theories on a systematic basis, even though all theory is open to revision (Boal, 2010). Archer et al. (2004) introduce the concept of

¹³ Mechanisms are “the ways of acting of things” (Bhaskar, 1978, p. 14) or powers in motion (Lawson, 2004). They serve as conceptual devices, often expressed through metaphors or analogies, to explain the way in which entities, causal powers and conditions result in particular events or outcomes.

judgemental rationality in their discussion of what constitutes a good or acceptable knowledge claim:

Judgemental rationality means that we can publicly discuss our claims about reality as we think it is, and marshal better or worse arguments on behalf of these claims. By comparatively evaluating existing arguments, we can arrive at reasoned, though provisional, judgements about what reality is objectively like (p. 2).

Because CR acknowledges that reality is mediated by conceptual resources such as beliefs, opinions, values and social norms, it rejects the positivist assumption of a theory neutral observational language which corresponds to and constitutes reality. The researcher takes the role of “partisan participant” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, p. 173) rather than neutral observer.

In contrast, constructivism’s interpretive focus has been accused of lacking in critical spirit (Crotty, 1998). For many constructivists, each person’s way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other: interpretations are equally “true”. In valuing subjectivity, constructivism may be criticised for lacking credibility and rigour (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

3.4 Rationale for adopting a critical realism paradigm

Careful consideration was given to selecting the most appropriate and useful paradigm for this study in the light of the research aim, the research questions and the researcher’s basic beliefs and preferences. The reasons for the choice of CR are as follows:

3.4.1 Alignment with the research aim

The overall aim of the research was to gain insight into managers’ experience and responses to value conflicts at work. In adopting a values perspective, the researcher was particularly interested in the interplay of individual and organisational values and expectations relating to the management role. This broad aim implied certain research imperatives: to gather real-life examples of situations that had generated value conflicts for individual managers; to explore in detail how managers had responded both behaviourally and emotionally to the value conflict; and to take into account a number of potential influencing factors,

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such as the individual's values, expectations of the management role, and the wider organisational context.

The need to gain a detailed understanding of organisationally situated, real-life events meant that the positivist paradigm, with its focus on objective measurement, hypothesis testing and experimentation, would not be conducive to the research aims. The literature review had indicated the dominance of positivist assumptions and associated methodologies in the psychological values literature. Although these approaches provided useful theoretical and conceptual grounding, there was a need to appreciate managers' subjective experiences and to explore wide range of contextual factors associated with particular behaviours. Furthermore, the research needed scope to explore emergent themes and concepts without the constraints of a fixed design and *a priori* variables.

The desire to understand responses to value conflicts from individual managers' perspectives initially suggested a natural alignment with the constructivist paradigm. Value conflicts are, arguably, personally defined and uniquely experienced. Certainly, the constructivist emphasis on detailed understanding of human experience and the interpretation of subjective meanings in natural settings had considerable resonance with the research topic. Nevertheless, there were more compelling reasons for adopting a critical realist approach, as discussed below.

3.4.2 Combining interpretation and explanation

Johnson and Duberley (2000) state that adopting a critical realist stance to management research entails understanding the interpretations and intentions that consciously motivate individual behaviour as well as the structures or conditions which affect social activities. This resonated strongly with the research questions, which sought to explore managers' responses to value conflicts, within the explanatory context of social structures, such as the pattern of demands and expectations associated with the management role and with membership of a values-led organisation. At the same time, CR allowed for the complex, inter-related and dynamic nature of the phenomenon to be investigated, which did not suit single cause and effect relationships.

The possibility of combining the constructivist aim of interpretive understanding (*verstehen*) with a level of causal explanation (*erklaren*), albeit provisional, aligned with the researcher's own view that management research findings

should be capable of informing practice. The combination of interpretive understanding and causal explanation appeared to provide additional insight that would resonate with practitioners (Ackroyd, 2004).

3.4.3 Use and alignment of theory

Critical realism does not dictate a particular theoretical perspective or body of social theorising. Indeed, Bhaskar (1978) states that different theories and explanations can and should be assessed in terms of their explanatory power, particularly their ability to account for the underlying mechanisms that generate observable patterns and outcomes. In a similar vein, self-professed critical realists Miles and Huberman (1994) advocate the use of prior theorising and empirical research in developing conceptual frameworks.

The literature review had covered a diverse theoretical territory, and an important consideration was the flexibility to draw on a range of ideas and frameworks when analysing the field data. The conception of identity as discursively constructed was an essential tenet of social constructionism (Burr, 2003; Casey, 1995). This philosophical stance would sit uneasily alongside the Maslovian needs-based conception of the self, which influenced Schwartz's (1992) and Rokeach's (1973) values theory. Indeed, Schwartz's concept of a universal set of human values, along with the psychological basis of cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), which contributed to the conceptual grounding for the research, appeared problematic if adopting a constructivist viewpoint.

3.4.4 The relevance of structure and agency

The review of management literature had identified the structural position of managers in the organisational hierarchy as an inherent source of tension. Managers' responses to value conflicts therefore needed to be considered within the structural and cultural framework of the organisation. Social structures are an essential consideration of CR and regarded as not reducible to human discourse. It seemed to the researcher that use of concepts such as organisational values, culture and structure demanded a level of acceptance that these had some form of independent reality capable of producing effects that were real in their consequences. As Boal (2010) comments, this also reflects how people behave in practice – as if there were solid ground underlying their action. CR provided a coherent argument for this stance, which seemed preferable to the “ontological oscillation” of many constructivist theorists (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p. 266), or

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as Weick (1995) puts it, letting a more realist form of ontology in through the back door.

Finally, CR aims to account for the sense people have of being *constrained or enabled* by their environment, in terms of structures in which they are located (Lawson, 2003). The notion of interaction between the individual and an external social reality that can constrain or facilitate human action had some affinity with Ryan and Deci's (2000) dialectical view of the self in self-determination theory (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.7.3, p. 23). However, the theory's humanist, needs-based approach was clearly antithetical to the constructivist's discursive notion of identity, as Casey (1995) makes clear in her critique.

In summary, these considerations suggested that CR aligned with the aims of the research, the nature of the research questions, and the researcher's own beliefs. Therefore, the methodology discussed in the following chapter was conceived within a critical realist paradigm.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The methodology and methods of data collection and data analysis, which together complete the research design, are described in this chapter. This includes an explanation of why these choices were appropriate in the light of the critical realist research paradigm and research aims. Ethical and research quality considerations are also addressed. The chapter ends with a summary of the research design.

The researcher adopted Crotty's (1998) definition of methodology as the research strategy which informs the choice of methods and links them to the desired outcomes. The methodology also governs the way in which the methods are employed (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). The choice of methodology was influenced by the purpose of the research, the research questions, its suitability for management research and practical considerations. An initial reading of the methodology literature had indicated that the case study would be a suitable methodology for the study. However, a number of alternatives were also considered.

4.2 Discussion of alternatives

Saunders et al. (2009) identify the following research methodologies: experiment, archival research, survey research, action research, ethnography, grounded theory and case study. Of these, experimental designs are most closely associated with positivistic approaches, and ethnography and action research with constructivist approaches. Case study and grounded theory are deemed broad-based methods because they can be applied in different ways depending on the philosophical perspective adopted (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

The current research had a dual purpose of understanding and explanation. These two aspects were viewed as interrelated, and not separable into discrete phases with different methodological requirements. There was a need to gather detailed accounts of managers' experiences of and responses to value conflicts and to understand the organisational context in which they were operating. These considerations favoured a methodology which would support organisation-based,

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naturalistic research, with opportunities to gather detailed, experiential data.

Experimental, archival and survey methodologies were rejected on this basis.

Although **action research** embraces a spectrum of approaches (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000; Heron and Reason, 1997), it is typically concerned with effecting change or issue resolution, e.g. where the organisation has identified an issue and is supportive of a facilitated, participatory problem solving approach, rather like an organisational development intervention. This did not apply to the present study.

Ethnographic research focuses on the meaning of the behaviour, language and interaction among members of a culture-sharing group. It derives from the research tradition of cultural anthropology (Creswell, 2007). In organisational settings, the researcher spends an extended period of time in the organisation, often in the capacity of participant observer, as in Watson's (1994) research. Although the prospect of witnessing value conflicts in real time, and discussing them with those involved was very attractive, the requisite immersion in the working lives of employees, the likely difficulty in gaining access, and the need to be in the right place at the right time to gather relevant data ruled out this approach.

In **grounded theory**, theory emerges from empirical data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Glaser and Strauss, 1967): there is no starting hypothesis, and the researcher is encouraged to enter the field with as few preconceptions as possible. As Creswell (2007) explains, the researcher zigzags between data collection and analysis in a process called *constant comparison*, where data is compared to emerging concepts or coding categories. *Theoretical sampling* is used to decide which participants to interview based on the requirements of the emerging theory, and data collection continues until theoretical saturation is reached. The objectivist stance and positivist terminology associated with Glaser and Strauss's (1967) original approach contrasts with the constructivist grounded theory of Charmaz (2006), who emphasises the researcher's values and interaction with participants to expose their multiple realities.

Grounded theory was appealing in that, in common with the research aim, it aims to understand phenomena which are not well defined or understood (Klenke, 2008); it develops theory based on participants' experiences within a particular social context (Kempster and Parry, 2011); and its systematic and demonstrable approach to data collection and analysis helps to address the criticism that

qualitative research lacks validity and rigour (Bryman, 2004). Its suitability for understanding the social processes of leadership has been convincingly argued (Kempster and Parry, 2011; Parry, 1998) and demonstrated (Kempster, 2006; Kan and Parry, 2004), and it is compatible with the critical realist paradigm (Kempster and Parry, 2011; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). However, the researcher had a number of reservations: (a) the length of time it would take to reach theoretical saturation, and the extent of the access required, could not be determined in advance; (b) in purist terms, the literature review undertaken in developing the initial research proposal went against the spirit of grounded theory¹⁴: the researcher had already identified theories that were potentially relevant as explanatory lenses, and indeed the decision to adopt a value conflicts perspective was in itself highly theory laden; (c) the highly structured process of data analysis advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1998) might prove over-restrictive, and the researcher felt that methodological rigour could be achieved by alternative data analysis techniques.

4.3 Rationale for case study

Having considered alternative methodologies, the researcher chose case study based on an assessment of its perceived strengths in relation to the research aims, the nature of the topic and project constraints. Its established use in management research (Harrison and Leitch, 2000) was regarded as an asset. The strengths generally associated with the case study methodology matched the requirements of the research as follows:

1. *Provides an opportunity to understand a phenomenon in depth, within its context (Eisenhardt, 1989).*

Case studies allow the researcher to develop a nuanced view of reality (Flyvbjerg, 2006), by taking multiple views into account. This aligned with the need to gather real-life examples of situations that had generated value conflicts and to explore in detail how managers had responded.

Furthermore, the context was important and there were unclear boundaries between the phenomenon being studied (managers' responses to value conflicts) and the context within which it was to be studied (Yin, 2009).

2. *Allows flexibility of design or "controlled opportunism" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.539).*

¹⁴ The Straussian interpretation of grounded theory takes a more relaxed view of accessing existing theory prior to data collection (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

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The research was not commencing with a tight theoretical framework. Knowledge of value conflicts was incomplete; thus the researcher had to remain open to emergent themes. It was important to be able to take advantage of impromptu opportunities for data collection and to pursue new lines of thinking.

3. *Gives scope for multiple methods of data collection in order to triangulate results and see the broader picture (Stake, 1995).*

The research questions demanded both understanding and explanation: it was important to capture the *hows* and *whys* rather than only the *whats* (Harrison and Easton, 2004). This suggested the need for a methodology that could support different methods and sources of data.

4. *Can be used within a variety of philosophical paradigms, including positivism (Yin, 2009; Eisenhardt, 1989), critical realism (Easton, 2010) and constructivism (Stake, 1995).*

A number of writers suggest that case study is conducive to critical realist research (Easton, 2010; Gul and Williams, 2010; Ackroyd, 2004; Harrison and Easton, 2004). Identifying the underlying entities, structures and contingent conditions that combine to produce particular events requires a holistic view of the phenomenon, contextual understanding and multiple perspectives, all of which could be gained from the case study approach.

5. *Can be used to build theory (George and Bennett, 2005; Dooley, 2002; Eisenhardt, 1989).*

The research aimed to generate rather than test theory. Eisenhardt (1989) suggests that theory building from case studies is most appropriate in new areas of research where there is little extant theory, because it does not rely on existing literature or empirical evidence. She argues further that the multiple perspectives, different data sources and often contradictory evidence associated with case studies are conducive to theory generation, because they unfreeze thinking and stimulate new insights.

Finally, a case study approach allowed the data collection methods and requirements to be planned in advance to a large extent, while retaining some flexibility. This would allow the researcher to be specific about access requirements when approaching potential case organisations, and to phase the field data collection within the overall timescale of the project.

4.3.1 Case studies and generalisation

A common criticism of case studies is that they lack generalisability, that is, they have low external validity (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Dooley, 2002; Gummesson, 2000). As Tsoukas (1989) explains, a positivist critique of case studies regards them as suitable for investigating local causality but not for making general theoretical claims; and that consequently they are best used in a pilot phase prior to larger scale, positivist research designs, whose results can be generalised to populations via random sampling and statistical inference.

Yin (2009), himself a positivist, addresses this critique in part when he argues that the case study does not represent a sample, and that the researcher aims to expand and generalise *theories* (analytical generation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generation). He regards [comparative] case studies as akin to experimental designs, where replication logic can be applied. If predicted results occur in a number of carefully selected cases, or if contrary results are attributable to predictable reasons, then analytical generalisation is achieved. Thus, he argues (2009, p. 15), case studies are generalisable to theoretical propositions, not to populations or universes.

Commenting on comparative case studies from a critical realist perspective, Tsoukas (1989) defends idiographic approaches which are based on a few organisations. These, he explains, help draw out the specific, contingent way in which a certain mix of causal powers has operated in particular cases. Critical realism does assume that there is a certain degree of invariance in the world (Easton, 2010), and identifying the deep processes at work, which operate under contingent conditions and through particular mechanisms, may form the basis of expansion and generalisation. Nevertheless, according to Harrison and Easton (2004), generalisation *per se* is not the primary aim of critical realist research. They argue that identifying a plausible, defensible, 'deep' explanation in one instance can be a major contribution to theory in its own right.

A similar argument is mounted by Flyvbjerg (2006), who considers that formal generalisation is overrated as the main source of scientific knowledge development: "that knowledge cannot be formally generalised does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation" (p. 227). In the light of this discussion, the research did not aim to generalise about how common particular patterns of responses to value conflicts are in all

organisations, but to identify the structures, processes and other contingent factors that accounted for managers' responses in the case organisations.

4.4 Case study research design

Using the case study methodology involves a series of design choices, which together represent the logic that links the data to be collected to the research questions and the conclusions to be drawn (Yin, 2009). Figure 8 below was developed by the researcher to represent the main *influences* and *design choices* which formed the basis of this study's design. These elements were identified from the case study literature (Yin, 2009; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Dooley, 2002; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995) and are used to introduce the research design and its implementation in the following sections

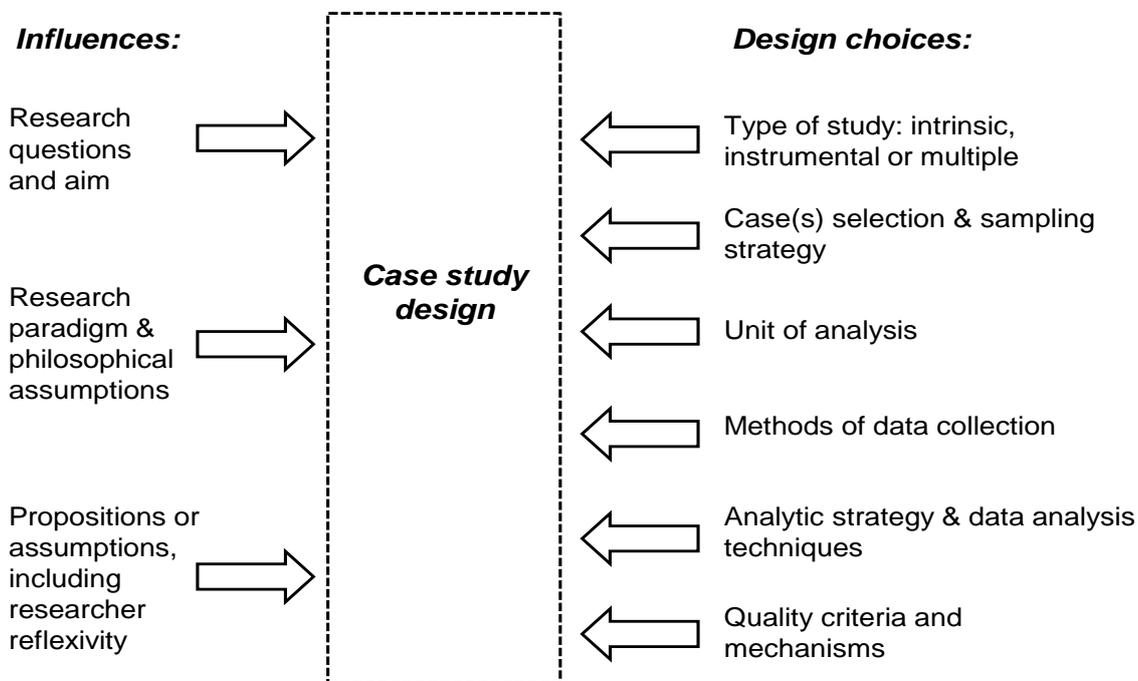


Figure 8: Case study research design

4.4.1 Influences

The research questions and aim, research paradigm and philosophical assumptions that influenced the choice of case study methodology were discussed in the preceding sections.

Figure 8 also shows propositions or assumptions as an influence on the research design, and indeed Yin (2009) regards *a priori* theoretical propositions, however broad, as an essential case study component. His positivist-oriented preference for this essentially deductive strategy contrasts with the inductive approach

advocated by Stake (1995) and Eisenhardt (1989). Theoretical propositions were not developed in advance in this study, because the emphasis was on exploration and developing new insights, and on theory building rather than testing. However, the researcher did make some theoretical assumptions based on the literature review, and her own background and work experience was regarded as a further influencing factor.

4.4.2 Theoretical assumptions

Based on the literature review, the researcher made the assumptions that:

1. Managers are likely to experience inner conflict at work owing to the nature of the management role and its accountabilities to non-managerial employees and to senior management (Mintzberg, 2009; Balogun, 2003; Watson, 1994);
2. This conflict can be framed in terms of values (Schwartz, 1996), arising from a mismatch between the [espoused or enacted] values and demands of the organisation and the manager's personal values and needs (Kasser, 2002; Rohan, 2000); and
3. The interplay of managers' personal values, their view of the management role, and the organisation's values and demands has explanatory potential in examining managers' responses to conflict, and the implications for them as individuals and for the organisation (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Sagiv and Schwartz, 2000; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998).

A tentative, working definition of value conflicts was developed in order to operationalise the concept in research interviews with managers:

A psychological tension or inner dilemma experienced by managers when their personal values and priorities are at odds with the values, demands and expectations of the organisation or others

This drew on the researcher's analysis of cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), which indicated the psychological effects of value conflicts, the management literature (Mintzberg, 2009; Balogun, 2003; Watson, 1994), which suggested potential sources of value conflicts, and on Schwartz's (1992) values theory, which established the oppositional nature of values and the concept of personal value systems.

4.4.3 Researcher reflexivity

The researcher's role in the research process is widely discussed under the rubric of reflexivity (Guba and Lincoln, 2000). This influencing factor was approached using Mason's (2002, p. 5) view of reflexivity as:

Thinking critically about what you are doing and why, confronting and challenging your own assumptions, and recognising the extent to which your thoughts, actions and decisions shape how you research and what you see.

Johnson and Duberley (2000) suggest that critical realist management researchers do not occupy a neutral position as detached observer, but are partisan participants in the research process. The researcher concurred with Lincoln and Guba (1985) that all stages of the research process are value-laden. Rather than seeking to eliminate subjectivity, the aim was to demonstrate transparency in the way the data had been collected and analysed; to recognise the researcher's own interest in and orientation to the research topic (see Chapter 1, Section 1.1); and to develop insights relevant to those operating within existing organisational structures. It is worth noting that the research was not affected by researcher accountability to an employing organisation.

The design choices listed on the right-hand column of Figure 8 (Case study research design, p. 84) are now discussed. These provided a framework for operationalising the research.

4.5 Design choices

4.5.1 Type of study

Stake (2000, p. 445) identifies three forms of case study: *intrinsic*, *instrumental* and *multiple*. The first type seeks a better understanding of a single case "in all its particularity and ordinariness". The researcher aims to uncover what is important about the case within its own world, and there is less emphasis on theory building: the study is undertaken not to prove anything but in the hope of learning something (Flyvbjerg, 2006). In contrast, an instrumental case is used primarily to provide insight into an issue or redraw a generalisation. Here, detailed scrutiny of the case supports understanding of an external interest, such as an abstract construct or generic phenomenon; it addresses *etic* issues initiated

by the researcher (Stake, 1995). Lastly, multiple or collective case studies are instrumental studies extended to several cases, often chosen as a means of building generalisable theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). This study was conceived as *instrumental*, because it aimed to use the case[s] to investigate a phenomenon and build theory.

Harrison and Easton (2004) caution that a single case is a sensible choice in many circumstances, where there are many contingencies and complex processes. Critical realism is not concerned with statistical regularity in establishing causation and so it follows that explanatory, single case studies are deemed valid if they identify the structures and mechanisms which were contingently capable of producing the observed phenomena. This satisfies the critical realist aim of achieving the most practically adequate theory (Sayer, 2000), or as Easton (2010) expresses it, the best explanation, judged by its consistency with the data. In contrast, George and Bennett (2005) assert that there is a growing consensus that the strongest means of drawing inferences from case studies is by using a combination of within-case analysis and cross-case comparisons, an approach advocated by Eisenhardt (1989).

The researcher felt that a balance needed to be struck between these two positions. After careful reflection, a **multiple case study** was selected to enable a level of between-organisation comparison and to mitigate the risk that a single case may provide insufficient accounts of value conflicts. The researcher decided that **three to four organisations** would yield a broad range of value conflicts while retaining sufficient in-depth organisational insight.

4.5.2 Case selection

Case selection was information oriented (Flyvbjerg, 2006), based on expectations about the information content of the cases and also on relevance to the research aims (George and Bennett, 2005; Mason, 2002). In spite of the popularity of maximum variance as a strategy for case selection (Creswell, 2007), given the potential complexity of the topic there was a concern not to introduce too many variables which might allow only superficial comparisons between the case organisations.

Organisations were selected on the basis of the following criteria, in addition to pragmatic considerations such as ability to gain access and geographical proximity:

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- *Private sector rather than public or third sector, and with a range of management functions accountable to the organisation rather than to an external professional body.*

This was to exclude from the study consideration of public/community service or professional values, which were the subject of separate streams of literature on the public and third sector (Stride and Higgs, 2009; Lyons et al., 2006; Fisher, 1998) and in fields such as teaching and academia (Macfarlane and Ottewill, 2008; Weigart, 2008; Gibbons, 2004; Henkel, 1997), public relations (Grunig, 2000), and the medical and healthcare professions (Rassin, 2008; Swick, 1998; Wilmot, 1995).

- *Of sufficient size to have at least two levels of management hierarchy between employees and executive management.*

This was to achieve the required principal focus on middle and first-line managers.

- *Employing managers with a reasonable level of discretion in the performance of their role.*

While interesting as a potential future study, very process-driven roles with low levels of managerial discretion might curtail the range of responses to value conflicts, which this study sought to expose.

- *With strongly espoused organisational values.*

Given the value conflicts perspective of the study, the interplay of organisational values and managers' personal values was of interest.

4.5.3 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis is signalled by the form of the research questions (Yin, 2009) and impacts the levels at which data is collected and analysed and findings are drawn (Patton, 2002). Because the research focused on managers' responses to value conflicts, the manager and the value conflict incident were both regarded as embedded units of analysis within the case organisations.

The final elements of the case study design shown previously in Figure 8 were data collection methods, analytic strategy and data analysis, and quality considerations. These crucial aspects of the research process are explored in Sections 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 below

4.6 Methods of data collection

Case studies are amenable to qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods of data collection (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). The characteristics and strengths of qualitative data are well rehearsed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Silverman, 2005; Mason, 2002; Stake, 2000), including richness, holism and “local groundedness” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 10), with potential to reveal complexity and latent or underlying issues and influences. The research called for detailed understanding of value conflicts which could best be illuminated by the in-depth, contextual understanding associated with qualitative research.

Qualitative studies have an established tradition in management research (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Gummesson, 2000), and arguments in favour of qualitative methods for leadership research apply equally to this study: they are well suited (a) for understanding the meanings and interpretations people place on events, (b) where the phenomenon is complex, multi-layered and has a subjective component that may be difficult to capture using quantitative methods, and (c) where there is a lack of existing empirical research (Conger, 1998). Hitlin (2003, p.123) comments that values are important “in so far as they *hold meaning* for individuals”. Accordingly, the researcher felt that qualitative methods would be best suited to uncover the personal significance of values and value conflicts.

Furthermore, in spite of the recognised dominance of quantitative methods in the values literature (Rohan, 2000; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998), qualitative methods such as interviews and document analysis have been used successfully to solicit the values of individuals (Bourne and Jenkins, 2005; Watson, 1994; Kluckhohn, 1951) and organisations (Schein, 2010; van Rekom et al., 2006), even though in some cases this was a precursor to quantification. For example, writing prior to the establishment of a universal values structure, Kluckhohn (1951) describes a range of approaches: analysis of verbal accounts and documents, observation of behaviour in situations involving choice, and identification of acts which evoke strong emotional responses; and Bourne and Jenkins (2005) identified managers’ values priorities in interviews using a form of structured questioning. Using qualitative methods to give more in-depth and meaningful insights into values based on experiential accounts represented a potential contribution area of the current research.

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4.6.1 Choice of methods

The following methods were selected based on their suitability to solicit data that would address the research questions:

Primary data:

- Interviews with first-line, middle and senior managers
- Context gathering discussions with HR/senior managers
- Researcher observations during interview visits
- A personal values survey was also completed by respondents in order to provide an additional analytic perspective on the qualitative data rather than for statistical analysis (see Section 4.6.5).

Secondary data:

- Organisational document analysis

Table 9 below indicates the information required for each research question, and the data collection methods used to gather this information.

Table 9: Research questions and associated data collection methods

Research questions (RQ)	Information needed	Manager interviews	HR/senior mgr. discussions	Document analysis	Values survey	Researcher observations
RQ1: What types of value conflict do managers encounter in their day-to-day work?	Detailed descriptions of value conflicts from the manager's perspective.	√√				
RQ2: How do they experience and respond to these value conflicts?	Detailed descriptions of value conflicts from the manager's perspective.	√√				√

Research questions (RQ)	Information needed	Manager interviews	HR/senior mgr. discussions	Document analysis	Values survey	Researcher observations
RQ3: How do personal values, role-related factors and the organisational context shape their responses?	Personal value, priorities and rationales for behaviour.	√√			√√	
	Expectations of the management role from the manager's and organisation's perspective. Espoused and perceived organisational values and organisational context.	√√	√√	√√		√
RQ4: What are the implications of the conflicts and responses for managers and the organisation?	Detailed description of the manager's feelings following the conflict.	√√				√
	Other outcomes of the value conflict e.g. for employees or the organisation.	√√	√			
Key: √√ = major data source; √ = potential data source						

The suitability and application of the selected methods is explained below.

4.6.2 Interviews

Interviews were chosen as a way of gathering detailed, first-hand descriptions of value conflicts as well as insight into role expectations and the organisational context. For Robson (2002, p. 229), the strength of the interview method rests in the “virtually unique window that it opens on what lies behind our actions”.

However, Wengraf's (2001) caution to those who regard interviews as an unproblematic window on psychological or social realities is noteworthy. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) stress the need for researchers to maintain critical awareness, both during the interview itself and when they interpret the data gathered. This view aligns with the critical realist stance: the interviews were

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regarded as subjective accounts of socially real events, and at the same time, the embeddedness of individual experience and behaviour in the wider social, cultural and structural context needed to be borne in mind. Additionally, the social setting and conventions of the interview itself was regarded as an influence on how those experiences and behaviours were conveyed. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest, the main focus needed to be on respondents' interpretation of specific situations rather than on abstractions and general opinions. The format adopted was semi-structured (Berg, 2007). Key themes and questions were identified in advance, while retaining flexibility to vary the question format and order, to respond to emergent lines of inquiry and to cover particular aspects in more or less depth.

4.6.2.1 Sampling strategy

Stake (2000) asserts that case study research is not sampling research in the statistical sense of the word, and that the primary criterion should be to maximise learning. Nevertheless, a number of writers stress the importance of a meaningful sampling strategy in qualitative research (Silverman, 2005; Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002). A purposeful or theoretical sampling strategy was adopted: respondent selection was based on the following criteria:

- a reasonably representative mix of gender, age and ethnicity;
- at least two years' service as a manager within the organisation; and
- a mixture of first-line, middle and senior managers with people management responsibility.

The number of interviews conducted was influenced by the level of access that was acceptable to the case organisations, and by time and resource constraints. The aim was to collect sufficient data to allow comparison between managers within and between organisations.

4.6.3 Interview design

A number of potential difficulties with the interview process were identified:

1. Its effectiveness is heavily dependent on people's capacities and willingness to verbalise, interact, conceptualise and remember (Mason, 2002);
2. The tendency for individuals in social situations to present themselves in a favourable light in order to conform with societal norms, regardless of their true feelings or actual behaviour, is widely acknowledged in interviews and

other self-report methods (Dobewall et al., 2014) e.g. social desirability response bias (Randall and Fernandes, 1991); self-presentation bias (Weinberger, 2003); and impression management (Schlenker, 2003).

3. The need for open reflection on personal values and value conflicts required a high degree of trust and rapport to be established in a short period of time.
4. The values literature indicated that values function in part to justify or rationalise decisions, even though those particular values may not have been involved at the time (Rohan and Zanna, 2001; Kristiansen and Zanna, 1994). If asked directly about their values, respondents might refer to values that were socially acceptable truisms rather than genuinely held beliefs (Maio and Olson, 1998). Indeed Wengraf comments (2001, p. 176) that “getting at values is always difficult”. To address this issue, he recommends being very concrete and specific, for example gathering accounts of real-life events, when questioning people about their values.

These issues were addressed by (a) careful planning and piloting of the interview questions; (b) paying particular attention to establishing rapport and encouraging openness; and (c) the use of Critical Incident Technique (CIT; Flanagan, 1954).

These elements are described below.

4.6.3.1 Pilot interviews

In line with Berg’s (2007) recommendation, the interview was piloted on a practising manager to check that the questions elicited anticipated response, that the language was meaningful, and that questions were not over-complex. Piloting the interviews gave valuable practice in introducing the research, using CIT and administering the values questionnaire (see Section 4.6.5 below). The main change resulting from the pilot was to explain the values questionnaire in more detail.

4.6.3.2 Building rapport and encouraging openness

The interviews started with broader, context-gathering questions about the organisation and the individual’s role, before asking about issues that were potentially more sensitive. Examples of value conflicts were sought in the second part of the interview. Techniques such as allowing silence, active listening, echoing responses and avoiding interrupting (Berg, 2007) were used during the interviews to encourage respondents to elaborate on their responses.

Ideally, the interviews would have been held in a neutral location and outside the working day, to encourage the manager to relax out of their work environment and to avoid the likelihood of interruption. However, practical considerations of time and access prevented this.

4.6.3.3 Critical Incident Technique

Flanagan's (1954) influential paper described CIT as a scientific procedure for gathering "important facts concerning behaviour in defined situations" (ibid., p. 335). Rooted in a positivist paradigm, CIT involved the use of objective evaluation criteria and systematic analysis of multiple critical incidents by independent observers, in order to make predictions about effective behaviour. More recently, CIT has been applied more flexibly as a qualitative interview procedure in organisational and management research, (Blenkinsopp and Zdunczyk, 2005; Lines, 2005; Ellinger and Bostrom, 2002; Cope and Watts, 2000; Chell and Pittaway, 1998). Chell's (1998) study of entrepreneurship used CIT to gain in-depth understanding of particular events or incidents from the individual's perspective, including cognitive, affective and behavioural elements. She then used the resulting descriptions to relate context, strategy and outcomes and to look for repetition and patterns of responses. This approach seemed to align with the research aim, articulated through the research questions, to understand and to explain responses and outcomes to value conflict incidents. Therefore, research questions – what the research wanted to understand and to explain – informed the interview design and structure, particularly the use of CIT to draw out the data in such a way as to allow comparisons to be made between incidents, managers and case organisations..

Managers were asked to think about situations when they had felt a significant dilemma or inner conflict between what they were expected to do as part of the management role and their own values; something that had a big impact on them as an individual or manager. This was regarded as a "critical incident", and questioning then focused on eliciting a detailed description of the event and the manager's thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Example prompt questions were: *What exactly did you do?; How did you go about doing this?; How did you feel at the time?; What was most important to you about how you handled the situation?; Who else was involved?; What was their reaction?; What happened next?.* The advantage of this more targeted questioning was that detailed information was gathered about each incident and the accounts were concrete and specific, with less scope for talking about values at an abstract level.

An example interview format is given in Appendix D. This provided a framework for the interview, and was used flexibly to direct the discussion rather than as a script.

4.6.4 Document analysis

Documentation such as annual reports, mission and value statements, websites and publicity material was accessed in advance and used to supplement interview-based context gathering. Demonstrating some prior background knowledge supported the researcher's credibility during interviews. Internal documents e.g. induction material, management training presentations, competency frameworks, appraisal schemes and leadership charters were accessed through the HR contacts. These were sources of data about the organisation's espoused values, and its stated expectations of managers, and helped the researcher gain familiarity with the official language of the organisation and its formal mechanisms (Yin, 2009).

Yin (2009) suggests the use of documents in case studies as a method of triangulation, in order to corroborate evidence from other sources. In this case, they were used in the analysis to consider the alignment between each organisation's stated values and expectations and managers' perceptions of them in practice, rather than to establish the accuracy of interview accounts.

4.6.5 Personal values survey

Respondents were asked to complete a personal values survey at the end of the interview. This was not intended for statistical analysis, but offered a potentially useful lens when analysing the interview data by enabling comparison between the values espoused or inferred in managers' accounts with their survey profile.

The Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ; Schwartz et al., 2001) was selected to assess personal values priorities according to Schwartz's ten value types (Schwartz, 1992). Use of this instrument facilitated cross reference to the extensive literature based on Schwartz's theory. Consisting of 40 questions, it is also shorter and less abstract than the original 57 item survey instrument, and less complex to complete. Its use with managers had been demonstrated in previous research (Higgs and Lichtenstein, 2009). Respondents were asked to read a short verbal portrait of a person, and assess "How much like you is this person?", marking their answer on a six point scale ranging from "Very much like

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me” to “Not like me at all”. Further details on the PVQ and the scoring are given in Appendix G.

After the interview, the resulting profiles were sent to each respondent with a short explanation of each of the value types, and they were invited to comment or raise any further queries. Email responses from respondents indicated that they identified with the profiles and had found this an interesting part of the process, giving a certain degree of face validity.

4.6.6 Researcher observations and field notes

A form of research diary was used, as recommended by a number of authors (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Patton, 2002; Miles and Huberman, 1994), to note any observations made in the field and ideas which could be revisited later in the analysis. Interview notes supplemented transcripts by recording non-verbal data, such as respondents' body language. Analysis processes were recorded in NVivo and embedded in spreadsheets to support transparency.

4.7 Analytic strategy and data analysis techniques

Yin (2009) describes data analysis as one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies. According to Mason (2002), the objective of [qualitative] data analysis is to construct a convincing explanation or argument from the data, and this surely requires the researcher to present a coherent account of the process followed – a feat not always accomplished (Pratt, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Furthermore, a number of authors emphasise that research in general, and data analysis in particular, is not a fixed, linear process; analytic procedures evolve in the field, and in practice, data collection, analysis and report writing often run in parallel, with multiple iterations (Easton, 2010; Creswell, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994). This presents the qualitative case study researcher with the challenge of establishing and explaining the means of methodological progression, from commencing the data collection to developing findings and conclusions, while acknowledging the non-linear, iterative nature of data analysis.

To respond to this challenge, a distinction can be made between the overall research approach or *analytic strategy* (Yin, 2009) and data analysis techniques. The analytic strategy is conceived here as a framework for the research process, integrating data collection, data analysis and theory development. Data analysis

techniques, such as coding and categorisation, focus more specifically at the data handling level.

The analytic strategy adopted is outlined below. The principal data analysis techniques are then identified, followed by a description of how they were implemented.

4.7.1 Analytic strategy

The strategy was influenced by Eisenhardt's (1989) process of inductive theory building from multiple cases, which was adapted in the light of the case study context and research aims. Although published over twenty years ago, and written from a positivistic perspective, her work continues to be widely cited and applied in management case study research (Ravenswood, 2011), and it has been termed described as a "cradle-to-grave inductive template" (Harrison and Easton, 2004, p.181). Indeed Eisenhardt (1989) describes it as a roadmap for developing theory from case study research, synthesising and extending previous work on case study design, qualitative analysis and grounded theory building. The researcher drew particularly on the section of the process from field data collection to reaching closure. This included overlapping data collection and analysis; within case and cross-case analysis and pattern-searching; iteration between data and theory to shape findings; and comparison with literature to strengthen the emergent theory. Table 10 below was developed to show the analytic strategy and the way in which each stage was applied in the research.

Table 10: Analytic strategy

Process of methodological progression and rationale (adapted from Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 533).	Application to the research
<p>Entering the field: <i>Overlapping data collection and analysis</i> Initial analysis can inform subsequent data collection both in the same case and in later cases. Scope for flexibility and opportunistic data collection (e.g. observations) to enrich and inform analysis</p>	<p>Active reflection following each interview and use of field notes to record ideas. Interview questions refined/new themes explored as the study progressed based on initial interviews and analysis. New case data collection ran alongside analysis of previous case.</p>

<p>Process of methodological progression and rationale (adapted from Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 533).</p>	<p>Application to the research</p>
<p>Analysing data: <i>Two main stages of analysis:</i> <i>(i) Within case analysis</i> Become familiar with each case and allow unique features of each case to emerge before seeking to generalise patterns across cases <i>(ii) Cross-case pattern search using divergent techniques</i> Look at data in many different, structured ways to avoid leaping to conclusions and minimise information-processing biases</p>	<p>Stage (i): Case summary of each organisation. Prominent themes identified and initial ideas noted. Stage (ii): Comparisons between VC incidents, managers and organisations. Critical incident data grouped by response types to identify patterns. Use of themes identified from the literature as an additional lens on the data.</p>
<p>Shaping findings: <i>Iterative tabulation of evidence and use of replication logic</i> Improve clarity and robustness of the concepts and refines ideas Searches for evidence of the “why” behind relationships to develop coherent and convincing explanations or insights</p>	<p>Iteration between theoretical conceptualisation (based on tentative themes, concepts and relationships) and the data. Matrices used to summarise and compare the data to verify ideas. Looked for negative or disconfirming instances and considered multiple possible explanations alongside the data.</p>
<p>Enfolding literature: <i>Comparison with similar and conflicting literature</i> Strengthen theory and potential to raise conceptual level by integrating different strands of literature</p>	<p>Emergent ideas considered alongside concepts and themes identified in the literature review. Additional literature consulted.</p>
<p>Reaching closure: <i>Theoretical saturation where possible combined with pragmatic considerations</i> Further incremental improvement is minimal</p>	<p>Case data collection planned in advance for pragmatic reasons. Data analysis ceased at theoretical saturation (i.e. when the incremental improvement to the theory was minimal).</p>

The analytic strategy shown in Table 10 above provided the framework for the techniques used at the data-handling level. These are outlined briefly below and their implementation is explained in more detail in Chapter 6.

4.7.2 Data analysis techniques

The researcher used qualitative data analysis techniques based on coding and categorisation of data to identify emergent themes and uncover meaning, rather than focusing on language (e.g. discourse analysis) or frequency counts (e.g. content analysis). Although the conceptual framework, research questions and interview design suggested broad categories for the initial coding into incident, manager and organisational layers (see Appendix F), more detailed codes were developed inductively from the data.

The techniques used were largely informed by Miles and Huberman's (1994) sourcebook. These centred on three overlapping and iterative areas of activity:

- **Data reduction** through coding and summarising;
- Within-case and cross-case **data display** using matrices; and
- **Drawing and verifying conclusions**, which included making contrasts and comparisons, hypothesising underlying relationships and seeking validation through techniques such as using if-then tests, looking for negative evidence, seeking rival explanations, and replication logic.

4.7.3 Use of NVivo software

The NVivo software package was used for data coding and to store interview transcripts and other organisational or researcher generated documents. It facilitated data analysis by enabling the researcher to search for and compare data by coding category, by organisation, and by individual manager or value conflict incident. Codes or concepts could be linked and relationships displayed visually, which was helpful when developing the coding framework and testing theoretical ideas against the data. As a number of authors observe (Lewins and Silver, 2007; Seale, 2005; Patton, 2002), this use of the software did not impose particular analysis procedures but did make some processes less time-consuming once the researcher was familiar with the package.

4.8 Quality criteria and mechanisms

The researcher concurred with Miles and Huberman's (1994) view that establishing the quality of qualitative research is important in its own right; it should not be regarded simply as a means of justifying the legitimacy of its findings compared with quantitative, "scientific" research methods. Commenting from a critical realist perspective, they state:

Our view is that qualitative studies take place in a real social world, and can have real consequences in people's lives; that there is a reasonable view of "what happened" in any particular situation (including what was believed, interpreted, etc.); and that we who render accounts of it can do so well or poorly, and should not consider our work undjudgable. (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 277)

The question of which criteria are appropriate to judge qualitative research then arises. The conventional, "scientific" criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity, are associated with the positivistic tradition, which values a high degree of correspondence with an external reality and experimental rigour. However, as argued by Halldorsson and Aastrup (2003), meaningful assessment of research quality needs to be based on criteria that are consistent with the ontological and epistemological position, the research methods used and the nature of the problem being investigated.

Given the range of different philosophical paradigms applied to qualitative research, it is not surprising that a number of alternative quality criteria have been proposed. These include quality of craftsmanship¹⁵, trustworthiness and authenticity (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Lincoln and Guba, 1985), which are associated primarily with constructivist research; and historical situatedness and emancipatory potential, which relate to critical theory (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Healy and Perry (2000, p. 122) suggest six quality criteria for realist case study research, combining positivist and constructivist criteria with Yin's (2009) case study methodology. However, these do not take account of whether qualitative or quantitative methods are used, and because they cover broadly the same areas as conventional criteria, they are perhaps more useful for informing quality implementation rather replacing more widely accepted criteria.

¹⁵ For Kvale (2009), this is achieved through having critical awareness of why particular interpretations or results may emerge during the process of interview research, and testing or challenging the researcher's assumptions.

Some writers on qualitative research (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002) emphasise the idea of rigour as a benchmark of quality. This, they suggest, should be demonstrated through careful and extensive fieldwork, systematic data analysis, and use of validation techniques such as triangulation of data sources or peer review of findings. Others (Saunders et al., 2009; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Silverman, 2005) discuss quality using the traditional terms of validity, reliability and generalisability (external validity). However, Mason (2002) asserts that nomenclature is surely less important than the way quality criteria are applied in practice. Therefore, the researcher decided to follow Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach of using the conventional criteria alongside the more qualitative research-oriented equivalents of confirmability, dependability, credibility and transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) as a basis for quality planning. The relevance of findings to management practice was a further quality consideration, similar to Miles and Huberman's (*ibid.*, p. 280) criterion of utilisation or application.

Table 11 below shows how each criterion was applied in the research, although in practice there was some overlap between categories. The first column shows the conventional criteria, with the alternative terms, proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), in italics. The second column reflects how the researcher interpreted the criteria, taking account of the qualitative methods used and the critical realist paradigm. The third column indicates how the criteria were addressed.

Table 11: Quality criteria and application to the research

Quality criteria	Interpretation	Indicative techniques used in practice
Objectivity <i>Confirmability</i>	Awareness of potential biases: researcher is values aware rather than value neutral and maintains a critical distance.	Researcher made her background and assumptions explicit. She was not embedded in the case organisations – this avoids <i>going native</i> (Silverman, 2005). Avoidance of verification bias ¹⁶ and anecdotalism through actively seeking instances that might disconfirm findings; alternative explanations were considered; other potential biases were acknowledged in research limitations.

¹⁶ Defined as the tendency to use the data to confirm the researcher's preconceived notions (Silverman, 2005). However, Eisenhardt (1989, p. 546) counters that this is less likely in case studies "just the opposite is true...continual juxtaposition of conflicting realities tends to "unfreeze thinking", and so the process has the potential to generate

Quality criteria	Interpretation	Indicative techniques used in practice
Reliability <i>Dependability / auditability</i>	Research design consistent with research questions Clarity about the methods and processes followed. Transparency about how findings were generated from the data - “trackability” (Halldorsson and Aastrup, 2003, p.331).	Regular, detailed review of study design and research process with supervisor as a means of quality control. Methods and procedures were described in detail. Data collection and analysis processes were recorded. A database of data sources, documentation and coding was maintained using NVivo and case/project folders, which could be made available to other researchers (subject to confidentiality requirements). Findings and conclusions were evidenced with data from multiple sources.

theory with less researcher bias than that built from incremental studies or armchair, axiomatic deduction”.

Quality criteria	Interpretation	Indicative techniques used in practice
Internal validity <i>Credibility / authenticity</i>	The findings of the study make sense; they are credible to the case organisations and to the research audience. Multiple perspectives and interpretations are considered in developing findings.	The link between data and findings was evidenced through tabular data representation and clear methodological description. Triangulation of sources (Patton, 2002): multiple data sources were used (manager and key informants interviews, values questionnaire and documents), allowing cross-data comparisons and consistency checks. Two independent researchers second-coded a data sample at (a) initial coding stage, to capture any additional themes which researcher may not have identified; and (b) once the coding categories had been developed, to assess coding consistency. Interim ideas were discussed with HR contacts, academic colleagues and with practising managers, with due regard for confidentiality, to help develop further insights. Theory triangulation (Patton, 2002): different theoretical perspectives were applied to the same data.
External validity <i>Transferability</i>	Description allows adequate comparison with other settings. Generalisation to theoretical propositions rather than to populations.	The case descriptions provided context-rich information to allow comparison with other settings; different contexts could be explored in future research. The research included a variety of contingent contexts and participants.
Utilisation <i>Application to practice</i>	The findings are capable of informing practice.	Discussion of interim findings with practising managers to consider the implications for practice; and a summary of findings offered to case organisations.

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In addition to the criteria shown in Table 11 above, ethical research conduct was regarded as closely linked with quality. Indeed, research quality, along with integrity and transparency, is a key principle of the Economic and Social Research Council Framework for Research Ethics (ESRC, 2015). Key ethical considerations are highlighted below.

4.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for the research was granted by the School of Management Ethics Committee. The research was designed with reference to key ethical principles, including quality and transparency, informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and avoidance of harm (ESRC, 2015). Illustrative examples of practices which addressed these areas are as follows:

- Managers were asked to participate in a research interview by the HR representative rather than by their own manager, to avoid them feeling an obligation to participate.
- The briefing sheet for potential respondents included a high-level outline of the PhD study, the format and length of the interview being requested, provision of an interview transcript for verification and sign-off, anticipated use of the findings and confidentiality. Respondents were invited to contact the researcher if they had further questions.
- At the start of the interview, permission was requested to audio record the discussion and respondents were advised that the interview could be paused or discontinued at any time. Managers were thanked for their participation after the interview and given further opportunity to raise questions on the day and by follow-up email.
- In addition to the interview transcript, respondents received a [confidential] values profile based on their questionnaire responses, with a brief description of the values listed. The explanation made clear that the information was for interest only and that there was no 'preferred' values profile.
- Individuals and organisations were not identified in the presentation of findings, and discussion of interim findings with HR representatives maintained individual anonymity.

The researcher was aware that discussion of personal value conflicts may lead some respondents to confront issues which were uncomfortable and may cause

them some distress. The planned approach in this event case was to pause, check whether the respondent would prefer not to continue, and if necessary discontinue or redirect the questioning. However, this situation did not arise.

Macfarlane (2010) challenges the dominant, codified approach to research ethics as unsatisfactory and less relevant to the more unpredictable nature of qualitative research. He makes a distinction between *procedural ethics*, which is concerned with satisfying the ethics approval process, and *ethics in practice*, which is making decisions in response to day-to-day moral challenges connected with the research process. These challenges, he argues, are best met by “trying to act reasonably according to the dictates of our conscience and experience” (ibid., p. 25)¹⁷. Certainly, the role of the researcher’s judgement in good [ethical] practice is echoed by Easterby-Smith et al. (2008). An example of an ethical issue which required such a judgement is described below.

The researcher wished to take account of multiple perspectives of value conflicts. Examining the same value conflict incident from the perspective of all those involved, rather than just the manager’s account was initially attractive, as it may have yielded additional insight into the circumstances and the implications of the manager’s response. However, this was deemed unfeasible on ethical grounds: (a) questioning a manager’s reportees, peers or senior managers about an incident described in the interview might alert them to events that they would otherwise have been unaware of; (b) advising the respondents that others would be asked about the incidents would be [ethically] necessary and may have rendered them less likely to share confidences; and (c) it might damage the manager’s credibility if peers and reportees were asked to comment on the implications of how he or she had handled a particular situation. Moreover, this data, although interesting, was not crucial to the research questions. Value conflicts were regarded as personally defined and subjectively experienced, and although understanding the organisational and situational context was important, the principal requirement of the data collection was to gather detailed, experiential accounts *from the individual manager’s perspective*, rather than to re-construct particular organisational events.

¹⁷ based on virtues such as courage, respectfulness, resoluteness, sincerity and humility (Macfarlane, 2010).

4.10 Summary of the research design

To summarise this chapter, Figure 9 below shows the case study design implemented in the research. Taking the influences and design components identified at the outset (Figure 8, p. 84) it highlights the choices made for each aspect.

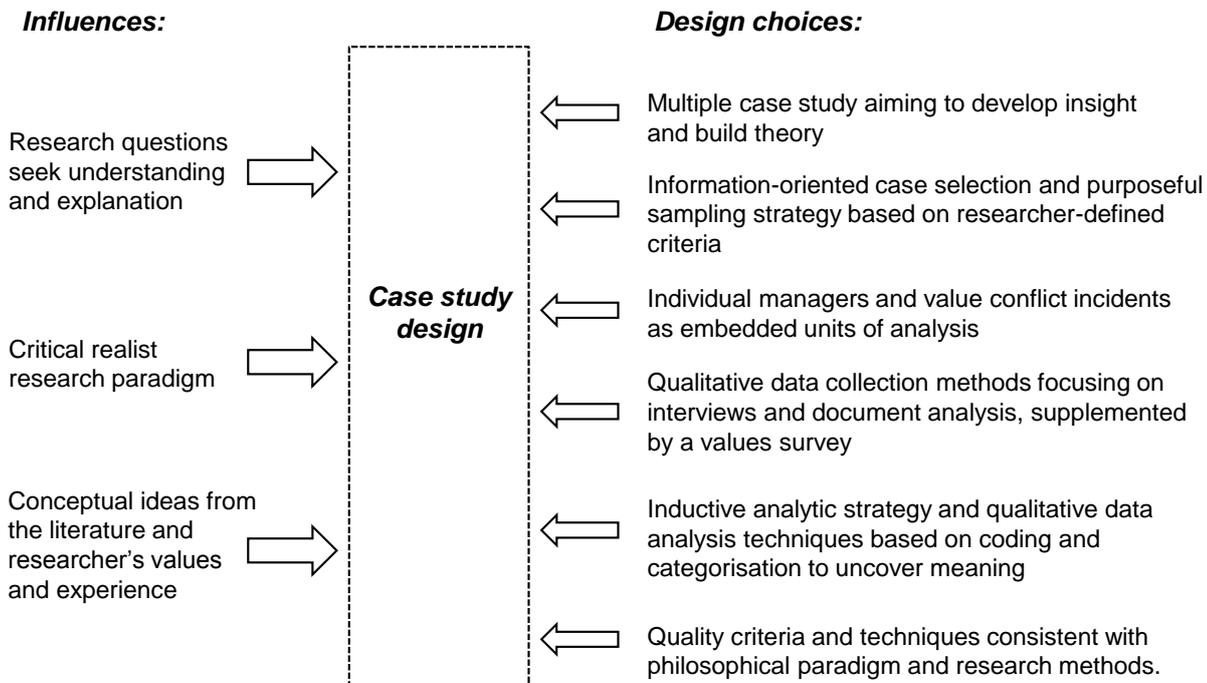


Figure 9: Summary of case study research design

The research implementation is described in the next chapter. This outlines the interviews held and the data collection timescales, and includes a descriptive summary of the four case organisations in which the research was conducted.

Chapter 5: Data collection and case synopses

5.1 Introduction

A summary of the interviews held and the data collection timescale is outlined in this chapter. This is followed by a brief synopsis of the four case organisations. The aim is to set the scene for the presentation of the data analysis and findings in Chapters 6 – 10. The analysis in Chapter 10 returns to the case organisations in more detail and draws cross-case comparisons.

For confidentiality reasons agreed during negotiation of access, the four organisations are not named in the research and are referred to as follows:

- **Cox Consulting:**
A small consulting company, operating largely in the construction industry
- **Insko:**
The UK division of a European insurance company
- **Optico:**
A high street optical chain
- **Smilecare:**
A specialist health insurance company.

5.2 Interviews and data collection summary

The researcher gained access by approaching contacts within the Human Resources (HR) department and, in one case, by making contact with the CEO at a business seminar. Each organisation met the criteria defined in the research design (Section 4.5.2, p. 87). Data was gathered between November 2010 and July 2011. In total, 42 semi-structured interviews were held with first-line, middle and senior managers, supplemented by preliminary, context-gathering discussions with HR/senior managers.

All the interviews, each lasting between an hour and an hour-and-a-half, were audio-recorded to enable the researcher to listen and focus on the interview process rather than taking detailed notes. This also allowed more eye-contact to be maintained, helping to build rapport and observation of non-verbal cues such as

facial expressions and body language. The interview design and techniques used were described in Section 4.6.3 (p. 92).

The researcher decided to transcribe the interviews in full in order to enable more comprehensive coding and analysis. Transcription also represented an initial stage in the data analysis by familiarising the researcher with the data. Finally, it allowed a complete record of the interview to be sent to respondents for sign-off.

The transcripts were stored in hardcopy files for each organisation, together with field notes, completed Personal Values Survey questionnaires and organisational material, and were uploaded in electronic form to NVivo. The response rate for the Personal Values Survey was 92.9%, achieved by incorporating the survey within the interview. To protect individual identity and to facilitate data analysis and referencing, each respondent was given a code in the format **X YY N**, where **X** is a one or two letter code representing the organisation, **YY** identifies them as a senior, middle or first-line manager (SM, MM and MO respectively) and **N** is the interview number by organisation and manager type. For example, **AMM3** is the third middle manager interviewed in Cox Consulting.

Table 12 below shows the timescale and number of interviews by organisation and manager type, excluding preliminary context-gathering discussions.

Table 12: Interviews by organisation and manager type

Organisation (code)	Interview timescale	No. of interviews	No. of interviews by manager type		
			First-line	Middle	Senior
Cox Consulting (A)	Nov 2010-Dec 2011	9	4	2	3
Insko (S)	Feb-March 2011	13	9	3	1
Optico (SP)	April-May 2011	9	5	3	1
Smilecare (D)	June-July 2011	11	8	2	1
	Total:	42	26	10	6

Organisational websites, intranets and other documents, such as induction material, behavioural competency frameworks, appraisal policies and values statements,

provided additional information on the organisation's stated values and formal expectations of managers. A list of all documents reviewed is listed in Appendix E for reference.

5.3 Case overviews

Each synopsis, developed from interviews, observation and organisational material, covers the organisational size and business context, organisational values and current challenges and initiatives. It also outlines the management structure and the nature of the respondent group.

5.3.1 Cox Consulting

Cox Consulting is a project management and surveying consultancy with a broad portfolio of projects, largely in construction and education management. It employs fewer than 100 staff, based in two offices in London and South-East England, and its 2010 turnover was £11.3 million. Most of the employees are fee-earning professionals, often working on client sites as project managers, surveyors or as consultants providing specialist advice and services. Following a management buy-out in 2003, Cox Consulting has grown rapidly as a result of acquisitions and active hiring to resource a series of new projects and business diversification. In particular it has developed a new, successful business stream in the education management field, providing policy and contractual advice as well as project management services to schools seeking Academy status.

The organisation is currently experiencing increased competitive and cost pressures. The majority of its business has traditionally come from public sector clients, and this income stream has been affected adversely by cuts in public sector spending and policy changes. The organisation has responded by reducing staff costs through re-structuring and a company-wide 10% pay cut. Staff turnover is low, particularly at senior levels, which the Head of HR felt was a result of economic pressures and the tight labour market in the construction industry. A new, director-led initiative aims to develop a more pro-active, business oriented leadership culture at junior leadership levels, and there is a strong focus on cost control and maximizing fee-earning activities.

The CEO and senior leadership team have a highly visible presence in the offices; open plan seating and glass-fronted meeting rooms, together with the frequent, desk-side conversations between directors and employees give an impression of informality and openness.

Management structure and respondent group profile

Cox Consulting is organised into ten Business Units, headed by Associate Directors and non-Board Directors who report to the Board. All have client-facing, fee-earning remits, such as Project Management, Building Surveying, Facilities Management and Education Consulting, with the exception of the Marketing and Innovation Unit and Core Services. Within the units, Associates are responsible for day to day management of junior professionals as well as fee-earning activity. The span of control is small, with only three or four reportees per Associate. As most of the work is project-based, professionals may be accountable to different project managers for task management, but there is very limited resource sharing across business units.

The nine respondent managers at Cox Consulting are from five Business Units and include the CEO. Their average length of service is 10.89 years, in a range between 2 and 25 years. As a whole, the organisation is male-dominated, particularly at middle and senior management levels, with only one female director/Business Unit Head. The respondent profile is shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Profile of Cox Consulting respondents

Respondent managers by level (n=9)	Gender	
	M	F
Cox Consulting		
First-line (Associates)	3	1
Middle (Associate Directors)	2	0
Senior (Directors)	2	1

Eight of the respondents had professional backgrounds in surveying or construction management. Three of these, based at the London office, had joined Cox Consulting as the result of an acquisition.

5.3.2 Insko

Insko is the UK subsidiary of an international financial services group focusing on long term savings and investment solutions, primarily life assurance, pensions and investments. It reported assets under management in excess of £30 billion at the end of Q1 2011. Its products are designed for wealth management, and customers can select from around 1,000 funds operated by 80 fund managers, including Insko's in-house fund manager. With no tied sales force, the organisation relies entirely on a network of around 6,000 independent Financial Adviser firms (FAs) to distribute its products and act on behalf of the client. Information, instructions and payments move between Insko and FAs in both directions. Insko's operating model of outsourcing product sales has been very successful, and the company has a reputation for innovation, high quality service and good relationships with FAs, evidenced by independent research and industry awards.

Operating in the competitive and highly regulated financial services industry, Insko's business strategy is to maintain the traditional, highly profitable life and pensions business and to grow its e-commerce based investment solutions platform. To support this strategy and to reduce operating costs, the company has invested heavily in new technology and process re-engineering based on "lean" principles (Womack and Jones, 1996). It is currently rolling out new and replacement business-critical investment administration systems.

The UK Head Office in South-East England employs around 2,000 staff, mostly in financial administration functions. Some teams interface with the FAs and clients either via paper or the telephone and process web and paper business. Others liaise with the fund groups and third party administrators to buy and sell investments, or perform associated reconciliation and accounting functions. In this high transaction environment, teams have daily and monthly performance targets based on throughput and error rates and are paid overtime to complete the day's trading activities. Employment terms and conditions are on a par with industry competitors and there is a generous staff benefits package.

Management structure and respondent group profile

Insko has a well-defined management hierarchy with four layers of management from supervisory level to the UK Operations Director. First-line managers or team leaders are known as "Managers of Others" (MOs). Each supervise between three

and twenty staff and are responsible for a set of administrative or financial processes, work scheduling, reporting and people management. They have limited budgetary responsibility. Middle managers (MMs) are budget holders for a business area, and typically have five to seven direct reportees.

Thirteen interviews were conducted over 4 days with the Insko managers. Their average length of service is 9.3 years, ranging from 3 to 20 years. The MO level is heavily female dominated, as reflected in the profile in Table 14 below:

Table 14: Profile of Insko respondents

Respondent managers by level (n=13) Insko	Gender	
	M	F
First-line (MOs - team leaders)	1	8
Middle (MMs - department or service managers)	2	1
Senior (SMs - functional/business unit managers)	1	0

All the respondents work in financial administration, governance and customer service functions. These are accountable through the Head of Customer Investments to the UK Operations Director, one of five directors reporting to the UK CEO. One of the MM respondents is responsible for a major IT implementation project and manages a large team brought into Operations from different parts of the business. People management responsibilities common to MOs and MMs include employee reviews and appraisals, performance management, career development and team building, and MOs are required to hold daily team briefings known as “huddles”.

5.3.3 Optico

Optico is a privately-owned, family business that has developed into a major optical retail group with a strong brand image, a 35% market share in the UK and a growing international presence. It was founded in the mid-1980s by a husband and wife team, both of whom are on the Board and run the company together with their son who is now Joint Managing Director. Both daughters are in high profile management roles. The business offers in-store vision and hearing tests by qualified clinicians as well as spectacle, contact lens and hearing aid retail, and it operates its own supply chain for design, manufacture and distribution of products to stores.

There are just over 1000 staff in the UK business and around 500 in international business, excluding store staff. Most of the 700 UK retail outlets are run as joint venture partnerships, with equal ownership, with the store paying a management fee to the organisation. The organisation's relationship with Store Partners through its retail support services is a fundamental tenet of the business, defined in a Partnership Charter and described in company documents as "at the heart of everything we do".

Optico's Head Office is not UK-based, but many central support functions such as finance, retail training, procurement and Human Resources (HR) are located in spacious, modern premises in a business park in South-East England. A company plane makes daily flights between the two sites. Five further sites in the UK deal with ophthalmic lens development, laboratory-based training, customer support, and retail operations.

Optico's turnover in 2009/10 was £1.36 billion and it has continued to grow in spite of the difficult economic climate: although like-for-like results are down, its overall performance is positive. Its expanding international business in the Netherlands, Nordics, New Zealand and Australia is regarded as an important revenue stream. It plans to roll out a further 140 stores in the coming year, increase manufacturing capacity and improve IT, finance and supply-chain management. The UK business is experiencing considerable price competition from big multiples such as supermarkets and pharmacy chains, and although the number of stores has increased, Optico has not increased resource in support services in an effort to control costs.

Management structure and respondent group profile

Optico has a very flat structure overall, although this varies between business functions. Central support services, such as finance, procurement and IT, typically have two levels of management, with middle managers reporting into the functional director. The Call Centre – which has been highly rated for customer service and as a place to work in recent national call centre awards – has additional supervisory and team leader tiers and runs as a semi-autonomous unit. Store staff training (clinical, retail and IT) is carried out by central services staff, and training managers are responsible for resource allocation to projects such as new store roll-outs, and for planning training to support new marketing or customer service programmes.

Staff who deal with store operations and management – the key interface between Optico and its Joint Venture Partners (JVPs) - are organised on a regional basis, with around 100 stores per region. Field-based Retail Development Consultants (RDCs), reporting to a Retail Director, each have a small team of reportees who are responsible for rolling out Optico initiatives, such as new customer service tools, staff uniforms or marketing displays. Retail Performance Consultants (RPCs) are similarly organised and are accountable for retail performance and profitability in their region. Owing to the partnership business model, however, they do not have direct authority over store managers or store staff because these are not Optico employees. The role was described by one RDC as “regional management without the stick”; influencing skills and demonstrating added value are important, particularly as their costs are charged to stores as part of the management fee.

Nine manager interviews were conducted at the business park site over four days. Two of these were conducted by video conference. The respondents’ average length of service is 7.2 years, in a range of 4 to 15 years, and their profile is shown in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Profile of Optico respondents

Respondent managers by level (n=9) Optico	Gender	
	M	F
First-line (Manager or consultant)	5	0
Middle (Regional manager or head of function)	1	2
Senior (Director level)	1	0

Most of the respondents are from support services functions including retail training, IT and finance, and based at the business park or at the Head Office. The fact that many of their roles involve frequent travel and out of hours working may account for the gender imbalance at first-line level in the respondent group. One respondent is from the Call Centre and another two are field-based Retail Development Consultants.

5.3.4 Smilecare

Established by two dentists in the mid-1980s, Smilecare’s core business is provision of dental treatment payment plans and specialist health-related insurance. Its three

primary customer groups are dental practices, who offer the payment plans to patients alongside NHS or private treatments; corporations, who provide dental insurance as an employee benefit; and individual plan members. The organisation retains close links with professional bodies through its Board of Directors as well as offering continuing professional development opportunities to dental practitioners, and its literature strongly emphasises its clinical credentials.

Smilecare was acquired by a large insurance group in the 1990s, but is largely allowed to run as a self-contained business and brand. The company expanded rapidly to take advantage of the growing number of dentists leaving the NHS and the concomitant increased demand for private dental treatment. It now has over 1.8 million individual plan members and around 6,500 member dentists. Although the company continues to be profitable, its business has remained static for the last four years and there is increasing competition from larger insurance companies who have entered the dental market. Greater focus on cost reduction in recent months has resulted in a small number of redundancies, and Smilecare's strategy is to differentiate itself in the market through customer service excellence and innovative use of I.T.

Smilecare employs around 350 people based in attractive, purpose-built premises in an historic city centre. Five area sales teams deal directly with dental practices, and other business functions handle corporate sales, marketing, finance and strategy, I.T. and business services. The majority of staff work in Customer Services; administering the payment plans and other products, operating the insurance helpline, advising dental practices and customers and dealing with corporate client queries. The company has invested heavily in I.T. systems in the last five years to allow on-line patient registration and other on-line services for customers, and manages its computer systems in-house.

The Managing Director has been in post for almost ten years, and is regarded by employees as a charismatic individual with an active presence in the office and in the local business community. The organisation has won a series of customer service and employer awards. Salaries are average in the industry, although its employee benefit package is generous and it has an active staff social club. A key HR challenge is to retain trained customer service and administrative staff; these typically have to travel from other areas because of high local housing costs, with the disadvantage of travel cost and time. Furthermore, there is labour market

competition from numerous insurance and other services companies in a nearby city.

Management structure and respondent group profile

Smilecare's executive leadership team comprises eight directors or business heads reporting to the Managing Director. A further ten percent of employees are at first-line or middle management grades, many of whom report directly to a business head. First-line managers, normally responsible for running a team of 6-8 people, are required to give functional or technical guidance as well as operational delivery and people management activities such as appraisals and development. In Customer Services areas, teams of up to 25 administrative staff reporting to a first-line manager are subdivided into work groups for task management.

Eleven managers were interviewed over five days, together with context-gathering and follow-up discussions with the Managing Director and his PA. Most are from Customer Services, I.T. and Finance functions. The average length of service is 7.8 years, in a range between 2 and 17 years.

Table 16: Profile of Smilecare respondents

Respondent managers by level (n=11) Smilecare	Gender	
	M	F
First-line (supervisor and junior manager grades – team leaders)	4	4
Middle (manager grades – heads of department)	1	1
Senior (executive leadership team – directors/ business unit heads)	0	1

The respondents' gender profile, shown in Table 16 above, reflects a fairly balanced mix across first-line and middle management levels, which is typical of the company as a whole at these levels. Two of the eight executive leadership team members are female.

5.4 Summary

The four case organisations outlined in this chapter – Cox Consulting, Insko, Optico and Smilecare – while differing in size and industry sector, have in common the challenge of responding to competitive and financial pressures within a difficult economic climate. All four organisations have invested heavily in new IT systems to

improve efficiency and customer service, while placing greater emphasis on controlling costs. The rapid growth of Cox Consulting, Optico and Smilecare has presented the particular challenge of preserving their distinctive and family-like culture while developing more robust policies, more formal methods of communication and standardised working practices. The similarities and differences between the case organisations are explored more fully in Chapter 10, where the organisation and cross-organisational findings are presented.

Having introduced the organisational setting of the research, attention now turns to the way in which the data were analysed in practice, and how the findings were developed, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 6: From data analysis to findings development

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the evolution of the research process from data analysis to the development of the findings, which are presented in detail in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. The chapter first explains the structure of the analysis and presentation of findings, with reference to the conceptual framework. Second, the chapter describes how the data analysis was carried out in practice, with reference to the analytic strategy set out in Chapter 4 (Methodology). This section includes examples from the interview data to illustrate the coding and analysis of value conflict incidents. Finally, the critical realism-inspired process model, which brings together the outcomes of the analysis, is introduced (Figure 15, p. 130). This model constitutes the central feature of the findings. It is presented in this chapter as a single point of reference to which the detailed findings can be related as the analysis unfolds in the subsequent chapters.

6.2 Structure of the analysis

The researcher's conceptual approach to the research was set out in the framework presented previously in Chapter 2 (Figure 1, p. 7). This conceptual framework was used not only to guide the literature review, but also to structure the data analysis, in conjunction with the research questions.

The relationship between the conceptual framework and the analysis is shown in Figure 10 below. As in the original figure, the diagram represents managers' experience of value conflicts within individual, role and organisation contextual layers, viewed from a values perspective. This has now been labelled to show how the different layers correspond to the four different sections of analysis – incident, manager, organisation and cross-organisation. The literature review suggested that each layer is associated with different values and expectations, and the analysis aimed to consider how these and other factors impinged on managers' responses to value conflicts and the outcomes.

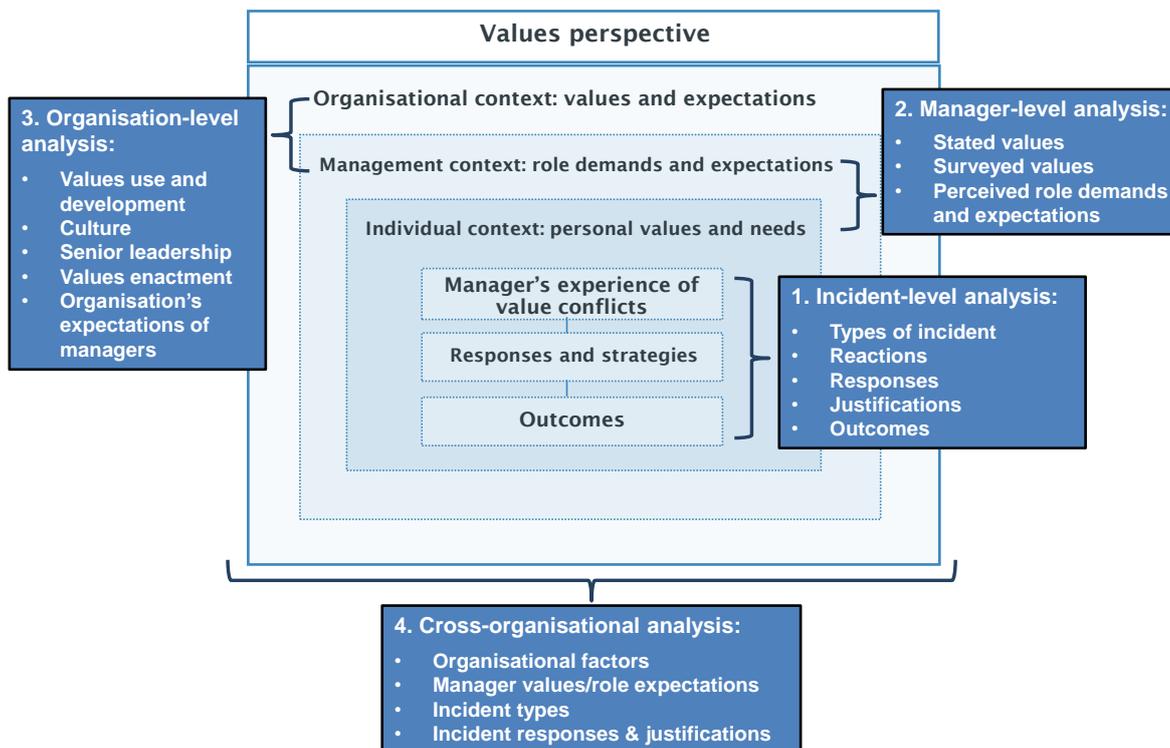


Figure 10: Stages of analysis in relation to conceptual framework

As shown in Figure 10 above, the first stage of the analysis focuses on the VC incidents as experienced by the respondents. The emphasis here was to understand the types of incident that occurred, how managers felt, what they did and why, and what happened as a result. These findings are reported in Chapter 7.

The second stage of the analysis focuses on the individual managers' values and their perception of the demands and expectations associated with being in a management role. This was to identify any personal understandings of the role which appeared to correspond with particular ways of dealing with VC incidents. These findings are reported in Chapter 8.

Stage three of the analysis considers the factors that characterise the four case organisations, focusing on the values, culture and senior leadership, and the organisation's expectations of those in management roles. These factors were identified in the literature review as particularly relevant given the values perspective of the research. The purpose of this stage was to identify contextual similarities and differences, which could have contributed to different patterns of incident types and responses, when these were analysed by organisation. These findings are reported in Chapter 9.

The fourth and final stage of the analysis compares the incident and manager-level findings cross-organisationally. This brings together the previous findings in

order to explain cross-case variations in incident types and responses. These findings and the resultant process model, which represents a key contribution of the research, are also reported in Chapter 9.

6.3 Coding and data analysis

The analysis was based on the strategy described in Chapter 4, Table 10 (p. 97), however rather than conducting two discrete, sequential phases of within-case and across-case analysis, the researcher carried out initial coding and analysis for the first two case organisations in parallel (Cox Consulting and Insko). Using this larger data set made it easier to identify clusters of codes and emergent themes, and to try out cross-organisational analysis techniques. A methodological paper and interim case studies were presented as conference papers (listed in Appendix J). Feedback suggested that the topic and approach were of interest and worthy of further exploration using the methods adopted.

The analysis entailed a combination of inductive and deductive processes; a practice adopted by many researchers (Lewins and Silver, 2007; Gibbs, 2002; Miles and Huberman, 1994). The main analysis steps were as follows:

6.3.1 Initial immersion in the data

This step involved detailed reading of organisational documents, especially values statements, appraisal templates and competency frameworks which provided the organisational values-related context and expectations of managers.

Transcription of interviews enabled the researcher to reflect on themes and note ideas or connections between interviews (such as the same incident recounted by more than one participant). These were captured in memos in NVivo.

6.3.2 Data reduction

Although Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest using contact summary sheets to capture the key points of each interview, this process did not prove useful in practice. This may have been because there was only one interview with each participant, the interviews were similar in structure, and key information could be captured through the coding without the need for a further written summary. Document summary sheets were used to extract from or summarise organisational documents and websites.

6.3.3 First-level (descriptive) coding

An outline coding framework (shown in Appendix F) was first created with reference to the research questions and conceptual framework. It was designed to capture relevant sections of data at organisational, role and individual levels as well as each VC incident. Using NVivo, coding then followed a 'broad to narrow' approach (Patton, 2002): data were coded into the broad, descriptive categories, and then more detailed, *in vivo* sub-codes were identified from the data within each category (e.g. descriptions of organisational culture such as "family oriented" and "friendly" or behaviours such as "go with the flow" and "healthy reticence"). As additional transcripts were coded, similar phrases and sentiments which occurred were allocated to existing sub-codes. The NVivo software enabled the researcher to revise and re-organise codes as required.

6.3.4 Reliability: second coding

Two independent researchers second-coded a data extract from two interview transcripts; once during the descriptive coding, to verify that the codes were sufficient and made sense in view of the data (Patton, 2002) and a second time to check coding consistency. The most valuable aspects of the second-coding process were clarification of the meaning and scope of first level (a priori) codes and how they applied to specific contexts, and identification of some extra coding categories. The measure of inter-rater reliability suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 64)¹⁸ was applied to the first-level codes. The initial combined score of 66% was improved to 95% after discussion and modification of some codes, with a coding consistency score of 94% using the updated coding framework. Because all the coding was to be done by a single researcher, the intra-coder consistency¹⁹ was checked on the same data sample and calculated to be 86%.

6.3.5 Second level (pattern) coding

Pattern coding consisted of grouping or clustering codes into a smaller number of meaningful categories which would form the basis for later within-case analysis and cross-case comparisons. Visual representation and manipulation of sub-codes

¹⁸ This is calculated as the number of agreements divided by the total number of agreements and disagreements.

¹⁹ The researcher recoded the same extract on an uncoded copy a few days later, aiming for an internal consistency score of around 80% (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

in NVivo facilitated this process. The category labels represented a move to “higher levels of inference” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 87). Throughout the process, memos, diagrams and annotations were used to capture analytical ideas for later exploration.

Having first coded and re-coded the interview data from Insko and Cox Consulting in order to do some preliminary analysis, the researcher found that very few new, first level sub-codes emerged from Optico and Smilecare data and no new categories or clusters were needed to incorporate them. Following Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) guidance, the researcher was satisfied that this part of the analysis had run its course, in that sufficient numbers of regularities had emerged and all incidents could be classified under existing codes.

6.3.6 Data displays

Data was analysed using matrices in order to extend findings and develop theory. For example, using the query function in NVivo, numbers of coded references per sub-code could be displayed by VC incident, manager or organisation and exported to Excel spreadsheets. This allowed the researcher to look for patterns and relationships in the data and to suggest avenues of further exploration in the data or in the literature. The matrices were also used to verify conceptual ideas and to pinpoint exceptions or “disconfirming evidence” (Patton, 2002, p. 478) which were examined further by returning to the interview transcript. These activities corresponded with the “Shaping Findings” stage of the analytic strategy (Chapter 4, Table 10, p. 97).

6.4 Analysis of value conflict incidents

The incident-specific coding and analysis was a crucial part of the analysis because it formed the foundation on which other findings were developed, and therefore it is described in detail in this section, using examples from the data. The purpose is to support the quality criterion on transparency about the means of generating findings from the data, which was identified as a quality criterion in Table 11 (Section 4.8, p. 100).

6.4.1 Incident identification

In Section 4.4.2 (p. 85), value conflicts were defined as:

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A psychological tension or inner dilemma experienced by managers when their personal values and priorities are at odds with the values, demands and expectations of the organisation or others

During the interview, respondents had been asked to describe in detail situations when they had experienced a significant dilemma or inner conflict in the course of their management role. Some respondents, while recognising the concept of inner conflicts and dilemmas, found it difficult to recall a specific example. Broadening the prompt question, for example by asking them to describe the most challenging situation that they had faced as a manager, helped to generate more incident accounts.

An early task in the analysis was to re-read the interview scripts in order to identify those sections describing specific dilemmas and challenging situations. A narrative summary of each incident was stored in NVivo for reference. To determine whether an event would be regarded as a value conflict (VC) incident, the researcher considered two main questions, informed by the adopted definition:

1. Was there evidence of an inner dilemma or turmoil in the manager's account?

and

2. Was there evidence in the data of the respondent's personal priorities (what they felt was important) conflicting with perceived demands or expectations (e.g. the management role, the organisation)?

or

Was there evidence in the data of the behaviour of others (e.g. employees, the organisation) conflicting with the respondent's personal view of what was the important or right (personal values-aligned) behaviour in the situation?

Accounts of situations that were challenging but did not cause an inner dilemma for the manager were rejected and marked as "null" incidents.

Examples of VC incidents included:

- a refusal by the senior leadership team to provide adequate resources for a project;
- poor communication of a pay cut to staff by the organisation;
- having to charge a longstanding client for additional services;

- severe pressure exerted on the manager to meet targets; and
- the requirement to instigate disciplinary or performance management procedures.

6.4.2 Incident coding

Having highlighted the sections of each transcript that were classified as VC incidents, the researcher wanted to break these down into their component parts, in order to allow comparisons to be made between incidents. It became apparent to the researcher that the incidents had common structural elements, which the CIT questioning had helped to draw out: (a) the manager's affective reaction on encountering the situation, (b) behavioural or cognitive responses, (c) rationales for the response, and (d) outcomes. These elements were added to the coding framework and used to re-code each incident into its component parts, as shown in Figure 11 below.

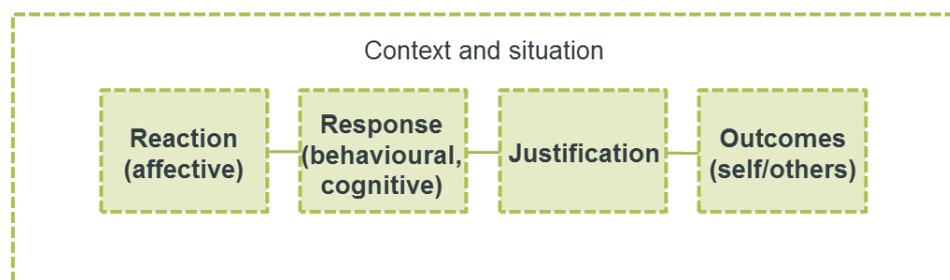


Figure 11: Broad coding categories for value conflict incidents

To give an example of how these broad coding categories were applied to the data, Figure 12 below takes a single incident and breaks it down into the component parts with extracts from the interview transcript. The value conflict occurred when the respondent, a middle manager at Insko, encountered a bureaucratic organisational approval process that resulted in the rejection of his business case for significant investment in a new and innovative IT system development project.

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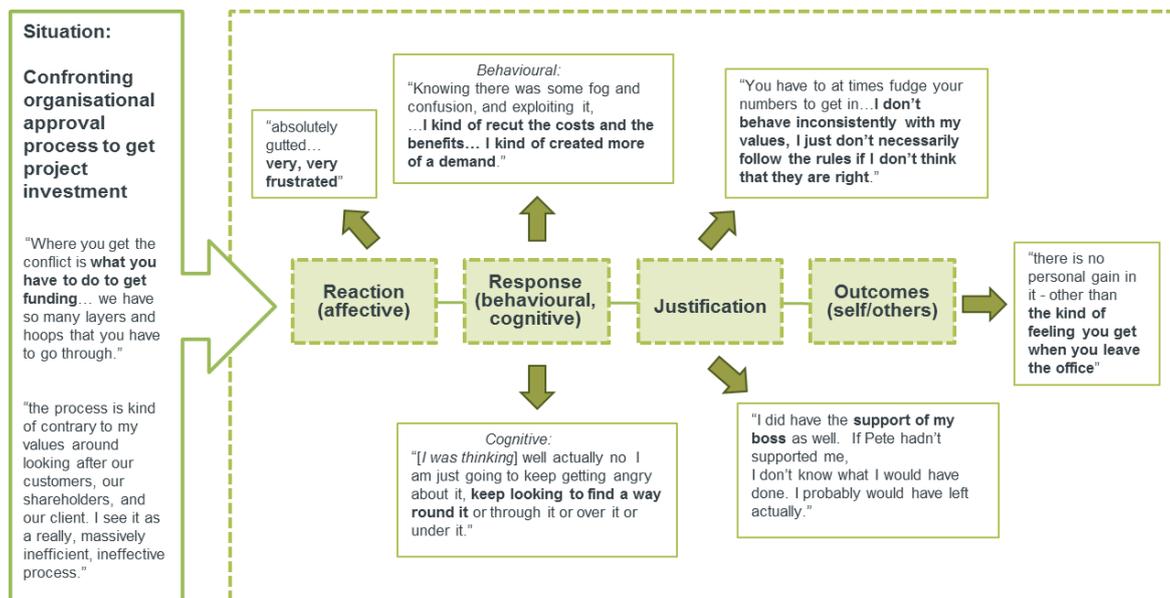


Figure 12: Example incident with coded data extracts

The manager recognised a conflict between conforming to the organisational process and his stated passion for customers, shareholders and client. He felt that the very process-bound, formal approval process required by senior management went against the organisation's espoused values of passion and pushing beyond boundaries. His dilemma was whether or not to assert his personal values over the demands of process compliance.

As shown in Figure 12 above, the manager tried to think of a way of securing funding for the project (*cognitive response*) and in the end presented the figures differently to give a projected outcome that met the approval criteria (*behavioural response*). Although he described this as "sharp practice", he felt it was in the organisation's best interests (*justification*). This action aligned with his personal achievement and self-direction values (voiced elsewhere in the interview and apparent later from his value survey responses). However, he asserted these values indirectly; outwardly conforming to the process rather than challenging it. Having the support of his own manager was a factor that the manager took into account when deciding what to do (*justification*). The *outcome* had been positive on a personal level at the time, although it was too early in the project to determine the outcome for the organisation.

The categorisation of incidents into their component parts was followed by detailed re-coding of data within these relatively broad codes into inductively derived categories. This resulted in circa 220 sub-codes, which were reduced to around 100 codes by merging or aggregating codes to eliminate evident overlaps of meaning. The researcher was then able to look for patterns of responses and

rationales by grouping the data into conceptual clusters within each broad category. Simple models in NVivo were helpful here. An example of an NVivo model showing *Justification* codes arranged into conceptual clusters is given in Appendix I.

Figure 13 below illustrates the re-coding and clustering process. It starts from the point where incident data has been categorised into the incident components (*Responses* in this case) and gives examples of detailed in vivo codes, aggregated codes and conceptual clusters.

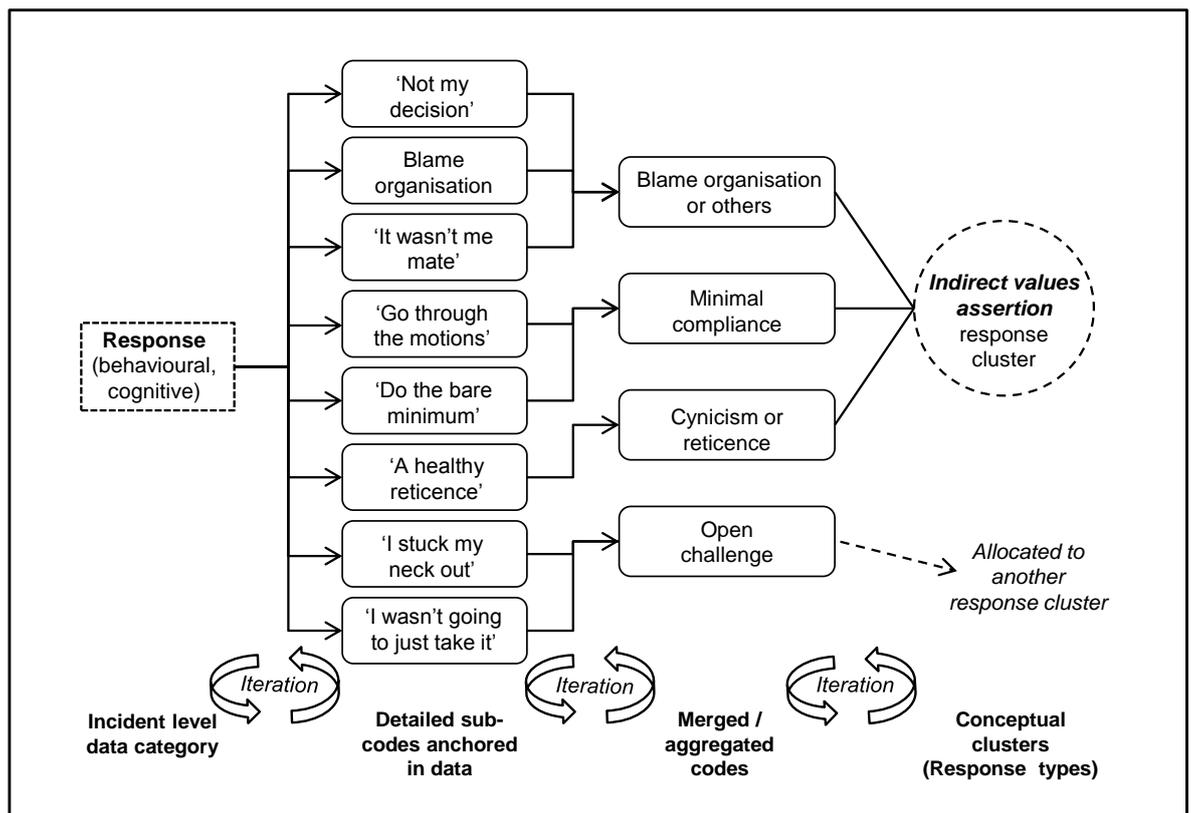


Figure 13: Illustrative example of incident coding and analysis.

The figure represents the following steps:

1. In the figure, the left-hand box shows one component of the VC incident process – Responses. All the responses found in each VC incident were first assigned to this code.
2. Next, *in vivo* sub-codes were created using all the data coded under the Response component. Some example sub-codes are shown in the second column of the figure, capturing a range of responses to value conflicts.
3. The sub-codes were then merged or aggregated where there were common themes or overlaps of meaning (shown in the third column of the figure). Thus, descriptions of responses such as “going through the motions” and

“doing the bare minimum” were grouped under a new code entitled “Cynicism or reticence”.

4. The final stage of the coding was to group these aggregated codes into “conceptual clusters”. Given the values perspective of the research, the researcher considered the implications of each type of response for the respondent’s personal value system when she developed these conceptual clusters. Thus, as shown in the diagram, responses such as cynical comments, blaming others or doing the least possible to comply with an organisational requirement (“minimal compliance”) seemed to signify that the respondents were asserting their real views or beliefs (associated with in their values) but in an indirect way – that is, they did not confront the organisation directly to express their disagreement or to challenge a decision. A conceptual cluster named “Indirect Values Assertion” was therefore created to capture these codes and associated data. Other codes were assigned to different conceptual clusters.
5. This process was repeated for each component part of the VC incidents (i.e. reactions, responses, justifications and outcomes).

Developing the conceptual clusters entailed frequent iteration between the data and the emergent clusters; simple counts to indicate the prevalence of particular responses or rationales; and validation of theoretical ideas through cross-incident comparisons, looking for negative evidence and reference to literature.

Spreadsheets based on NVivo queries were invaluable for identifying patterns of responses, rationales and outcomes across incidents. The resultant incident findings are presented in Chapter 7.

6.5 A critical realism-inspired conception of value conflicts: the VC process model

The main research aim was to explore from a value conflicts perspective how managers deal with tensions and dilemmas at work. Therefore, the development of findings from the VC incident analysis was fundamental to the research.

However, as the research questions (Chapter 1, Section 1.3, p. 4) make clear, the researcher was seeking explanation as well as understanding. Indeed, this had contributed to the choice of critical realism (CR) as the research paradigm.

Therefore, in the light of this paradigm, it was important to consider the contingent interplay of personal values and priorities, organisational values and

expectations and other socio-structural factors in seeking explanations for events.

As discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 3.3.3, p. 72), reality for critical realists goes beyond observable phenomena to include entities that may not be observable but have actual consequences (Fleetwood, 2004). In order to achieve its aim of developing plausible explanations or practically adequate explanations of reality (Sayer, 2000), CR takes account of such entities and their causal powers, which combine contingently to produce events or outcomes, and which act on, and are acted upon, by human agents. Entities may be *materially* real: existing independently of what we do, say or think; *ideally* real: conceptual or discursive entities; *artefactually* real: created objects which are conceptually mediated; or *socially* real: dependent on human activity for their existence but not reducible to discourse (Fleetwood, 2004).

Applying this idea to the present study, Figure 14 below represents the personal, role and organisational-level factors analysed in the present study as CR entities. These entities and their powers constitute a “complex nexus of influences” (Kempster and Parry, 2011, p. 111) which, in combination with other entities and human agency, shape events – in this case, the types of VC incidents and the associated responses, justifications and outcomes.

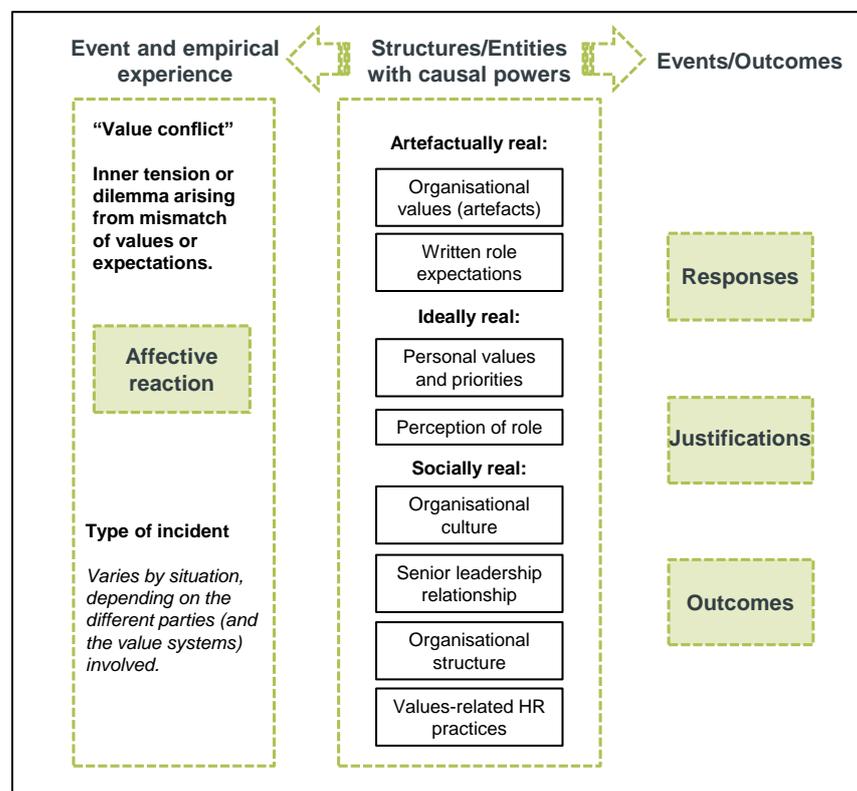


Figure 14: Personal, role and organisational factors as CR entities

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The causal combinations of powers have “tendencies” – what Fleetwood (2004) describes as typical ways of acting. However, as Kempster and Parry (2011) point out, their ability to influence varies according to the other influences operating in a particular context or situation. This contributes to the uniqueness of each VC incident. At the same time it is possible to identify patterns and to build contextually-grounded explanations of events and outcomes.

Expanding on Figure 14, Figure 15 below shows the map or blueprint of the social process of value conflicts that was constructed from the research findings. The development of the model is traced in the presentation of findings in Chapters 7 to 9.

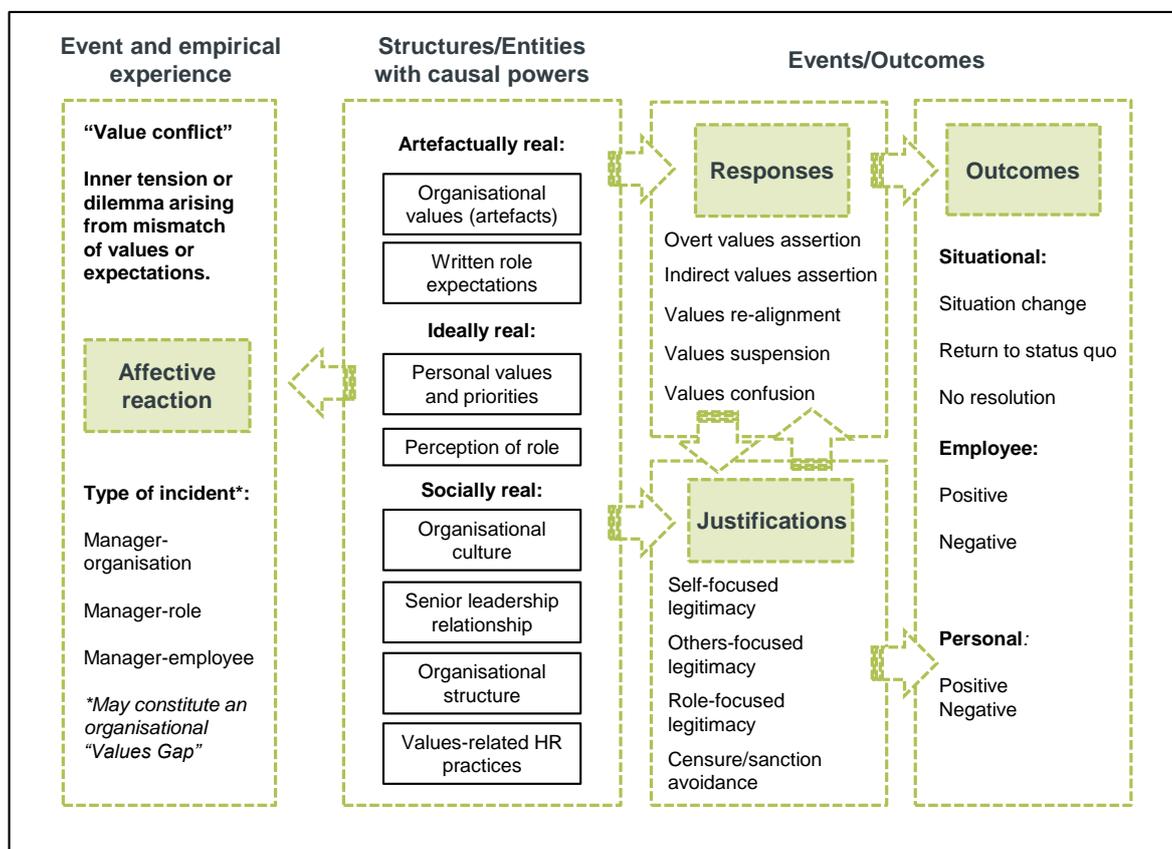


Figure 15: The value conflicts process model

The left hand pillar of the above model shows the phenomenon of value conflicts, experienced by the respondent managers and associated with certain **affective reactions**, which are detailed in Chapter 7. The findings in Chapter 7 also identify the **types** of value conflict found in this study.

Likewise, the two right-hand pillars of the model (Events/Outcomes) relate to the VC incident level findings in Chapter 7. The analysis identifies patterns of **responses**, **justifications** and **outcomes**, which are classified into conceptual

categories and patterns identified between responses, justifications and outcomes.

The remaining pillar (Structures/Entities with causal powers) shows the different personal and socio-contextual factors explored in Chapters 8 and 9 as CR entities which combine contingently to produce events and outcomes. Of these, **personal values** and **perceptions of the management role** are reported in the manager-level findings in Chapter 8. The remaining **organisational factors** are reported in the organisation-level findings in Chapter 9.

The findings of the cross-organisational analysis (Chapter 9) shed further light on **the operation of the model**. The analysis looks at how the structures/entities differ across the four organisations, and using the VC incident and manager-level findings, suggests that different combinations of entities appeared to be influencing the value conflict process in different situations and across different settings.

In this way, the analysis works towards the development of the value conflict process model in Figure 15 - effectively assembling the map and highlighting contingent combinations of entities that produced particular events or outcomes. Therefore, the presentation of findings in Chapters 7, 8 and 9 and the discussion in Chapter 10 will refer back to this model as its constituent parts unfold.

Chapter 7: Incident level findings

7.1 Introduction

This major section of the findings focuses on the value conflict (VC) incidents identified from interviews in all four case organisations. The chapter begins by showing how these findings map onto the critical realism-inspired process model which was introduced in Chapter 6. It then reports on the types of incident found. The patterns of (i) reactions, (ii) responses, (iii) justifications, and (iv) outcomes emerging from the VC incident analysis are then presented. These four incident components correspond with the categorisation of VC incidents described in Chapter 6, Figure 11 (p. 125). The findings also explore whether certain responses tended to be found with certain justifications and, in turn, whether these were associated with particular personal or organisational outcomes.

The findings presented in this chapter address the following research questions (RQs):

- **RQ1:**
What types of value conflict do managers encounter in their day-to-day work?
- **RQ2:**
How do they experience and respond to these value conflicts?
- **RQ4:**
What are the implications of the conflicts and responses for managers and the organisation?

The chapter ends with a summary of the main incident-level findings in relation to these research questions.

7.1.1 Mapping the VC incident findings to the process model

In order to relate this part of the findings to the whole and to help navigation through the detailed findings in this chapter, Figure 16 below shows the VC process model of value conflicts (see Chapter 6, Figure 15, p. 130). The four highlighted boxes are those that were populated by the findings in this chapter.

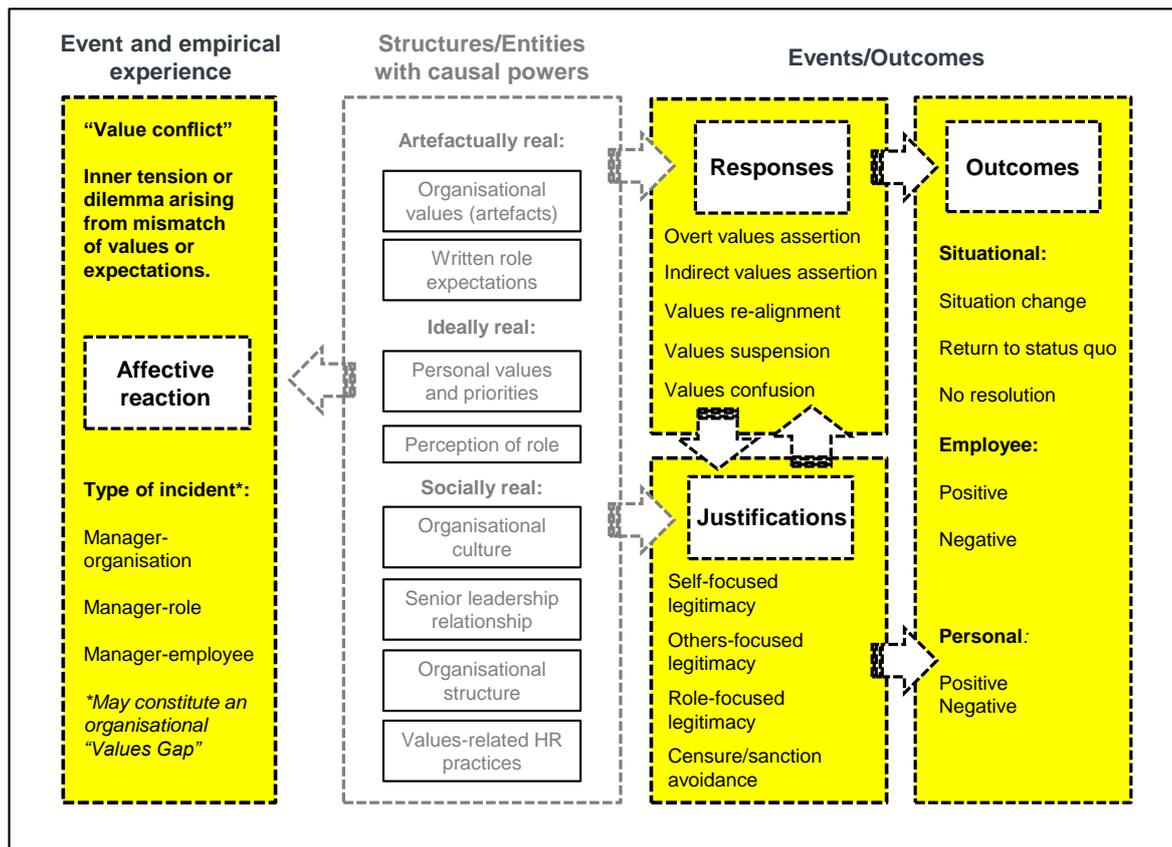


Figure 16: Incident-level findings mapped to the VC process model

The VC incident types, affective reactions, responses and justifications are presented in Sections 7.1.3 to 7.1.7 below. The different outcomes of the VC incidents are identified in Sections 7.1.8, and 7.1.10. The relationship between responses, justifications and personal outcomes are explored in Section 7.1.9, Finally, Section 7.1.11 identifies the relationship between responses and situational/employee outcomes.

7.1.2 Incident summary

Analysis of interview transcripts generated identified 72 value conflict incidents. A further ten situations were categorised as null incidents because they did not meet the criteria given in Section 6.4.1 above. Table 17 below shows the number of value conflict incidents by organisation and manager type:

Table 17: Value conflict incidents by organisation and manager type

Organisation	Number of VC incidents	VC Incidents by manager type		
		First-line (n=26)	Middle (n=10)	Senior (n=6)
Cox Consulting	16	10	5	1
Insco	21	15	5	1
Optico	18	10	5	3
Smilecare	17	14	2	1
Total	72	49	17	6

As Table 17 indicates, value conflicts were identified in all four case organisations and among all levels of manager, and the data confirm that the concept resonates with managers even though they voiced a general sense of alignment between their own and the organisation's values. The nature and type of incidents gathered is reported next, followed by discussion of findings from analysis of managers' reactions, responses and rationales and incident outcomes.

7.1.3 Incident types

Sorting the incidents into broad categories according to the main parties or value systems involved resulted in the following three types:

1. Manager-organisation:

The respondent manager felt under pressure from the organisation or its senior management to do something that he or she did not agree with or personally found difficult. Examples include being required to enforce a policy, defend an organisational decision or implement a new initiative.

2. Manager-employee:

Another employee's attitude or behaviour did not align with the respondent manager's values, expectations or standards. Dealing with poorly performing reportees or with conflicting priorities between managers of different departments are examples of this type.

3. Manager-role:

There was a conflict between the respondent manager's personal values and his or her perception of the obligations of the role (that is, what he/she thinks is expected of a manager, as opposed to the organisation's or other peoples' demands or expectations). Two examples of this type are

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(a) a manager's felt obligation to keep a disciplinary matter confidential while personally wanting to be open with the rest of the team, and (b) a sense of responsibility, as a manager, to deliver a roll-out project and meet a tight and frequently changing schedule, while having to ask team members to travel at weekends and work longer hours in order to do so.

Figure 17 below shows the distribution of by type (n=72). The manager-organisation type was the most frequently occurring, with 30 incidents.

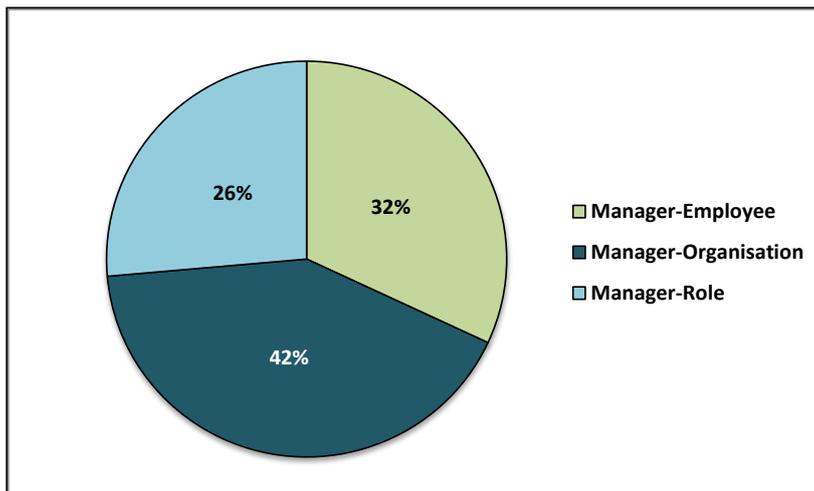


Figure 17: Value conflict incidents by type

Of the **manager-employee** type incidents, dealing with underperforming employees was the most common source of value conflict. As anticipated, a number of respondents felt a conflict between their sense of duty to the organisation and their desire to help and support their reportee. However, a surprising finding was that the majority experienced inner tension and frustration because another employee's behaviour did not align with organisational values. One Smilecare middle manager described trying to compensate for a reportee who was failing to live up to the organisation's values of *adding value* (customer service) and *as good as my word* (ownership, delivers on commitments), which she strongly espoused:

It was very difficult for me to keep picking up the pieces all the time...I would say - we will do [it], yes we will have that ready for you by the end of the day, or we will do that - and then it wasn't done. Yes I did feel quite upset that it wasn't done ... also I would be upset that he hadn't gone back and said he couldn't do it. Just not to do it is...yes I did find that quite concerning really. [VC74]

Another Smilecare manager recalled the discussion he had had with a reportee who failed to display *adding value* and *agility* (openness to change) values:

[I said] the business is moving in a direction and you have to be open to change and you have to move with it. If you don't then you can't expect the business to wait for you. Especially in challenging times... you have to move with it. If you don't move then you have got a decision to make - you either get on the train or get off the train. And you find that if your personal values don't align you are not going to develop. [VC80]

The nature of the conflict here appears to be a mismatch between organisational values, which the respondents had assimilated into their own value system, and the values implicit in the behaviour or attitude of the other employee.

7.1.4 Values Gap incidents

It is notable that most **manager-organisation** type incidents constituted a conflict between managers' personal values - what they felt was the most important, right or beneficial course of action - and the organisation's *enacted* values or demonstrated priorities, rather than its *espoused* or stated values. A further conspicuous finding is that in 36% of incidents (including just over half of the **manager-organisation** type and a third of the **manager-role** type), the inner conflict arose when respondents felt that the organisation had not lived up to its espoused values or commitments in a particular situation.

Typically, these incidents involved perceived failures by the organisation to sustain the values of *Openness* and *Respect* through its actions or decision-making:

Respect I think is one that we just don't do and I think it is from the top down; there is a lack of respect and I think it is really serious. I think it is genuinely a really serious problem. [*Middle manager, Insko, VC21*]

As managers, respondents were then required - or felt obliged - to deal with the consequences. One example is the Cox Consulting first-line manager who was faced with employees who were dissatisfied when the organisation had communicated a company-wide pay cut by letter, giving no prior warning or positioning to managers. Other such incidents include lack of transparency over decision-making; a decision to charge longstanding clients for additional services; large expenditure on a corporate event soon after announcement of

redundancies; and pressure to meet targets despite a stated commitment to employee work-life balance. Failure to recognize and reward employees who “pushed beyond boundaries” by challenging the status quo and going beyond their job remit was mentioned by three respondents.

The term “**values gap**” was conceived by the researcher to describe the apparent trigger for these value conflicts. As shown in Figure 18 below, a values gap exists where there is a perceived disconnection between the organisation’s espoused values or codes of behaviour and its enacted values or demonstrated priorities, or where an explicit or inferred promise has not been kept²⁰.



Figure 18: The organisational values gap

This discrepancy between espoused and enacted values was perceived by an Optico first-line manager who strongly criticised the organisation for being unwilling to dismiss the director of a joint-venture partnership store:

The business didn’t want to get into a situation of litigation over the shares because it would be too time-consuming and too costly. So rather than do that we gave him a slap on the wrist and then put him back in his store. I think we talk about values of the organisation and people and all of those things... This guy couldn’t be more detached from what we are about: [he was] all about money, all about profit, and to hell with people. And I just thought it was a terrible message to send out to the staff...and it is very contradictory. It does make you kind of question some of the senior figures within the business and their decision making and processes. [VC54]

Perhaps the best illustration of a values gap incident, recounted by a female middle manager at Insko, was the sudden announcement that the organisation had decided to withdraw Insko Day - the highly valued tradition of an extra leave day over the Christmas period. She described this as a “cracking example” of the organisation failing to live up to its values. Not only was the decision itself

²⁰ The research aimed to understand how managers *experience* value conflicts; therefore a respondent’s *perception* that the organisation had not acted in accordance with its values was significant when identifying “values gap” incidents. This approach finds a parallel in psychological contract research (Cullinane and Dundon, 2006).

described as universally resented, because it was seen to break a longstanding commitment to employees, but so too was the way it had been communicated – a brief email to all staff with minimal explanation and the suggestion that instead, staff would be allowed to undertake seven hours of charity work over the course of the year. Figure 19 below pinpoints the values gap, with extracts from the interview account to show the manager's reaction and response.

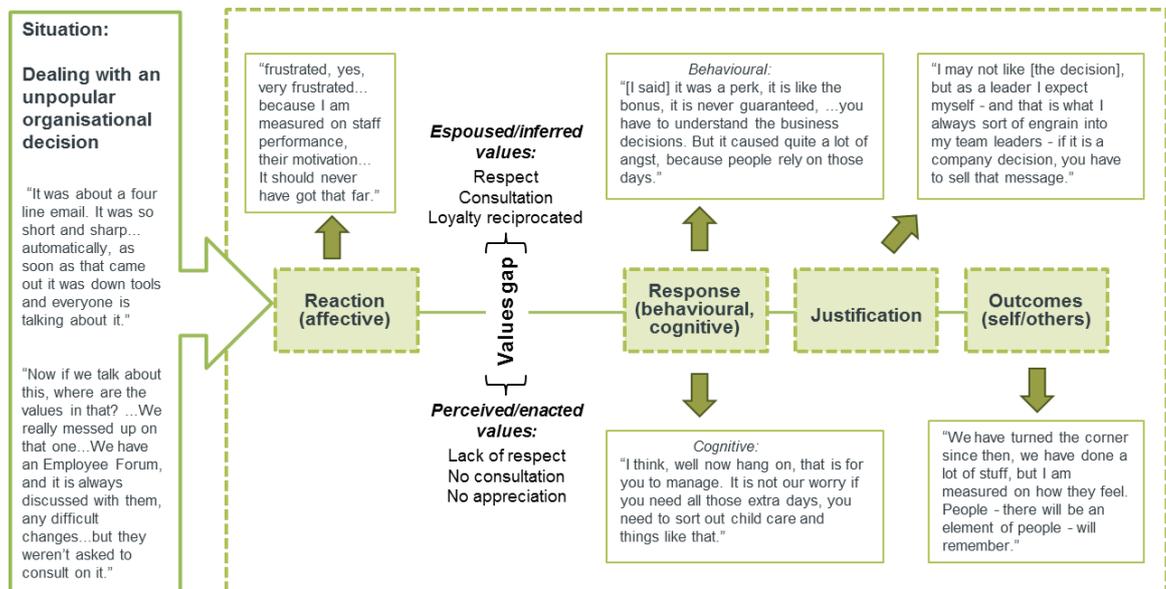


Figure 19: Example of a "values gap" incident - Insko Day

Perhaps because it was a recent event, the withdrawal of Insko Day was mentioned by seven respondents as a value conflict. Confronted with strong negative reactions to the decision among their teams, they referred to the tension between their personal openness and honesty values, loyalty to their team and the obligations of the management role. At a personal level, some recalled feeling sad at having been let down by the organisation over Insko Day. Others described their frustration with the organisation, resentment about the impact on team morale – on which many were measured - and in one case, a sense of guilt by association. The accounts also show a range of behavioural responses: most respondents had tried to defend the decision - like the manager in Figure 19 above - effectively trying to bridge the values gap on the organisation's behalf. However, two had decided to share with reportees their own negative feelings about the decision, exposing rather than repairing the values gap. The affective reactions and behavioural/cognitive responses found in these and all the value conflict incidents are discussed below.

7.1.5 Affective reactions

Like the frustration expressed by the manager in the Insko Day incident (Figure 19 above), the experience of a value conflict triggered negative affective reactions, such as anger, sadness, worry and distress. The clustered reactions shown in Table 18 below relate closely to negative affect descriptors in the 20-item PANAS scale (Positive and Negative Affect Scale; Watson et al., 1988). In the left-hand column, the percentage figure refers to the proportion of incidents with a reaction in that cluster. Some incident accounts referred to more than one reaction, such as a combination of frustration and anger, and therefore were coded into more than one cluster. The right-hand column gives illustrative extracts from the data.

Table 18: Affective reactions to value conflicts

Reaction cluster	Illustrative extracts from incident accounts [incident number shown in parentheses for reference]
Uneasy/jittery 30%	<p>“[I was] between a rock and a hard place” [VC40]</p> <p>“I felt - hang on, this feels like I am being made to act in a way that I am not comfortable so I think the sleepless time was working out how to deal with that.” [VC68]</p> <p>“I was way out of my comfort zone.” [VC69]</p>
Frustrated/irritated 24%	<p>“Oh absolutely gutted...very, very frustrating” [VC18]</p> <p>“I have certain values in the way that I want it to work and if I am unable to do that, that is where the frustration comes in.” [VC62]</p>
Distressed 15%	<p>“For me that was very that was very debilitating. Sort of make or break type stuff” [VC23]</p> <p>“That caused me a lot of angst...trying to have that fight...I can't be telling them that I am fighting with management to get more staff, I know we need more staff. And that is where I am in between the two, and that was very stressful for me” [VC40]</p>
Angry/challenged 15%	<p>“I was quite furious actually” [VC22]</p> <p>“I felt for about fifteen minutes pissed off... it was just bloody ridiculous how close to the wire it got” [VC42]</p>

Reaction cluster	Illustrative extracts from incident accounts [incident number shown in parentheses for reference]
Worried/upset 10%	“I had a sleepless night Monday night” [VC17] “I wasn’t...going home every night thinking, Oh, that’s been an interesting challenge today; it was, Oh God, this problem is still with us” [VC01]
Guilty 6%	“I felt like it was my fault” [VC08]

As shown in the table, most reactions were in the *uneasy/jittery* cluster (such as feeling uncomfortable, under pressure, or “stuck in the middle” between the organisation and reportees), although the negative feelings described in all the clusters are consistent with the sort of psychological discomfort associated with cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

There were some variations by incident type. Unlike the overall cluster proportions, the most common reaction in **manager-employee** type incidents was *frustrated/irritated* (36%), whereas this cluster accounted for less than 20% of reactions in the **manager-organisation** and **manager-role** types. At the same time, the proportion of *uneasy/jittery* reactions was lower for **manager-employee** type incidents (22%) than for **manager-organisation** (31%) and **manager-role** (37%) type incidents. This indicates that respondents who had encountered a mismatch between their own and another employee’s values – for instance, when dealing with behavioural or performance issues – had experienced frustration more often, and uneasiness less often, than those dealing with clashes between personal and organisational values or expectations.

However the frustration experienced in the **manager-employee** type incidents was often accompanied by other emotions. For example, one Optico first-line manager’s description of what went through his mind when three of his reportees had decided to resign also conveys guilt and inner turmoil:

I just can't get it straight in my head and I still haven't been able to sort of work it through...Why don't they see the same thing with the company as me? Why don't they see the values? Have I not explained it to them properly? Have I not given them the right things to do? It might just be they want something different, but why? ...It is not that I take it personally; it is just that I feel that I should have done more and I should have done something differently. [VC50]

7.1.6 Responses

Inductive coding of managers' responses identified 25 response codes, which were then grouped into five conceptual clusters. In line with the values perspective of the research, these five clusters were chosen to express the response in terms of the managers' personal value system: (a) **Overt assertion** of personal values; (b) **Indirect values assertion**; (c) **Re-alignment** of personal value priorities; (d) **Suspension** of personal value priorities; and (e) **Values confusion**. Table 19 below gives a brief definition of each cluster and examples from the incident accounts. In the Response cluster column, the percentage figure refers to the proportion of incidents that included a response in that cluster. Incident accounts can include more than one response.

Table 19: Managers' responses to value conflicts

Response cluster	Description	Illustrative extracts from incident accounts [incident number]
Overt values assertion 35%	The manager expresses and enacts personal value priorities by openly challenging a decision or action, or by refusing to comply with an organisational demand.	<p>"I won't just say, fine, go along with whatever is said... I don't really see that I can do it, if I'm not convinced that it's right." [VC15]</p> <p>"So they were sort of saying "You have to give up a name" and I said "Well I am not going to just nominate someone. I am actually going to see if I can get a volunteer". If I force someone into that role and that person doesn't want to do it then ...it is not good for the individual." [VC41]</p>
Indirect values assertion 15%	The manager finds a way of acting in accordance with personal value priorities, such as by purposely ignoring the issue or opposing it without open confrontation.	<p>"Occasionally there's an email that comes through... and then oh dear - I'm on holiday, oh I've got a meeting that day, and then it sort of drifts away again." [VC10]</p> <p>"I suspect I portrayed some cynicism. I don't think I vocalised it but I think, I suspect people got that I wasn't genuinely 100% convinced it was a goer." [VC67]</p>

Response cluster	Description	Illustrative extracts from incident accounts [incident number]
Values re-alignment 27%	The manager aligns personal priorities and behaviour with the organisation's or others expectations. The response is accompanied by a legitimising and/or principle-based justification.	<p>"I had a team meeting and I presented it in a way to make it sound [a]new exciting thing...trying to sell all the benefits of why we are doing it rather than the fact that I didn't perhaps necessarily agree with what we were doing." [VC41]</p> <p>"At the end of the day I am being paid to do this. I might as well enjoy it and so I would never say I am absolutely vehemently against this project ...but if they are thinking what I am thinking then I will say yep, I am with you on this but we are kind of stuck here guys so let's see what we can do with it." [VC57]</p>
Values suspension 14%	The manager complies reluctantly with the organisation's or others' expectations, putting personal values priorities "on hold"; the response is typically justified as a self-preservation strategy rather than a willing choice.	<p>"Where Directors have decided this is what we need to do, and you're the poor sod that's got to get on and implement it, if there's a robust process in place, you just have to sort of blinker yourself a little bit from the emotions and say look, there's a process, we follow it, doing what we're told, you know, we get to the end, we achieve the objective." [VC03]</p> <p>"We did it that way, but I just remember at the time it was just really, really uncomfortable and I was really not happy with delivering this message." [VC66]</p>
Values confusion 8%	The situation remains unresolved and the manager is not able to reconcile the value conflict or make a decision about how to respond.	<p>"I was so busy going through this mental turmoil...and trying to remain professional. I tried not to let my team know...I did crack in the end and I did have to seek advice from HR." [VC23]</p> <p>"As a result as you say something has got to give so the quality I think suffers and that has suffered in my personal situation which I struggle with." [VC63]</p>

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The fact that *overt values assertion* is the largest response cluster suggests that personal value priorities were the strongest driver of response behaviour in the face of a value conflict. Indeed, together with *indirect values assertion*, behaviour which expressed personal values – whether openly or covertly – accounted for 50% of responses. A notable type of response in this cluster, found in seven incidents, was where the manager had decided to leave the situation or role that had given rise to the value conflict. This purposeful exit was different from situation avoidance, and may be regarded as the ultimate form of values assertion, as this manager explains:

I did it for about a year and then I left...when there is a strong enough conflict between my values and what I am being asked to do, I stop doing it. [VC33]

In contrast, the smallest cluster – *values confusion* – was used to capture responses that indicated a lack of ability to resolve or deal with the conflict. In a few cases, managers had tried to find a resolution by asking others for advice or moral support, but effectively they remained unreconciled to the situation or avoided making a decision.

Over a quarter of responses were in the *values re-alignment* (27%) cluster: here, rather than remaining fixed, value priorities appeared to be adjusted dynamically in order to deal with the value conflict. The way in which managers framed their response in this cluster was the key differentiator between this form of dynamic values adjustment and the *values suspension* response. The latter was described in defensive or negative terms – putting on an act or complying without conviction – compared with the more positive language of values realignment. The following two comments from managers describing how they conveyed an unpopular organisational decision to reportees makes the difference clear:

Values suspension:

Well I just said I didn't know anything about it. I didn't say I agreed with it but you need to not react, be seen to be in support of management decisions. [VC25]

Values re-alignment:

Well that is my job. If a business decision is made, whatever that decision is, it is my job to defend it. I may not like it, but as a manager I expect myself – and that is what I always sort of engrain into my team leaders – if it is a company decision, you have to sell that message. [VC39]

Interestingly, **manager-role** type incidents had a much larger proportion of *values realignment* and *values suspension* responses (totalling 61%) and fewer *Overt values assertion* responses (17%) compared with the other two types and with the overall cluster profiles. **Manager-role** situations represent an inner conflict - a mismatch between the manager's personal values and his or her perception of the obligations of the role - so one possible explanation is that there may be less need or opportunity in such situations to express personal values overtly, compared with conflicts between the manager and another party. However, the accounts suggest an alternative interpretation - that managers were able more readily to substitute personal values with role obligations by compartmentalising personal and work priorities in this type of conflict. One Optico manager called this the “two hats approach”, although for this InSCO manager it was not an easy thing to do:

I don't feel very supportive of the business. I don't like what they have done here. I don't agree with this decision. ... I can only sit there so many times smiling and saying no it is fine, [we've] got to do this. The guys at work aren't stupid; they can see what is going on. [VC37]

Here again, managers' portrayal of their response as either willing or reluctant was an important indicator of whether they were re-aligning or suspending values in these situations. Their justifications or rationales for their responses, discussed below, help to shed further light on how they dealt with value conflicts.

7.1.7 Justifications

The reasons or explanations that managers gave for their response to the value conflict (“justifications”) were coded inductively from the incident accounts. During the interviews, questions such as “What was going through your mind when you decided to act in that way?” and “What was important to you in deciding how to act?” were used in order to encourage managers to recall their thoughts at the time of the incident and to avoid triggering defensive, post-hoc justifications.

The 40 justification sub-codes were grouped into four conceptual clusters, based on the *focus* (self, role or others) and *aim* of the response as articulated by the respondents (see Appendix I). The first three clusters, shown in Table 20 below, reflect a positive sense of legitimacy about the response, expressed in terms of personal principles or convictions. Justifications were allocated to these clusters based on references to: (i) the respondent's self-concept (self-focused legitimacy);

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(ii) a concern with the outcome of the action for the organisation, customers or reportees (others-focused legitimacy); and (iii) a felt obligation as a manager (role-based legitimacy). The fourth cluster in the table contains negatively framed rationales, where the respondent acted to avoid censure from self or others, or for fear of organisational sanction. Examples of these include to assuage guilt, to fend off criticism, to avoid hindering career progression and – for one manager – because he might be earmarked for redundancy in future. Thus, unlike the other three clusters, justifications in this cluster were not based on a positive sense of legitimacy or principled conviction.

Table 20: Rationales (justifications) for responses to value conflicts

Justification cluster	Description	Illustrative extracts from incident accounts [incident number shown in parentheses]
Self-focused legitimacy 26%	Positive; important to the manager's personal principles and relating to their sense of self.	<p>"Sometimes I don't obey the rules all the time; I am a little bit flexible. But that is just, I don't know, my work ethic, my work standards." [VC22]</p> <p>"Well I am not like that - just me and my personality and the way I am. I just can't do that." [VC32]</p> <p>"You have to maintain what is important and what you are trying to achieve." [VC56]</p>
Others-focused legitimacy 26%	Positive; seeking the best outcome for others (the organisation, customers or reportees).	<p>"I think my approach was I absolutely believed this was the right thing for our business to be doing...it is right for the business, it is going fundamentally improve what we do for customers and get our unit cost down...whilst it is going to be painful for those sort of people that we have to say goodbye to, it is the right thing for the mass of people there as well." [VC24]</p> <p>"It was one of those things you had to do. If you didn't do it, then the company would be at risk." [VC11]</p> <p>"I wouldn't want anyone to think that couldn't talk to me, and I always think how I would like to be treated if I was working for someone." [VC75]</p>

Justification cluster	Description	Illustrative extracts from incident accounts [incident number shown in parentheses]
Role-focused legitimacy 26%	Positive; accepted as a valid management responsibility or role obligation.	<p>“Well I think you just have to really, even if you don’t agree with it, you have got to. Inside I was - urghh great, so next year it means we will only get two days off because of where Christmas falls - but I think in our position you have got to try and be upbeat and see the business side of it even if you don’t feel it is necessarily right.” [VC34]</p> <p>“And you do have to communicate with your team and unfortunately you are the person on the front line and you just have to get on with it.” [VC66]</p> <p>“In the appropriate times in the appropriate channels I think it is perfectly reasonable and valid and part of my job to challenge. But once the decision has been taken it is group think and there we go...Yes, it is not comfortable but it is part of what we do.” [VC67]</p>
Censure or sanction avoidance 23%	Negative, self-focused: avoidance of censure (by self or others) or organisational sanction	<p>“I felt like it was my fault.” [VC06]</p> <p>“I just think you have to, you know, be seen to be committed to the company at times, especially when they are going through restructuring and redundancies.” [VC07]</p> <p>“It was a fear culture ...she was the puppet master, it was do what she said or they’d pay you off.” [VC27]</p> <p>“Not wanting to disappoint ...that is the pressure that I put on myself and I am probably my own worst enemy for that. But also the nervousness of being a new manager of saying no I can't do it and what impact that may have. I think was another driving factor as well.” [VC63]</p>
<p><i>Note: The percentage figure refers to the proportion of incidents that included a justification in that cluster. Incident accounts can include more than one justification.</i></p>		

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The justification clusters are not intended to imply a moral valence or particular ethical stance, and nor did the research set out to gather value conflicts that were specifically ethical in nature. Although none of the incidents was described as constituting a major ethical exposure, some respondents did express sentiments familiar in ethical theory, justifying their actions as “the right thing to do”. For example, the utilitarian principle of the greatest good for the greatest number (Fisher and Lovell, 2009) was mentioned by six respondents, and others, like this Smilecare manager referred to moral absolutes when explaining their response:

I think the way I have been brought up is that you just don't lie. You just tell the truth and if something has gone wrong it doesn't matter how bad it is but you can't lie about it. And...that is what I say to my team, I say I don't care what you have done, we can get through it together and I will help you. But you must never lie to me. [VC64]

The situation above, involving a reportee who had forged a signature on a financial document, appears to have triggered a *sacred value* (Tetlock, 2003) – one regarded as inviolable and consciously based on moral or ethical principles – that directed the manager's response. In a similar vein, another manager reflected more broadly:

I think realistically that you either have to engage in it and make the best of it or don't stay, actually...I mean if it was really something that was against my principles or I really objected out and out, I wouldn't be here. [VC05]

A prominent finding from the analysis, based on the percentage figures for the first three clusters shown in Table 20 above, is that three quarters of the justifications draw on positive sources of legitimacy, whether from personal (self- or others-focused) priorities or from the management role itself. This suggests that where possible, managers found it easier or more preferable to focus on active, values-affirming ideas when determining their response than on more passive, self-protective reasoning: making a positive choice rather than acting to avert detrimental consequences or negative self-views. The even size of the four clusters is also noticeable, although analysis of the justifications by incident type found some interesting variation between clusters:

- **Manager-employee** type incidents:
Largest proportion (34%) of justifications in the *self-focused legitimacy*

cluster.

Smallest proportion (16%) in *others-focused legitimacy* cluster.

- **Manager-organisation** type incidents:
Largest proportion (32%) of justifications in the *others-focused legitimacy* cluster.
Other clusters relatively evenly sized.
- **Manager-role** type incidents:
Largest proportion (32%) in the *role-based legitimacy* cluster.
Smallest proportion (16%) in the *self-focused legitimacy* cluster.

These subtle variations suggest that the basis of the conflict - another employee, the organisation, or felt role obligations - did have a bearing on the form of legitimacy that prevailed when managers decided how to respond.

However, perhaps the most striking finding is the range and volume of rationales identified in the incident accounts. On average, three distinct justification statements were identified in each incident. Fifty-seven percent of incidents contained justifications in two or more clusters, and almost a fifth of incidents contained justifications in three or more clusters. These figures paint a picture of managers drawing on multiple sources of legitimacy to bolster cognitive support for a particular response. A good illustration of this is the incident recalled by an Inco first-line manager, whose manager had demanded a series of detailed reports at very short notice. This pressure, together with his bullying management style, personal ambition and lack of concern for her as a newly appointed supervisor, conflicted with her own desire to deliver work to a high standard, to be in control and to protect her team. Her response was to try and produce the reports by herself, working long hours and hiding her own feelings, rather than asking for help from her reportees or voicing her concerns to her manager or peers. Throughout the account she explained her thoughts:

- Justification 1: ***Self-focused legitimacy (important to me)***
I wanted to do a good job. I knew I could be, not a wonder supervisor, but I knew I could be a good supervisor.
- Justification 2: ***Others-focused legitimacy (maintain team morale)***
I wanted to succeed for not just myself but for my team's sake. My team needed to stay positive, they needed to stay motivated, they needed just to know that there are people out there who appreciate the hard work they are doing.

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- Justification 3: ***Censure or sanction avoidance*** (*appear to be in control*)
I didn't want to look like I was not coping or making my situation worse.
- Justification 4: ***Censure or sanction avoidance*** (*not my fault*)
You know he didn't give me the support I needed to achieve the results I needed to achieve.
- Justification 5: ***Others-focused legitimacy*** (*concern for employees*)
I didn't really want to influence anybody else's working relationships with him in case mine was purely a conflict of - like - personal conflict. [VC23]

The manager went on to explain that she had become withdrawn and severely stressed, and this had resulted in a period of stress-related absence.

7.1.8 Personal outcomes

Incidents were examined to identify any personal (psychological) outcomes from the manager's perspective. These were conveyed verbally and/or through non-verbal expression, captured in the researcher's interview notes or in the audio-recording. Negative personal outcomes included uncertainties about the management role, lack of motivation, low morale and negative feelings towards the organisation. Although such outcomes were discernible in 36% of the incidents, 64% of incidents resulted in positive outcomes, as illustrated by the following comments:

When you make a decision saying actually, this isn't right, start looking for something else and then moving into it, then obviously that is a really good feeling[*smiles*]. [VC18]

I couldn't believe they had done it for us. I just thought this is incredible [*laughs*]. I mean that's the difference here - people listen you know. [VC17]

Positive outcomes included increased feelings of motivation, job satisfaction and self-esteem. A few incidents featured a mixture of positive and negative feelings: in one case, the manager appeared to be satisfied with his decision to speak his mind rather than defend an organisational decision, but then shrugged his shoulders and said:

It does kind of make you question why you're doing the job you're doing. You kind of wish you were one of the two categories, you know, either the

senior manager or one of the team where you could moan about it.

[VC28]

Overall, however, the greater proportion of positive outcomes indicates that in most cases, the manager had experienced a satisfactory resolution or diminution of the negative feelings triggered by the incident. In addition, broader positive outcomes were mentioned by respondents, such as improved team morale, effecting a decision change by the organisation, facilitating the success of a project and protecting customer satisfaction.

7.1.9 Patterns of co-occurrence

The findings presented so far were from analysis of managers' reactions, responses, justifications and personal outcomes as separate elements. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the value conflicts, the next stage of the incident analysis looked at the relationships between these different elements; that is, exploring whether certain responses were more likely to be accompanied by certain justifications, and in turn whether these were associated with more positive or negative personal outcomes.

Given that many incidents featured more than one response and/or more than one justification, the accounts were first re-examined to determine whether or not a particular response aligned clearly with a particular rationale or outcome. Then, all the "response-justification-outcome" patterns for each incident were recorded in a spreadsheet, and the data sorted so that the different pattern combinations could be counted and displayed. Findings from this analysis are discussed below.

(i) Responses and Justifications

The patterns of co-occurrence between responses and justifications were analysed first. The two diagrams shown side-by-side in Figure 20 below compare the proportion of each response type that was accompanied by a "positive" justification (based on *self, other or role-focused legitimacy*) with the proportion of each response type that was accompanied by a "negative" (*censure or sanction avoidance*) justification. For visual clarity, the thickness of the connecting lines indicates the proportion size of the response-justification patterns in addition to the percentage figures. Thus, of the *overt values assertion* response patterns identified in the incident accounts, 90% featured a positive justification (represented by a thick connecting line in the left-hand diagram), and 10% featured a *censure or sanction avoidance* justification (represented by a thin

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connecting line in the right-hand diagram). Together these add up to 100% of the justifications featuring with *overt values assertion*.

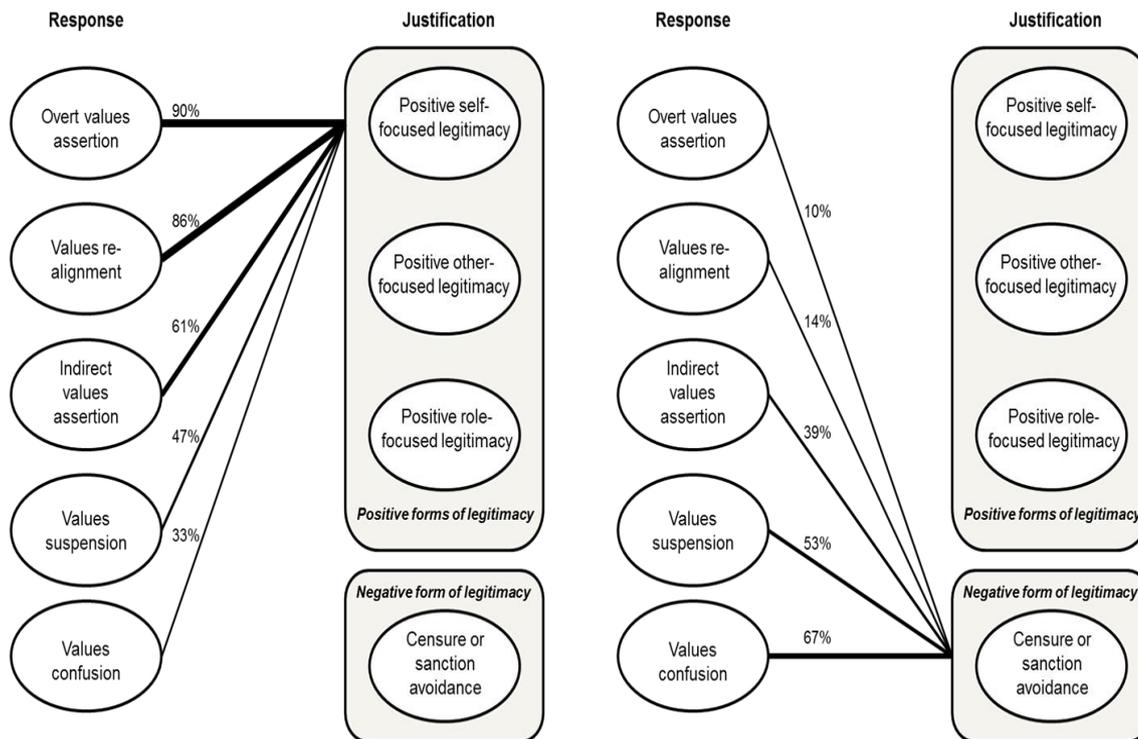


Figure 20: Responses and justifications: patterns of co-occurrence

As Figure 20 above makes clear, the strong majority of responses categorised as overt assertion of personal values or re-alignment of personal value priorities were accompanied by a legitimacy-based justification rather than by censure or sanction avoidance, as were a rather smaller majority of *indirect values assertion* responses. This indicates that such values-led types of response could be more readily justified for self, others or role-based reasons than could *values suspension* or *values confusion* responses. At the same time, in 39% of cases *indirect values assertion* co-occurred with *censure or sanction avoidance*. A likely explanation is that in these cases, managers chose a covert means of expressing their value priorities because to assert them openly might have negative consequences for their career or reputation. This was clearly the case for an InSCO first-line manager when confronted by her staff over the organisation's decision to spend £20,000 on a staff and customer "It's a Knockout" day, having recently announced redundancies as part of a cost-cutting exercise. The value conflict was between complying with the Function Head's directive – "we were told we had to be positive... to look after the staff who were staying, not the ones that were leaving" - and expressing what she really felt about the event. She found a covert way of conveying her sense of outrage to her staff while at the same time giving the required positive message. She explained:

I just said it was not my decision, it was a management decision. I mean if you speak up or say anything they'd get me out. Managers wouldn't say it outright, they just make sly comments. [VC26]

Returning to Figure 20 above, the finding that *values confusion* responses were most often found with *censure or sanction avoidance* justifications makes intuitive sense; managers who were unable to resolve the value conflict by appealing to one of the positive forms of legitimacy were typically left with the discomfort or anxiety they had originally felt and tended to blame either the organisation or themselves for the situation. An example of this is a first-line manager at Smilecare who, at the time of the interview, was struggling with too much work and felt unsupported by his own manager. He felt a conflict between trying to be passionate and energetic (in line with Smilecare's values), living up to his personal values of supporting and helping others, and doing an excellent job without compromising on quality. As his account makes clear, he was afraid of giving a bad impression by refusing to take on more work but also highly self-critical, questioning his ability as a manager:

I am continually finding that I am working well over 100% capacity and something has got to give. I actually felt quite demotivated. And thinking actually if I am not able to do what I feel I need to do within the job, then actually, is this the right place for me now? I think I have let myself down. I can't say no because that is frowned upon. So as a result...the quality I think suffers and my personal situation which I struggle with... I have noticed slightly less "oomph", a little bit more negativity and that is disappointing. [VC63].

It is notable that *values suspension* – effectively putting one's personal values on hold when responding to the value conflict – was justified via roughly equal numbers of positive and negative forms of legitimacy.

Breaking down the response-justification patterns further to show the three positive forms of legitimacy separately shed further light on this finding. The results are displayed in Figure 21 below, which shows the proportion of each positive form of legitimacy (self, others or role-focused) that co-occurred with each response type. In the figure, the percentage figures down the right-hand side show the total proportion of positive justifications for each response. The percentages in the shaded bars show the percentage of self, others and role-based legitimacy justifications that contribute to the overall percentage total.

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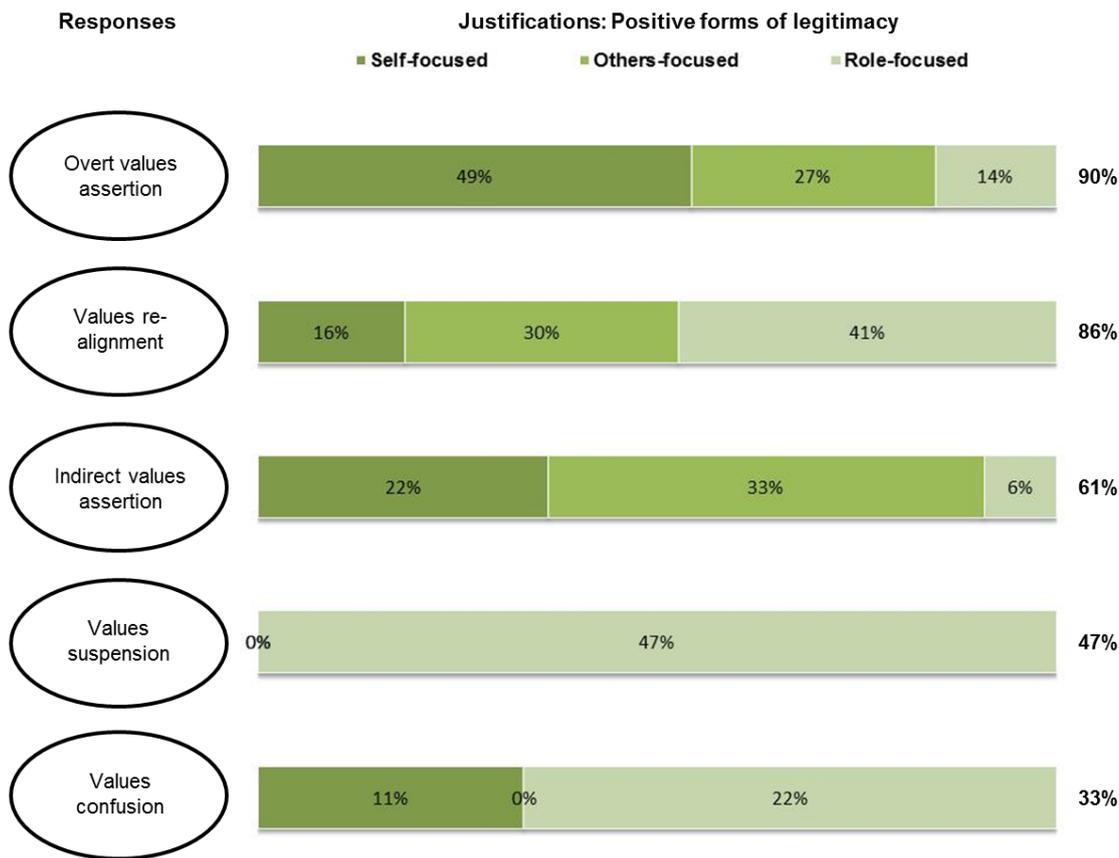


Figure 21: Response-Justification patterns: Proportion of positive forms of legitimacy per response cluster

Figure 21 above makes it clear that *role-focused legitimacy* was the **only** positive justification used with the *values suspension* response. This implies that in these cases, managers used the management role as a readily accessible mechanism for acting outside their personal value system – akin to the tactical bracketing of personal principles identified by Jackall (1988). This pattern is different from the *values re-alignment* responses, which also co-occur with relatively more role-focused justifications than other response clusters: in the *values suspension* response patterns, managers are acting in a values “vacuum”, while the values alignment pattern implies a more active adoption of the alternative value priorities. This is illustrated in Table 21 below, which contrasts the two response types using extracts from two VC incident accounts:

Table 21: *Values re-alignment* and *values suspension* response examples

(a) Having to implement a new system regarded as a bad decision.		
Value conflict: Optico [VC49]	 Response: Values re-alignment	 Justification: Role-based legitimacy
The conflict is I want something better. I don't want to spend money on it because I don't see why we should. I think we should as a company just get the best.	I got on with it to be honest. I mean I guess that is where it is -there are enough things that we are doing and enough variety in what we are doing that are good things and you can see a tangible benefit ... and it kind of overrides the stuff that you go - why the hell are you doing this?	My job title is delivering the infrastructure projects. And I will deliver the infrastructure projects that the company has decided to the best of our ability. What we have to do is deliver that project; we can't like just slow it up or not do it just because we don't like it. We are there to deliver.
(b) Not being allowed to give a reportee a day off to attend a funeral.		
Value conflict: Smilecare [VC66]	 Response: Values suspension	 Justification: Role-based legitimacy
It was a real struggle because I felt really stuck between the team and my manager, and I was like, oh I don't know what to do.	[I said] to her - look, you need to give me some leeway because at the moment it is a no. And I really found that difficult because I didn't agree with what we were doing.	There are going to be decisions that you disagree with and there will be decisions that the team disagree with. [But] you do have to communicate with your team...unfortunately you are the person on the front line and you just have to get on with it.

The difference in tone between the two responses in the above examples raises the question of whether particular responses co-occurred with more positive or negative personal and psychological outcomes. **Response-outcome** pattern analysis found that *values re-alignment* was the response associated with the highest proportion (75%) of positive outcomes, followed by *overt values assertion* (63% positive outcomes). One possible interpretation of these data is that,

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typically, *values re-alignment* responses constitute a “safer” option for those managers who are able to adjust their value priorities dynamically; by aligning their stance with the opposing value set, they avoid the potential risk of their open challenge being rejected. On the other hand, *overt values assertion* is likely to result in positive outcomes if the situation changes as a consequence, but if the organisation or other party fails to alter its stance or behaviour, negative outcomes such as disappointment, frustration and vulnerability are likely to follow. This explanation was supported by the case of the middle-manager at InSCO who felt that the organisation was putting staff under undue strain; “I felt it was not fair at all and we were not living our values”. She had battled in vain with senior management for more staff and a more reliable IT system (“...if had been a company car, it would have been scrapped”), resisting organisational pressure to back down. She remarked ruefully:

I could have used all that time where I was fighting to get the systems to think about strategy and think about how I was going to move it forward, that would have been far better use of my time [VC40]

Overall, *values confusion* responses had the highest proportion of negative outcomes (67%), with balanced proportions of positive and negative outcomes in the remaining two clusters. However, these three response types between them occurred in less than a third of the response patterns, so the lack of data was a limiting factor in the pattern analysis in these cases.

The final stage of the pattern analysis was to examine whether more positive outcomes from the manager’s perspective were achieved when a particular justification was combined with a particular response type: did the justification perhaps have a bearing on the psychological outcome of the chosen response? The analysis focused on *overt values assertion* and *values re-alignment* responses here, because these had been associated with more positive outcomes overall and because of the limited data in the other three response clusters.

In Figure 22 below, the shaded bars represent the proportion of positive and negative outcomes by response and justification type. In the figure, the percentage figures in the Justification type column show each justification type as a proportion of the total justifications for that response. For example, of the *overt values assertion* responses, 49% co-occurred with a self-focused legitimacy justification type and of these, 64% had positive outcomes for the manager.

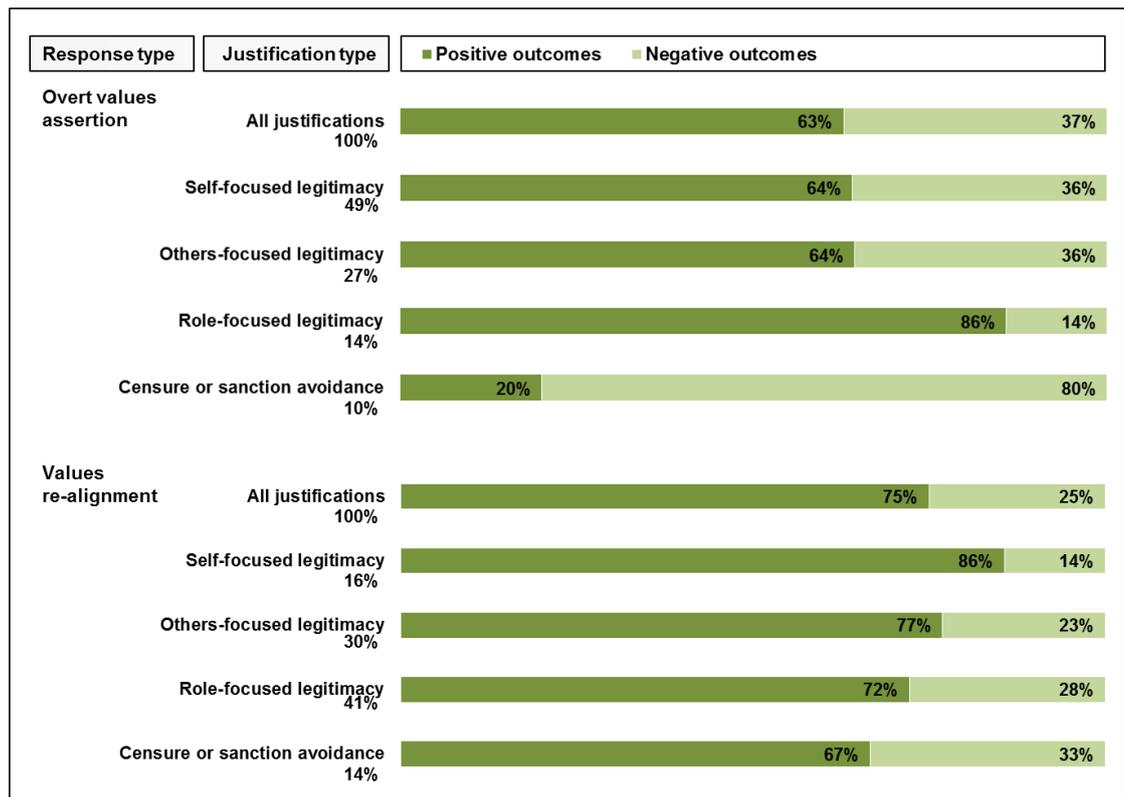


Figure 22: Response-Justification-Outcome patterns: *overt values assertion* and *values re-alignment*

The most notable findings from this analysis are:

1. For the *overt values assertion* response, use of a *role-focused legitimacy* justification was accompanied by more positive outcomes (86%) compared with the percentage positive outcomes for all justifications with that response type (63%). Censure or sanction avoidance co-occurred with fewer positive outcomes (20%).
2. For the *values re-alignment* response, use of a *self-focused legitimacy* justification was accompanied by slightly more positive outcomes (86%) compared with the percentage positive outcomes for all justifications with that response type (75%). Censure or sanction avoidance co-occurred with slightly fewer positive outcomes (67%).

Clearly, any conclusions drawn from these findings must take into account both the relatively small size of the data set at this level of granularity and the fact that, as stated previously, most incidents contained more than one response-justification-outcome pattern. Nevertheless, the data suggest that, overall, **using one of the three bases of legitimacy (*self, others or role-focused*) increases the likelihood of a positive psychological outcome for managers, and using**

***censure or sanction avoidance* increases the likelihood of a negative psychological outcome for both these response types.**

The foregoing analysis of the patterns of co-occurrence, together with the broader discussion of responses, justifications and personal outcomes, gave detailed insight into the way in which managers respond to value conflicts, and the factors they take into account when deciding how to act. It also considered the implications of these strategies in relation to managers' positive or negative feelings at the end of the incident. The next part of the analysis considered the implications of managers' responses for the organisation.

7.1.10 Situational and employee outcomes

The nature of the research design meant that data on organisational outcomes were necessarily gleaned from interview accounts and therefore reflected managers' perceptions. Unlike the categorisation of personal outcomes, assigning a positive or negative valence to organisational outcomes was unfeasible, because the relevant criteria (e.g. financial, employee morale, customer satisfaction) varied between incidents according to the situation, the parties involved and the perspective of different stakeholders. Accordingly, outcomes derived from the accounts were grouped into the categories shown in Table 22 below. It is worth noting that although all 72 incidents were assigned a situational outcome, only 35% of incidents had a discernible employee outcome.

Table 22: Perceived situational and employee outcomes

(a) Perceived situational outcomes	No. of incidents with this outcome
<i>Situation or behaviour change</i> Changes to the situation or behaviour that had caused the value conflict e.g. a reversal of a controversial decision or a reciprocal solution found.	18 (25%)
<i>Return to status quo</i> The outcome conformed to organisational expectations; no processes or behaviours were changed as a result.	33 (46%)
<i>No resolution</i> The conflict was ongoing or no tangible outcomes had been achieved.	21 (29%)

(b) Perceived employee outcomes	No. of incidents with this outcome
Employee interests upheld or employee morale improved	17 (24%)
Negative impact on employee interests or morale	8 (11%)
<i>Note: Each incident featured a situational outcome. 35% of incidents also featured an employee outcome.</i>	

As the table shows, the largest number of incidents resulted in the second situational outcome: return to the status quo. An interesting finding was that over half of the incidents that had a positive effect on employee morale also featured the return to status quo outcome: although the situation had not changed as a result, the way in which the managers handled the value conflict did appear to have made a difference to their reportees. Situational or behavioural change co-occurred with the remaining positive employee outcomes.

The co-occurrence of responses and outcomes was next analysed to determine whether particular types of response appeared to be associated with particular situational or employee outcomes. Figure 23 and Figure 24 below show the proportion of situational and employee outcomes respectively per response type.

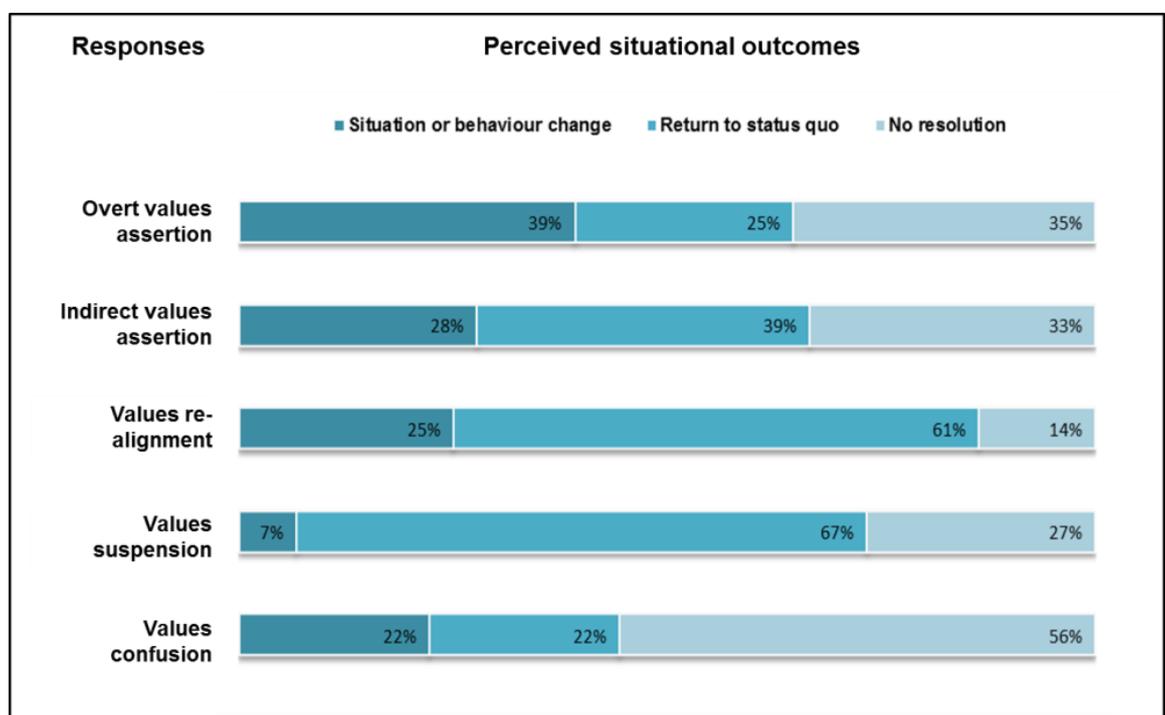


Figure 23: Co-occurrence of responses and perceived situational outcomes

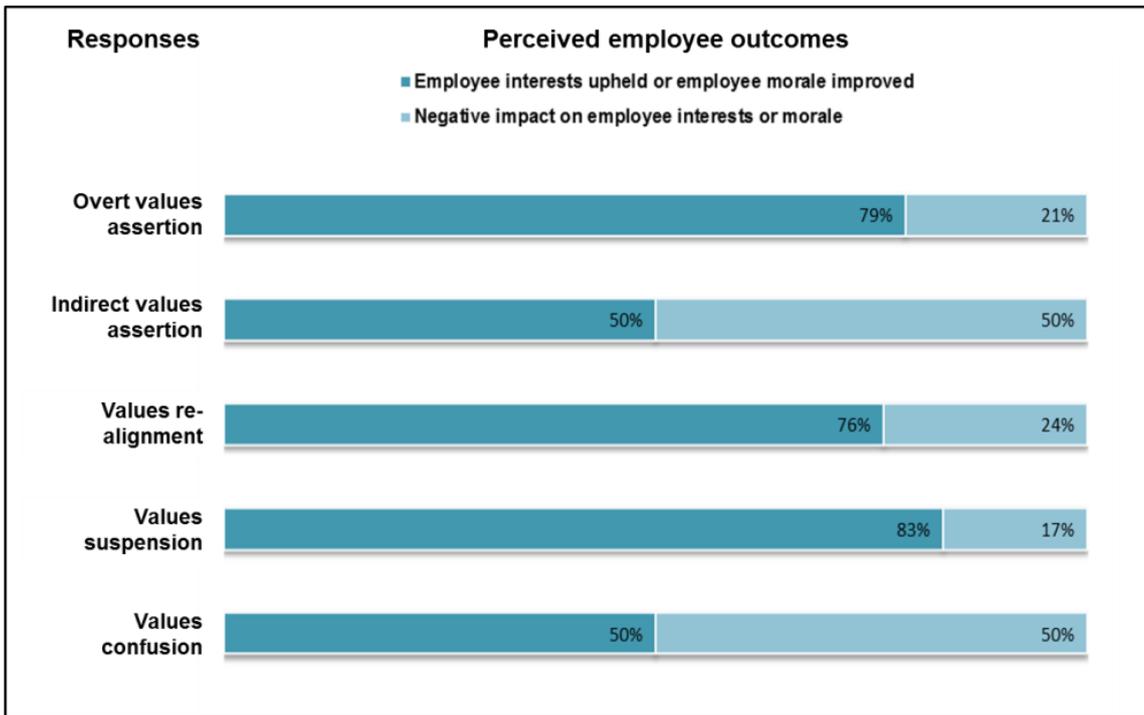


Figure 24: Co-occurrence of responses and perceived employee outcomes

Looking first at the *overt values assertion* response type patterns (the top bar in Figure 23 and Figure 24), 39% resulted in a situation or behaviour change, 25% in a return to the status quo and 39% in no resolution. At the same time, 79% of employee outcomes were positive for this response type. Scrutiny of the response-outcome pattern data by incident showed that almost all of these positive employee outcomes co-occurred with the *situation or behaviour change* or *return to status quo outcomes*. Furthermore, the majority (63%) of personal outcomes for managers associated with the *overt values assertion* response (shown previously in Figure 22) were also positive.

Looking next at the *values realignment* response type patterns (the third bar in Figure 23 and Figure 24), only 25% resulted in a situation or behaviour change, 61% in a return to the status quo and 14% in no resolution. The majority (76%) of employee outcomes were positive for this response type. As before, scrutiny of the response-outcome pattern data by incident showed that almost all of these positive employee outcomes co-occurred with the *situation or behaviour change* or *return to status quo outcomes*. Additionally, the majority (75%) of personal outcomes for managers associated with the *values realignment* response (shown previously in Figure 22) were also positive.

The three remaining response clusters were treated with caution in the analysis, as between them they accounted for only 30% of the 137 response-outcome patterns, so the lack of data made it difficult to draw out meaningful findings at

this level of granularity. However, they are shown in Figure 23 and Figure 24 above for completeness, and show that, in general, *values confusion* was most likely to be associated with a *no resolution* situational outcome and with proportionally more negative outcomes for employees; *values suspension* was most likely to be associated with *return to status quo* but with more positive employee outcomes; and *indirect values assertion* was associated with relatively even spread of situational and employee outcomes.

Bearing in mind the limited data, the findings of the response-outcomes analysis are summarised in Table 23 below, which shows the outcomes most often associated with each response type:

Table 23: Summary of all outcomes by response type

Response type	Perceived situational outcome	Perceived employee outcome	Manager personal outcome
Overt values assertion	Situation/behaviour change	Positive	Positive
Indirect values assertion*	Return to status quo	Mixed	Mixed
Values realignment	Return to status quo	Positive	Positive
Values suspension*	Return to status quo	Positive	Negative
Values confusion*	No resolution	Mixed	Negative
<i>* denotes small response cluster size with very limited data</i>			

According to the table above, the responses that appear most beneficial for both manager and employees are *overt values assertion* and *values realignment*, which are also the two largest response clusters. However, the different situational outcomes raise the question as to which response may be most desirable for the organisation: a behavioural or situational change, or a return to the status quo?

In order to address this question, the data was scrutinised from a specific perspective: the implications of the response for the **organisational values gap** (introduced earlier in Section 7.1.4). The organisational values gap perspective was chosen as it was highly relevant to the values-based focus of the overall research.

7.1.11 Implications for the organisational values gap

The term “values gap” was defined in Section 7.1.4 as a perceived disconnection between the organisation’s espoused values or codes of behaviour and its enacted values or demonstrated priorities – effectively, a failure by the organisation to live up to its values. Twenty-nine VC incidents had been triggered by an organisational values gap. This subset of the total data set had the potential to give new and unexpected insights into the role played by managers in these situations: did their responses to the value conflicts expose or conceal the values gap, and to what extent was the breach exacerbated or repaired?

First, the five response clusters identified in Section 7.1.6 above were re-interpreted using the data subset (29 values gap incidents) in order to frame managers’ responses in relation to the organisational values gap. In Table 24 below, the values gap responses are categorised as subsets of the response clusters from the original analysis. The right-hand column gives examples from values gap incident accounts.

Table 24: Responses to Values Gap incidents

Note: The percentage figure refers to the proportion of incidents that included a response in that cluster (n=29).

Values Gap Responses	Description	Values gap incident examples [incident number shown in parentheses]
Challenge (34%) In response cluster: Overt values assertion	By openly challenging the organisation over the perceived values gap, the manager attempts to change the organisational decision, or takes personal action to repair the breach.	Situation: Being put under pressure by Smilecare senior management to move someone out of the business, which the manager felt was unjustified. Perceived breach of organisational integrity value. “I was fairly bloody minded once I had made my mind up. Yes it was horrible, I would say one of the darkest moments here really...And I stuck my neck out quite a lot actually. I was unprepared to push her out the business and stated that I wasn’t going to do it.” [VC68]

Values Gap Responses	Description	Values gap incident examples [incident number shown in parentheses]
<p>Expose (15%)</p> <p>In response cluster: Indirect values assertion</p>	<p>The manager dissociates him/herself from the organisation's breach of values, such as by publicly blaming the senior leadership team.</p>	<p>Situation: Dealing with an unpopular and badly communicated organisational decision: the withdrawal of Inesco day. Perceived breach of organisational Respect value and broken promises to consult staff and reward loyalty.</p> <p>"I just sort of said - well there isn't a lot I could say - I didn't know about this before you guys got it. I got it at the same time. We will just have to sort of see. I mean it wasn't really one where I could sort of defend. I didn't feel like I could sort of defend anything because I didn't know in advance really. I got a communication, as I say not so good a communication the same time that they did. There wasn't really an awful lot I could do with that one" [laughs]. [VC32]</p>
<p>Defend (willing) (21%)</p> <p>In response cluster: Values re-alignment with positive justification - <i>self, other or role-based legitimacy</i></p>	<p>The manager attempts to account for or mitigate the perceived values gap, for example by trying to explain the reason behind an organisational decision or action.</p>	<p>Situation: Dealing with an unpopular and badly communicated organisational decision: the withdrawal of Inesco day. Perceived breach of organisational respect value and broken promises to consult staff and reward loyalty.</p> <p>"The reaction wasn't good. And I can understand why in a lot of ways... But the way I sort of spoke around it was [to] try and be supportive to the decision and saying well that has been a privilege that day for the last however many years...I see it as a loyalty thing I guess. I think you do need to deliver things sometimes in a way that is not necessarily what you might think personally or say with your friends and colleagues privately." [VC39]</p>

Values Gap Responses	Description	Values gap incident examples [incident number shown in parentheses]
<p>Defend (reluctant) (15%)</p> <p>In response cluster: Values suspension with negative justification - <i>censure or sanction avoidance</i></p>	<p>As above, the manager attempts to account for or mitigate the perceived values gap but does so reluctantly; for self-protection rather than as a willing choice.</p>	<p>Situation: Being required to communicate a senior management decision not to give a performance bonus to a reportee who had consistently worked long hours to drive through a high-profile project. Perceived breach of Inско Integrity values, and breach of promise to reward values-oriented behaviour (Passion, Pushing beyond boundaries).</p> <p>“So I then had to go back - obviously it is me that has then got to deliver the message back to that individual - and I didn’t agree with the rating that he had been given. He was very disappointed, very unhappy... I had a lot of empathy for him, thinking, I know exactly what he is going through. It was hard, it was very sort of tearing... [You] just do everything that you possibly can to get yourself noticed. I think that is the thing, getting yourself noticed to management...” [VC36]</p>
<p>Avoid (11%)</p> <p>In response cluster: Values confusion</p>	<p>The manager avoids the issue or attempts to leave the role or situation in which the breach occurred.</p>	<p>Situation: Working on a project which the manager felt was being run in a way which was contrary to the organisation’s Integrity, Accountability and Respect values.</p> <p>“I suppose it is actually more of a values issue than anything else - and that was the same in [that project] - I clashed quite strongly with the people who were managing that operation. So then I thought - I really need to get out of here, this is wrong - and I came here and it has been much better ever since...if [my boss] hadn’t supported me, I don’t know what I would have done. I probably would have left actually. I probably would have looked to do a different job either [here] or somewhere else and that is kind of what I have done.” [VC19]</p>

The proportion of responses per cluster for the values gap incidents, shown in Table 24 above, is in line with the proportions found in the whole data set. Perhaps surprisingly, several responses in the *challenge* cluster showed managers aligning themselves with the organisation in spite of its values breach: “**We** really messed up on that one” [VC39]. Respondents voiced their sense of responsibility to restore the organisation’s credibility; in effect to “bridge” the values gap in the eyes of employees.

The accounts of managers who displayed a *defend (willing)* response suggest that compensating for the organisation’s failure to live up to its values was, for many of them, desirable and legitimate. One manager talked of deactivating his personal moral compass when he presented an organisational decision in a more favourable light to reportees; in this case he prioritised loyalty to the organisation over the principles that applied outside work. This type of response is exemplified by the idea of “holding the line” on behalf of the organisation, which was voiced by eleven respondents.

In contrast, in the *expose* responses, managers did not express any compunction to repair or defend the inconsistency between espoused and enacted values. By dissociating themselves from the decision or action that had caused the breach, they appeared to align themselves with employees rather than the organisation. Here, being honest and open about their personal feelings was of greater concern than repairing the gap or minimising its impact.

The responses found in the *challenge*, *defend (willing)* and *expose* clusters share the characteristic that they could be reconciled with the manager’s personal values or self-expectations as a manager. However, in the *defend (reluctant)* cluster, although managers’ responses had the effect of bridging the values gap in the eyes of others, this seemed to be at the expense of their sense of authenticity; requiring them to put on an act:

I don’t like what they have done here. I don’t agree with this decision. But I have got to keep the act up, because if I don’t - if I start going downhill and the team start going downhill and they don’t see that [support for the organisation] from me then we could have a real problem. [VC38]

A decision to leave the role or situation raised an interesting point of difference compared with the original analysis. Previously, this type of response had been treated as an example of overt values assertion. In the values gap analysis, however, the action of removing oneself from a values gap situation meant that

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the breach was knowingly left unaddressed. Therefore, it was located in the *avoid* category.

The final stage of the analysis was to examine the responses alongside situational outcomes in order to explore their consequences for the organisational values gap. The findings are summarised in Table 25 below. For each values gap response type, the table lists the most common situational outcome (and also shows it as a percentage of all the outcomes for that response type). Alongside are the employee and manager outcomes most often found with particular responses and situational outcomes.

Table 25: Summary of all values gap incident outcomes by response type

Values Gap responses	Perceived situational outcome	Perceived employee outcome	Manager personal outcome
Challenge	Situation/ behaviour change (73%)	Positive	Positive
Expose*	Return to status quo (75%)	Negative	Negative
Defend (willing)	Return to status quo (75%)	Positive	Mixed
Defend (reluctant)*	Return to status quo (100%)	Positive	Negative
Avoid*	No resolution (100%)	Negative	Negative
* denotes small response cluster size			

As shown in the top row of Table 25, of the incidents which featured a response in the *challenge* cluster – such as voicing concerns to senior managers or taking personal action – 73% resulted in a situation change, such as a modification of the decision that had caused the values breach, and of these, most were positive for the manager at a personal level, and, where applicable, positive for employee morale or interests. The following two comments typify this pattern:

To be honest if I hadn't challenged that decision...it would have been a failure for the team. And not just for my team but for the [project] implementation. [VC22]

I had a sleepless night Monday night and on Tuesday went in all guns blazing, protecting what I think I have been building which is my team. [The Managing Director] went out probably thinking, "That bloody woman, here she goes again, I have just had four weeks of peace", and he went out and he talked to people like [the Finance Director] and [he] said "I think she is right, we need to do it in a different way". [VC17]

However, it is notable that 27% of *challenge* responses resulted in no resolution or a return to the status quo, where the organisation had rebutted the manager's attempt to address the breach of values, and these were associated with negative outcomes for the manager and employees alike.

As might be expected, the pattern of responses-outcomes for values gap incidents is similar to that of the whole data set (summarised previously in Table 23). It is notable, however, that the *defend-willing* response was found here with proportionally fewer positive outcomes for the manager, perhaps indicating managers' frustration at the organisation's failure to repair the situation that caused the values gap. As before, although both types of *defend* responses typically resulted in positive outcomes for employees, they appeared detrimental to the outcomes for managers. The implications for employees in instances when managers had avoided or dissociated themselves from the breach were, tellingly, often left unstated in the accounts:

Researcher: What was the response that you got from your particular employees?

Respondent: Er, stunned silence and – fine, whatever. [VC11]

To summarise the discussion of the response-outcome patterns, Figure 25 below depicts the implications of the different responses for the values gap.

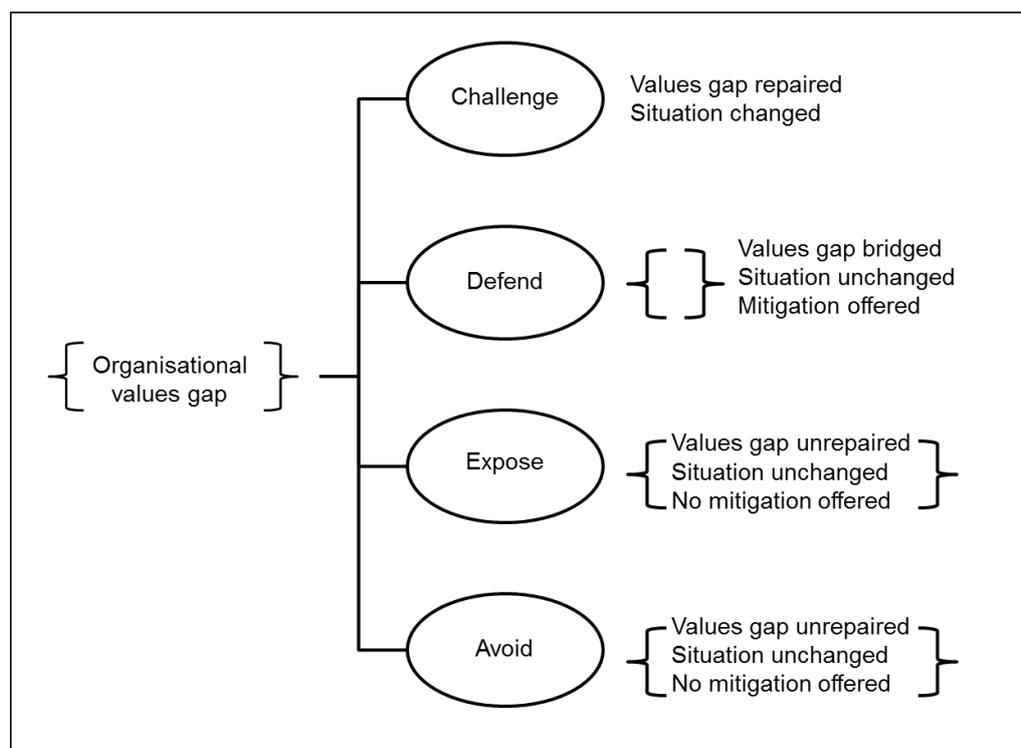


Figure 25: Implications of responses for the organisational values gap

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As shown in the figure, *challenge* responses that had effected an organisational or situational change are regarded as having repaired the values gap. In these cases, the manager's action had not only resolved the *perceived* discrepancy between the espoused and enacted values, but had also restored the *actual* discrepancy. For example, by challenging the organisation's appraisal grade decision process, which did not reflect the espoused value of Openness, one Insko manager instigated a change to achieve greater process transparency.

In the *defend* response incidents, managers effectively bridged the values gap on behalf of the organisation, whether willingly or reluctantly: mitigating the impact of the breach on reportees by attempting an explanation or defence. In contrast, *expose* and *avoid* responses are classified as failing to repair the gap, because the situation was left unchanged and/or no mitigation had been offered to reportees. In some cases, by sharing their personal disagreement with a decision, the manager may even have exacerbated the breach in the eyes of employees.

7.2 Summary of incident-level findings

The findings presented in this chapter targeted RQs 1, 2 and 4:

- **RQ1:** What types of value conflict do managers encounter in their day-to-day work?
- **RQ2:** How do they experience and respond to these value conflicts?
- **RQ4:** What are the implications of the conflicts and responses for managers and the organisation?

The findings are summarised below.

RQ1 and concept-related findings:

1. Value conflicts were experienced by managers at all levels. The theoretically derived, conceptual definition of value conflicts described the phenomenon in a way that resonated with managers' personal experience.
2. *Type and nature of value conflicts (Section 7.1.3)*
Three types of incident were identified according to the main parties or value systems involved: manager-organisation, manager-employee and manager-role.
3. *Values gap incidents (Section 7.1.4)*
A perceived failure by the organisation to live up to its espoused values or

promises was identified as a significant source of value conflict, occurring in 36% of incidents. These were termed values gap incidents.

RQ2 related findings:

1. *Affective reactions to value conflicts (Section 7.1.5)*

The negative affective reactions were grouped into six clusters.

Frustration/irritation was the most common reaction in manager-employee type incidents and *uneasy/jittery* was found most in the other incident types.

2. *Responses (Section 7.1.6)*

The behavioural responses were grouped into five conceptual clusters that characterised then in terms of the manager's personal value system: *overt values assertion*; *indirect values assertion*; *values re-alignment*; *values suspension*; and *values confusion*. Most responses were in the first three of these clusters.

3. *Justifications (Section 7.1.7)*

Managers' rationales drew on three forms of positive legitimacy - *self*, *others* or *role-focused* - and on one negative form of legitimacy - *censure/sanction avoidance*. Three quarters of justifications were derived from positive legitimacy, and on average, three distinct justification statements were found per incident.

4. *Response-justification co-occurrence patterns (Section 7.1.9)*

Most *overt values assertion*, *indirect values assertion* and *values re-alignment* responses were found with positive legitimacy-based justifications, while *values confusion* was more likely to be found with *censure/sanction avoidance*. *Values suspension* was associated equally with role-related legitimacy and *censure/sanction avoidance*.

RQ4 related findings:

1. *Implications for managers (Section 7.1.8)*

Sixty-four percent of incidents resulted in positive personal outcomes for managers, indicating a satisfactory resolution or diminution of the negative feelings triggered by the incident. *Values re-alignment* was associated with the highest proportion of positive outcomes and *values confusion* with the highest proportion of negative outcomes.

In the two major response clusters (*overt values assertion* and *values re-alignment*), use of a positive form of legitimacy (*self*, *others* or *role-focused*)

Chapter 7

was associated with more positive outcomes, and use of *censure/sanction avoidance* was associated with more negative outcomes.

2. *Situational and employee implications (Section 7.1.10)*

Perceived situational outcomes were categorised as *situation or decision change*; *return to the status quo* and *no change*. Additionally, 35% of incidents had a perceived positive or negative impact on employee interests or morale. The largest proportion (46%) of incidents resulted in *return to the status quo*, and there were more positive than negative employee outcomes.

The responses associated with a majority of positive outcomes for both manager and employees were *overt values assertion* and *values realignment*, and *values confusion* was associated with more mixed or negative outcomes.

3. *Implications for the organisational values gap (Section 7.1.11)*

Re-categorisation of managers' responses using the values gap incident data subset identified specifically ways in which the managers responded in the case of a perceived breach of values by the organisation: *challenge*; *defend (willing)*; *defend (reluctant)*; *expose*; and *avoid*. *Challenge* and *defend (willing)* were the two most frequently occurring responses.

Challenge was most commonly associated with the *situation/decision change* outcome, and with proportionally more positive manager and employee outcomes. *Avoid* was found with the *no resolution* situational outcome and negative manager and employee outcomes. The remaining clusters were most commonly found with the *return to status quo* outcome.

Successful *challenge* responses repaired the values gap by effecting situation/decision change; *defend* responses bridged the values gap by offering mitigation to employees; and *expose* and *avoid* responses left the gap unrepaired, with no situation change and no mitigation being offered.

Building on these incident findings, the next chapter presents the manager level of analysis, in order to consider any potential relationships between managers' personal value priorities, their view of the role and their responses to value conflicts.

Chapter 8: Manager-level findings and analysis

8.1 Introduction

This chapter reports findings from the manager level of analysis. At manager level, the analysis first examines the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ; Schwartz et al., 2001) responses and values articulated in the interview transcripts outside the value conflict incident descriptions (“stated values”) to identify any patterns of co-occurrence between personal value priorities and value conflict (VC) incident responses. Second, managers’ views of the demands and expectations of the management role, identified from interview data, are considered in relation to their incident responses. The findings address part of research question (RQ) 3:

How do **personal values, role-related factors** and the organisational context shape [managers’] responses [to value conflicts]?

The areas of the value conflicts process model (Figure 15, p. 130) to which the manager-level findings relate are highlighted in Figure 26 below.

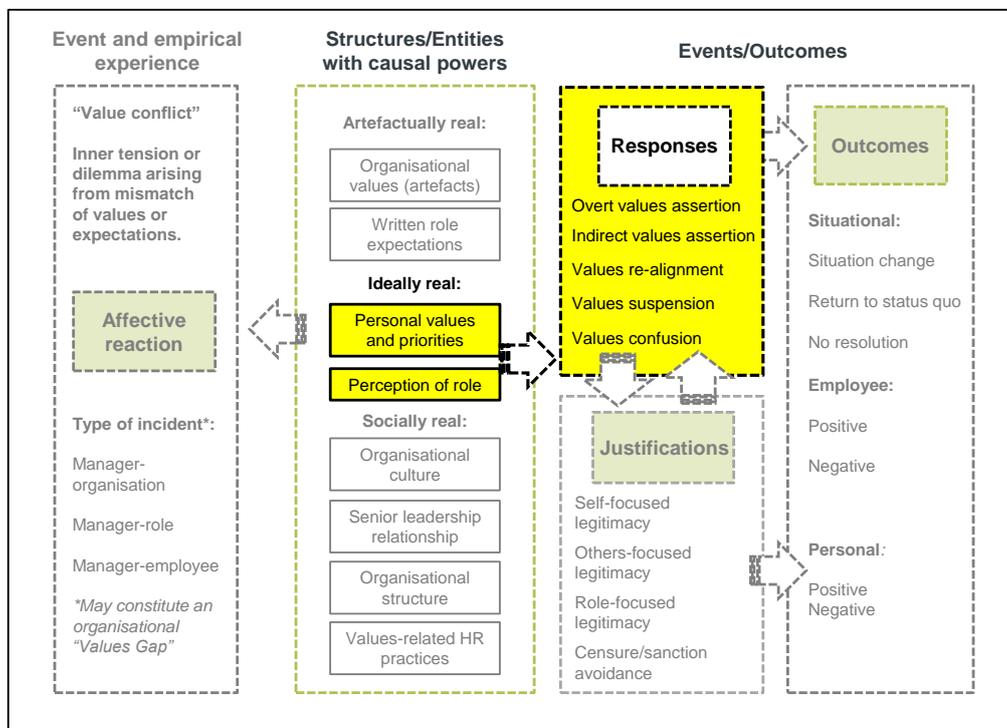


Figure 26: Manager-level findings mapped to the value conflicts process model

The analysis enabled the researcher to assess any patterns of correspondence

between managers' surveyed values, stated values and perceived role expectations and their VC incident responses.

8.2 Values survey responses

The use of the PVQ was explained previously in Chapter 4 (Section 4.6.5, p. 95). The method of scoring, together with brief comments on the respondent group's value profile scores, is described in Appendix G.

The analysis was carried out by displaying the value profile for each manager, i.e. their score for each of the ten value types (Schwartz, 1992), alongside the data from the relevant VC incidents in tabular form. Managers' VC responses and justifications were compared with their value profile to examine whether high scores for certain value types corresponded with a higher proportion of particular VC responses, compared with the overall proportions of responses.

8.2.1 Findings

In general, the proportion of **VC response** types corresponding with high scores in individual value types was very similar to the overall proportions, allowing for the fact that some value types attracted only a small number of high scores, which inevitably distorted their percentages. There were a slightly higher proportion of *overt values assertion* responses with a high **self-direction** value score than the overall profile, and of *values re-alignment* with high **security**. This makes intuitive sense – the **self-direction** value type is associated with independent thought and action-choosing, while **security** is associated with stability of relationships and a sense of belonging, rendering the manager more likely to adopt others' value priorities to resolve the conflict.

Overall, however, the main finding from this section of the analysis was that managers' value priorities, as measured in the PVQ, did **not** correspond with a strong tendency towards certain VC responses or justifications. A possible explanation of this is that factors other than personal value priorities were contributing to the response type chosen or exerting a mediating influence on any relationship between values and behaviour. This is reminiscent of Robertson and Callinan's (1998) conception of values as one of a number of variables involved in cognitive-affective mediating processes that, together with other fixed or situational

factors, influence behaviour. However, the findings also raise questions about the utility of the survey method in assessing the influence of personal values on real-life experiences and behaviour. The results of the analysis suggest that PVQ responses did not reflect the actual value priorities “in-use” during the VC incidents.

8.3 Stated values

In approaching this part of the analysis, the researcher was mindful of Kluckhohn’s (1951) assertion that while values are normally implicit, they can be expressed in words, and that what people say about their values may in fact be more accurate longer-term than inferences drawn from actions in specific circumstances. It is important to acknowledge that the aim here was not to elicit a ranked set of values in the abstract for each manager. Rather, the values-related data used in this part of the analysis emerged naturally from questions about the nature of their role and what they expected of themselves as managers.

To avoid “double-counting” data, this part of the analysis and the subsequent analysis of role-related demands and expectations did not include the sections of the transcripts coded as VC incidents. In the incident accounts, references to personal values and role expectations in the incident accounts were typically expressed when managers explained their responses to value conflicts, and therefore had already been coded and analysed as VC justifications. The relationship between VC justifications and personal values is discussed later in Chapter 10 (Section 10.4.3, p. 236).

Values-related statements were identified in the transcripts by drawing on Schwartz and Bilsky’s (1987) definition of values as concepts or beliefs about desirable end states or behaviours that transcend specific situations. The initial intention was to code such statements using the Schwartz (1992) value types as *a priori* categories, to facilitate direct comparison with questionnaire data. However, it became clear that an inductive approach would be more transparent or “dependable” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985): managers’ statements tended to be at a lower level of abstraction than the Schwartz value types and it was not always clear which was the best fit. For analysis purposes, therefore, the 22 inductively-derived codes were grouped into six broader clusters capturing related concepts or beliefs. Table 26 below shows the clustered codes and illustrative quotes from the interview data.

Table 26: Value clusters and sub-codes derived inductively from manager interviews

Value cluster	Illustrative extracts from interview transcripts
<p>Drive and passion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal development • Self-drive • Passion • Challenge • Change 	<p>“So I guess that is my driver really, is always trying to improve.” [SPMO5]</p> <p>“It really taught me that it is ok to step out of your comfort zone and sort of push yourself to the next level.” [SMO7]</p> <p>“I take on a lot. I set my own personal goals and challenges or objectives and things.” [SMM3]</p> <p>“I like to have a challenge. In the past I have been given options - would you like to go down this route or this route. I always choose the challenging role because I like to be a little bit under pressure really, because that is when I feel at my best.” [SMM3]</p> <p>“I guess that is why I kind of enjoy what we do ...it is constantly evolving so I think that is why I enjoy it.” [SPMO5]</p>
<p>Fairness and respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness • Collaboration • Respect for others 	<p>“I can't remember the last time I said to somebody thou shalt do this...I don't impose rules on them.” [ASM1]</p> <p>“I think it is really important to respect that that person has been placed in a role for a reason and it is important to respect the views and wishes of others. Really no matter where they sit, if it was somebody more junior to me it is important that everybody gets heard.” [DMO1]</p> <p>“I am a great believer in that if you treat people well then they will give back.” [SPMM3]</p> <p>“I love the whole partnership side of this business, I would never go back to the traditional us and them sort of organization. I do like the whole working together part of it.” [SPMO4]</p>
<p>Support and trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loyalty and trust • Put others before self 	<p>“I prefer it to be open. I like the openness and honesty... It is important that they felt that they can sort of tell me things, their worries, their concerns.” [SMO7]</p> <p>“I like to be there to support others ...I will always be there for them and then my own things that I have got to do I'll probably end up doing later.” [SMM3]</p> <p>“I have been on the receiving end of a couple of people...you tell</p>

Value cluster	Illustrative extracts from interview transcripts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty and openness • Help and support others 	<p>them something in confidence...and then they have gone and actually told other people within the team. And I would never do that because it is about confidentiality and professionalism and unfortunately some people don't get it." [SMO5]</p>
<p>Order and balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conform with others • Order and due process • Stability 	<p>"I try not to sort of step out of line or do things that aren't acceptable." [DSM1]</p> <p>"I am old school, I know that. I think we have far too many dress down days." [SMM2]</p> <p>"It is very dynamic...but that doesn't sit that well with me and my values because I am quite process driven...I need those processes in place to help me to control what is going on." [DMO8]</p> <p>"Up until a couple of weeks ago I was the only fee earning person to have my own desk which I kind of handed back..." [Interviewer: How do you feel about that?]</p> <p>"It is difficult. I mean I had to take my pictures of my kids home and put them on my bedside table...and I have got little hidey holes in the office where I have put my things...I tend to kind of stay in places quite a long time, so I am fully expecting to be here for the long haul." [AMO2]</p>
<p>Success and recognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement and success • Meet high self-standards • Hard work and do my best • Meet or exceed others' expectations 	<p>"I don't really work for money. I work for approval." [ASM3]</p> <p>"It has never really been good enough for me to be just ok at something. I always try to be - I don't necessarily always succeed I have to say - but I always aim to be very good or excellent, that is what I try to achieve." [DMO2]</p> <p>"I am quite a perfectionist I would like to say, and I would place very high expectations on myself in the manager's role." [DMO1]</p> <p>"I think for me recognition is very important, a very important driver, it really makes me feel valued and actually recognised that my efforts are sort of paying dividends." [SMO7]</p> <p>"I am quite kind of I like to call competitive, so I generally like to be ahead [laughs] of everyone else...I like my team to be better</p>

Value cluster	Illustrative extracts from interview transcripts
• Recognition	than everyone else as well.” [SPMO4]
Enjoyment and expediency • Work-life balance • Enjoy life	<p>“That is a really good feeling, knowing actually I can walk away from this because if it wasn’t making me happy then life’s a bit too short.” [SMM1]</p> <p>“I am just quite positive, happy go lucky, just get on with it, life is too short [<i>laughs</i>]...Yes, worry about tomorrow when we get there.” [SMO5]</p> <p>“I like a healthy work-life balance I’m just glad I don’t have a Blackberry. You see some managers, you come in in the morning and there are people who have emailed at 11 o’clock at night. You think well if that’s what it takes to be a manager, I don’t want that.” [SMO4]</p> <p>“Certain people have said to me why haven’t you gone further up the chain, and I have been offered positions further up the chain, but I look at what you have to do for those jobs and think - oh just where is your life.” [SPMM3]</p>

Following this clustering process, and with reference to the Schwartz (1992) list of values by type (shown in Appendix B), it became apparent that the codes could now be mapped tentatively onto areas of the Schwartz (1992) value structure, as shown in Figure 27 below. Although not definitive, this proved a helpful sense-making device when analysing the correspondence between managers’ stated values and VC response types.

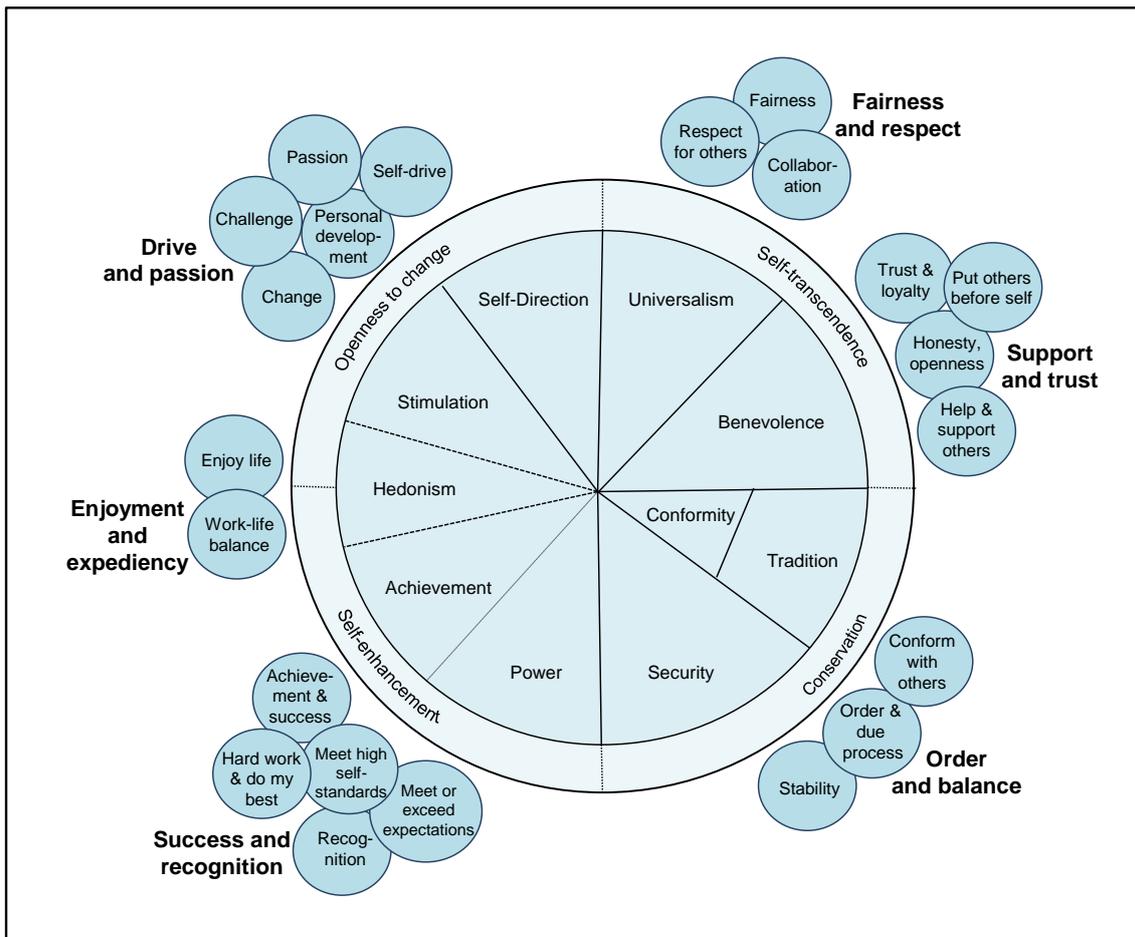


Figure 27: Value codes mapped to Schwartz's (1992) value structure

Overall, the two largest clusters were *Success and recognition*, and *Support and trust*, followed by *Drive and passion* and *Fairness and respect*. Values in the *Enjoyment and expediency* and *Order and balance* clusters were least commonly stated. This aligns to some extent with the values questionnaire results, where the Schwartz value types that had the greatest number of high scores were **benevolence**, which corresponds most closely with *Support and trust*, and **self-direction**, which relates to the *Drive and passion* cluster. While **achievement** was rated highly by around half the managers on the PVQ, **power** attracted a very few high scores. On this basis, it is possible that the *Success and Recognition* cluster has more affinity with the Schwartz **achievement** rather than the **power** value type.

8.3.1 Findings

By comparing managers' stated values with their responses to VC incidents, it was possible to identify patterns of co-occurrence between response types and value clusters, i.e. the likelihood that managers with a certain VC response also

articulated a particular value during the interview . Table 27 below indicates, for each VC response type, the value clusters with a higher level of co-occurrence and those a lower level of co-occurrence, compared to the total for all response types.

Table 27: Co-occurrence of VC response types and stated value clusters

VC Response type	Higher level of co-occurrence	Lower level of co-occurrence
Overt values assertion	Success and recognition	Order and balance
Indirect values assertion	Order and balance Enjoyment and expediency	Success and recognition
Values re-alignment	Success and recognition Drive and passion	Enjoyment and expediency
Values suspension	Fairness and respect Support and trust	Drive and passion
Values confusion*	Fairness and respect Order and balance Enjoyment and expediency	Drive and passion
* denotes very small cluster size		

Interestingly, the results displayed in Table 27 above suggest an intuitively more coherent pattern of co-occurrence than the findings from the analysis of questionnaire data. Managers using the *overt values assertion* response – standing up to others and enacting personal values – more often voiced values centred on achieving their goal or meeting high personal standards, and less often mentioned conformity or stability as important to them. In contrast, managers who had put their values on hold and acted at the expense of their personal values or priorities (*values suspension*) voiced the importance of fairness, honesty and helping others – values closer to the “self-transcendence” dimension of Schwartz’s model.

Like the *values suspension* group, the *values confusion* managers were less likely to mention change, challenge and self-drive as important to them. These managers were also conspicuously higher than average on *Fairness and respect* values, but also mentioned the importance of stability and due process – all things that would inevitably be threatened in the case of a value conflict. Although they were also higher on *Enjoyment and expediency* type values, analysis of the transcripts showed that these managers typically mentioned work-life balance as important rather than

expressing the more expedient “life’s too short” sentiment, compared with those who had found a covert way of expressing their values (*indirect values assertion*). The latter group’s preference for *Order and balance* type values suggests that expressing values covertly enabled them to keep the conflict in perspective and avoid “rocking the boat”.

Managers who had used the *values re-alignment* response made more mention of *Drive and passion* and *Success and recognition* type values, which correspond most closely with the “Openness to change” and “Self-enhancement” dimensions of Schwartz’s (1992) model: the strategy of aligning personal values with the demands of the organisation or others may reflect the value they placed on being flexible, responding to changing priorities and gaining recognition. However, the low mention of *Enjoyment and expediency* values may also indicate that their response was less likely to be adopted as a means to an end, but rather as a way of “re-framing” the conflict situation.

8.4 Role-related demands and expectations

During the interview, managers were asked to describe the expectations they had of themselves *as managers*, and the role-related expectations of the organisation. The purpose was to understand whether their perception of role demands might have a bearing on how they responded to value conflicts. An inductive coding and clustering process, similar to that described in Section 8.3 above, found four main focus areas:

1. Results:

Driving change, meeting targets, delivering results and improving performance.

2. People:

Team motivation and development, communications, supporting staff and managing relationships within the team.

3. Expertise:

The technical aspects of the role, such as planning, process improvement and contributing technical expertise.

4. Leadership:

Leading by example, being a role model, representing the team externally,

enacting organisational values and “holding the line” on behalf of the organisation.

Illustrative extracts from the coding in these four areas are shown in Figure 28 below.

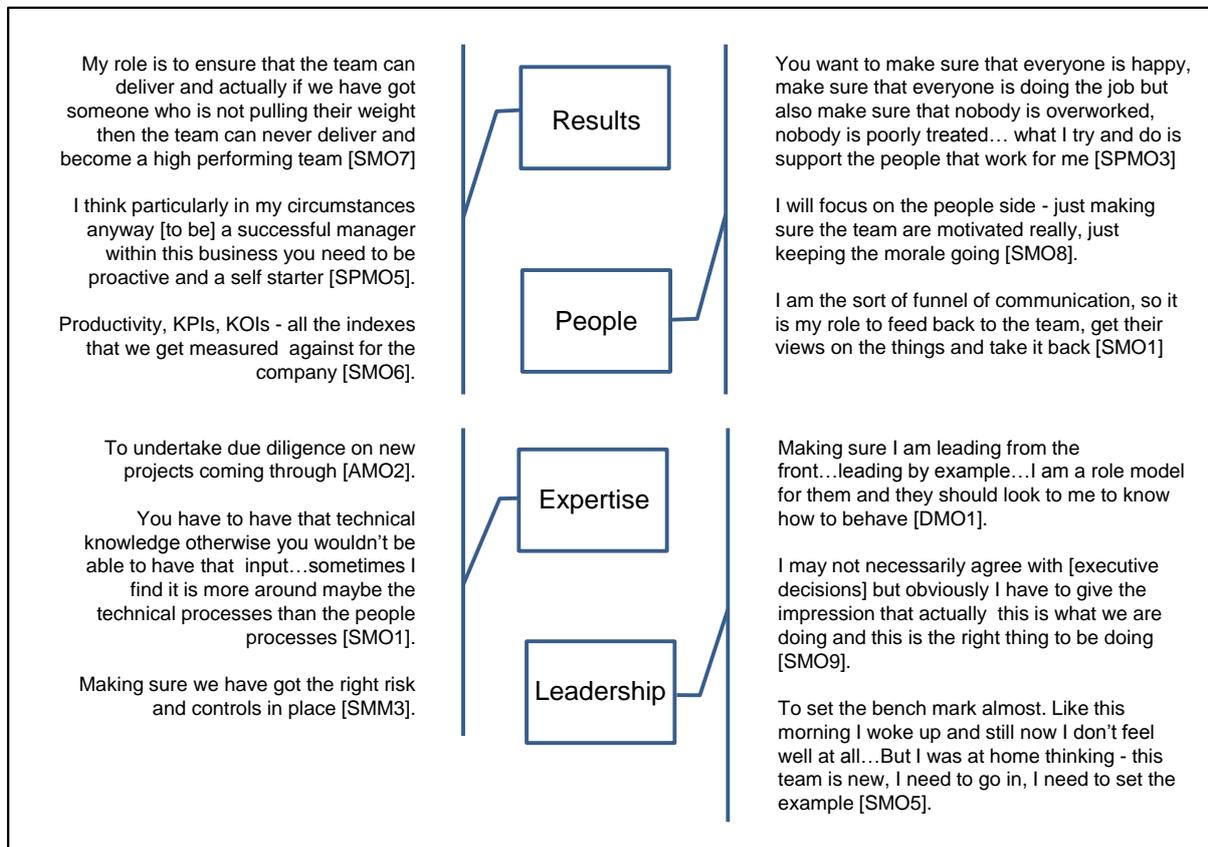


Figure 28: Perceived role-related demands/expectations

Overall, almost 70% of managers stated a demand or expectation in two or more areas, and 25% stated a demand or expectation in three or more areas. The Leadership and People areas were mentioned most often, comprising two-thirds of the total number of comments coded between them. Expertise was mentioned least often, with only 10% of comments. Overall, almost 80% of managers mentioned at least one demand/expectation in the Leadership area, and 70% and 60% did so in the People and Results areas respectively. Only 15 managers (36%) made an Expertise-related comment.

8.4.1 Findings

Managers' role-related expectations were compared with their VC responses, in order to explore whether managers displaying a certain response type were more

likely to comment on particular aspects of the role. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 28 below. This indicates, for each VC response type, any role clusters with a higher level of co-occurrence and any with a lower level of co-occurrence, compared to the total for all response types.

Table 28: Value conflict responses and perceived role-related demands/expectations

VC Response type	Higher level of co-occurrence	Lower level of co-occurrence
Overt values assertion	-	Leadership Expertise
Indirect values assertion	Leadership Expertise	-
Values re-alignment	-	-
Values suspension	Expertise	-
Values confusion*	Leadership People	Results
* denotes very small cluster size		

The findings summarised above show limited patterns of co-occurrence, with a few exceptions²¹:

1. The lower level of co-occurrence between *overt values assertion* and Leadership-related comments may indicate that managers with this response type were less concerned with demands such as role-modelling organisational values and holding the company line, which were coded in the Leadership cluster. However, there were no patterns of higher-level co-occurrence for this response type.
2. It is notable that the *values re-alignment* response showed a cluster pattern very similar to the total for all response types. This was also the case when the ratios between the clusters were analysed by response type and

²¹ The percentage findings for the final response cluster, *values confusion*, gave a potentially misleading picture, because it is a very small cluster. Therefore, these were not explored further in the analysis.

compared with the ratios for all responses. This perhaps indicates an affinity between a broad-based conception of the management role and a readiness to re-align value priorities tactically.

3. Managers who responded with *Indirect values assertion* and *Values suspension* were more likely to mention Expertise-related comments, and those who responded with *Overt values assertion* were less likely do so. A possible explanation is that more technically-focused managers felt less confident in expressing their personal values in the case of a value conflict.

However, the conclusions that can be drawn from these findings are limited by the data available: during the interviews, managers were asked to describe the demands of the management role, not to rank or rate them in terms of their importance. Therefore, although the data affirm the breadth of the perceived demands of the role, it was not possible to isolate a single most important role demand for each manager, for comparison with VC responses. This avenue could be explored in a future study. Nevertheless, in interpreting the results of this analysis, the volume and diversity of role-related demands/expectations described by managers suggests that these are more likely to contribute to the *experience* of value conflicts in the first place, rather than having a direct connection with the particular action taken in response.

8.5 Summary of manager-level findings

The manager level findings presented in this chapter address part of the third research question (RQ3): *How do **personal values, role-related factors** and the organisational context shape their responses?* The data analysed were: (a) Values survey (PVQ) responses; (b) values stated during interviews; and (c) perceived role-related demands and expectations.

Overall, the analysis pinpointed certain patterns of co-occurrence within the three data sets analysed, although these were complex and incomplete, as shown in Table 29 below. This shows the patterns identified for each set of data according to different VC response types.

Table 29: Summary of manager-level findings – value conflict responses compared with personal values and role demands

Data set:	Personal value priorities	Stated personal values	Role-related demands/expectations	
<i>Source:</i>	<i>PVQ</i>	<i>Interviews</i>	<i>Interviews</i>	
<i>Analysed via:</i>	<i>Ten Schwartz value types</i>	<i>Six inductively-derived value clusters</i>	<i>Four inductively-derived role areas</i>	
Value conflict response type	Overt values assertion	Positive affinity with <i>Self-direction</i>	Negative affinity with <i>Leadership</i> and <i>Expertise</i>	
				Negative affinity with <i>Order and balance</i>
	Indirect values assertion	-	Positive affinity with <i>Order and balance</i> and <i>Enjoyment & expediency</i>	Positive affinity with <i>Leadership</i> and <i>Expertise</i>
			Negative affinity with <i>Success and recognition</i>	
	Values re-alignment	Positive affinity with <i>Security</i>	Positive affinity with <i>Success and recognition</i> and <i>Drive and passion</i>	-
			Negative affinity with <i>Enjoyment & expediency</i>	
	Values suspension	-	Positive affinity with <i>Fairness and respect</i> and <i>Support and trust</i>	Positive affinity with <i>Expertise</i>
			Negative affinity with <i>Drive and passion</i>	

Data set:		Personal value priorities	Stated personal values	Role-related demands/expectations
	Values confusion²²	-	-	-
	Overall:	Very weak patterns	Strong patterns	Weak patterns

As Table 29 makes clear, the most comprehensive set of patterns were found between VC response types and the values that managers voiced in interview (outside the VC incident accounts). This suggests that these stated values – although not rated by importance – were more relevant in shaping responses to value conflicts than were the surveyed values and perceived role demands. Indeed, given that role demands were not rated by importance either, it is surprising that the only rated data – the values survey responses – showed the weakest patterns of co-occurrence.

These findings may also be summarised diagrammatically on the relevant section of the value conflicts process model, as shown in Figure 29 below. In the figure, dotted lines indicate the patterns of correspondence found between managers' surveyed (Schwartz) values, stated values and perceived role demands.

²² The Values confusion response type results are omitted from the summary due to the very small cluster size.

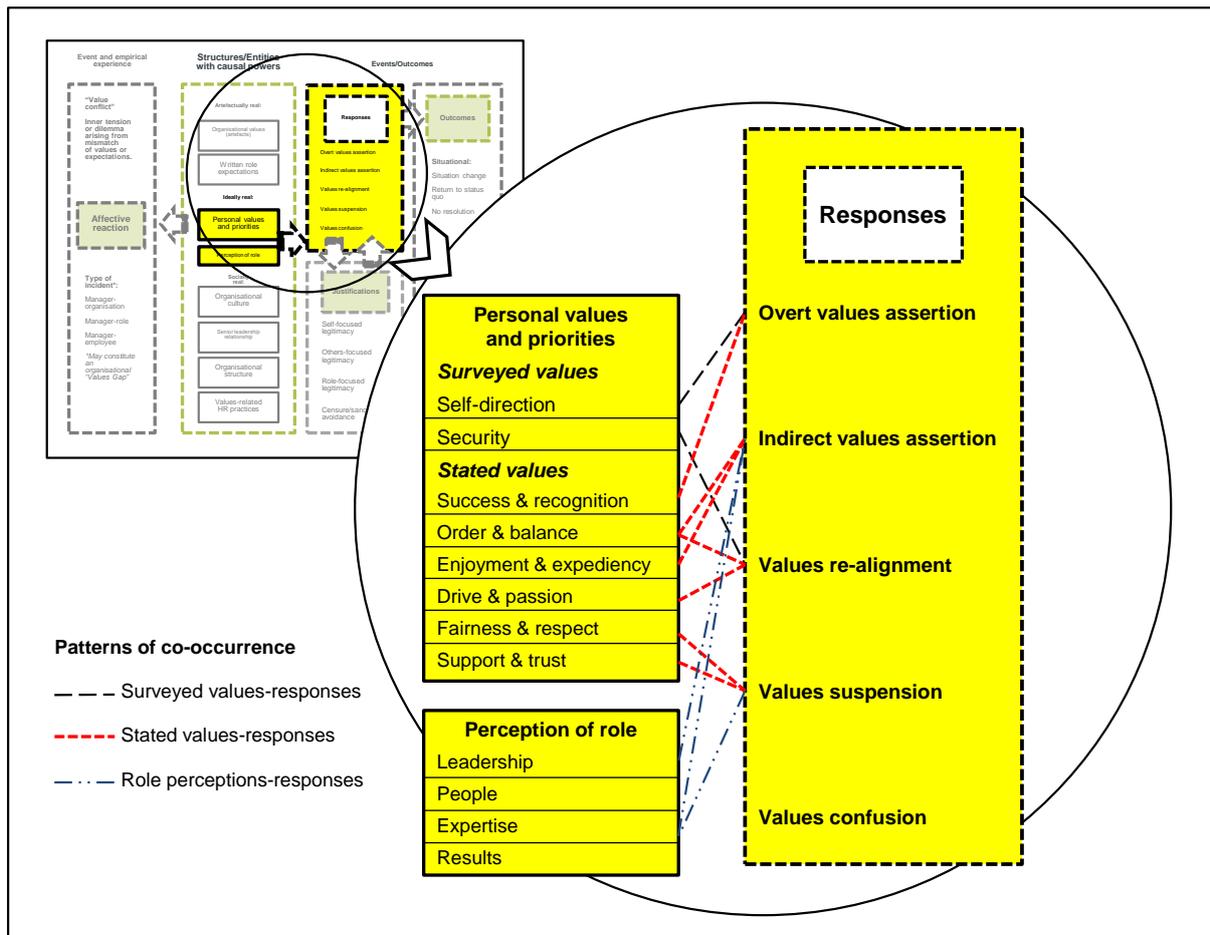


Figure 29: Manager-level findings in relation to the VC process model

The diagram in Figure 29 and the tabular summary in Table 29 above illustrate the complex relationship between responses to value conflicts and personal values or role demands which was found in the study. This suggests that the responses are contingent on a number of different personal and contextual factors acting in combination. The next part of the analysis therefore considers how the organisational context may also play a part in shaping managers' responses to value conflicts.

Chapter 9: Organisation-level findings and cross-case analysis

9.1 Introduction

Following the incident and manager-level analyses in Chapters 7 and 8, attention now turns to the organisational context. The aim is to consider how certain organisational characteristics may have shaped the type of value conflict (VC) incident and managers' VC responses. This addresses the remainder of the third research question (RQ3): How do personal values, role-related factors and **the organisational context** shape [managers'] responses [to value conflicts]?

The areas of the value conflicts process model (Figure 15, p. 130) to which this chapter relates are highlighted in Figure 30 below. The organisation-level analysis in Section 9.2 below explores the *artefactually real* and *socially real* structures/entities shown in the second column of the figure. The later, cross-case analysis in Section 9.4 considers the impact of these characteristics and the manager-level characteristics (the *ideally real* structures/entities in the second column of the figure) on the patterns of VC incident types, responses and justifications by organisation.

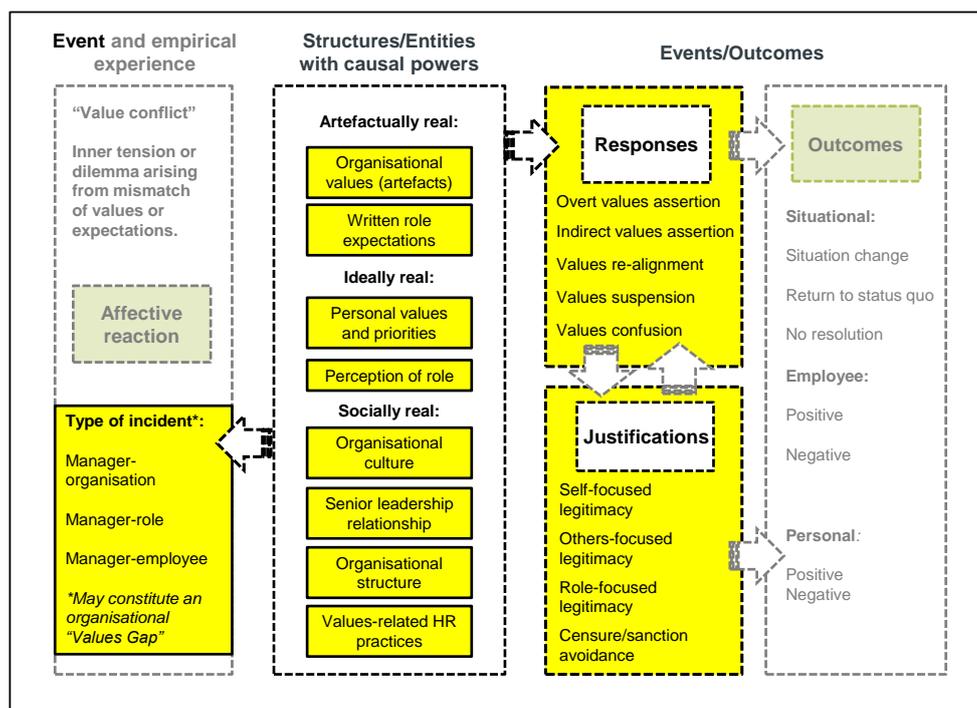


Figure 30: Organisational & cross-case analysis mapped to the process model

The chapter is organised accordingly into two main parts:

1. **Organisation-level findings:**

- **Descriptive analyses**

Building on the four case synopses presented in Chapter 5, this part identifies organisational characteristics identified from interview data, documentation and field observation, including descriptions of culture, senior leadership and values enactment. These are described for each organisation in turn, followed by a cross-organisational summary to facilitate comparison between the cases in the cross-case analysis.

- **Manager-level findings by organisation:**

This part examines the manager-level findings (Chapter 8) by organisation to feed into the cross-case analysis.

2. **Cross-case analysis**

- **Incident-level findings by organisation:**

The incident-level findings (Chapter 7) are analysed cross-organisationally, taking into account the manager and organisation-level characteristics. Comparisons between the four cases are drawn in developing contextually-based explanations of the variations in incident-level findings by organisation.

9.2 Organisational-level findings: descriptive analyses

The following characteristics are described for each case organisation in turn:

- the development and use of organisational values;
- how managers described the organisation's culture and its senior leaders;
- managers' views on whether the organisation lives up to its espoused values; and
- the organisation's formal and perceived expectations of managers.

Informed by the literature on organisational values reviewed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3), these particular factors were deemed especially relevant to the values perspective of the research, because of: (a) the widely-acknowledged, close connection between values and culture (e.g., Schein, 1997 ; Hofstede et al., 1990); (b) the idea that organisational values originate from the values of the founder or leader and are subsequently accepted by employees (Schein, 2010), (c) the view that organisational values influence leader and employee behaviour decision-making (e.g. Gardner et al., 2011; Collins, 2001a; Lord and Brown,

2001); and (d) doubts cast by other scholars about the relevance and utility of formally espoused values, particularly where there is a discrepancy between these and the values actually practised by the organisation and its leaders (e.g., Johnson et al., 2008; Stevens et al., 2005; Urbany, 2005; Murphy, 1995).

9.2.1 Cox Consulting

9.2.1.1 Values, culture and leadership

The Cox Consulting values, developed three years previously by the senior leadership team, are displayed on the company website, in office reception areas and in marketing material:

- Passion
- Creativity
- Inspiration
- Openness
- Excellence
- Integrity.

Perhaps reflecting the client-facing nature of the business, the value descriptions place greater emphasis on how the organisation conducts itself toward clients rather than internally. For example, *Passion* is defined as the way in which Cox Consulting works to create advantage for its clients and meet their needs, and *Creativity* is described as thinking creatively in the search and delivery of the right answers for clients.

Although the current CEO was not the founder of Cox Consulting, he had initiated development of the values and viewed them as a reflection of his personal business philosophy. He had spent time embedding them amongst his senior leadership team, describing the process as “a good eighteen months or so of getting to know each other, getting aligned on vision, mission, values etc.” The CEO had been the first to engage a full-time Head of Human Resources (HR), whose appointment was the catalyst for development of employment policies and practices consistent with the organisation’s stated values (e.g. the leadership development strategy, core competency framework, appraisal scheme, employee forum, opinion survey and career development charter). However, he acknowledged that his recent focus on growing the business had resulted in less time being spent on developing junior managers, cascading the values and

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behavioural competencies, and embedding the new HR processes. Another senior manager commented:

I think we have sort of launched the values and for some reason I don't feel that some of the teams have actually embraced them and taken them up and used them and understand them, and it therefore hasn't permeated down. [ASM3].

The characteristics of the organisation most commonly voiced by managers were open, friendly and like a family. At the same time, managers who had worked for Cox Consulting since its early days as a small, family firm also described it as increasingly corporate, process-bound and commercially driven, which for them was a source of regret. One manager cited the recent change to hot-desking as a sign of a less personal, more commercial approach:

It is difficult. I mean I had to take my pictures of my kids home and put them on my bedside table... I have got little hidey holes in the office where I have put my things. They are not official hidey holes but they exist. [AMO2]

In spite of the sense that Cox Consulting was no longer quite the same as in the early days, respondents did feel that the leaders did value their staff. It was notable that none of the leadership team was singled out as a particular source of inspiration or loyalty: managers made more reference to colleagues, professional standards and the organisation in general.

9.2.1.2 Values enactment

When asked whether the organisation lived up to its values in practice, the value most often mentioned was integrity, described in terms of high professional standards, having a good "moral compass" and giving the best possible service to clients. Integrity was, according to managers, enacted by individual employees, the senior team and the organisation as a whole:

There's nothing that I have seen or been asked to get involved in that would make me feel, no, I'm not prepared to do that...Again, that comes back to the values of the business and its people, you know, its moral compass is good. [AMM1]

All the senior managers interviewed emphasised the importance of the Passion and Innovation values, and the need for more business development-focused

behaviour. In contrast, none of the first-line or middle managers mentioned these when asked to describe the organisation's values and culture. For these managers, any discrepancy between espoused and enacted values lay not in the organisation's failure to live up to its stated values of passion and innovation, but in the perceived mismatch between its traditional client service values and its more recent commercial mind-set.

9.2.1.3 Expectations of the management role

Just as Cox Consulting's values are strongly client-focused, so too are its stated expectations of managers. Customer focus is assessed in the 360 degree leadership feedback questionnaire, and exceeding client expectations features heavily in the leadership behavioural competencies. When asked what sorts of attitudes or behaviours Cox Consulting expects of its managers, senior managers consistently mentioned representing the company to clients and delivering results. The former corresponds to the documented competency of "presenting the Company as positively as possible...to both internal and external customers". This expectation was also mentioned by six first-line managers. For instance, one commented:

I am basically the face of [Cox Consulting] to my clients. I represent the company and the way we do things. I am expected to be courteous, professional, deliver on what I say, my promises. [AMO1]

Unlike in first-line manager interviews, the need for technical expertise was not mentioned by senior managers, who emphasised the need to develop a more business focused attitude. The marketing director described running a series of workshops in which he coached managers in networking and influencing skills, challenging them to be proactive in soliciting future business opportunities. He summed up their resistance to changing requirements using a sporting metaphor:

I have talked to the guys at some of the master classes about the goal posts - they were moving, well actually somebody has stolen them now, they don't actually exist. In actual fact somebody has rubbed out the white lines as well, and they have taken the ball away [*laughs*] ...it is like, well no, it is different now, you have got to change, and I think that people do have an awful lot of problems with that. [ASM2]

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Although first-line managers were clearly aware of this business development expectation, there was widespread reluctance to comply.

9.2.2 Insko

9.2.2.1 Values, culture and leadership

Insko's intranet describes the values as "integral to our day-to-day working lives... we should all feel confident to challenge behaviours which do not support our values". Insko was required to adopt the values of the parent group following its acquisition six years ago, and one of its former values, Passion, was added after negotiation. The five values shown below form the basis of Insko's behavioural framework, career ladder and recognition scheme, and values-supportive behaviour is assessed in all employee appraisals:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Accountability
- Pushing beyond boundaries
- Passion.

The values are displayed on posters in meeting rooms, and each department has a values champion responsible for raising the profile of values in their area, although there was no evidence of this activity. Alongside the parent group employee engagement survey, the CEO introduced a six-monthly cultural survey, now in its second year, and resulting action plans have to date centred on leadership and communication. A series of leadership development and culture change projects have been launched in the last three years.

The HR business partner described significant investment in developing a cohesive, values-based culture, yet managers commented that the acquisition, senior leadership changes and increased size and bureaucracy were undermining what they had liked about Insko:

I think when people talked about it, it was quite a friendly place to work yet still an incredibly successful and a very demanding place. And I think some of that is breaking down. [SMM2]

For another manager, the imposition of the parent group's values had symbolised the breaking down of Insko's former culture, which he described as innovative

and distinctive. Indeed, several respondents mentioned the imposition of the parent group's values in less than positive terms, and managers were equivocal about their influence in practice. The posters depicting values were described by one manager as “desperately trying to be inoffensive, but actually I think not really hitting it”, and another dismissed the values as bland, boring and lacking in distinctiveness. As a vehicle for conveying organisational expectations, values were typically dismissed as “feel-good slogans”, establishing no more than a baseline for behaviour, as these comments illustrate:

If you care about what you do, you do this anyway - you don't need this up here [*gesturing at a values poster on the wall*]...if we have got the sort of workforce who need this to be engrained in them we have got the wrong workforce. [SMM2]

However, others commented that the explicit linkage between values and behavioural expectations in the competency framework had helped them to tackle performance issues in their team:

At least it gives us a starting point - we can go back and say “Well actually you know, if you think about the values you are not really demonstrating those very well” and it helps, but – well, that should be a bit of common sense really. [SMO6]

The majority of managers respected and got on well with their immediate manager, yet none of them commented positively about the executive team. Criticisms centred on poor communication, lack of contact and no continuity of leadership. Large-scale employee communication meetings were described by one manager as pitched at the wrong level, and the CEO's internal blog, called “Tom's²³ Diary”, was informally known as “propaganda.com “. One manager described a recent entry:

You read that and you think, “Oh Tom, you really are so, so far away from reality, it's so painful”. You think, “That just shows, I mean you clearly have no respect, you clearly just do not get what is going on”. [SMM1]

Positive descriptions of the culture included: passionate; innovative; demanding; and fun and friendly, although most comments were critical: just over half the managers referred to the culture as changing or confused, and a similar number

²³ Name changed for confidentiality reasons

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mentioned silo working, bureaucracy and a blame culture. Nevertheless, the way in which most managers described their responsibilities, particularly towards their teams, conveyed a sense of motivation, passion and enjoyment of the job that seemed to outweigh the perceived shortcomings of the executive leadership and the frustration caused by IT systems and bureaucracy.

9.2.2.2 Values enactment

Responses as to whether the organisation generally lived up to its values revealed a mixed picture. Interestingly, the original Insko value of Passion was most frequently mentioned by managers when asked whether the organisation demonstrated its values in practice, as this manager explains:

I think people are genuinely passionate. I think there can be an issue about whether that passion is being directed in a common direction. I think that is not always the case and I think there could be an issue - is that direction actually a direction that is good for the organisation? But I think there is a lot of passion in Insko. [SMM1]

The most common example of Insko's failure to live up to its espoused values, mentioned by six respondents, was lack of respect. Examples included poor communication; lack of transparency; a blame culture perpetuated by particular senior managers; and putting people under too much pressure, despite a stated commitment to employee work-life balance:

"Respect" I think is one that we just don't do and I think it is from the top down; there is a lack of respect and I think it is really serious. I think it is genuinely a really serious problem. [SMM1]

Failure to recognise employees who "pushed beyond boundaries" by challenging the status quo or by demonstrating high commitment was the next most common example, featuring in three accounts. Conversely, three respondents stated that in general, Insko did live up to its values in the way it treated its employees, including the comment that the executive team did try to do "the right thing".

9.2.2.3 Expectations of the management role

Insko's emphasis on values, and how these translate into behaviours, was reflected in its behavioural competency framework. This listed the behaviours expected from all employees underneath each organisational value, followed by additional behaviours at each management level. Acting as a role model and

demonstrating the organisation's values were cited as key organisational expectations in eight of the twelve manager interviews, although there were different views on what being a role model meant in practice. For some it meant suppressing their personal feelings and for others it was keeping positive and supporting the business.

Some managers referred to being guided by personal standards rather than organisational expectations. For example, one said he wore a tie to work in order to set an example of looking more professional, and another voiced disapproval of the relaxed dress code and regular "dress down" days.

The interviews highlighted difficulties in meeting daily and monthly operational targets, keeping teams motivated, and fitting in daily team meetings and individual performance reviews - all of which were key performance indicators (KPIs). The formalisation and measurement of people management activities had in practice made it harder for managers to guide and support staff, because the increased bureaucracy took them away from informal, face-to-face contact.

Managers' descriptions of perceived expectations were noticeably consistent with the language used in the behavioural framework. This perhaps reflects the frequent reinforcement of Insko values and expectations through leadership development, performance management and values surveys. One expectation, which did not feature explicitly in the formal framework, yet was mentioned in eleven interviews, was the view that managers should "hold the line" - represent the organisation positively to followers and support organisational decisions. One manager commented:

Expectations - live the values, obviously, and be accountable and passionate about what you are doing, and that to me is also a thing about delivering messages to people. As I say, even if you don't agree with them you have still got to take accountability for it because at the end of the day that would be one of your objectives for the year. [SMO9]

In this example, the respondent had re-interpreted the Insko value of accountability in terms of supporting decisions even if she did not agree with them.

9.2.3 Optico

9.2.3.1 Values, culture and leadership

Optico states in induction material that its core values are part of what make it successful. The values encapsulate the importance of passion for the business and delivering the highest levels of customer service:

- Treat people as we would like to be treated ourselves
- Passionate about:
 - Our customers
 - Our people
 - Partnership
 - Communities
 - Results

The five elements listed under Passion have brief descriptions. For instance, *Results* is described as “keep it simple, get it done, deliver on our promises”, and *Our people* refers to the organisation’s commitment to help employees to reach their full potential.

The values were created by its two founders and represent their business philosophy. Although the values are described in induction material as “not just words that we hang on a wall”, posters representing them, which feature directors, employees and store partners, are in fact displayed in meeting rooms and common areas. In practice, the values are translated into *Behaviours* – “how we do things around here” – which in turn are included in performance objectives and assessed in quarterly performance reviews and annual appraisals. One of the four Optico leadership behaviours is acting as a role model for the organisation’s vision and values.

It is clear that the respondent managers associate the values with the two founders and also identify with them personally, as in Schein’s (1997) conception of values and culture. Several managers commented that the values express the way everyone in the organisation goes about things, almost as if it is second nature:

A lot of the people that work here do live by those kinds of values themselves, whether that is in their work environment or their personal

environment...particularly the one where it says treat others as you would want to be treated yourself. [SPMO5]

The Client Services Centre manager felt strongly that recruiting people who were already displaying “Optico values” was important in preserving the values-led culture. At the same time, the Head of Development commented wryly that “ If your value set doesn’t match the company value set then you realise that quite quickly”, implying that such people were likely to leave or be managed out of the business.

Almost without exception, managers remarked on Optico’s distinctiveness in its commitment to customers and employees – one even referred to this as “a very clear moral obligation”. These three comments from senior, middle and first-line managers are typical:

We do things differently. We are not just somewhere to buy your specs and we are not just somewhere to be employed to sell specs [SPSM1]

Customers are the lifeblood of our business. [SPMO2]

If you were to talk to my team they all care desperately about the getting it right - getting it right for the customer...Although it is a multi-billion pound business there is still that feeling that we try to look after people. [SPMM3]

When describing what it was like to work at Optico, almost all respondents mentioned the two founders:

Once you get into a company like that, you can see how you could be there forever, because of the values that the company holds, because of the way that people treat you. That I think is key to it...and it is that feeling that the company gives you which is good...I think it comes from the top. I think it comes from the family board members. [SPMO3]

This enthusiasm about the two leaders centred on their genuine passion for the business and their enactment of the values. Interestingly, although a number of managers mentioned that the female founder had recently appeared in a newspaper “rich list” as the first female UK billionaire, none made a cynical comment – rather, her achievement was a source of pride. Indeed, there were no negative comments about the leaders, although managers who had worked on

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projects with the MD and his Director son did remark that his enthusiasm resulted in a constant stream of initiatives for the business to implement:

[The MD] has five brains in his head and they are firing off simultaneously, whereas [his son] has five brains in his head and they are lined up like a laser. So both are very engaging, both can be very challenging; you are very, very clear with [the MD's son], and you are very, very unclear with [the MD]...he is so desperately passionate about this business. [SPSM1]

This led to a rather chaotic and fast-paced environment, without time for proper planning and consultation, and placed huge demands on managers. One manager relayed a typical conversation:

A great idea will come out and then there would be a sort of:

- "Well, got to do it now, got to do it tomorrow."
- "We[ve] got to talk to people and see what they think of it first."
- "Right, well, just send them an email and see what they think and then we will do it anyway."

It is kind of the perception of quite a few people that that is how it goes. [SPMO4]

However, he still felt that Optico was a very positive place to work, and, like several other respondents, shared his intention to stay there: "the grass isn't greener, if that makes sense".

9.2.3.2 Values enactment

A very striking finding, on re-reading the interview transcripts, was the sense of shared values throughout the organisation and their enactment both by leaders and by employees. The passion of the two founders and their son, who was now also a Director, was regarded as genuine and compelling. When asked whether this was similar to other organisations he had worked for, a first-line manager who had been at Optico for seven years said:

No. This is the first company where this really comes across in that way, and you can pooh-pooh things and go yes, whatever, but I feel that they actually mean it, and they demonstrate it in everything they do. [SPMO2]

Responding to the question of whether the organisation generally lived up to its values, one middle manager concluded simply: “I haven’t really given it a lot of thought because I suppose it is just...the way we do things” [SPMM1].

9.2.3.3 Expectations of the management role

Although the Optico values are very generic, they are expanded in induction material into ten behaviours, described as observable and possible to assess and develop. They include four specific leadership behaviours: *Relentlessly drives for results*; *Down to earth*; *Communicates the big picture*; and *Walks the talk*.

Although none of the managers specifically referred to these behaviours, the most commonly mentioned organisational expectations related to: (a) achieving targets and delivering results; and (b) team motivation. Role-modelling Optico values was also described as a key expectation in interviews, corresponding with the definition of the behaviour *Walks the talk*.

The Client Services Centre manager described organisational expectations in detail: achieving KPIs (relating to team performance) and demonstrating values-related behaviour, measured via 360 degree feedback. The regular monthly, quarterly and annual reviews of these two aspects suggested that underlying the general talk about passion and leadership was a very focused and results-oriented environment. The straightforward way in which values and behavioural expectations were expressed left no room for procrastination or half-heartedness:

I think it is very much a case of - here you go, you know what you have got to do on your annual plan, crack on and do it. I won't be micromanaging you, but we have got to make sure that x, y and z is done and it is done to a high standard. [SPMO5]

Despite the formal feedback mechanisms, managers did seem genuinely interested and passionate about the motivational aspects of their role, as this middle manager comments:

I guess more informally as a manager it is more about how do you engage with your team, how do you motivate them, how do you get them excited about coming to work in the morning, how do you reward and recognise what they achieve, how do you develop them, how do you find out what people want to do next and help them to get there. [SPMM1]

9.2.4 Smilecare

9.2.4.1 Values, culture and leadership

The Smilecare values were developed by a project team led by the HR Director with representatives drawn from different departments and levels, including the current Managing Director (MD). A series of workshops resulted in six values which the website describes as “behaviours that are fundamental to the way we treat our customers and each other”:

- Integrity
- Team player
- Oomph!
- Adding value
- Agility
- As good as my word.

In an attempt to make the values meaningful, the project team created value descriptions that emphasise behaviours – for example, “Oomph!” includes demonstrating a positive attitude, drive and passion, and “Adding value” is deciding on a course of action by ensuring that the benefits to the company outweigh the costs in the long term. The behaviours are also reinforced by HR policies: each employee has an appraisal objective relating to the six values and linked to a bonus. Managers commented that this made them tangible and motivating, even though they expressed behaviours that people should be demonstrating anyway. The values are also included in job descriptions and used in performance discussions and selection interviewing, including senior leadership team appointments.

When asked about the values, managers tended to mention “Oomph!” first; the name was clearly memorable and something that they identified with. Indeed the HR manager said that the values had become part of the organisation’s everyday language:

You sort of hear people saying, ‘Well that wasn’t very agile’ or, ‘Oh that wasn’t very oomph-y’ ...in meetings or chatting to each other. [DSM1]

Despite this apparent assimilation of the values among employees, it was clear that demonstrating values alignment was not optional: over half the respondents commented that the organisation absolutely expects employees to enact the

values. The expression “Smilecare fit” was used to describe this. The HR manager observed that although Smilecare is a “very nice” company, it can be quite tough – “People who don’t fit and won’t adjust – they don’t survive very long”. One middle manager made a similar point, and hinted that changes to the previous senior leadership team had been made because one or two did not have the Smilecare fit.

Nevertheless, all the managers interviewed did identify with the values and were universally positive about the organisation and its senior leadership. The culture was described as friendly, fun and informal. There was an active social club, and managers commented on the organisation’s respect for work-life balance, saying that it valued its staff and was very committed to its clients. These first-line managers’ comments are typical:

You do get your head down and you do get the job done, but that you are enjoying what you are doing. And that to me kind of underpins [Smilecare]...we do all work extremely hard and there is an awful lot of pressure put on us, but it is making sure that we are positive and that we do have a good team spirit. [DMO8]

Even in sort of tough times or challenging times we still have fun as a company. [DMO1]

When asked about the senior leadership, almost all managers focused their comments on the MD, who was described as impressive, dynamic, inspiring, charismatic and a brilliant speaker:

He always finds the sort of positive aspect. He doesn’t shy away from some of the difficult communications but he always tries to put a positive spin on things. [DMO8]

He is a good reason to be here. I like being here. [DMO4]

His approach and his attitudes and how he thinks the company should operate permeates down through... how he communicates and how he interacts, using him as a role model...that naturally feeds down because he is that type of character. [DMO6]

Two of the managers said that it was not appropriate to challenge the executive leadership team’s (ELT) decisions because of their seniority and their greater knowledge of the organisation. One said that there was a certain amount of peer

pressure not to do so: “The view might be ‘Well, who the hell does he think he is - the ELT have decided’”. Interestingly, too, the HR manager observed that, with the exception of the Finance Director, she and the ELT were perhaps too like-minded, such that ideas were not robustly challenged.

9.2.4.2 Values enactment

Managers felt that Smilecare does live up to its values in its dealings with customers and employees, citing characteristics such as open, honest communication and trust. Indeed, failure to live up to organisational values was mentioned only in relation to the behaviour of certain employees rather than to the organisation and its senior leaders.

9.2.4.3 Expectations of the management role

Organisational documents and interview comments alike emphasise role-modelling Smilecare values as a key responsibility of managers at all levels. The Smilecare leadership “pyramid” describes attitudes and behaviours aligned with each value by leadership level, where the overriding emphasis is on personal qualities, such as perseverance, courage and enthusiasm; and leadership style, such as engaging, action-oriented and empowering. These characteristics were also emphasised in a presentation by the MD about leadership and change at Smilecare, aimed at an external audience, which included quotes about inspirational leadership from a range of sources, including the book “Good to Great” (Collins, 2001a).

The importance placed by the MD on leadership skills and winning “hearts and minds” was echoed by managers, who mentioned team motivation and development, leading by example and role-modelling values as key organisational expectations more often than reaching targets or task-related expertise. A document on the HR intranet lists the specific people management responsibilities of managers, such as regular performance reviews, development, appraisals, absence management and communication. However, it was clear that the aspects of the role perceived by respondents as leadership or values-related were uppermost in their minds.

9.2.5 Summary of organisational descriptive analyses

The key characteristics identified in the analysis are summarised in Table 30 below by organisation to facilitate later cross-case comparisons to be made in Section 9.4:

Table 30: Summary of descriptive analyses by organisation

	Cox Consulting	Insko	Optico	Smilecare
Values development <i>Source: interviews</i>	Senior leadership team.	Inherited from the parent group.	Created by the founders (current owner-directors).	Cross-level organisational project teams.
Values use <i>Source: documents, interviews, observation</i>	Posters, website and marketing material. Consistent with (but not embedded in) behavioural competencies and appraisal scheme and not used in leadership and client satisfaction surveys.	Posters, website and induction material. Promoted by department “values champions”. Embedded in behavioural competencies, appraisals and reward scheme but not in team and cultural surveys.	Posters, website and induction material Actively promoted by founders. Translated into “behaviours” and used in objectives, reviews and appraisals.	Posters, website and induction material. Translated into “behaviours” and used in objectives, appraisals, bonus scheme, job descriptions and selection interviews, including for senior appointments.
Culture <i>Source: interviews</i>	Open, friendly and like a family; client-focused, professional. Becoming more formalised and commercially	Confused, changing: bureaucratic, blame culture and silo working; but also passionate, friendly and innovative.	Distinctive; familial; customer-focused. Closely associated with the business principles and	Informal, fun and friendly. Hard-working but positive. Demands values alignment. Strongly influenced by

	Cox Consulting	Insco	Optico	Smilecare
	minded due to financial pressure and rapid growth.	Losing its distinctiveness due to frequent leadership changes and acquisition.	values of the founders.	the MD.
Senior leadership <i>Source: interviews</i>	Accessible. Competent but not inspirational.	Little contact. No continuity of leadership; remote from the “grass roots”.	Lots of contact. Inspirational and values-led; passionate and successful; actively involved in the business.	Lots of contact. Highly charismatic MD, seen as an inspirational role-model. Like-minded leadership team
Does the organisation live up to its values? <i>Source: interviews</i>	Robust professional integrity and good “moral compass”. Traditional client relationships and respect for staff being compromised by new commercial mind-set.	Passionate; fundamentally sound moral integrity. Lack of respect for employees and failure to recognise those who push beyond boundaries.	Yes. Strong on passion and treating others as you would like to be treated yourself.	Yes. Strong on honesty and openness.

	Cox Consulting	Insco	Optico	Smilecare
Organisation's key expectations of managers <i>Source: documents, interviews</i>	Exceed client expectations; deliver against promises; develop the business.	Deliver on operational targets; HR processes; team morale; role-model the values.	Role-model the values. Team motivation and development Meet targets; respond rapidly to new initiatives and deliver on KPIs.	Role-model and reinforce the values. Leader behaviours: courage, perseverance, self-awareness, enthusiasm. Team motivation and development emphasis.

In the next part of the analysis, the manager-level findings presented in Chapter 8 are examined by organisation. These and the characteristics in Table 30 above are then discussed and compared in relation to the incident findings in the cross-case analysis in Section 9.4.

9.3 Manager-level findings by organisation

9.3.1 Value survey responses

The PVQ responses were generally consistent between organisations, with Schwartz's (1992) **benevolence** and **self-direction** value types rated most highly. However there were some noteworthy exceptions:

1. Proportionally fewer Optico managers had *high*²⁴ scores for the **achievement** value type compared to the other three organisations, although none of them had given it a *low* rating: it was important to them, but less markedly so than to managers in the other organisations.
2. Optico and Smilecare managers had relatively more *high* scores for the **security** value type. This includes values such as stability of relationships and a sense of belonging. A high score may indicate that these

²⁴ See Appendix G for an explanation of the designation of *high* and *low* to survey scores.

respondents valued job security more than Insco and Cox Consulting managers.

3. Although *high* scores for the **tradition** value type were generally absent, relatively fewer Cox managers had a *low* score for this, suggesting that they were less opposed to values such as detachment, moderation and respect for tradition than respondents in the other three organisations.
4. Relatively fewer Smilecare managers had *high* scores for **self-direction** (i.e. independent thought and action-choosing), although no respondents had a *low* score for this value-type.

9.3.2 Stated values

Looking at the data by organisation, the most conspicuous finding is that Insco managers expressed personal values much more often than the rest of the respondents. Three quarters of Insco managers mentioned ***Drive and Passion*** and ***Support and Trust***²⁵ values, compared with around half the managers in the other three organisations, and relatively more of them mentioned ***Enjoyment and Expediency***, ***Support and Trust***, ***Order and Balance*** and ***Fairness and Respect*** values. This perhaps suggests that the Insco managers had greater awareness of, and ability to articulate, what was important to them as individuals; as if thinking in terms of values (not just organisational values) was more natural to them than to managers in the other organisations. Insco's recent, heightened focus on value surveys and values-related management development may have "primed" this values awareness.

Interestingly, however, only 60% of Insco managers mentioned ***Success and Recognition*** values, compared with over 80% of Smilecare managers. On the other hand, only one Smilecare manager mentioned ***Drive and Passion*** as important compared with two thirds of managers in the other three organisations.

Less than half of Cox Consulting managers mentioned ***Success and Recognition*** values, relatively fewer than in the other three organisations, but otherwise the other value clusters mentioned both here and in Optico were similar to the overall proportions.

²⁵ The six stated value coding clusters are: Drive and Passion; Enjoyment and Expediency; Success and Recognition; Support and Trust; Order and Balance; and Fairness and Respect. See Chapter 7, Table 26 (p. 183).

9.3.3 Role-related demands and expectations

Previously (Chapter 8, Section 8.4, p. 179) managers' perceptions of the demands and expectations of their role were clustered into four areas: Leadership, People, Results and Expertise. Of these, the first two were mentioned most frequently and Expertise was mentioned least frequently. Analysis of these data by organisation revealed a number of differences in emphasis:

1. All Insko managers, all but one Smilecare manager, and two-thirds of Optico managers referred to **Leadership**-type behaviours as a role expectation. This corresponds with these organisations' emphasis on behaviours such as role-modelling the values in organisational material (e.g. management competencies), and in the case of Smilecare and Optico, with the behaviour demonstrated and advocated by senior leaders.
2. Less than half of Cox Consulting managers referred to **Leadership** as a perceived expectation, while 80% mentioned **Results**; a higher proportion than in the other three settings. Although this was unexpected, given the technical/professional nature of the respondents' experience, the increasing focus on cost-control and project profitability driven by the senior leadership team may have been uppermost in their minds. Similarly, the absence of evidence for "inspirational" leadership and strong people management skills among senior leaders may have contributed to the correspondingly fewer comments about these aspects in Cox Consulting compared with the other settings.
3. Over half of Insko managers mentioned **Expertise** as a role expectation, a larger proportion than in the other organisations. This is probably indicative of the more task-oriented responsibilities of the first-line managers at Insko, but is somewhat at odds with their unanimous mention of **Leadership** - a potential source of tension within the role.

Analysis of role-related data by organisation revealed considerable alignment between the language used by managers to describe perceived role expectations and the language used in formal organisational documents such as behavioural competency frameworks: managers were conversant with organisational discourse about the role of managers and appeared to have adopted it into their own understanding of the role. This was particularly noticeable when managers at Insko, Optico and Smilecare talked about Leadership-focused activities such as role-modelling organisational values, leading by example, and enacting organisational values. In the case of the latter two organisations, respondents'

greater emphasis on the Leadership and People aspects of the role was mirrored in their description of the senior leaders, who were indeed perceived to be leading by example and living the values. The following comments from Smilecare and Optico first-line managers are typical:

So taking inspiration from [the Smilecare Managing Director], how he communicates and how he interacts, using him as a role model - I think that just feeds down. That naturally feeds down because he is that type of character. [DMO8]

I certainly remember my first seminar and standing there watching [the Optico founder and joint Managing Director] present, and the passion that comes through from them to the business, that can only serve to motivate you, and that goes all the way through the Board, and that works, you can see that energy. [SPMO1]

The manager-level findings by organisation are summarised in the next section,

9.3.4 Summary of manager-level findings by organisation

Table 31 below captures the three areas of manager-level findings by organisation: PVQ responses, stated values and perceived role expectations. The comments refer to relative proportions rather than absolute numbers to allow meaningful comparison.

Table 31: Cross-organisational comparison: personal values survey scores, stated values and perceived role expectations.

	Cox Consulting (n=9)	Insko (n=13)	Optico (n=9)	Smilecare (n=11)
Value priorities <i>Source: Schwartz values survey</i>	Highest scores for Benevolence and Self-direction . Fewer managers with low Tradition .	Highest scores for Benevolence and Self-direction .	Highest scores for Benevolence and Self-direction . More managers with high Security . Fewer managers with high Achievement .	Highest score for Benevolence . More managers with high Security . Fewer managers with high Self-Direction .

	Cox Consulting (n=9)	Insko (n=13)	Optico (n=9)	Smilecare (n=11)
Stated values <i>Source: interviews</i>	Most common: Support & trust. Relatively low mention of Success and Recognition values.	Most common: Support & trust and Fairness & respect. Overall, most likely to mention personal values and priorities.	Most common: Drive & passion and Success & recognition. Pattern similar to the average for all organisations.	Most common <i>and</i> mentioned more than in other settings Success & recognition. Relatively low mention of Drive & Passion.
Managers' view of role-related demands and expectations <i>Source: interviews</i>	Most common: Results. Relatively high mention of Results. Relatively low mention of Leadership.	Most common: Leadership and People. Relatively high mention of Expertise and Leadership.	Most common: People. Relatively high mention of People.	Most common: Leadership. Relatively high mention of Leadership.

Looking across the first two rows of Table 31, the summary highlights the similarities and differences between survey scores and stated values by organisation. The findings in the bottom row of the table are particularly interesting when compared with the organisational values, senior leadership behaviour, and/or the organisation's formal expectations of managers. These were summarised previously in Table 30 (page 203). In particular, the Cox Consulting, Optico and Smilecare respondents' views reflect the behaviours enacted by senior leaders and are consistent with the documented expectations and – in the case of Optico and Smilecare – the organisational values. At Insko, the prevalence of comments on *Leadership* and *People* reflect the documented expectations and values, but *not* the perceived senior leadership behaviour. These aspects are revisited in Chapter 10 Section 10.5.

9.4 Cross-case analysis: Incident-level findings by organisation

Attention now returns to the value conflict (VC) incident types, responses and justifications presented in Chapter 7, this time from a cross-organisational perspective. These are examined in the light of the manager-level findings (Table 31, p. 208) and the organisational characteristics (Table 30, p. 203) in order to draw out the variation between the different case organisations and the different contingencies on which this variation depends.

9.4.1 Organisational characteristics and profile of VC incident types

This first part of the cross-case analysis compares the profile of VC types (**manager-organisation, manager-employee and manager-role**; introduced previously in Section 7.1.3, p. 135) across the four organisations, including the proportion of “**values gap**” incidents²⁶. It identifies the particular organisational characteristics that account for the profile of VC incident types found in each case. Thus, it is concerned with the relationship between the elements of the VC process model highlighted in Figure 31 below.

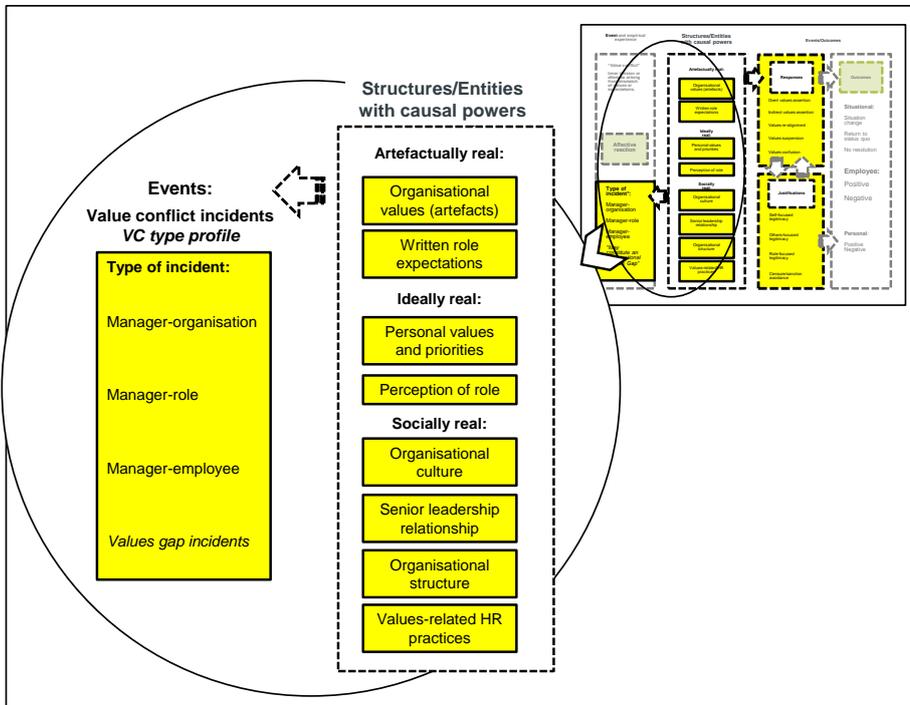


Figure 31: Cross-case analysis: structures contributing to VC type profile

²⁶ Values gap incidents arise from a perceived discrepancy between the organisation’s espoused values and its enacted values or demonstrated priorities (see Section 7.1.4, p, 139).

Although the average number of incidents recounted by respondents was relatively consistent between settings, the proportions of incident types and Values Gap incidents showed significant differences. By analysing the profile of VC incident types for each case in relation to the manager and organisation-level findings (summarised in Table 30 and Table 31), it was possible to identify the combination of characteristics which could explain the differences between cases. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 32 to Figure 35 below. Each of the four figures shows in the left-hand column the profile of VC incident types for a particular case organisation. Consistent with the VC incident process model, this pattern of value conflict “events” is shown as the outcome of the interaction of various entities (listed in the right-hand box in the figures) and their causal powers or tendencies. The *manifestation* of these tendencies in each organisation is shown in the central column of each figure.

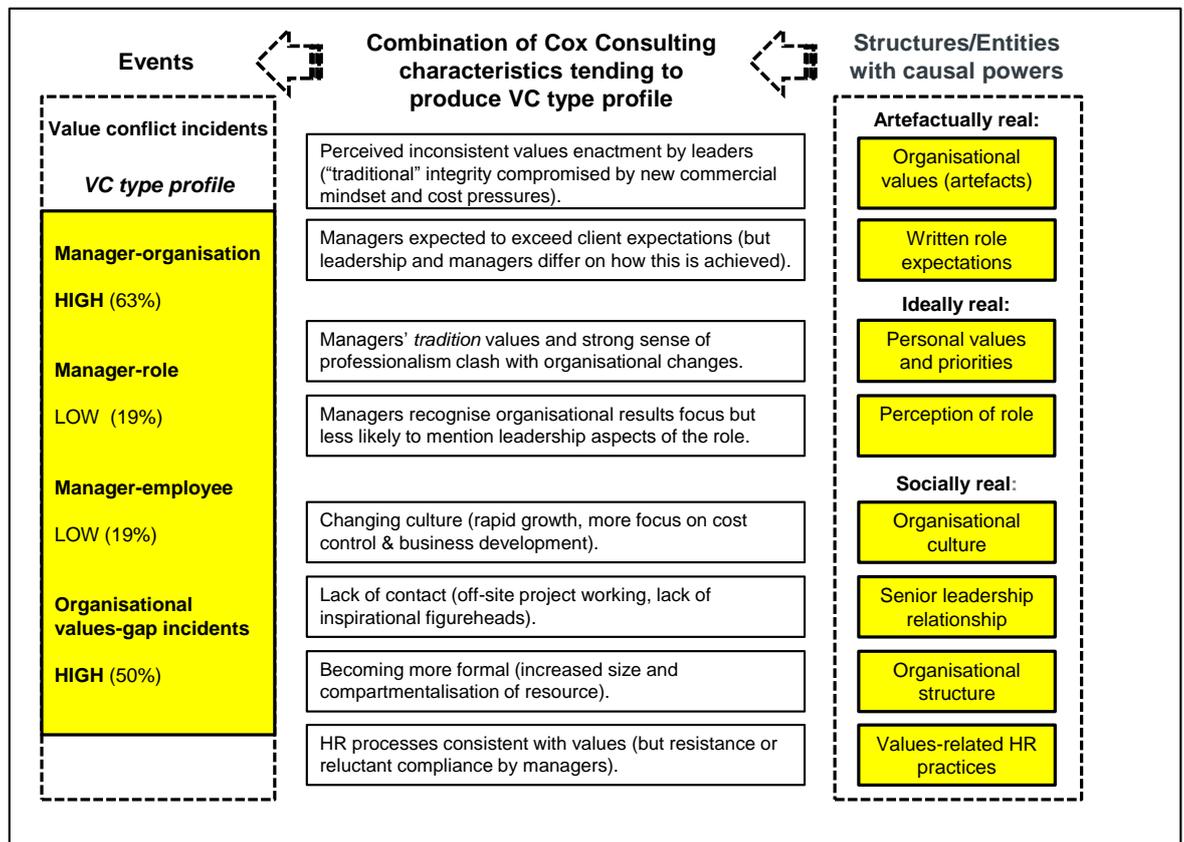


Figure 32: Cox Consulting: characteristics tending to produce VC type profile

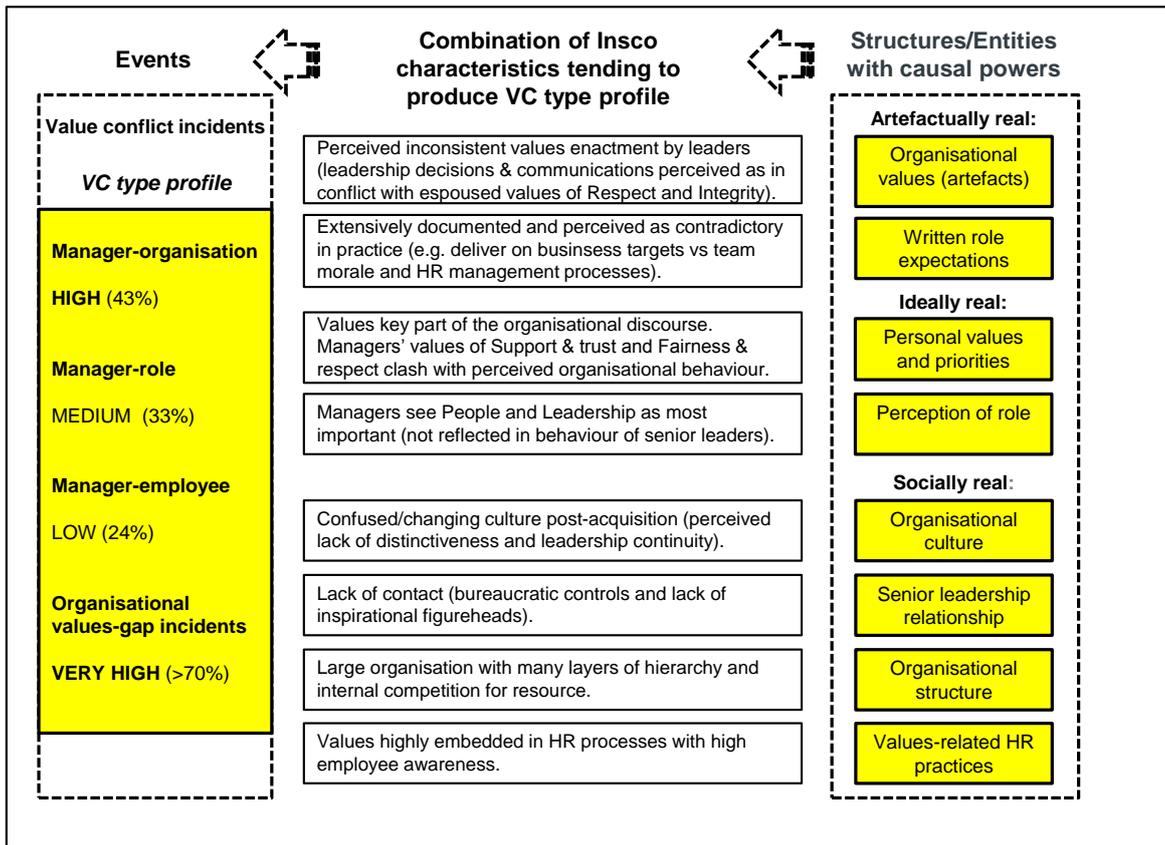


Figure 33: Insko: characteristics tending to produce VC type profile

Looking first at the findings for Cox Consulting and Insko (Figure 32 and Figure 33 above), the majority of VC incidents (63%) in the former case were **manager-organisation** - the manager had felt under pressure from the organisation or senior managers to do something that he or she did not agree with. At Insko, over three-quarters of incidents were either **manager-organisation** (43%) or **manager-role** (33%) - a conflict between personal values and the perceived obligations of the role. Conversely, the largest proportion of VC incidents at Optico and Smilecare (shown in Figure 34 and Figure 35 below) were **manager-employee** - an employee's attitude or behaviour did not align with the manager's values or expectations. Indeed, the **manager-employee** type incidents in these two organisations almost exclusively involved performance managing reportees or dealing with other employees who were failing to demonstrate *organisational* values. This reflected the strong alignment of the Optico and Smilecare respondents' own values with their organisation's values, to the extent that encountering non-compliance with these values in other employees caused them significant discomfort.

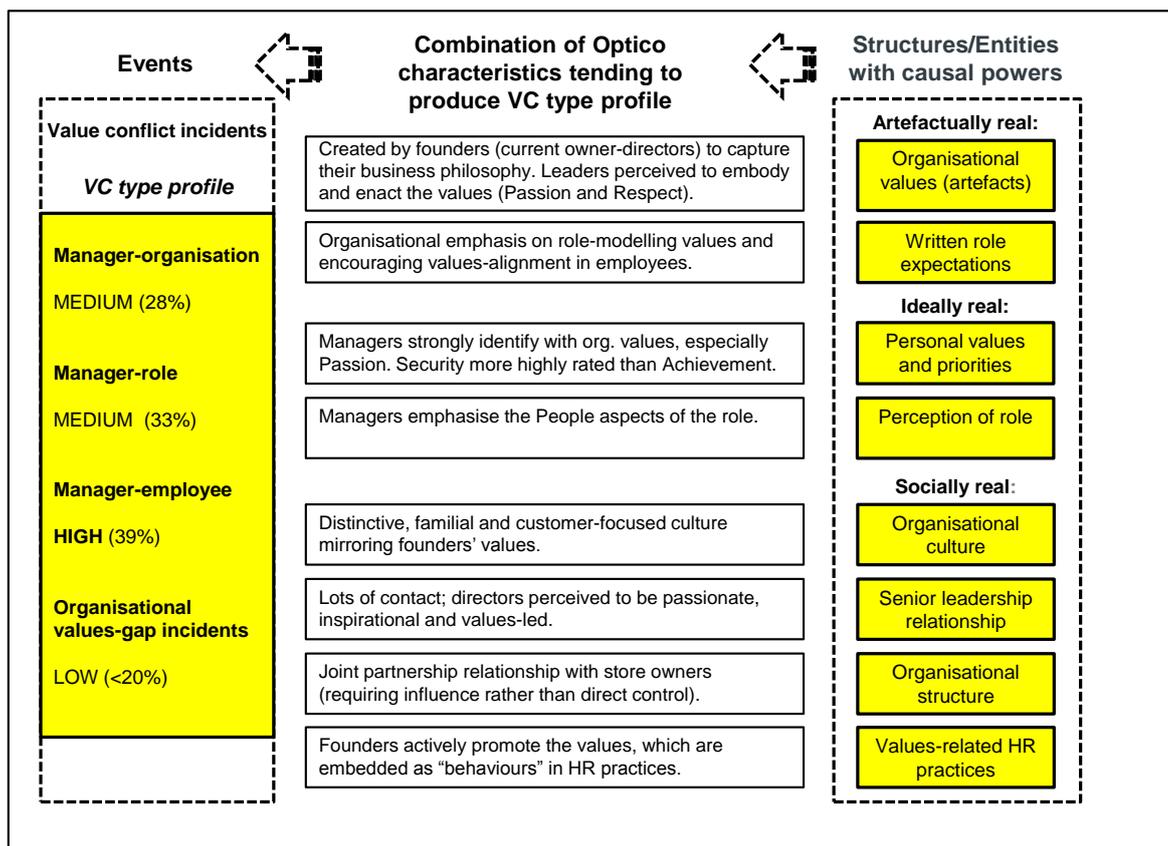


Figure 34: Optico: characteristics tending to produce VC type profile

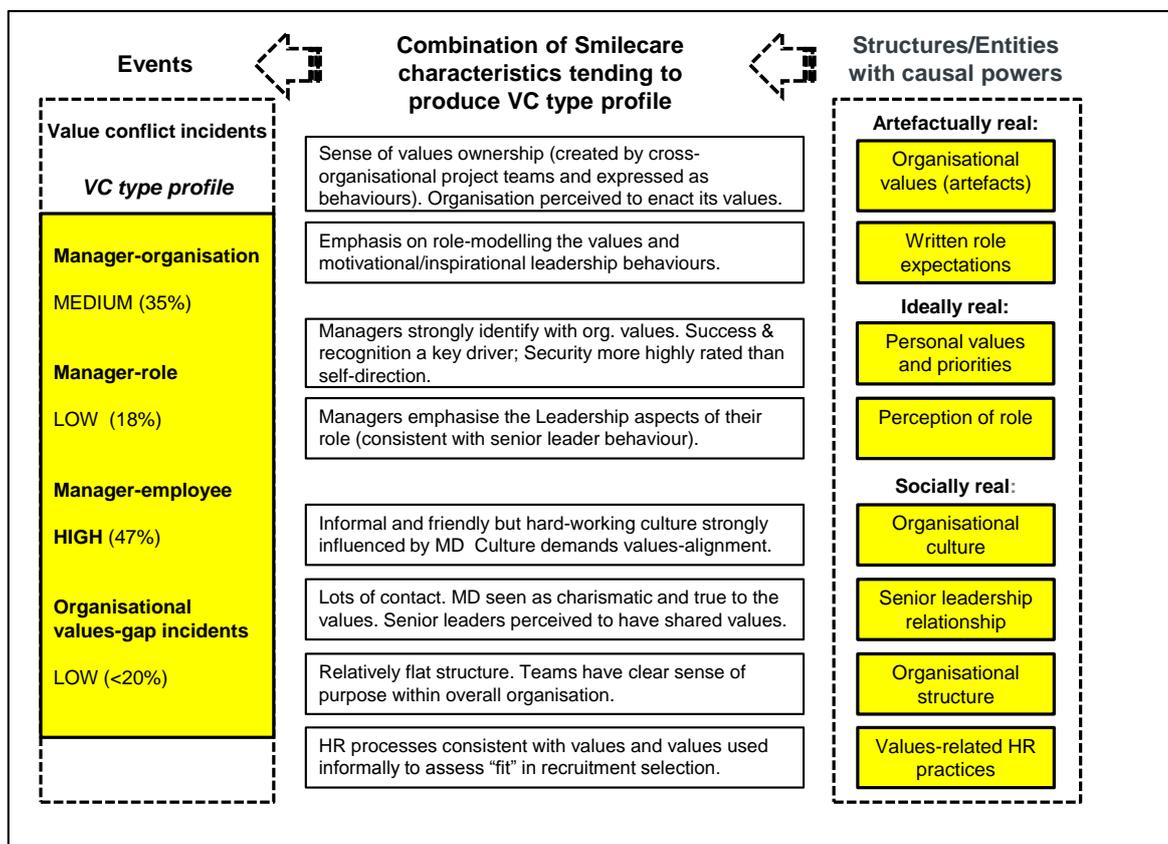


Figure 35: Smilecare: characteristics tending to produce VC type profile

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Looking at the proportion of values-gap incidents across the four organisations, over 70% of Insko incidents, and almost half of Cox Consulting incidents fell into this category. In contrast, less than 20% of incidents at Optico and Smilecare were values-gap incidents. This finding is consistent with managers' responses when asked whether the organisation lives up to its values (reported previously in Section 9.29.2 of this chapter). Although Cox Consulting and Insko managers felt that their organisations had basic moral integrity, but sometimes compromised on values such as respect for employees or gave priority to commercial pressures, Optico and Smilecare managers affirmed strongly that their organisation and its leaders did live up to its values. Furthermore, managers' view of senior leaders as inspirational role models, and their clarity about what the values meant in practice, were factors shared by Optico and Smilecare.

The higher proportion of **manager-organisation** type VC incidents found at Cox Consulting and Insko reflects the factors that these two organisations had in common. These include perceived inconsistent values enactment by senior leaders; lack of contact with senior leaders for structural or relationship reasons; and a confused or changing culture. These characteristics did not apply to the other two organisations. Conversely, the dominance of **manager-employee** type incidents in Optico and Smilecare reflects the consistency of their use of values in HR practices, culture, role requirements and senior leadership behaviour, which brought employee non-compliance with values to the fore. Clearly, the fact that all types of value conflict were identified in each organisation indicates that these sets of characteristics were not the sole contributing factors to each type; rather they are viewed as *tending* to result in particular profiles of VC incident type, in combination with other situational and individual factors unique to each event.

9.4.2 Organisational characteristics and VC responses/justifications

The second part of the cross-case analysis compares the patterns of VC responses and justification across the four case organisations. It comments on the particular organisational characteristics that account for the different patterns found by organisation, thus exploring the relationship between the organisational structures/entities and the event outcomes (managers' responses and justifications). This aspect relates to the right-hand sections of the VC process model (Figure 15, p. 130), as highlighted in Figure 36 below.

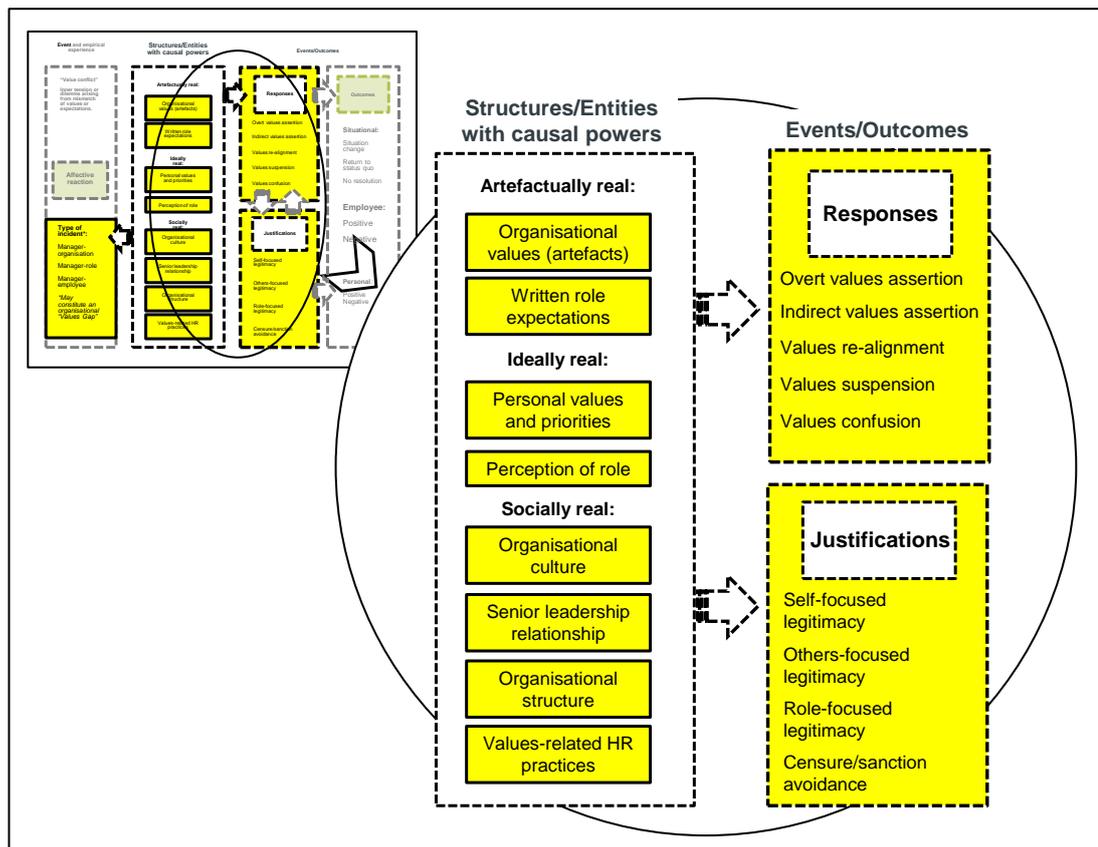


Figure 36: Cross-case analysis: structures/entities contributing to VC responses/justifications

9.4.2.1 VC responses by organisation

The analysis in Section 7.1.6 (p. 142) identified five VC response clusters, of which the two most often adopted were *overt values assertion* and *values re-alignment*, accounting for over 60% of responses between them. *Values confusion* was the least common response type (8% of responses). The cross-organisational breakdown shown in Figure 37 below illustrates how the relative proportions of use of each response type differed between settings.

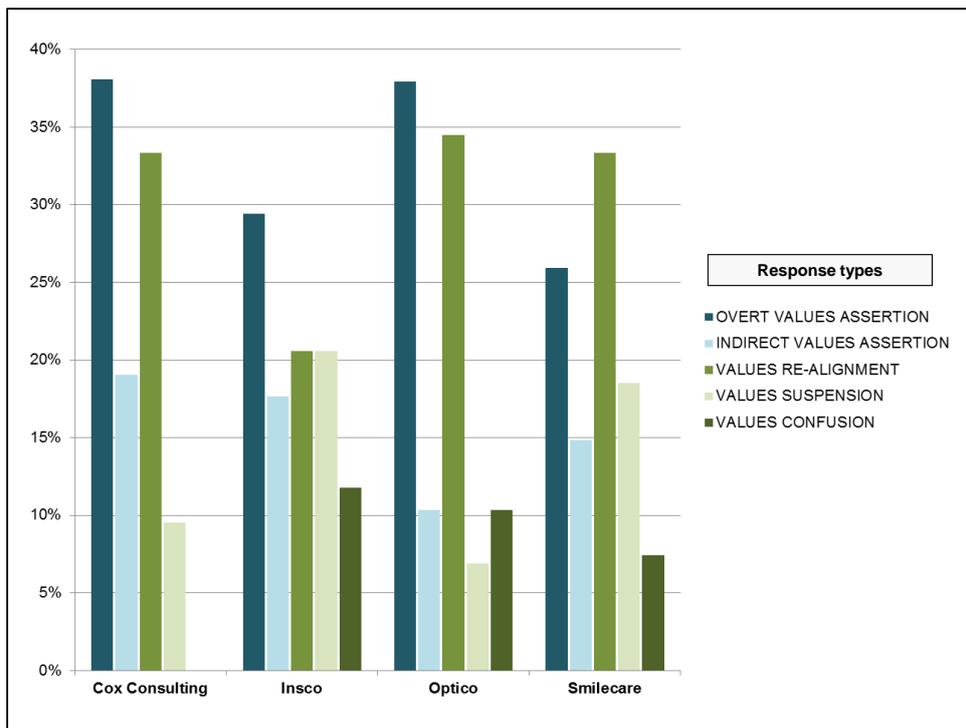


Figure 37: Relative proportions of VC response types by organisation.

Although the two dominant clusters in each organisation (the first and third columns of each grouping reflect the overall findings, there are some noteworthy variations:

1. Cox Consulting managers used *indirect values assertion* relatively more than others²⁷, and Optico managers were least likely to use this response.

Although both Cox Consulting and Optico managers described the culture as open and familial, the covert resistance by Cox Consulting managers to demands for process compliance, such as the appraisal system, suggests an unwillingness to challenge decisions in practice: perhaps because they felt the “Results” aspects of the role – their prime concern – would be better served through indirect means.

2. Insko managers adopted the most even spread of responses. They were more likely to use *values suspension* and *values confusion* than those in other organisations.

This finding may be explained by the remoteness and lack of contact with decision-makers at Insko which combined with the organisation’s strong (and often conflicting) emphasis on performance and team morale. Managers here

²⁷ No Cox Consulting managers used *Values confusion*, however it must be noted that this was a very small response cluster so this finding is not regarded as significant, given the numbers involved.

talked more often about being “caught in the middle” – and the spread of responses reflects this sense of confusion about how to respond.

3. In Smilecare, managers used *values re-alignment* more commonly than *overt values assertion*, unlike managers in the other three organisations.

This perhaps reflects Smilecare’s strong cultural emphasis on values enactment, with the result that personal values (expressed via *overt values assertion*) took second place, where personal priorities and organisational demands differed. Use of *values re-alignment* was also relatively high at Optico, where the strength of the [values-led] culture was also evident, and similarly reinforced by the stated expectation, shared by managers, that managers should role-model organisational values.

In critical realist terms, these patterns arise from *tendencies* of structures/entities to produce particular outcomes. This idea is shown diagrammatically in Figure 38 below, using the relevant sections of the VC process model as a framework.

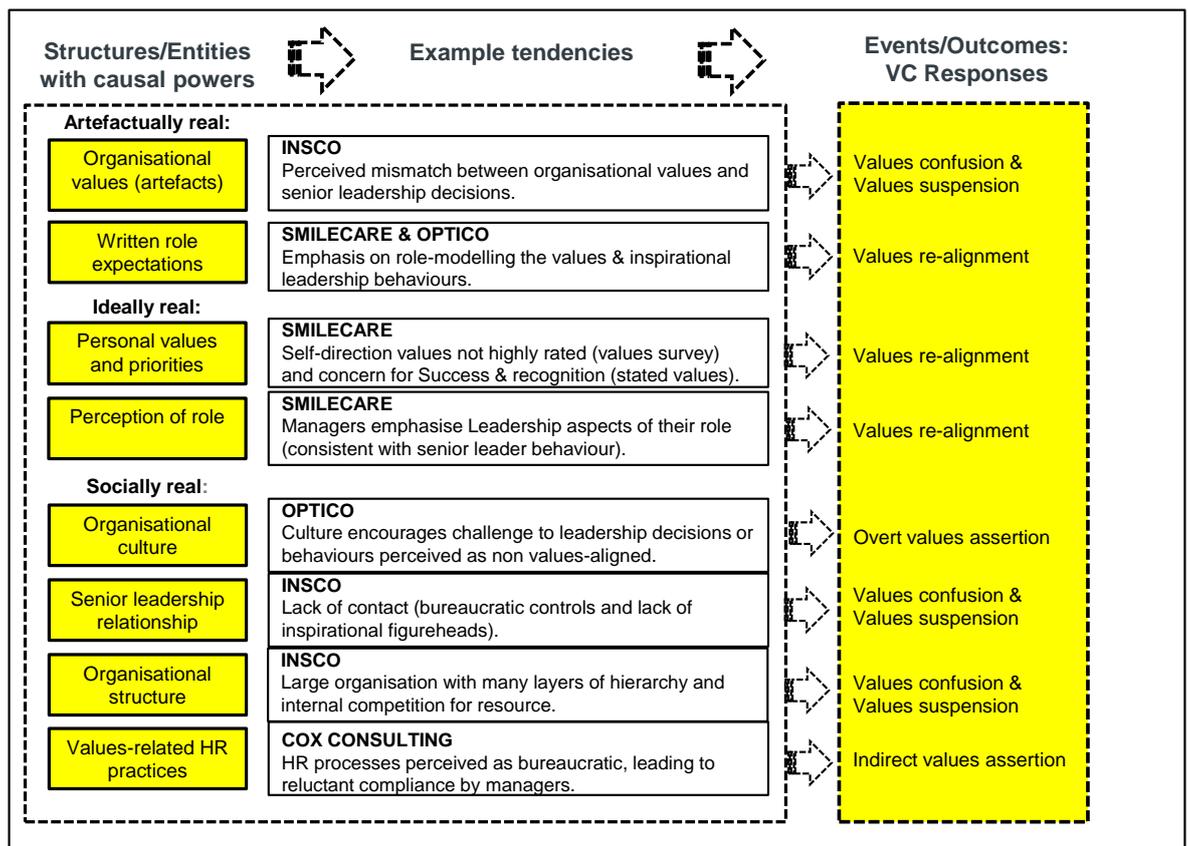


Figure 38: Example tendencies leading to VC response patterns

In the figure, examples of organisational characteristics have been listed in the central column alongside the relevant structures/entities in the left hand column. These example tendencies contribute to the relatively dominant pattern of VC

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responses in the different cases that is shown on the right hand column. Of course, given that all types of responses were found in each case, the example characteristics above reflect one of a combination of mechanisms or powers in motion that result in a particular, unique VC incident

9.4.2.2 VC justifications by organisation

In Section 7.1.7 (p. 145), the reasons managers gave for their responses to value conflict incidents were grouped into four conceptual clusters²⁸, and it was also noted that managers typically used multiple justifications per response. Figure 39 below shows the relative proportions of justification types used by managers in the four organisations.

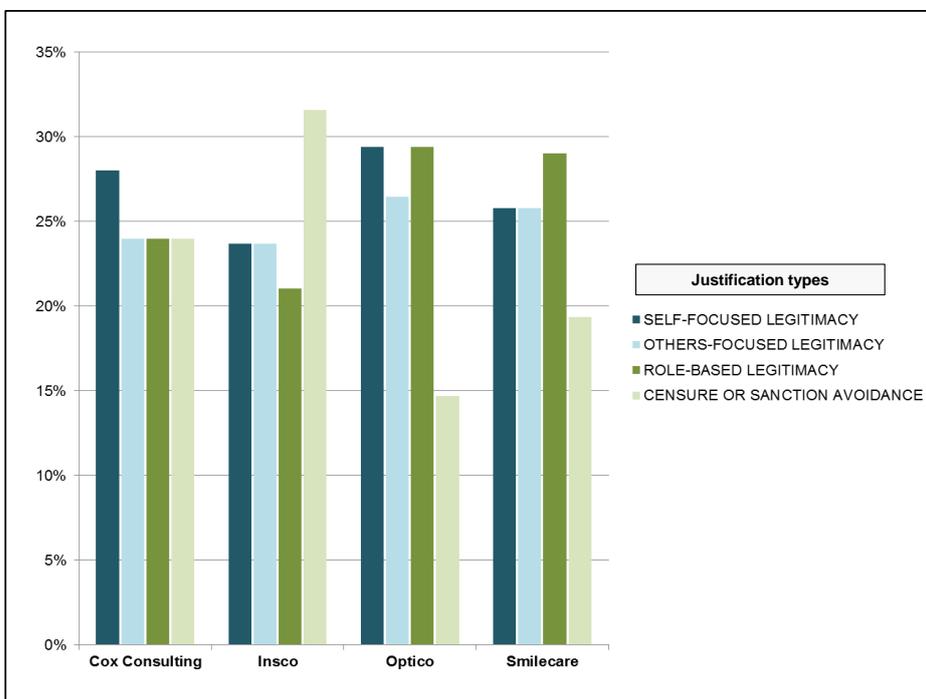


Figure 39: Relative proportions of VC justification types by organisation.

Unlike the relatively even spread of justification types when the whole dataset was analysed, the breakdown by organisation reveals notable differences in the dominant justification types used by respondent groups:

1. Insko managers gave relatively more *censure or sanction avoidance* type justifications than those in other organisations, and used this justification more often than the other three types. In contrast, Optico managers were least likely of the four groups to use *censure or sanction avoidance*.

²⁸ *Self-focused legitimacy, others-focused legitimacy, role-focused legitimacy, and censure or sanction avoidance.*

This appears indicative of the “blame culture” described by some Insko managers, coupled with the organisation’s focus on measuring performance through KPI’s and surveys. The contrasting finding at Optico is interesting: although anecdotal, the comment of one manager that “there is a sort of green blood in us” [SPMO1] – a reference to the corporate branding colour - is perhaps an indication of the positive nature of the culture, where fear of censure and sanction was genuinely rare; helped no doubt by the high level of job security and the strong organisational performance over a number of years.

2. Optico and Smilecare managers used *role-focused legitimacy* relatively more often than Cox Consulting and Insko respondents.

Common characteristics of Optico and Smilecare, such as the strong, inspirational leadership presence, have already been mentioned. A further shared characteristic is that *Success and Recognition* values were most commonly stated among these two respondent groups. The value they placed on being recognised for doing a good job perhaps contributed to the greater use of *role-focused legitimacy* here.

As in the example of VC response patterns shown previously in Figure 38, Figure 40 below shows examples of the tendencies that led to the different proportions of justifications found between cases.

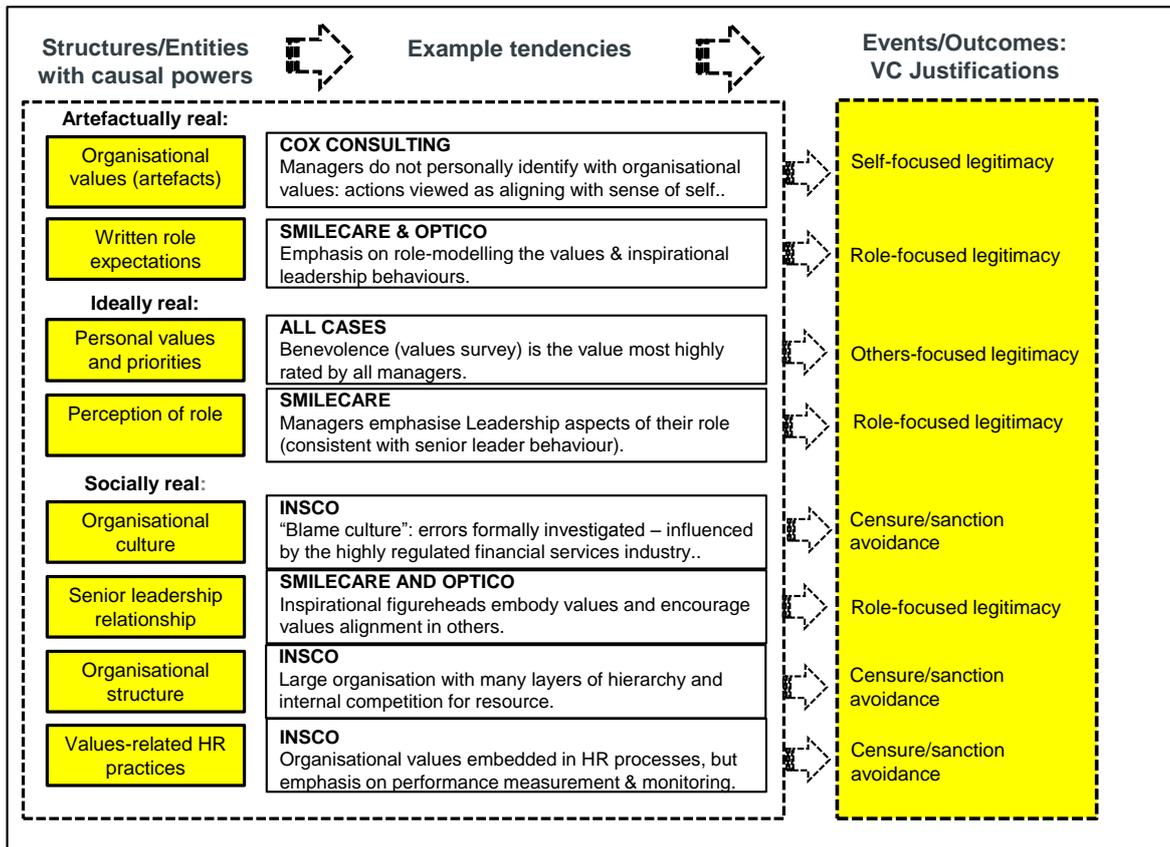


Figure 40: Example tendencies leading to VC Justification patterns

The fact that managers used multiple justifications per incident means that the examples shown above are indicative of the *dominant* patterns found in the case organisations: they do not imply a one-to-one relationship between a particular structure/entity and one type of VC justification. Rather, the identification of patterns in the cross-case data indicates the *relevance* or *strength* of the various structures/entities in influencing VC responses and justifications.

9.5 Chapter summary

9.5.1 Organisation-level analysis

The descriptive analyses in Section 9.2 identified key characteristics of the four cases that had been identified as particularly relevant to the research: values use and development, culture, senior leadership, values enactment and organisational expectations of managers. Next, the profile of managers' values survey responses, stated values and role views were then summarised for each organisation in Section 9.3. These findings were then combined with the incident-level findings in the cross-case analysis.

9.5.2 Cross-case analysis

The cross-case comparisons in Section 9.4 reviewed dominant organisational characteristics and respondent manager profiles in relation to VC incident types, responses and justifications. The findings identified the patterns of characteristics (conceived as critical realist structures or entities) that combined to produce (i) different profiles of VC incident types and (b) different patterns of VC responses and justifications across the four cases. These variations by case were mapped onto the VC process model to illustrate how contingent combinations of entities and their causal powers produced a range of outcomes.

The discussion of critical realism in Chapter 3 referred to the stance advocated by its proponents that researchers should access different theories to help develop explanatory insights. This includes use of extant theory to develop prior conceptual frameworks (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and as a sense-making device during the analysis (Kempster and Parry, 2011). In the next chapter, therefore, the findings are discussed with reference to the literature explored in Chapter 2. By applying different theoretical lenses to the findings, the aim is to gain additional insight into the empirically-derived explanations and to highlight the contribution of the present study to understanding management tensions and dilemmas using a value conflicts perspective.

Chapter 10: Discussion

10.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the discussion elaborates on and extends the findings in order to highlight the contributions of this research to theory and practice. The findings are also examined in relation to key theoretical ideas introduced in Chapter 2. This process was noted in Chapter 4 (Section 4.8, p. 100) as contributing to the credibility or authenticity of the research, akin to theory triangulation (Patton, 2002). It is also consistent with Eisenhardt's (1989) idea of "enfolding literature" to strengthen theory, which formed part of this study's analytic strategy. As a result, the new insights contributed by this research may be more clearly identified. Principal among these is the explanatory power of the Value Conflict (VC) process model (Figure 41 below). This model integrates the different elements of the multi-layered analysis to give a blueprint of the social process of value conflicts.

The chapter is organised thematically in four sections as follows:

1. **The critical realism-inspired VC process model**

This section reflects on the findings and draws on ideas from critical realism (CR) to bring together the different elements considered in the research.

2. **The concept and experience of value conflicts**

The explanation of findings relating to Value Conflict (VC) reactions, responses, justifications and personal outcomes is explored further by means of two theoretical frameworks - cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) and self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995). The discussion points to the limitations of these theories in explaining the findings of the present research, thus underlining the contribution of this study to a holistic understanding of value conflicts as a social process.

3. **VC responses and justifications in relation to values theory**

The VC response findings are related to the perspectives on the self-concept and personal value systems exposed in the literature review. The idea of authenticity is introduced as a conceptual device which helps to draw together the different approaches and sheds further explanatory light on the responses found in the research. The VC justification findings are linked to the *rationalisation* and *guidance* functions of values identified in the literature

review, showing how the findings of this study contribute additional insight into the use of values to rationalise behaviour.

3. The role-related and organisational context:

The final section returns to the linkages found between VC incidents and aspects of the role-related and organisational context, including the “values-gap” incident findings. It highlights the important implications for organisational and management practice arising from the findings.

10.2 The critical realism-inspired VC process model

Taken individually, each of the three analysis chapters (Chapters 7-9) present a detailed, but necessarily limited, view of the data. The elements and relationships considered within each level do not, on their own, capture the complex interplay of personal, role and organisational factors involved in each unique VC incident. The critical realist research paradigm helped the researcher to interpret this complexity and to represent the social process of value conflicts which captures the different influences and dynamics of the process.

Critical realists acknowledge that any understanding of events is mediated by the empirical experience of those involved – in this case individual managers; the language used by managers to describe the incidents; and the interpretation of their accounts and other data by the researcher. The same event may be perceived differently by different individuals, not least because different [ideally real] entities, such as personal values and role perceptions, come into play. This was illustrated by the “Insko day” incident, where the withdrawal of a company holiday led to a range of experiences, responses and justifications among the seven respondents who described it. Nevertheless, as a result of comparing data between incidents and between organisations, and by reasoning, as Johnson (2000) suggests, *what, if it existed, would account for this phenomenon?*, it was possible to develop empirically-derived explanations of events and the underlying powers in motion.

The VC process model is shown in Figure 41 below. This represents a **key contribution** of the research and brings together the different elements that form the research findings. In the model, the factors analysed in the research are conceived as structures or entities with causal powers and tendencies. Acting contingently in combination with other entities and human agents, they lead to events (e.g. types of VC incidents and VC responses) and outcomes.

For analysis purposes, the components of value conflicts were originally envisaged as a sequential series of blocks (see Figure 11, p. 125). However, based on the patterns found in the analysis, the model illustrates the interaction of these components (shown in the shaded boxes) both with each other and with the underlying personal and socio-contextual structures.

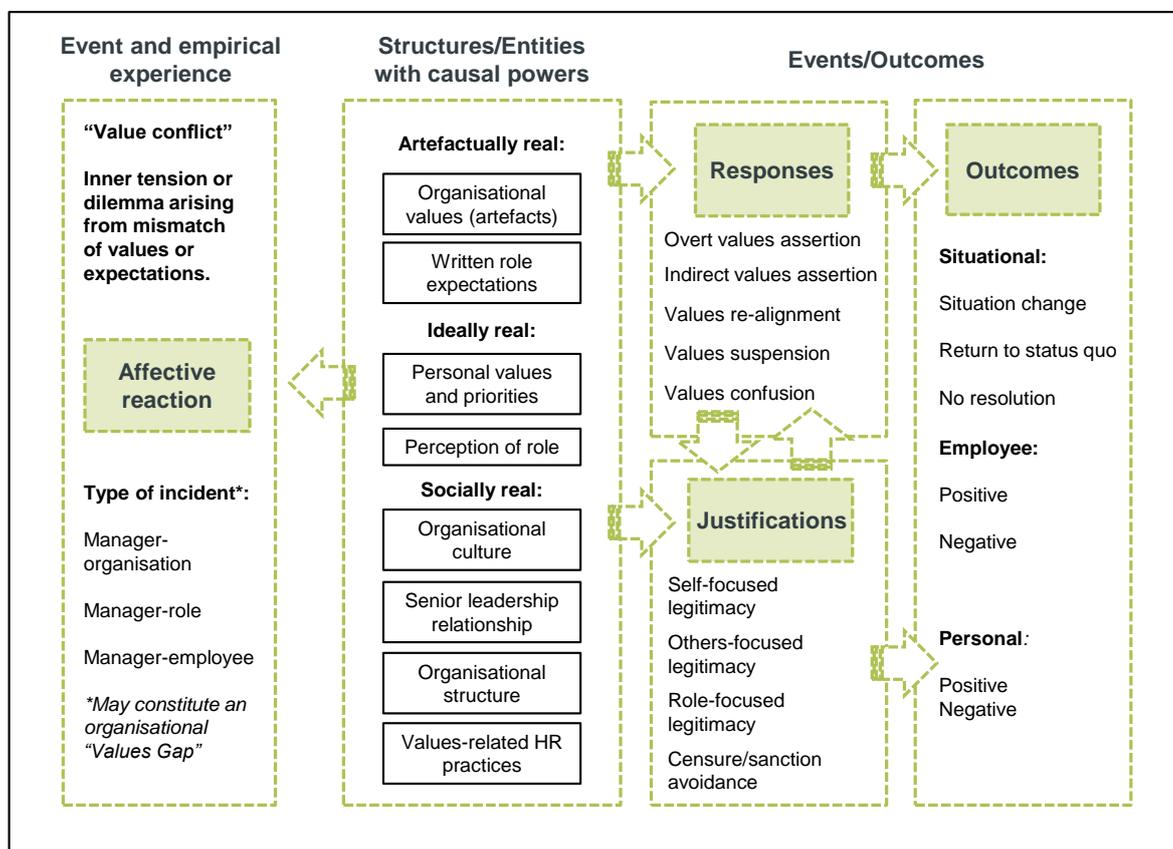


Figure 41: The value conflicts process model

The incident-level analysis in Chapter 7 identified relationships between the different components of VC incidents. The manager-level and organisational-level analyses in Chapters 8 and 9 identified personal values, role-related factors and organisational characteristics (depicted in the model as structures or entities) that the literature had suggested were of particular relevance to the research questions and values perspective. Finally, the cross-case analysis in Chapter 9 looked at how these structures, acting in combination, influenced the different patterns of incident types and events/outcomes in the different contexts.

The patterns found in the data give an indication of the different combinations of *powers in motion* (Lawson, 2004) which, with varying degrees of strength, were influencing responses and justifications. For example, different **VC responses** had an affinity with different stated values and, to a lesser extent, with role perceptions. Given the relatively consistent preference for *Overt values assertion*

and *Values re-alignment* compared with other responses across all the settings, personal values and role perceptions seemed to be exerting stronger effects than organisational factors here. However, organisational factors were still involved: *Values re-alignment* responses had a particular affinity with culture and role factors demanding enactment and role-modelling of organisational values.

In the case of **VC justifications**, socially real entities such as organisational culture, leadership and practices (e.g. intensive performance measurement of managers) influenced managers' tendency to draw on positive (e.g. role-based) or negative (censure/sanction avoidance) bases of legitimacy. Thus, underlying structures were found to exert causal powers both for VC responses and for VC justifications. At the same time, the patterns found in the incident-level analysis associated particular responses with particular justification types. These patterns of co-occurrence do not, however, provide evidence for a uni-directional causal flow from responses to justifications or vice versa. Rather, a plausible explanation of events is they exert a mutual influence – that is, justifications contribute to, and also result from responses.

There is, however, a discernible flow of events between responses and **VC outcomes**, and in particular between justifications and personal (psychological) outcomes. The most commonly used responses – overt values assertion and values re-alignment – were associated with more positive outcomes. However, the same response type combined with the use of positive (self, role or others-based) sources of legitimacy was associated with more positive personal outcomes, and combined with the use of censure/sanction avoidance was associated with more negative personal outcomes. Thus, justifications may be conceptualised as a “**legitimising self-talk**” devices, which can help or hinder the manager's achievement of positive personal outcomes from the VC incident response. This is discussed in Section 10.3.2 with reference to self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995).

10.3 The concept and experience of value conflicts

Adoption of a value conflicts perspective to explore management tensions and dilemmas is a defining feature of the present research. Little attention has been paid in the literature to a definition and systematic exploration of the concept, nor to its application to the tensions and dilemmas of management work. Using a theoretically-derived definition of value conflict, the research confirmed the

resonance of the concept with practising managers in relation to their experience. Value conflicts were classified according to the different interfaces and value systems that had been brought into conflict (organisation, role and employee). By analysing the affective and cognitive components of the value conflict incidents described in managers' first-hand accounts, the findings gave detailed insight into the situated experience of value conflicts and their outcomes.

All types of value conflict were found among respondents with different levels of seniority and experience, suggesting that such dilemmas are a persistent feature of the management role. In spite of the contemporary awareness of ethical issues in organisations and leadership (e.g. Ciulla et al., 2013; Yukl et al., 2013; Dean et al., 2010), none of the respondents in this study described dealing with major ethical exposures or malpractice. Indeed, very few of them had experienced the large-scale redundancy programmes and career uncertainty that feature in the management literature (e.g. McCann et al., 2008), and most spoke positively about their employer and the organisation's values and culture. Rather, the findings illuminated the emotional turmoil, often unacknowledged in the literature (Gardner et al., 2009), arising from day-to-day management situations.

10.3.1 Cognitive dissonance theory: an interpretive framework

McConville (2006, p.648) uses the term *role dissonance* to describe the fundamental tension arising from the "intermediate, vicarious" nature of the [middle] management role, which, she argues, cannot be resolved by the individual. However, emphasising the functional and structural constraints of the role perhaps belies the agentic capability of managers to "act differently" (Mantere, 2008, p. 297) in responding to events: finding contingent, cognitive and behavioural strategies to resolve day-to-day dilemmas.

The potential relevance of cognitive dissonance theory (CDT; Festinger, 1957) to the interpretation of value conflicts was introduced in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4.3, p. 38). Applying a CDT lens to the [qualitative] incident findings from this study contributes a more applied, yet systematic, understanding of the theory in action, which contrasts with the dominant quantitative, experimental paradigm apparent in CDT research (Kenworthy et al., 2011; Aronson, 1997).

The negative affective reactions to value conflicts found in the data were anticipated, based on CDT's prediction of the psychological discomfort caused by

awareness of discrepant cognitions; indeed, negative affect had been included in the researcher's working definition of value conflicts on this basis.

Festinger's (1957) asserted that cognitive dissonance is fundamentally a motivational state: the individual is motivated to resolve the psychological discomfort caused by discrepant cognitions, and will try to do so by adopting a contingent range of behavioural and cognitive responses known as dissonance reduction strategies²⁹. Such strategies were found in certain combinations of responses and justifications found in the incident accounts. For example:

- *Overt values assertion* and *indirect values assertion* responses accompanied by a *self-focused legitimacy* justification echo the idea of reflecting on a positive aspect of the self, such as by adopting more clearly defined value priorities (McGregor et al., 2001; Steele, 1988; Steele and Liu, 1983).
- *Values re-alignment* aligns with the strategy of changing a discrepant attitude or other cognition (may include a self-belief) (Elliot and Devine, 1994; Aronson, 1969; Festinger, 1957).
- The three positive, legitimacy-based justification types reflect the dissonance reduction strategy of transcendence: appealing to a superordinate cognition and justifying the discrepancy using a higher principle (Elliot and Devine, 1994; Aronson, 1969; Festinger, 1957).
- Managers typically gave more than one justification when describing the thoughts that accompanied their response (on average, three per incident account). In CDT terms this bolstered support for their behaviour by adding consonant cognitions (Festinger, 1957).

The predominantly positive personal psychological outcomes found in 64% of incidents suggest, from a CDT perspective, that the strategies used to reduce the negative feelings triggered by the incidents had led to resolution of the cognitive discrepancy. However, the patterns of responses, justifications and personal outcomes indicate that some strategies were more effective than others. For example, *overt values assertion* and *values re-alignment* combined with positive forms of legitimacy were associated with more positive personal outcomes. *Values confusion* and *values suspension* responses and the use of

²⁹ According to Festinger (1957), dissonance reduction strategies involve adding new consonant cognitions or decreasing the number of dissonant cognitions, and/or increasing the importance of consonant cognitions and reducing the importance of dissonant cognitions.

censure/sanction avoidance justifications - which do not appear to relate to recognised dissonance reduction strategies - were associated with more negative outcomes.

Overt values assertion and *values re-alignment* were found to be the responses most commonly adopted. A CDT-based explanation of this finding might suggest that these two strategies were chosen because of their dissonance-reducing effectiveness. This explanation applies likewise to the predominance of positive justifications (self, role or others-focused legitimacy comprised 75% of justifications used). However, the nature of CDT's motivational or drive-like characteristics has been the subject of lengthy debate among dissonance researchers (recently summarised by Kenworthy et al., 2011), and its relationship with other drives or motivations is left unspecified in Festinger's (1957) work. CDT intentionally focuses only on the aversive effects of cognitive inconsistencies and their implications for action: it does not look at broader motivational needs or goals, and the other personal, structural or contextual factors that that influence behaviour. For example, it does not explain why managers used *censure/sanction avoidance* justifications, or why some seemed unable to resolve the dilemma (seen in *values confusion* and *values suspension* responses and negative personal outcomes). Thus, a purely CDT-based interpretation on its own is insufficient to explain the empirical findings, and endorses the broader explanation of events portrayed in the VC process model (Figure 41).

CDT's central tenet that "we strive for consistency between our internal and our external lives" (Kenworthy et al., 2011, p. 99) does however resonate with the interplay between behavioural responses and cognitive justifications found in this study. The idea of striving for consistency is also to be found, although expressed in a different way, in self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995), identified in the literature review as having explanatory potential for value conflicts. This is now explored in the light of the research findings.

10.3.2 Insights from self-determination theory

As described in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.7.3, p. 23), self-determination theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan, 1995) holds that behaviours that are congruent with personal values and needs, consciously valued and personally important are experienced as more self-determined, leading to a greater sense of autonomy and increased self-esteem (Kernis, 2003).

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Using the empirically-derived response types and justifications from the VC incident data in this study, together with the patterns of co-occurrence identified between responses, justifications and psychological outcomes, it was possible to make conceptual linkages between these and the different types of behavioural regulation in SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The response types and dominant justifications were arranged accordingly on the self-determination continuum (given in Figure 3, p. 24), as shown in Figure 42 below.

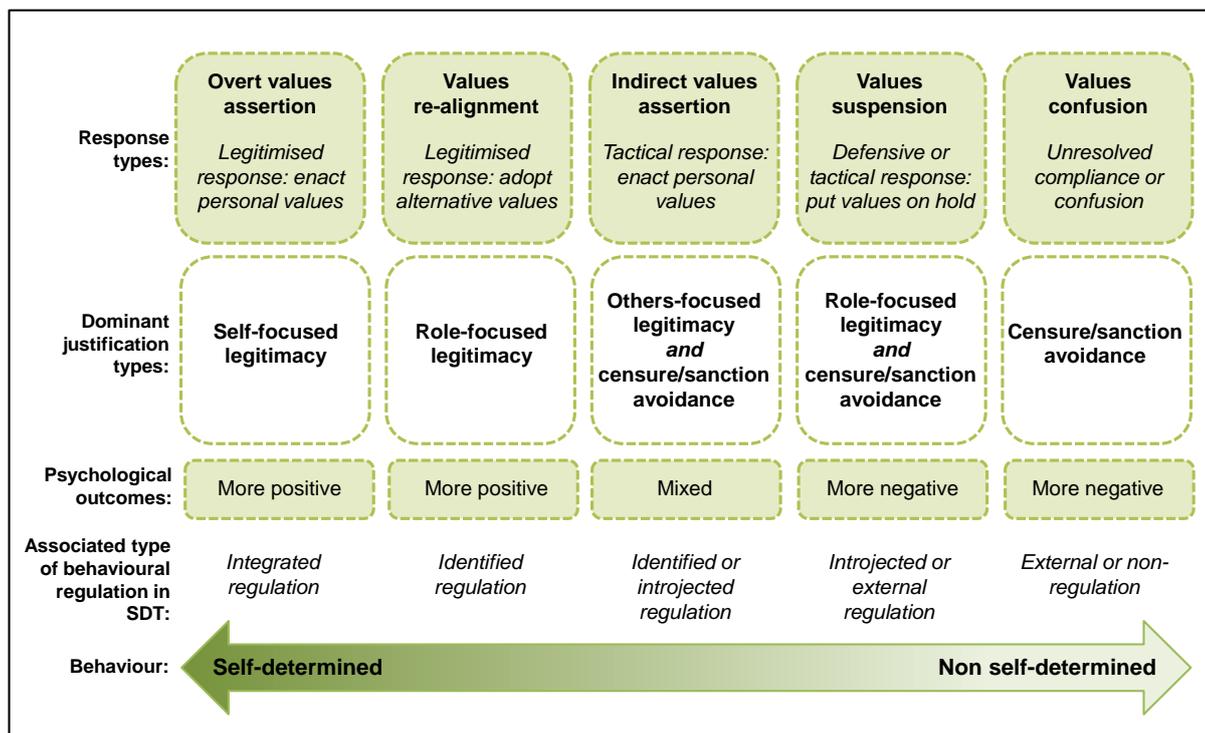


Figure 42: Empirically-derived responses, justifications and outcomes arranged on the self-determination continuum.

In Figure 42, the five different VC response types and their dominant types of justification and manager outcomes are shown above the relevant type of behavioural regulation from SDT along the self-determination continuum. In this case, all the responses are deemed to be extrinsically rather than intrinsically motivated. The applicable type of behavioural regulation was identified with reference to its associated regulatory processes. Thus, managers who responded to VC conflicts by enacting their personal values, and doing so based on a positive (self-focused) form of legitimacy, were acting consistently with their self-concept, values and convictions: they were effectively demonstrating “integrated” regulation of behaviour on the SDT continuum. This includes responses where the manager challenged an organisational decision or attempted to change the situation. The more positive personal outcomes reported by managers using this response with positive forms of legitimacy find theoretical support in SDT and

associated empirical studies (Ryan and Deci, 2002). Such positive outcomes are also associated with enacting personal values rather than conforming to others' expectations in authentic leadership theory (Gardner et al., 2005).

Values re-alignment is shown in Figure 42 above as an example of "identified" regulation. It was deemed slightly less self-determined than *Overt values assertion*, because it involved managers adjusting personal value priorities to align with those of the organisation or individual involved in the VC conflict. However, the associated, predominantly positive, justifications (in particular, role-focused legitimacy) indicate that the manager was consciously endorsing the value or importance of doing so; there was a sense of purpose and volition in the behaviour. The *Indirect values assertion* response was found most often with *Others-focused legitimacy* and *Censure/sanction avoidance* justifications, with mixed personal outcomes. It is associated with identified and introjected regulation in Figure 42. On the one hand, managers were finding a way of indicating their values and priorities, and feeling a certain amount of legitimacy in their response, but on the other hand, they were effectively self-censoring a more open expression of their true feelings.

Values suspension and *Values confusion* were the least common responses and had the fewest reported positive outcomes, reflected as diminishing degrees of self-determination in Figure 42. *Values suspension* was only found with *Censure/sanction avoidance* and *Role-focused legitimacy* justifications; the former indicating that the behaviour was more compliance-based ("external" regulation). Although the role was used as a source of legitimacy, there was a sense of managers divorcing personal values from the requirements of the role – "you just have to blinker yourself a bit from the emotions" was how one manager described it. Finally, *Values confusion* was aligned with "external" regulation and non-regulation (amotivation) because it was associated with predominantly negative justifications and, in practice, indicated an inability to resolve the conflict.

The application of SDT to value conflicts in the research, and the model presented in Figure 42 above, together represent a novel application of the theory. SDT offers a means of interpreting and explaining the patterns of correspondence found in the data from a self-based perspective. Combining the VC incident-level findings with theoretical insights from SDT in this way supports the *plausibility* (Sayer, 2000) of the value conflicts perspective as a way of explaining the individual, psychological effects of dealing with management tensions and dilemmas. However, a purely SDT-based explanation of value conflict responses

does not address the operation of managers' personal value systems that was uncovered in this research.

10.4 Responses and justifications in relation to values theory

10.4.1 Value conflict responses and personal value systems

In Chapter 2.1, contrasting theoretical stances adopted towards the self were aligned with different conceptual and empirically-based interpretations of value systems as either (i) single and stable, corresponding to a unified self-concept; or (ii) multiple and dynamic, corresponding to different self-categorisations or identities. The responses to value conflicts found in this study contribute to our understanding of personal value systems.

First, the language used to describe *overt values assertion* and *indirect values assertion* responses indicates that respondents recognised when they were acting in accordance with personal values and priorities: it felt “right” according to their conception of themselves as individuals. On the other hand, the *values re-alignment* responses indicated awareness that the behaviour was **not** entirely congruent with personal values: it involved a conscious, but personally acceptable, compromise or adjustment. Finally, *values suspension* and *values confusion* responses indicated a similar sense of lack of congruence, but in this case there was not the same indication that an acceptable or valued compromise had been achieved. In the case of *values suspension*, the respondent was “going through the motions”, and *values confusion* signalled a lack of resolution.

Respondents' awareness of self-congruent, values-aligned behaviour in the findings seems to support the notion of single, relatively stable value systems closely connected with the self-concept: behaving in line with values, whether overtly or indirectly, accounted for 40% of the responses. At the same time, almost 30% of responses involved some form of re-alignment of personal values priorities. Applying different theoretical stances from the literature, this response type may reflect:

- (i) dynamic construction or recall of situation/issue-dependent value priorities (Seligman and Katz, 1996); or

- (ii) activation of alternative priorities associated with different self domains or categorisations (Verplanken et al., 2009; Lord and Brown, 2001; Seligman and Katz, 1996); or
- (iii) giving personal values a lower priority and conforming with a “social value system” – that is, the manager’s perception of another person’s, or the organisation’s, value priorities and expectations (Rohan, 2000).

In the case of (i) above, Seligman and Katz (1996) argue that individuals re-prioritise key values in different situations or when a particular issue is salient, based on comparisons between value rankings in the abstract and in relation to specific issues. This fundamentally conflicts with the widely-held view that a distinguishing feature of values is their trans-situational nature (Schwartz, 1992; Rokeach, 1973). It is possible that in this study, work-related situations, such as defending an unpopular decision or dealing with an underperforming employee, activated different, issue- or domain-specific value priorities. However, if this were the case, it seems likely that the situation-specific values would have been experienced as *personally owned* to the same extent as generic (abstract) personal value priorities; whereas the managers in the study clearly made a distinction between their initial personal stance and the re-adjusted priorities when describing their *values re-alignment* response.

Similarly, in the case of (ii) above, *values re-alignment* may represent a switching between different levels or domains of the self, e.g. from personal to relational or collective (Verplanken et al., 2009; Lord and Brown, 2001), or between different self-aspects³⁰ (Hannah et al., 2009), which align with different value priorities. Hannah et al. (2009) suggest that leaders who can draw on multiple different but positively-oriented self-aspects, while maintaining a sufficient level of integration between core values and aspects of identity, have greater functional flexibility. This would suggest an adaptive value in the *values realignment* response: the ability to recognise and utilise different facets of the self, yet retaining some sense of consistency and legitimacy.

Regarding (iii) above, person-organisation values fit research (Edwards and Cable, 2009) is based on the assumption that people are capable of assessing the values of their institution, as they perceive them, as well as their own values. Dobewall

³⁰ Self-aspects are defined by Hannah et al. (2009) as semantic representations of social roles, which are associated with positive and negative self-attributes formed by past experiences. According to their theoretical model of the self-concept in the context of leadership behaviour, situational cues or role demands prime certain self-aspects, which activate linked cognitions, including values.

et al.'s (2014) research on self-other agreement supports the idea that people can make assessments of others' value systems. If this is the case, presumably they are also able to refer to these when choosing which value priority to follow – their own or that of the relevant third-party. However, this idea still rests on the idea of a single *personal* value system. Moreover, if the personal-social value system explanation is accepted, it is surprising that the *values re-alignment* response - effectively putting others' priorities before one's own - attracted the largest proportion of positive personal outcomes for managers. Rohan (2000) raises the question as to whether personal value priorities determine what is the “optimal reconciliation” for an individual in the case of value conflicts; for example, are those who tend to conform with social value systems more likely to rate values types such as conformity and universalism more highly in the Schwartz (1992) values survey? However, the weak patterns of co-occurrence found between the values survey results and VC responses (Section 8.3.1, p. 177) do not support this idea.

In view of these difficulties and the VC responses found in this study, Seligman and Katz's (1996, p.71) assertion that “taken to extreme, neither the stable view nor the multiple value system perspective is tenable” is persuasive. If value systems were completely dynamic or interchangeable according to different self-representations, this would seem to contradict the notion of values as guiding principles in life (Allport, 1955). Conversely, the view of a stable value system with an enduring hierarchy of value priorities (Rokeach, 1973) seems open to question: if people's motivations vary across situations or salient identities, it is likely that people's value priorities will also vary to some extent. Based on managers' descriptions of their thoughts and feelings when values were brought into conflict, the idea of **authenticity** emerged as a new theme and as a potential unifying construct which to some extent bridges the different perspectives discussed above.

10.4.2 Values and the authentic self

The experiential, reflective accounts of value conflicts gathered in this study gave insights into the *meaning* that values hold for individuals, which is not discernible from values survey ratings or rankings. When managers described what was important to them, about their performance management role in general or in relation to value conflicts, the implicit or explicit expression of values seemed to constitute a “self-anchor”, which allowed them to retain a sense of self which

persisted across situations and across roles. This sense of stability and continuity was seen in comments such as: “It is just not how I am” [SMM3]; “I like to be sure that I am always ahead of the curve”; “I do always want to please other people...and not doing it isn’t natural to me” [SMO9]; “I was raised to work hard, to push myself as hard as I can” [SMO6]; and “I just like to be better than what the next man is doing” [SPMO4].

Hitlin (2003, p.123) comments that values and identity are linked at the theoretical level through the concept of **authenticity**: “We feel authentic when we are acting in accordance with our values”. Harter’s (2002, p.382) definition of authenticity as acting “in accord with the true self, expressing oneself in ways that are consistent with inner thoughts and feelings” appears to evoke humanistic perspectives of the self as an innate, unified motivational force seeking fulfilment of potential and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1970; Rogers, 1961). Kernis, who defines authenticity similarly as “the unobstructed operation of one’s true, or core, self in one’s daily enterprise” (2003, p.13), states that his work derives theoretical and empirical support from self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1995).

However, Erickson’s (1995) discussion of authenticity is framed explicitly within a multi-faceted conception of self. Values are described as providing a sense of continuity and a notion of self as a perspective from which to act. In common with Verplanken and Holland’s (2002) concept of value-centrality, Erickson asserts that some values are more important to the self than others. These “self-values”, she argues, permeate the basic assumptions that individuals make about who they are. They also allow for the ability to differentiate “being ourselves” from false-self behaviours (Erickson, 1995, p.133), which was apparent in the different VC responses in this study. Erickson (1995, p. 127) also comments that people are not usually aware of their subjective sense of identity, or of how authentic they feel at any given moment, unless a “self-referential” or “essential” problem triggers the process of self-reflection.

The distinction between central or core “self-values” and other, important - but not self-defining - values, generates an alternative explanation of the *values re-alignment* response. It also accounts for the associated positive personal outcomes, and appears more meaningful than debates on value system structure which are divorced from lived experience. Thus, in adopting the *values re-alignment* response, managers were aware that their behaviour did not quite align with their core self-values, but they were able to draw on other, less central

but still important, values, perhaps associated with other roles or identities (e.g. as a manager, as a “people-pleaser”, as a “loyal company person”) to derive legitimacy and a sense of autonomy. Importantly for Erickson, values are *experienced* as if they are part of an autonomous self, even if those values are effectively internalisations of rules generated by social structures. From an individual perspective, then, thinking in terms of values - and acting “authentically” in accordance with them - enables a sense of self-esteem and well-being (Kernis and Goldman, 2006) rather than thinking in terms of, and feeling constrained by, externally imposed rules and norms.

In summary, then, the foregoing discussion of findings in the light of the value systems literature suggests that: (a) some managers were able to make a conscious distinction between core, “self-values” and other important, but not self-defining values; and (b) these managers drew on these other important values as a source of legitimacy and autonomy in the enactment of their role. The idea of using values in this way to enable a sense of authenticity and agentic capability contributes to contemporary scholarly dialogue on authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2011) and has practical relevance to management and leadership development..

10.4.3 VC justifications and value functions

The justification-related findings presented in Section 7.1.7 (p. 145) centred on four, inductively-derived clusters which grouped their rationales into *self-focused*, *others-focused* and *role-focused legitimacy*, and *censure/sanction avoidance*. The VC justifications were identified from what managers said when they were asked what was going through their mind at the time of the value conflict; what they felt was important to them in choosing a course of action. In effect, the justifications express the values that were triggered in connection with the VC incident (as opposed to those values gleaned from other interview data and from values survey responses). Although the four justification clusters are less specific than Schwartz’s value types, *self-focused legitimacy* aligns broadly with the Self-enhancement and Openness to change dimensions of the values structure model (Schwartz, 1992), and *others-focused legitimacy* with the Self-transcendence dimension. *Role-focused* legitimacy, with its emphasis on conforming to functional expectations, and *censure/sanction avoidance*, which in some cases indicated a concern for [job] security, are perhaps closer to the Conservation dimension.

As discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.4, p. 13), values perform a number of functions for the individual. What function(s), then, did the justifications perform in relation to value conflicts? Specifically, did managers use the [values-expressive] justifications before they acted to guide their response, or post-hoc to rationalise their behaviour, or both? The **guidance** function highlighted the popular conception of values as evaluative standards or preferences for particular ways of behaving (Rohan, 2000). This implies that values would have been invoked *prior* to action, to guide managers' decision on how to respond. On the other hand, the use of values as rationales for decisions and behaviour (**rationalisation** function) is widely acknowledged (Davidov et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2011; Maio, 2010). Because values have aspirational and principled connotations, invoking them as a basis for action *post-hoc* helps to maintain and enhance self-esteem, described by Rokeach (1973) as an overarching values function.

However, Schwartz (1996, p. 2) suggests that values are likely to be activated and to enter awareness in the presence of value conflicts. Tetlock's (1996; 1986) research on decision-making in pluralist political ideologies found that people engage in complex, "trade-off" reasoning when evaluating issues that bring important values into conflict. This suggests that values-related priorities would indeed have been salient for managers at the time they were deciding how to respond. In Katz's (1960) functional analysis of attitudes, he states that a particular attitude may serve more than one function for the individual. Applying this to value functions, therefore, it seems likely that the values expressed in justifications were both guiding responses and providing or reinforcing the decision taken. This dual relationship is reflected in the VC process model (Figure 41).

Finally, a conspicuous finding of the study was that managers typically used multiple justifications when describing their behaviour. This observation is seldom made in experimental approaches, which tend to focus on priming one or two values in order to study their specific effects on attitudes and behaviour, such as the studies described in Kristiansen and Matheson's (1990) review. The findings highlighted that both complementary *and* contradictory values were invoked in relation to the same incident response. It appears, therefore, that managers were using the justifications contingently, as a form of legitimising "self-talk", which drew on both personally important *and* socially desirable values, even where these seemed mutually incompatible. This finding contributes a new insight into the way in which values are used to rationalise behaviour.

10.5 The role-related and organisational context

The organisational and role-related context in which managers were operating was integral to the research, as reflected in the conceptual framework (Figure 5, p. 62). As Maio et al. (2001, p. 105) comment, situational forces can produce “substantial obstacles” to the behavioural expression of values and in some cases can overwhelm them. In Chapter 8, Section 8.4 (p. 179), managers’ perceptions of the demands and expectations of their role were presented as four focus areas: Results, People, Expertise and Leadership. The finding that most respondents identified a multiplicity of demands that spanned two or more focus areas is not surprising, given the variety of management work identified in the literature (Hales, 2005; Hales, 1986; Kotter, 1982; Mintzberg, 1973; Stewart, 1967).

Particular contextual factors were found to correspond with different patterns of VC **types** by setting, as shown in Figure 32 to Figure 35 of Chapter 9. In particular, a greater proportion of *manager-organisation* type conflicts were found at Cox Consulting and Insko. Perceived inconsistent values enactment by senior leaders and changing or confused culture was a feature of both these organisations, and senior leadership figures were not described as charismatic. At Insko, the senior leaders were both structurally and physically distant³¹. This finding is highly relevant to the charismatic and transformational leadership literature (reviewed in Avolio et al., 2004). Research in this field has considered the influence of both close and distant charismatic leaders on a variety of follower and organisational outcomes but their role has not been studied in relation to follower perceptions of value conflicts. Similarly, the research identified the role and organisational characteristics which influenced patterns VC responses and justifications.

Writing on middle managers’ strategic agency, Mantere (2008, p. 309) makes the point that the management literature tends to neglect what enables and constrains the fulfilment of their roles. His research emphasises the importance of a reciprocal view of role expectations: “for middle manager agency to take place, reciprocal actions by the top management is needed”. On that basis, in the context of the present study, it could be argued that the organisation’s

³¹ Structural distance has been used to refer to the levels of hierarchy between leader and follower; their physical location; and the frequency of their interaction (Antonakis and Atwater, 2002), although Avolio et al. (2004) limit its scope to the first of these, and use physical distance to refer to other aspects. Shamir (1995) distinguishes between “close” and “distant” leadership in terms of hierarchical proximity.

expectation of managers to role-model and reinforce its espoused values needs to be matched by consistent enactment of these values by senior managers.

10.5.1 Values gap incidents and organisational integrity

A further contribution of this research is to recognise situations where there was a perceived failure by the organisation to live up to its values and the implications of managers' responses for organisational integrity. Based on the unexpected finding that over a third of VC incidents involved perceptions that the organisation had acted inconsistently with its espoused values or commitments in a particular situation, a separate, meta-category termed "**values gap**" was used to identify these incidents (Section 7.1.4, p. 137). A values gap was deemed to exist where there is a perceived disconnection between the organisation's espoused values or codes of behaviour and its enacted values or demonstrated priorities, or where an explicit or inferred promise has not been kept. The identification of this phenomenon, the different ways in which managers responded, and the implications of these responses for organisational integrity represent a contribution of the research to the organisational values and culture literature, and also to the literature on organisational integrity, which is discussed below.

The literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.3) touched on the idea that the organisation's espoused values might differ in practice from its enacted values, with the consequent risk of employee cynicism and lack of trust towards senior management, as well as damage to the credibility of the values themselves (Urbany, 2005). Indeed, Cha and Edmondson's (2006) qualitative case study of a small advertising company found that employees became disenchanted with the CEO because they judged him to be hypocritical when his behaviour was inconsistent with the values that he vigorously espoused and promulgated. Exploring this idea further in the literature suggested the conceptual relevance of **organisational integrity** (Palanski and Yammarino, 2009; Palanski and Yammarino, 2007), which has gained prominence in leadership research. Leader behavioural integrity has been found empirically to have a strong positive correlation with trust (Simons et al., 2007) and employee attitudes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Davis and Rothstein, 2006). Drawing on Simon's (2002) conception of behavioural integrity as word-action consistency, Palanski and Yammarino's (2009) definition of integrity at the organisational level specifies enactment of stated values and promise-keeping by the organisation in relation to its stakeholders. Inevitably, assessment of whether the organisation is

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achieving word-action consistency relies on the perceptions of employees and other stakeholders: organisational promises are often implicit and inferred (Rousseau, 1995).

Integrity is also the value most frequently included in corporate values statements and it is found regularly in company mission statements and codes of conduct (Audi & Murphy, 2006). Indeed, in this study, integrity is specified as an organisational value at Cox Consulting and Inesco, and is implied in the value definitions at Optico (“deliver on our promises”) and Smilecare (“as good as my word”). Organisations who publicly adopt integrity as one of their organisational values are effectively associating this value with their culture. Thus, there is a double irony should an organisation that espouses integrity also fail to live up to its values.

At both personal and organisational levels, integrity has a positive moral valence – it is “a good thing...it has a perceptible glow” (Audi and Murphy, 2006) – although its definition is often left vague and ambiguous (Koehn, 2005). Interestingly, some scholars conceive integrity as *wholeness* or internal consistency (Palanski and Yammarino, 2007), which finds a parallel in SDT’s emphasis on internal consistency and unity. The virtuous association between integrity and living up to [espoused] values perhaps explains why managers in the study experienced the organisation’s failure to do so as a value conflict, particularly as this had implications for their responsibilities towards employees.

10.5.2 Values gap repair as a facet of management work

The findings presented in Section 7.1.11 (p. 162) contribute to the management literature by highlighting the role played by managers in “values gap repair. This emerges from the present research as a significant and particular facet of management work in organisations with strongly-espoused values. Lack of organisational integrity has particular implications for managers: Palanski & Yammarino (2009, p.418) suggest that it is often first-line and middle managers who are responsible for resolving “cross-level integrity conflicts”, choosing whether to prioritise their own integrity above defending that of the organisation. This choice is, ironically, perhaps more difficult for day-to-day dilemmas, when things are not clear-cut and major ethical issues are not at stake. Where there was a perceived failure by the organisation (or its senior leaders) to live up to its values in this study, the managers faced the leadership challenge of interpreting

and mitigating the situation for their reportees, while protecting their own behavioural integrity and dealing with the inconsistency at a personal level.

10.5.3 Other implications for managers

In addition to highlighting the role played by managers in values-gap repair, the study's findings have further implications for managers working in organisations with values-led cultures, especially where the manager identifies strongly with the espoused values. One such example emerged from the findings on VC incident types. Analysis of the manager-employee type incidents found that most occurred when another employee's behaviour did not align with the organisation's values. The accounts suggest that managers felt a conflict because they identified personally with these values, not just because of formal role requirements to manage performance and motivate employees. Interpreting "typical" management situations, such as dealing with under-performance, from a value conflict perspective helps to explain the strong emotions experienced by those in the study and the affect-related personal outcomes associated with their responses. The emotional aspects of the role are perhaps overlooked in performance management and related skills development interventions.

The review of the management literature (Chapter 2, Section 2.5) referred to managers' sense-making role – interpreting inconsistent events to create coherence and meaning for employees (Beck and Plowman, 2009; Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Hallier and James, 1997; Weick, 1995). For instance, in Sims' (2003) narrative analysis of managers' attempts to make sense of organisational strategies for themselves and for their team, he comments that they are not even convinced by their own stories: "they know that they are always on the edge of dishonesty" (ibid., p. 1209). This idea has some affinity with the *Defend* response in the values gap incidents, where managers recognised that they were effectively "covering up" for the organisation. More broadly, the VC incident findings illustrate how some managers drew on role-based sources of legitimacy to help them retain a sense of authenticity in these situations. Thus, from a sense-making perspective, the findings provide an insight into how some managers interpreted situations for employees, while also making their own sense of value conflicts by drawing on personally valued aspects of their management role.

Where managers in the study were not able to derive positive legitimacy from their role (e.g. in *values suspension* responses), the sense of discomfort arising from "putting on an act" was borne out by the associated predominantly negative

personal outcomes. As one first-line manager commented: “I can only sit there so many times smiling and saying no it is fine, [we’ve] got to do this” [SMO8]. This seems indicative of “surface acting”, identified in Hochschild’s (1983) work on emotional labour. In their theoretical paper on emotional labour and authentic leadership, Gardner et al. (2009) posit that when leaders are surface acting³², followers are likely to detect that the leader is putting on an act, and indeed the same manager went on to say: “The guys at work aren’t stupid: they can see what’s going on”. As Gardner et al. (2009) point out, empirical studies of emotional labour have found that it has a negative impact on psychological well-being; and furthermore, lack of “felt authenticity” - which Gardner et al. (ibid.) associate with surface acting - is linked with lower levels of well-being in authentic leadership theory (Gardner et al., 2011). Hewlin’s (2003) theoretical concept of “façades of conformity” predicts similar negative psychological effects in relation to a specific form of behavioural self-presentation, although this has not been extensively researched. It is possible that the additional requirement for managers in strong values-based cultures to role-model organisational values, common to all four research settings, may have intensified the need for surface acting in the absence of compensatory role-focused legitimacy. This aspect merits further empirical exploration.

10.5.4 Implications for the organisation

The different responses to values gap incidents found in the study highlight the difficulty for organisations in developing a shared sense of what values - and values enactment - mean in practice. The idea that values are open to interpretation is not new: writing over sixty years ago, Kluckhohn (1951, p. 398) commented:

Values are clearly, for the most part, cultural products. Nevertheless, each group value is inevitably given a private interpretation and meaning by each individual, sometimes to the extent that values become personally distinctive.

However, the current research findings illustrate the contemporary relevance of this idea. For example, the bureaucratic project funding approval process at InSCO was perceived as conflicting with the organisation’s espousal of “Passion” and

³² Surface acting is defined by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993, p. 92) as “simulating emotions that are not actually felt, which is accomplished by careful presentation of verbal and nonverbal cues”.

“Pushing beyond boundaries” values. Similarly, the decision to withdraw a traditional company holiday was interpreted by some managers as a violation of “Respect”. Furthermore, the personal interpretations of the behaviours expected of managers evident in the interview accounts highlighted that even detailed behavioural prescriptions aligned with each value, such as at Insko, are open to interpretation: does acting as a role model for followers involve putting a positive spin on organisational decisions, or does it mean challenging processes and voicing personal feelings to reportees? It appears that such dilemmas were not anticipated when values and associated human resource (HR) practices were implemented, nor acknowledged in leadership training. Nor are they addressed by the literature on person-organisation values fit (discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5). Although there is considerable empirical support for the positive outcomes of congruence between individual and organisational values (Edwards and Cable, 2009), less attention has been paid to the *meaning* that employees attach to organisational values, which they have been encouraged to internalise. As the Smilecare HR director wryly observed: “Values are very difficult, aren’t they? I mean it is like holding a jelly - it is very difficult”.

The difficulty of developing shared *meanings*, rather than shared values which are open to different interpretations, was also evident in the Cox Consulting findings. Here, managers’ stated personal commitment to exceeding client expectations (reinforced in the Cox Consulting “Passion” and “Excellence” value descriptions) and acting with integrity (also a company value) featured frequently as an important rationale for behaviour in their *overt* and *indirect values assertion* responses. The managers who resisted the pressure to solicit new business or charge for additional services, whether overtly or covertly, felt they were upholding their own and the organisation’s integrity and standards of customer service, even though the senior team did not consider the new emphasis on business development to be at odds with its customer service values. This finding points to the importance, for organisations with strongly espoused values, of positioning new strategic initiatives and responses to changing market conditions in the context of organisational values. For example, at Cox Consulting, explaining the increased focus on cost control and business development in relation to the organisation’s customer-led values may have developed a greater buy-in among managers. At Insko, awareness among senior leaders of the likely perceived contradiction between the value of Respect and the sudden withdrawal of Insko Day may have pre-empted the negative employee reactions and their consequences for managers.

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It is notable that all the respondents felt that, in general, their values aligned with those of the organisation. The strong affective reactions captured in their accounts show the tensions that arise when this alignment is damaged by organisational actions or circumstances, and the negative psychological outcomes for individuals who are unable to reconcile the conflict. This in turn may have a detrimental effect on the positive organisational outcomes associated with values fit. Indeed, organisations that foster cohesive values cultures and demand value-led behaviour in their employees perhaps risk greater adverse reactions should they fail to live up to their own espoused values and principles; a factor rarely acknowledged by writers in the culture-excellence tradition (e.g. Collins, 2001a; Peters and Waterman, 1982).

10.6 Summary

In conclusion, the discussion of findings and the linkages drawn with extant literature in this chapter help to pinpoint the theoretical contributions of the research. A key feature of this study's approach was the use of a value conflicts perspective to explain how managers experience and deal with tensions and dilemmas at work. The VC process model captures the elements involved in the experience and outcomes of value conflicts. It also explains the way in which these elements combine contingently to produce a range of outcomes, with important implications for management and organisational practice. Key to this explanation was the application of insights from the critical realist research paradigm to the empirical findings.

The interpretation of the findings using CDT (Festinger, 1957) and SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1995) as explanatory frameworks emphasises the plausibility (Sayer, 2000) of the values-based perspective. However, the limitations of these theories, taken individually, in explaining the research findings were also noted. They serve to highlight the importance of this research to a rounded understanding of the personal and social processes involved in the experience of value conflicts and the outcomes.

The theoretical contributions of the research, together with its contributions to method and practice, are summarised in the final chapter of the thesis.

Chapter 11: Conclusions

11.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter first reiterates the research aim and theoretical grounding, and then summarises the key findings. Next, the contributions of the research to theory, methodology and practice are delineated. The limitations of the research are acknowledged, leading to a discussion of suggestions for future research directions. The chapter ends with a short, personal reflection on the research process.

11.2 Research aim and theoretical background

The research aimed to explore from a values perspective how managers deal with the tensions and dilemmas of their role. The review of management literature suggested that managers are likely to experience situational dilemmas at work owing to the nature of the management role, with its multiple accountabilities and allegiances to non-managerial employees and to the organisation (Mintzberg, 2009; Balogun, 2003; Watson, 1994). These dilemmas were framed as value conflicts, arising from a mismatch between the values and expectations of the organisation or others and the manager's personal values and priorities.

Using cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) as an interpretive framework, value conflicts were conceived as cognitive discrepancies, experienced as inner tension or dissonance that the individual is motivated to resolve. Because values are closely associated with the self-concept (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Rokeach, 1973), managers' responses to value conflicts were likely to have implications for them as individuals, as well as for the organisation: research on first-line and middle managers increasingly underlines their importance to the successful implementation of strategic change and human resource management practices (Rouleau and Balogun, 2011; Wooldridge et al., 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Balogun and Johnson, 2004). The lack of organisational studies that adopt a values perspective in their analysis suggested the need for greater understanding of value conflicts and responses in organisational settings.

The research aim was articulated through four research questions (RQs), which were investigated via a multiple case-study, using qualitative methods supplemented by a personal values survey (Schwartz et al., 2001). Accounts of

value conflicts were gathered from managers in four organisations and findings were developed based on incident, manager and organisation levels of analysis.

The multi-layered analysis yielded significant and detailed findings at each level. These are summarised below in relation to the research questions in order to demonstrate that these have been addressed. Moreover, the empirical findings were integrated into the VC process model (Figure 41, p.225), which captures all the elements involved in the social process of value conflicts, and the complex interplay between them. The model, which is a key contribution of the research, draws on the critical realist research paradigm (Fleetwood, 2004) to conceive the different personal, role and organisational factors as structures or entities with causal powers, which combined contingently to produce different types of value conflicts, and different responses and outcomes.

11.3 Summary of findings by research question

RQ1: What types of value conflict do managers encounter in their day-to-day work?

The theoretically derived, conceptual definition of value conflict was recognised by respondents at all levels as resonating with their personal experience. Three types of incident were identified according to the main parties or value systems involved: manager-organisation, manager-employee and manager-role. In addition, a perceived failure by the organisation to live up to its espoused values or promises was identified as a significant source of value conflict, occurring in 36% of incidents, which were termed “values gap” incidents.

RQ2: How do they experience and respond to these value conflicts?

Value conflicts evoked negative affective reactions, including unease, anxiety, frustration and distress. Respondents’ behavioural responses were characterised in personal value system terms: *overt values assertion*; *indirect values assertion*; *values re-alignment*; *values suspension*; and *values confusion*, with *overt values assertion* and *values re-alignment* accounting for over 60% of responses.

Managers explained their responses using multiple sources of legitimacy – on average, three per incident account. Three quarters of these were positive forms of legitimacy - *self*, *others* or *role-focused* - and remainder were based on *censure* or *sanction avoidance*.

Overt values assertion, indirect values assertion and values re-alignment responses were more likely to be found with *positive legitimacy-based* justifications, while *values confusion* was more likely to be found with *censure/sanction avoidance*. *Values suspension* was associated equally with *role-related legitimacy* and *censure/sanction avoidance*.

RQ3: How do personal values, role-related factors and the organisational context shape their responses?

The cross-case analysis brought together the incident, manager and organisational level findings. It demonstrated that particular *types* of value conflict were more likely to be found when certain organisational characteristics were also present. For example, inconsistent values enactment by senior leaders; lack of contact (for structural or relationship reasons) with senior leaders; and a confused/changing culture was linked with a greater proportion of manager-organisation type value conflicts. In contrast, highly embedded organisational values; a charismatic senior leader who exemplified organisational values; and strongly articulated expectation of role-modelling and enacting values-aligned behaviour were associated with a greater proportion of manager-employee type value conflicts. Similarly, the cross-case analysis identified patterns between personal values, role perceptions, organisational characteristics and VC responses/justifications. These findings were explained with reference to the operation of the VC process model, where different combinations of entities and associated “powers in motion” led to particular events or outcomes (see Chapter 10, Figure 32 to Figure 35, Figure 38 and Figure 40).

RQ4: What are the implications of the conflicts and responses for managers and the organisation?

Almost two-thirds of incidents resulted in positive psychological outcomes for managers. *Values re-alignment* was the response associated with the highest proportion of positive outcomes and *values confusion* had the highest proportion of negative outcomes for both managers and employees. Use of a positive form of legitimacy (*self, others or role-focused*) was associated with more positive outcomes, and use of *censure/sanction avoidance* was associated with more negative outcomes.

The affective, cognitive and behavioural processes involved in respondents’ experience of value conflicts and the personal outcomes were interpreted using cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) and self-determination theory (Deci

and Ryan, 1995). In particular, mapping the responses and outcomes on the self-determination continuum (Ryan and Deci, 2002) highlighted the implications of different responses for managers' need satisfaction and sense of authenticity.

The situational outcomes of value conflicts were analysed in conjunction with VC response patterns and cross-organisational findings. Significant implications were identified for management and organisational practice, particularly in organisations with strongly espoused values. These included new insights into the role of managers in relation to the maintenance of organisational integrity through "values gap" repair. These are discussed as contributions to practice in Section 11.4.3.

11.4 Contributions to theory, methodology and practice

The findings summarised above clearly demonstrate that the research questions have been addressed. The research as a whole is now assessed in terms of its contribution to theory, methodology and practice.

11.4.1 Contribution to theory

This research makes several theoretical contributions. The significance of the main contribution – the VC process model (Figure 41) and its constituent parts – is explained below. More broadly, the research contributes a new understanding of the tensions and dilemmas of management work by adopting a value conflict perspective. The findings give detailed, contextualised insights into how managers respond to challenging situations that bring their personal values and priorities into conflict with the demands and expectations of the organisation and others. Based on the analysis of the affective, cognitive and behavioural components of the incident accounts, a rich picture emerged of the emotional turmoil, response strategies and legitimising thought processes that are invoked by seemingly day-to-day events. As such, the findings contribute to the management and organisational literature, where values are more typically considered in the context of management and leadership ethics (e.g. De Cremer et al., 2011; Groves and LaRocca, 2011) or in research on person-organisation fit (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). The patterns found linking responses, justifications, and personal and organisational outcomes illustrate the importance of managers' responses to challenging situations even where big ethical issues are not at stake.

11.4.1.1 The Value Conflicts process model

(i) A critical realism-inspired process model of value conflicts

The VC process model (Figure 41, p. 225) is an important theoretical contribution because it is the first to represent and explain the concept of value conflicts as a social process. It delineates the elements of this process and their relationships with each other. Fundamental to the model is its conception of personal, role and organisational characteristics as critical realist structures or entities, which reflect different forms of (social) reality and have effects that are real in their consequences. By working backwards from events/outcomes to the structures or entities with their causal powers acting in combination, the researcher used retroductive reasoning to develop explanations of events – the types of value conflicts, managers' responses and the personal and organisational outcomes. Different configurations of the model, featured in the presentation of findings (e.g. Figure 32 to Figure 35, p. 211-213), show how the model can be used to explain variations between contexts.

The VC process model also encompasses detailed, empirically-based findings that define and classify the phenomenon of value conflicts, thus paving the way for future research. The importance of this aspect is described in points (ii) and (iii) below.

(ii) Definition and typology of value conflicts in management work

The research contributes a theoretically-derived and empirically validated definition of value conflicts in management work. The concept of value conflicts is accepted by a number of values researchers (Sverdlik, 2012; van Harreveld et al., 2009; Rohan, 2000; Schwartz, 1992; Kristiansen and Matheson, 1990; Tetlock, 1986), but it has not been explored in relation to lived experiences, nor has it been applied to the tensions and dilemmas of management work. This definition, together with the classification of managers' value conflicts into types according to the different interfaces and value systems brought into conflict (organisation, role and employee), contribute to the values and management literature and offer a platform for further research into value conflicts at work.

(iii) Framework of VC responses, justifications and outcomes

Within the model, the empirically derived framework of VC responses, justifications and outcomes is in itself a contribution to theory. This classification can be used to research value conflicts in other settings. For example, the

categories could be used to design a survey instrument for use with larger populations. Scenarios based on the incidents gathered in this research could also form the basis of an instrument to research value conflict responses. This would go some way to address Connor and Becker's (1994, p.71) call, still not fully addressed, for an instrument that places respondents in "realistic behavioural-choice situations...in which the choice is clearly value driven".

11.4.1.2 Other theoretical contributions

Other theoretical contributions emerge from the synthesis of the empirical findings with hitherto discrete strands of research, including value systems (Schwartz, 1992), self-determination theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan, 1995) and cognitive dissonance theory (CDT; Festinger, 1957).

(i) Application of two theoretical perspectives: cognitive dissonance theory and self-determination theory

The research makes a further contribution by applying different theoretical perspectives to the phenomenon of value conflicts. The need for synthesis of different theoretical lenses to shed light on a single phenomenon has been raised by Gardner et al. (2010) in relation to leadership research. Similarly, Easton (2010, p. 123) argues that "only by seeing the same data through the different theoretical lenses employed by different researchers can understanding of some of the features of the real world occur."

The interpretation of the findings using CDT (Festinger, 1957) and SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1995) helps to explain why some response strategies and sources of legitimacy are more effective than others in achieving positive personal outcomes. Turning first to CDT, values have been linked to indirect dissonance reduction processes in self-affirmation research (Steele and Liu, 1983). However, the application of a CDT lens to explain the experience of value conflicts from dissonance arousal to dissonance reduction represents a novel application of the theory. It also contrasts with the dominant quantitative, experimental paradigm in CDT research (Kenworthy et al., 2011; Aronson, 1997).

Likewise, the application of SDT to value conflicts in this research contrasts with the more typical, experimental forms of SDT research. Parallels were identified between the VC incident findings and the different types of behavioural regulation in SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Using the empirically-derived response types and justifications from the VC incident data, together with the patterns of

co-occurrence identified between them and the personal outcomes, it was possible to arrange them on the self-determination continuum (Ryan and Deci, 2000), thus integrating the experience of value conflicts with ideas on the self and the fulfilment of psychological needs.

(ii) Personal values theory insights

The discussion in Chapter 10 made connections between the findings and two specific aspects of the values literature. First, managers' use of [value-based] justifications in connection with VC incident responses was considered with reference to the **guidance** and **rationalisation** functions of values identified from the review of values literature. Multiple justifications were typically used when managers described their behaviour, and complementary and contradictory values were invoked in relation to the same incident response. The inference from the findings was that managers were using the justifications contingently, as a form of legitimising "self-talk", which drew on both personally important and socially desirable values, even where these seemed mutually incompatible. This finding contributes a promising insight into the way in which values are used by managers to rationalise behaviour in response to workplace dilemmas.

Second, the findings connect with ongoing debates in the values literature about the nature of personal value systems and their relationship with the self-concept (Verplanken et al., 2009; e.g. Hitlin, 2003). The concept of authenticity emerged as a potential unifying construct which to some extent bridges different perspectives. The findings on *values re-alignment* responses suggested that some managers were able to make a conscious distinction between core, "self-values" and other important, but not self-defining values; and that these managers drew on these other important values as a source of legitimacy and autonomy. The idea of using values in this way to enable a sense of authenticity and agentic capability also contributes to contemporary scholarly dialogue on authentic leadership theory (Gardner et al., 2011).

(iii) The concept of values gap repair as a facet of management work

Discrepancies between espoused and enacted values have been identified as inevitable facet of organisational life (Cha and Edmondson, 2006; Argyris, 1990) and may perhaps be regarded as a specific form of psychological contract breach (Cullinane and Dundon, 2006). The contribution of the current research is to examine managers' responses to this phenomenon in terms of the implications

for values gap repair and for organisational integrity. Moreover, it contributes to the management and organisational values literature by identifying values gap repair as an important facet of management work in organisations with strongly espoused values. The implications of these theoretical contributions for practice are highlighted later in Section 11.4.3

11.4.2 Contribution to methodology

The case-study methodology and data collection methods used in this study are well-established in qualitative management research (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). The research design (Chapter 4, Figure 9, p. 106) was based on a template developed by the researcher by integrating ideas from the case-study literature (Easton, 2010; Yin, 2009; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake, 2000; Stake, 1995), and the analytic strategy was adapted from Eisenhardt (1989). Data analysis was inspired by Miles and Huberman's (1994, p.12) interactive model and data handling techniques, involving data reduction; data display; and conclusion drawing and verification. The study contributes to methodology not through use of these elements *per se*, but through their application to values research and through the detailed exposition of VC incident coding and data analysis.

11.4.2.1 Application of qualitative methods to values research

The review of values literature in Chapter 2, Section 2.2) pointed out the dominance of quantitative approaches in this field. Influenced and given impetus by the work of Rokeach (1973) and, in particular, Schwartz's (1992) circular model, values research is characterised by the use of survey-based measures and experimental approaches (Maio, 2010; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998), often involving large populations (e.g. Posner, 2010b) and cross-national comparisons (Cieciuch et al., 2014; Schwartz et al., 2012; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz et al., 2001; Schwartz and Sagiv, 1995).

A key contribution of this research, therefore, is to apply a qualitative case-study methodology to values research. This delivered experientially-based insights that are not achievable using experimental and survey methods. The analysis identified values implicit in managers' accounts when they talked about what was important to them as individuals and in relation to the management role. Values were also identified in the form of justification statements in the VC incident accounts. Additionally, the use of Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954) to gather detailed descriptions of value conflicts differs from the experimental

methods employed in research on values-based decision making and trade-off reasoning (e.g. Hanselmann and Tanner, 2008; Tetlock, 1986). Finally, the case-study framework enabled role and organisational context to be taken into account in the analysis. Thus, this research presents an alternative methodological approach for values research and responds to Maio et al.'s (2010, p. 9) assertion that “a focus on values at an abstract level cannot be sufficient for complete understanding of values”.

11.4.2.2 Analysis and presentation of incident data

This study also makes a contribution through its detailed analysis and presentation of the VC incident data. A number of scholars have recognised the need for greater transparency of analysis when reporting qualitative research (Bluhm et al., 2011; Pratt, 2009; Bryman, 2004; Rynes and Gephart, 2004; T.W. Lee, 1999); not only to address [positivistic] criticisms of lack of rigour, but also to enable learning from other researchers' methodologies and the sharing of best practice. The analytic processes described in Chapter 6 included identification of affective, cognitive and behavioural components from critical incident data; conceptual clustering informed by coding matrices; modelling relationships between codes using NVivo software; and identifying patterns of co-occurrence through use of spreadsheets constructed from coded data counts. The figures in Chapter 6 (Figure 11 to Figure 24) and the material in Appendix F to Appendix I illustrate these processes and present the findings diagrammatically to complement the tabular display of data extracts and more narrative presentations of findings.

11.4.3 Contribution to practice

The findings contribute significantly to the development of management and organisational practice. They draw attention to important and hitherto neglected aspects of leadership and management development and inform the process of organisational values implementation.

11.4.3.1 Management and leadership development

(i) *Equipping managers to deal with the tensions and dilemmas of their role*

The research gave unique insights into understanding management tensions and dilemmas by framing them as value conflicts, which, as the research

demonstrated, is a concept with which managers identify. The VC incident findings draw attention to the day to day challenges managers encounter, the range of emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses these may provoke, and the potential for positive and negative psychological outcomes. These findings suggest (a) the need to raise managers' awareness of the value conflicts inherent in their role and (b) the need to equip them with effective strategies to deal with them.

Examples of the incidents gathered in this research could form the basis of mini-case studies for the purpose of management and leadership development. Prompted by the incident scenarios, managers could be encouraged to consider the implications of alternative response strategies and reflect on their own experience of dilemmas at work, either individually or as a group. Commenting that much leadership development focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and skills, Bolden (2010, p. 120) observes that "one of the main benefits for practising managers is the opportunity for reflection". Additionally, the types of VC responses and outcomes identified in the research could form the basis of a diagnostic tool for experienced managers to be used in developmental discussions.

11.4.3.2 Considerations for leadership behaviour and values implementation

(i) *Making values meaningful*

The organisations in this study had attempted to make their values meaningful to employees by expressing them as behaviours and embedding them in management role descriptions and appraisal objectives: managers were encouraged to judge others – and were themselves judged – in relation to these values. As a consequence, not only did respondents experience a conflict when reportees' behaviour fell short of the organisational values with which they identified (manager-employee type conflicts), but also they interpreted organisational events in terms of these values (manager-organisation type conflicts). This raises an important consideration for leaders wishing to implement and embed organisational values: placing a strong emphasis on organisational values is likely to encourage value-based judgements by managers and other employees, and a heightened awareness of inconsistencies between organisational values and behaviour, leading to value conflicts.

(ii) Positioning decisions in relation to organisational values

Different interpretations of organisational values were evident in managers' perception of and responses to value conflicts. As identified in Section 10.5.4 (p. 242), this finding highlights the leadership challenge of developing a shared sense of what organisational values – and values enactment – mean in practice. Perceived inconsistencies between senior leader decisions and behaviour, such as the focus on cost-control and new business development at Cox Consulting, were evident in conflicts experienced by managers, who also had to deal with negative employee reactions. In practice, awareness that their actions are likely to be interpreted in value terms may encourage senior leaders to frame strategic or tactical decisions in terms of organisational values in a form of “proactive sense-giving” (Cha and Edmondson, 2006, p. 75), thus helping to develop shared meanings and avoid perceived value conflicts.

(iii) Openness to challenge

The study also highlighted the behaviour of managers who bridge the “values gap” in the case of perceived breaches of organisational integrity by defending or rationalising organisational actions to employees. This behaviour may otherwise go unnoticed or be taken for granted as part and parcel of the management role. Nevertheless, the findings raise an important consideration for organisations that seek to embed values-led behaviour at all levels: are its senior leaders prepared to be challenged when their decisions appear to compromise organisational values and integrity? If so, bridging the values gap – facilitating the acceptance and implementation of those decisions – may not constitute the “right” thing for managers to do. Instead, the organisation might consider how it can develop a culture that encourages managers to challenge perceived lack of integrity, and how it can prepare its senior leaders to respond to such challenges.

11.5 Limitations

Silverman (2005) emphasises the need for methodological awareness: the researcher needs to reflect critically on the research process and its limitations, and any conclusions drawn from the data need to be framed in this context. Potential difficulties in using interviews to elicit accounts of value conflicts were

identified previously in Chapter 4 (Section 4.6.3, p. 92)³³ and mitigated as far as possible through the interview design, including the use of Critical Incident Technique (CIT; Flanagan, 1954) to focus on specific incidents. Other limitations are as follows.

First, respondents agreed to participate in the research on a voluntary basis. Managers of particular levels within departments were contacted by the Human Resources (HR) representative by email with information about the study provided by the researcher, but were not obliged to participate. This resulted in a sample of managers who were possibly more favourably disposed to the HR contact or to the organisation, and who felt they could spare the time. This potentially limited the range of value conflicts collected, but as Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 264) emphasise: “You can talk only with people who can be contacted. Accessibility may be connected with workload, lack of co-operation, or both”.

Second, the interview method of data collection meant that the value conflict accounts were necessarily retrospective, and there was a risk that the elapsed time had dulled managers’ ability to recall the event in detail. However, based on her use of CIT, Chell (2004) comments that if respondents are allowed to select incidents of particular significance to them, they generally have very good recall. A further possible limitation connected with the research design was the reliance on only managers’ own accounts of events, thus restricting the opportunity to triangulate data sources in relation to each incident account. The possibility of gaining multiple perspectives on a single value conflict incident was discussed at length in Chapter 4 (Section 4.9, p. 104), where it was concluded that it was undesirable on ethical grounds and not crucial to the research aims. However, a number of Insko managers described the same organisational event as a value conflict, allowing the researcher to identify different responses and justifications in connection with the same incident.

Third, a number of researchers suggest “member checking” (i.e. verifying or validating the interpretation of findings with respondents) as a way of increasing the credibility and authenticity of qualitative research (Klenke, 2008; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Commenting on grounded theory and leadership research from a critical realist perspective, Kempster and Parry (2011) this as a key means

³³ These included the tendency for individuals to present themselves in a positive light, e.g. for social desirability reasons (Randall and Fernandes, 1991); and to resort to socially-conditioned platitudes when asked about their values, rather than actual beliefs (Maio and Olson, 1998).

of assessing practical adequacy and validity. However, due to access limitations, it was not possible to discuss interim ideas or conclusions with the respondents themselves in the current study. However, feedback was sought on early findings at conferences (see Appendix J), and emergent ideas were discussed, with due regard for confidentiality, with the former HR manager from one of the case organisations and with a practising manager from another organisation with high-profile corporate values. This helped to affirm the plausibility of the ideas and their relevance to practice.

Finally, in the present study, respondents were asked to describe their perceptions of the demands and expectations of their role during the interviews, but were not asked to say which of these they felt was most important to them. A future study could be designed to focus more specifically on managers' role priorities in relation to value conflict responses. Other opportunities for further research are identified in the next section.

11.6 Opportunities for further research

The discussion of research findings in Chapter 10 prompted ideas for future research directions in a number of areas. First, the case-study research design meant that respondents were not asked to describe value conflicts experienced prior to joining their current employer, and the interviews did not include any former employees. Organisational exit was identified in the literature review as a potential strategy in response to value conflicts (Hewlin, 2009), and three respondents mentioned leaving a previous project role or job as a result of a value conflict. This suggests that an analysis of organisational exit decisions from a value conflict perspective might yield further insights relevant to research on organisational exit decisions (e.g. McClean et al., 2013; Kulik et al., 2012).

It was noted in Section 10.5 (p. 238) that charismatic/transformational leadership research has examined the influence of both close and distant charismatic leaders on a variety of follower and organisational outcomes (Avolio et al., 2004). However, the effect of charismatic leader behaviour on follower perceptions of *organisational integrity* merits further exploration. Moreover, previous empirical work by Shapiro et al. (2011) used a leader-member exchange (LMX)³⁴ framework

³⁴ LMX is defined by Shapiro et al. (2011, p.413) as “a summation of the positive evaluation that employees have of their leaders” and includes the extent to which employees are willing to defend their leader’s decisions.

to explore follower responses to leader “transgressions” - things that made them feel disappointed or let down by the leader (ibid., p. 415). Their findings supported the hypothesis that leaders’ positive attributes, such as inspirational motivation and perceived competence, helped to avoid punitive evaluation by employees. Future research could examine whether manager perceptions of senior leaders’ positive attributes, such as inspirational motivation, made them more likely to bridge perceived gaps in organisational integrity.

The research findings suggested that breaches of organisational integrity were perhaps more evident to employees as a result of the emphasis placed on values alignment by senior leadership; and that dealing with “values gap” repair was a particular feature of management work in organisations with strongly espoused values. Indeed, Cha and Edmondson’s (2006) case-study of charismatic leadership in a small, values-driven advertising company led them to conclude that appeals to shared values may undermine the positive outcomes associated with charismatic leadership: followers made attributions of hypocrisy when the CEO’s behaviour did not reflect the values he championed. These ideas could be explored further in combination with concepts such as surface acting (Hochschild, 1983) and leader authenticity (Gardner et al., 2011). In addition, conducting a similar study in settings where organisational values had *not* been defined or embedded would allow comparisons to be made between the types of value conflicts experienced. It would also help determine whether breaches of organisational integrity were perceived by managers in the absence of strongly espoused “official” values, with implications for the literature on organisational values and ethics.

More broadly, research on value conflicts in other organisations would enable more detailed consideration of the effects of context, and would indicate whether similar patterns of responses, justifications and outcomes occur in other settings. The responses, justifications and outcomes found in this research could form the basis of a survey instrument, and used to gather a larger sample of value conflicts as part of a quantitative or mixed-methods research design. Studying responses in different national cultures would complement existing cross-cultural values scholarship. Finally, a longitudinal research design would allow tracking of the frequency and type of value conflicts experienced by managers and the different responses adopted over time.

11.7 Reflexive review of the research process

In Chapter 4, (Section 4.4.3, p. 86), the discussion of researcher reflexivity drew on Mason's (2002, p. 5) definition of the term: "thinking critically about what you are doing and why...and recognising the extent to which your thoughts, actions and decisions shape how you research and what you see". In this spirit, and recognising the role of the researcher as a "partisan participant" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, p.173), I have included a short, personal reflection on the research process.

First, accepting that the critical realist researcher – particularly one researching values - is *values aware* (Ackroyd, 2004; Johnson and Duberley, 2000), I completed the Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001) that was used in my research. The high scores on the Security and Conformity value types perhaps reflect in part my preference of order and coherence; a preference that was certainly challenged when trying to integrate conflicting theoretical perspectives in the literature (an ultimately fruitless endeavour) and making sense of large amounts of qualitative data. Pettigrew's (1990, p. 274) comment on the challenges of management research certainly resonates with my experience:

There are times when one feels overwhelmed by detail. Later in the process, one may feel a temporary, often illusory, sense that order is prevailing.

Studying managers' responses to value conflicts at work presented several theoretical and methodological challenges. These arose from the abstract and "fuzzy" (Cha and Edmondson, 2006, p. 71) nature of the values construct both at personal and organisational levels and the inevitable complexities introduced by the individual, role and contextual characteristics in play.

Using critical incident technique (Chell, 2004; Flanagan, 1954) within a semi-structured interview format proved to be an invaluable means of focusing the conversation on concrete events and experiences, while allowing sufficient time to build rapport and gather broader contextual and role-related data. Re-reading the transcripts during the coding and analysis phases, I noticed some missed opportunities to ask "why": should I have pursued particular lines of questioning further? Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009, p. 133) comment was reassuring: "Many 'why' questions in an interview may lead to an over reflected, intellectualised interview... and the interviewer may here go beyond the subjects' self-

understanding". I think that in general, I found the right balance between encouraging respondents to elaborate on their experience without making them feel defensive or under pressure.

Another successful element of the interviews was the incorporation of the values survey at the end. This undoubtedly yielded a higher response rate than would have otherwise been possible and did not interfere with the natural progress of the interview. The survey was included in the qualitative research design as a possible means of triangulation (Patton, 2002) with values inferred from qualitative data. However, the relatively weak patterns of correspondence found between surveyed value priorities and VC incident responses raised questions in my mind about the utility of measures of abstract values for explaining situated experiences and behaviours; and moreover there was little correspondence between the surveyed values and those inferred from interview accounts. Maio et al.'s (2010, p.9) view that values have the ability to be both abstract and concrete is intriguing: "Values must implicitly refer to something...People refer to values in ways that are abstract, but when applying them people must do so concretely". This speaks to my natural inclination towards qualitative methods and naturalistic inquiry (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) and preference for situationally contingent explanations, while posing a challenge for my own [abstract] values of order and stability!

Throughout the research, and particularly while writing up the data analysis, I aimed to address the need for analytic rigour and transparency in qualitative research (Bluhm et al., 2011; Pratt, 2009; Rynes and Gephart, 2004; T.W. Lee, 1999), using figures and matrices to help give clarity and to avoid a dense, narrative presentation of findings. Aware of the tendency to anecdotalism and verification bias (Silverman, 2005), I tested out conceptual ideas using coding counts and spreadsheets; looking for patterns in the data but also returning to the transcripts to examine instances that did not fit with these patterns. At times, the intuitive and creative conceptual thought processes triggered by the qualitative data analysis sat uncomfortably with this concern for rigour and transparency. Ultimately, comparisons with existing theories (CDT, SDT) and discussion with practising managers was a source of some reassurance that the findings "made sense" and that the explanations gave a plausible, while still fallible and incomplete, account of reality (Sayer, 2000).

In conclusion, this research gives fresh insight into management tensions and dilemmas by exploring them from a value conflict perspective. Derived from

systematic analysis of managers' experiential accounts of value conflicts, the findings elucidate the affective, cognitive and behavioural processes involved and their outcomes. By examining the findings in the socio-structural context of the organisation and the management role, the research highlights practical implications for managers and leaders in organisations with strongly espoused values, and contributes an alternative, qualitative approach to values research.

Thesis Appendices

Appendix A Definitions of values

Author	Definitions
Kluckhorn (1951)	<p>“Values are the termini of our intentions. We never fully achieve them” (p.76).</p> <p>“A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable that influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of actions.” (p.395)</p> <p>Some values are “only partially or occasionally verbalized and in some instances must be inferential constructs on the part of the observer”.</p> <p>An implicit value is “almost always potentially expressible in rational language. Values are “eminently discussable”. (p.397)</p> <p>There is a “union of reason and feeling inherent in the word value” (p.400).</p> <p>“Conceptions of the desirable are not limited to proximate or ultimate goals. Ways of acting are also valued, whether the act itself be conceived as a means or as an end” (p.403)</p>
Lewin (1952)	<p>“Values influence behaviour but have not the character of a goal (i.e., of a force field). For example, the individual does not try to “reach” the value of fairness, but fairness is “guiding” his behaviour. It is probably correct to say that values determine which types of activity have a positive and which have a negative valence for an individual in a given situation. In other words, values are not force fields but they “induce” force fields” (p.41).</p>
Allport (1955) Allport (1961)	<p>“The healthy adult...develops under the influence of value schemata whose fulfilment he regards as desirable even though it may never be completely attained. In agreement with such schemata he selects his perceptions, consults his conscience, inhibits irrelevant or contrary lines of conduct, drops and forms subsystems of habits according as they are dissonant or harmonious with his commitments” (p.75-6).</p> <p>“A value is a belief upon which a man acts by preference. It is thus a cognitive, a motor, and above all, a deeply propiate disposition” (p.454).</p>

Appendix A

Author	Definitions
Rokeach (1973)	<p>“A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (p.5).</p> <p>Values transcendently guide actions and judgements; are not tied to any specific object or situation; are abstract beliefs about modes of conduct and ideal terminal goals. Value priorities occupy central positions in cognitive networks of attitudes and beliefs.</p> <p>“Values are cognitive representations and transformations of needs...not only of individual needs but also of societal and institutional demands...we must be cautious in how we infer needs from values because values are not isomorphic with needs” (p.20)</p>
Connor and Becker (1979)	<p>“...global beliefs about desirable end states...[which underlie] attitudinal and behavioural processes” (p.72).</p>
Williams (1979)	<p>A core phenomenon is the presence of “criteria or standards of preference”. All values have “cognitive, affective and directional aspects” (p.16).</p>
Schwartz and Bilsky (1987)	<p>“According to the literature, values are (a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviours, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance” (p.551).</p>
Schwartz (1994, p.21)	<p>“I define values as desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity.”</p>
Bilsky and Schwartz (1994)	<p>“Values are criteria individuals use to judge the desirability of behaviour, people and events” (p.165).</p> <p>“Values vary in terms of the importance that individuals attribute to particular goals” (p.165).</p> <p>“Values refer to the individual’s intentional goals that are available to consciousness” (p.165).</p>

Author	Definitions
Feather (1996)	<p>“I regard values as beliefs about desirable or undesirable ways of behaving or about the desirability or otherwise of general goals” (p.222).</p> <p>Value systems are abstract cognitive structures or “associative networks” which are linked to the affective system and organise past experience.</p>
Meglino and Ravlin (1998)	<p>“...a person’s internalised belief about how he or she should or ought to behave” (p.354)</p>
Rohan (2000)	<p>“The value system is a stable meaning-producing superordinate cognitive structure” (p.257).</p>
Rohan and Zanna (2001)	<p>“Values are defined as implicit organizers of judgements about the capacity of things, people, actions, and activities to satisfy requirements and desires, and value systems are integrated structures within which there are stable and predictable relations among values. Personal value system structures exist as a result of a universal desire to live the best way possible; social value system structures exist because living well requires that people understand their social environments” (p.467).</p>
Verplanken and Holland (2002)	<p>“We consider values as cognitions that may define a situation...elicit goals...and guide action” (p.435).</p>
Hitlin (2003)	<p>Values deal intrinsically with issues of cognition and of feeling. Values are “emotion-laden conceptions of the desirable” (p.132).</p>

Appendix B Schwartz's universal value types

Value type	Associated motivational goal	Representative values
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources	Social power; Wealth; Authority; Preserving public image; Social recognition
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards	Successful; Ambitious; Capable; Influential; Intelligent; Self-respect
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself	Pleasure; Enjoying life
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life	A varied life; Daring; An exciting life
Self-direction	Independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring	Creativity; Freedom; Independent; Curious; Choosing own goals
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all	Broad-minded; wisdom; A world of beauty; Equality; Unity with nature; A world at peace; Social justice; Inner harmony; Protecting the environment
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact	Honest; Loyal; Helpful; Forgiving; Responsible; True friendship; A spiritual life; Mature love; Meaning in life
Tradition	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self	Respect for tradition; Humble; Accepting my portion in life; Devout; Moderate; Detachment

Appendix B

Value type	Associated motivational goal	Representative values
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms	Self-discipline; Obedient; Politeness; Honouring parents and elders
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, relationships, and self	Family security; National security; Reciprocation of favours Social order; Clean; Healthy; Sense of belonging

Source: Based on Schwartz (1992), Bilsky and Schwartz (1994).

Expanded value types in Schwartz’s refined theory of basic individual values (Schwartz et al., 2012) related to the ten (Schwartz, 1992) value types

19 refined theory value types (Schwartz et al., 2012)	Conceptual definition in terms of motivational goals	10 value types (Schwartz, 1992)
Dominance	Power through exercising control over people	Power
Resources	Power through control of material and social resources	
Face	Security and power through maintaining one’s public image and avoiding humiliation	<i>[Power and security]</i>
Achievement	Success according to social standards	Achievement
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification	Hedonism
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty and change	Stimulation
Self-direction - Thought	Freedom to cultivate one’s own ideas and abilities	Self-direction
Self-direction - Action	Freedom to determine one’s own actions	

19 refined theory value types (Schwartz et al., 2012)	Conceptual definition in terms of motivational goals	10 value types (Schwartz, 1992)
Universalism–concern	Commitment to equality, justice, and protection for all people	Universalism
Universalism–nature	Preservation of natural environment	
Universalism–tolerance	Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself	
Benevolence–dependability	Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the ingroup	Benevolence
Benevolence–caring	Devotion to the welfare of ingroup members	
Tradition	Maintaining and preserving cultural, family, or religious traditions	Tradition
Humility	Recognizing one’s insignificance in the larger scheme of things	<i>[a new, distinct value]</i>
Conformity–rules	Compliance with rules, laws, and formal obligations	Conformity
Conformity–interpersonal	Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people	
Security–personal	Safety in one’s immediate environment	Security
Security–societal	Safety and stability in the wider society	

Source: Based on Schwartz et al.(2012).

Appendix C Revisions to cognitive dissonance theory

As stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3, the academic literature on cognitive dissonance is characterised by a number of proposed revisions to the original theory. A number of these argue that the self plays a critical role in the dissonance process e.g. Aronson (1969, 1969), Steele (1983) and Stone (2001). Interpretations which are relevant to the application of dissonance theory to value conflicts are discussed below, and parallels drawn with concepts with other self-based theories outside the dissonance literature.

Self-consistency and self-affirmation theories

Aronson (1969) argues strongly for the involvement of the self in the dissonance arousal process, and states that dissonance reduction always requires some form of self-justification (Aronson, 1997). According to his self-consistency theory, dissonance occurs when particular self-attributes are threatened by behaviour that is inconsistent with the individual's personal standards or self-expectancies. Because most people have relatively favourable views of themselves, maintaining a consistent self-concept generally implies maintaining a positive view of the self as competent and morally good (ibid.). When dissonance is aroused, the individual will take action to justify the behaviour (such as by changing an attitude) to reduce its inconsistency with the self-concept or self-standard. These two self-motives - to maintain a consistent self-concept and to maintain or enhance one's self-concept - are represented elsewhere in the literature as the need for self-verification (Swann et al., 2003) and self-enhancement (Sedikides and Gregg, 2008).

While self-affirmation theory (Steele, 1988; Steele and Liu, 1983) also views cognitive discrepancies as a threat to a positive self-concept, it states that the self acts as a buffer or resource to counter negative dissonance effects. Affirming an equally important, but unrelated, aspect of the self-concept can restore global self-integrity, even though the original cognitive discrepancy has not been resolved.

Stone et al. (1997) make a distinction between *direct* and *indirect* routes of dissonance reduction, which is evident in these two theories. The direct route focuses on addressing the discrepancy which caused the dissonance to occur (as in self-consistency theory), while the indirect route (proposed in self-affirmation

theory) does not. The two theories also make different predictions about the moderating role of a positive or negative self-concept (operationalised as high or low self-esteem) on dissonance effects. Each theory has been criticised for failing to provide a comprehensive explanation for all potential forms of dissonance arousal and responses (Stone and Cooper, 2001; Harmon-Jones, 2000). Experimental studies have demonstrated that reflecting on the self-concept is not necessary for dissonance to occur (Steele et al., 1993), and that psychological discomfort arising from dissonance can be reduced without involving self-relevant beliefs (Kidd and Berkowitz, 1976).

Self-regulation and self-standards explanations

Arguably, dissonance performs an adaptive, self-regulatory function, because it motivates the individual to make decisions and take effective, unconflicted action (Harmon-Jones, 2000). McGregor et al. (2001, p. 484) suggest that cognitive inconsistency is aversive “because it implies the prospect of self-regulatory breakdown”. The authors identify two indirect or compensatory strategies in their experimental research on responses to personal dilemmas. In the face of uncertainty, subjects adopted more extreme attitudes to an unrelated social issue, or more clearly defined value priorities and increased commitment to projects consistent with their values and identity. The authors interpret this as an attempt to find certainty in another area or by affirming one’s sense of self. Both strategies reduce dissonance indirectly, without resolving the source of the discrepancy.

Stone and Cooper (2001) base their integrative, “self-standards” interpretation on a dynamic, multi-faceted view of the self, drawing on the idea of the working self-concept (Markus and Wurf, 1987) and multiple self-representations as motivational standards (Higgins, 1987; Markus and Nurius, 1986). Thus, the involvement and function performed by the self is determined by the relevance, valence and accessibility of particular self-attributes or self-representations in the working self-concept. Dissonance arises when an individual assesses his or her behaviour as falling short of “some meaningful criterion of judgement” (Stone and Cooper, 2001, p. 228). This may be *idiographic* (based on self-expectancies and personal standards of what is good or bad, moral or immoral, wise or foolish) or *nomothetic* (based on perceived normative standards or others’ expectations, which are not moderated by self-esteem). Once dissonance is aroused, they predict that the self may act flexibly either as a *resource* that can help buffer threats to the self-concept

(in line with self-affirmation theory), or as a *standard* against which the individual judges his or her behaviour (as in self-consistency theory).

Insights from other self-theories

In the light of the above discussion, the view adopted in the present study is that the self plays a significant role in dissonance arousal and reduction, providing that aspects of the self-concept are accessible or are made salient. Support for this perspective is found in a number of self-based theories outside the dissonance framework. Aronson (1997, p. 29) remarks on those which are “strikingly reminiscent” of [his interpretation of] dissonance theory, in combining cognitive and motivational perspectives with a central emphasis on the self-concept; including self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987), self-verification theory (Swann et al., 2003; Swann et al., 1988; Swann, 1984) and self-evaluation maintenance theory (Tesser, 1988).

Self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) and Marcus and Nurius’ (1986) concept of current and possible self-representations align with Aronson’s (1969) view that the self operates as an evaluative and motivational standard in the dissonance process. The “ought self” (Higgins, 1987), which refers to one’s own or significant others’ normative standards or expectations, features in Stone and Cooper’s (2001) account of dissonance arousal. The negative affective response resulting from a discrepancy between actual and ideal or ought self-representations clearly parallels the effects of cognitive discrepancy in dissonance theory.

As noted earlier, the self-verification motive (Swann et al., 2003) has similarities with Aronson’s (1969) concept of self-consistency. However, others assert the primacy of the motive to maintain or enhance the self-concept (Sedikides and Gregg, 2008; Sedikides, 1993). Tesser (1988) similarly emphasises the motive to maintain a positive self-evaluation, although focusing on social comparison processes. The desirability of self-consistency and moral and adaptive capability is perhaps also reflected in SDT’s emphasis on the motivational need for competence, and the desirability of an integrated self-concept (Ryan and Deci, 2003).

Appendix D Manager interview format

Introduction and setting expectations:

Thank for agreeing to take part in the interview:

We have about an hour scheduled – is that ok with you?

Introduce myself:

My background was as a project manager and HR manager in private and public sector. Now doing a PhD research degree in the School of Management at University of Southampton

Background to the research:

To explore the challenges faced by managers in balancing the demands of their role and the organisation with their personal values.

The project involves interviews with managers from a small number of private sector organisations over the coming 6-8 months. I'm interviewing around ten managers in [organisation], and also meeting [senior managers and HR representative] to get a bit more background about the organisation itself.

Confidentiality:

As noted in the briefing note that [name of HR contact] sent you, these interviews are confidential – that is, none of the managers or organisations will be identified in the write up for my thesis.

I will provide a practitioner summary of the findings to each organisation, and of course you will be welcome to have a copy, but again nothing will be reported in a way that can identify you as an individual.

Format of the interview and tape recording:

So over the course of the discussion I'd like to understand more about your actual experiences as a manager at [organisation], and towards the end I will ask you to complete a short values questionnaire.

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What I normally do is tape record the interview, so I can focus on what you are saying rather than taking extensive notes, and that also allows me to make an accurate transcription of the discussion afterwards. I will send you a copy of that so you can confirm that it is an accurate record of the discussion. Is that all right with you? Thank you – I'll set it going. [START TAPE RECORDER]

Is there anything you would like to ask before we get started?

Do of course let me know if you want to pause or stop the interview at any time, it is entirely up to you.

Role and background information:

Can we start by talking a little bit about your role and background.

How long have you been at [organisation]? Was all of that time in management?
[previous role/career background]

Can you tell me about your current role?

[What exactly is involved? What are the main calls on your time? How many people do you have reporting to you? Who do you report in to? How much of your time is spent out with clients?]

Organisational values and expectations:

How would you describe [name] as an organisation?

[how would you describe its culture? What makes you say that? How does that come across in practice?]

How would you describe its values as an organisation?

[clarification - values – what is ultimately important to the organisation, in the way it deals with its staff, its clients, how it goes about its core activities]

[Name of HR contact] gave me the formal list of [organisation] values. [*values list as aide-memoire*] How do they translate into practice e.g. how staff are dealt with – such as promotion/appraisal and development/communication from directors? Can you give an example of that?

What do you think are [organisation's] expectations of you as a manager?

[how are these conveyed in practice, on a day to day basis?]

What about your employees' expectations of you?

[can you give me an example?]

Are there other expectations or demands that you make on yourself in how carry out your role as a manager?

[what are the implications in practice?]

Manager experience of value conflicts:

In this part of the interview, what I'm particularly interested in is situations when managers have felt a real inner conflict between what they are expected to do as part of the management role and their own values, and how they deal with these sorts of really difficult situations or dilemmas.

Does this fit in with any of your experiences at [organisation]?

[Prompt if not clear about what is being asked for:]

For instance, many managers that I speak to find it difficult if they are asked to implement changes or working practices that they disagree with, or if they are caught in the middle between their own team members and the organisational expectations. I'm very interested in how that makes them feel and what they do in those sorts of situations

Thinking then about your experience as a manager at [organisation], which situation would you say stands out as really significant, something that had a big impact on you as an individual or as a manager?

[it's ok to take a while to think about this]

[if no] What would you say has been the most challenging situation you have had to deal with while you have been a manager at [organisation]?

What I would really like to do is talk in depth about that incident.

Incident 1

Taking the example you gave me, would you tell me about the events that led up to the situation?

Example prompt questions:

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Who was involved

When exactly did this happen – period of time?

How did this make you feel at the time?

Did you discuss the issue with anyone?

What exactly did you do? How did go about doing this?

What was most important to you about how you handled the situation? What do you think was most important to the organisation/employee?

How did you feel about how you dealt with the situation? Others?

How did it make you feel as a person / privately?

How much choice do you feel you had in how you responded to this situation?

What was the reaction?

What were the implications for the people involved? ..for the organisation?

To what extent would you describe this incident as presenting a conflict with your own values? What kinds of values do you think were involved (own values, other's values)?

Thinking about the incident in hindsight, how do you feel about it now?

Incident 2

Have there been other events which caused a significant dilemma for you as a manager, or when others' expectations of you caused a clash with your personal values? (other value conflict situations?). Which do you think has been of most significance to you? Could you tell me about that? [*prompts as before...*]

Thank you, this is really useful to my research / I really appreciate your openness.

Is there anything else you would like to add to what we discussed?

TURN OFF TAPE RECORDER

Values survey

For this last part of the time, can I ask you to complete a short values questionnaire? It will only take a few minutes. It is a standard questionnaire, widely used in research. I'd be grateful if you could answer the questions as best as possible. It just gives me some additional data to help guide the analysis.

The format consists of brief descriptions of typical characteristics of people. You have to read each description and then decide how much each description is like or not like you. [*show questionnaire*]. As you can see, you are asked to indicate this on a scale ranging from low (not like me at all) to high (very much like me).

What I'd like you to do is work through this reasonably quickly. I'll just be reading through some notes, but do give me a shout if you have any questions as you go through...[*manager completes questionnaire*].

How did you find the questionnaire?

Close

Thank you. Is there anything you want to ask me before we finish?

Could you give me your email address – then I will send you your questionnaire results, if you would like them [*check*], and the transcription of the interview once I have typed it up, just so you can verify its accuracy. This will be in a few weeks' time. In the meantime, please do of course let me know if you have any further thoughts or questions about what we discussed.

Thank you very much indeed for sparing this time. It has been really useful to my research.

Appendix E List of organisational documents accessed

Cox Consulting
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structure chart 2. Mission and values (part of marketing brochure) 3. Development Charter 4. Performance Appraisal form 5. 360 Feedback Questionnaire 6. Core Competency Framework 7. Job description template 8. Consultancy Job Bands 9. Management Training Course: Managing the Cox Consulting Way 10. Capability Statement 11. Induction letter 12. Stress Management policy 13. Working hours and work/life balance guidelines 14. Website

Insko
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structure chart 2. Career Choices Framework (CCF) 3. CCF employee presentation 4. Career levels and competencies 5. Performance and Total Reward Guide for Managers 6. Performance Review summary 7. Performance Review moderation (manager training presentation) 8. Values-based behavioural framework 9. Cultural survey feedback presentation 10. Website

Optico

1. Structure chart
2. Behavioural competencies descriptions by level
3. Performance review guide and form
4. Global induction presentation
5. Website

Smilecare

1. Structure charts
2. "Engaging employees" presentation by CEO
3. Intranet article: What is required of a manager?
4. Leadership attitudes pyramid
5. Intranet: Vision and values
6. Recognition and reward system - policy summary
7. Smilecare Behaviours chart
8. Website

Appendix F Outline coding framework

Level 1 codes	Level 2 codes (child nodes)	Description
Organisation context ORG_LAYER	<i>Organisational contextual information, including general expectations of employees, culture, circumstances and organisational values (espoused or in use)</i>	
	Organisational values ORG_ESP_VAL	Organisational values: Formal, espoused values of the organisation – likely source is organisational documents and “official” values cited by respondents
	Organisational expectations ORG_EXP_GEN	General organisational expectations of [all] employees
	Culture/climate/v alues ORG_CULTURE AND VALUES	Culture/climate/perceived or enacted values: What it’s like to work here, what it’s like as an organisation The type of organisation it is. Individual respondent’s perception of the organisation’s values and expectations in practice/in use (enacted values).
	Context/circumst ances ORG_CONTEXT	Context: current business circumstances, pressures, events, new initiatives etc.
Role context ROLE_LAYER	<i>Management role information, including formal or informal management responsibilities and challenges, organisational or senior management expectations of managers, and the role demands and obligations felt by managers themselves</i>	
	Relationship with manager MGR_REL	The manager’s relationship with his or her manager – what are they like, how they get on, the nature of their interaction
	View of job JOB_VIEW	The manager’s attitude towards his or her job – e.g. enjoys it, finds it stressful, challenging etc.
	Organisation’s	Organisational expectations of the management

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Level 1 codes	Level 2 codes (child nodes)	Description
	expectations of the management role ROLE_EXP_ORG	role: Organisational demands and expectations of those in management roles (sources: senior manager and HR interviews, see also organisational documents)
	Personal role demands and felt obligations ROLE_EXP_SELF	Role demands and obligations from manager's perspective: respondent's personal view of the role obligations.
	Perceived expectations ROLE_EXP_OTHERS	Other people's expectations of the manager role, perceived by the respondent manager, e.g. employees or his or her manager.
Individual context IND_LAYER	<i>Personal values, needs and sense of self (self-based descriptions – “the sort of person I am”)</i>	
	Personal values IND_VAL AND NEEDS	Personal values and needs: Ways of behaving or goals/ends that are personally important or desirable; guiding principles, personal standards with which to judge themselves and others (include “I ought” or “I should” statements, the “right thing to do”); things that are important in life (<i>example – meeting customer or organisational expectations, being honest, always do my best</i>)
	Self-descriptions IND_SELF	Self-descriptions: Sense of self; who I am, what I am like, the kind of person I am, self at work and/or at home
	Circumstances IND_CIRCS	Personal circumstances: Information such as family, marital status, career or life stage, interests, health, background.

Level 1 codes	Level 2 codes (child nodes)	Description
Value conflict incidents VC_INC		A description of a value conflict incident. "A psychological tension or inner dilemma experienced by managers when their personal values and priorities are at odds with the values, demands and expectations of the organisation or others."
	Type of value conflict incident VC_TYPE	<p>Broadly, what sort of value conflict is it? Which main parties or value systems are involved?</p> <p>VC_MGR-ORG Manager-organisation: A situation where the manager feels under pressure from the organisation/senior manager to do something that he or she does not agree with or finds personally difficult (e.g. implement a policy, support a change, defend a decision, make someone redundant)</p> <p>VC_MGR-EMP Manager-employee: A situation where an employee's attitude or behaviour does not align with the manager's expectations or standards</p> <p>VC_MGR-ROLE There is a felt conflict between the manager's personal values and his or her perception of the obligations of the role (that is, what he/she thinks is expected of a manager).</p> <p>VC_NONE Described as a difficult or challenging situation but not meeting the criteria for a value conflict (i.e. no inner dilemma or turmoil AND no conflict between personal priorities/values and values/expectations of organisation or others).</p>
	Experience of value conflict VC_EXP	Experience of the value conflict. How the manager feels when the conflict occurs. The manager's reaction when a value conflict is experienced (e.g. tense, upset, uneasy, other feelings?). The initial affective, emotional reaction
	Response to value conflicts	Response to the value conflict. Behavioural or cognitive strategies employed in response to a

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Level 1 codes	Level 2 codes (child nodes)	Description
	VC_RESP	value conflict incident. How the manager “deals” with the situation.
	Response justification VC_RESP_JUST	Justification or rationale for the response strategy adopted. Normally to address questions like: why did you decide to act that way?; why was it important to do that?; what was going through your mind...?
	Outcomes of the response strategy VC_RESP_OUTCO MES	<p>Outcomes of the response for the individual, organisation or others. Includes actual or felt outcomes.</p> <p>RESP_OUT_IND Response outcomes for individual manager</p> <p>RESP_OUT_ORG Response outcomes for organisation</p> <p>RESP_OUT_OTH Any other outcomes</p>

Appendix G Portrait Values Questionnaire

The use of the Schwartz Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ; Schwartz et al., 2001) as a data collection method was described in Chapter 4 (Section 4.6.5, p. 95). This appendix describes the format of the PVQ and how it was scored. It also provides additional profile information about the respondent group by commenting on the scores by value type, gender and manager level. The PVQ scores contributed to the manager-level analysis in Chapter 8.

Scoring

The value survey comprises 40 questions with a six-point response scale. Respondents are asked to read brief descriptions of typical characteristics of people and rate the extent to which the characteristic applies to them. Example items are:

- Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to them. They like to do things their own original way.
- It is very important to them to show their abilities. They want people to admire what they do.
- They like to take risks. They are always looking for adventures.
- It's very important to them to help people around them. They want to care for other people's well-being.

Each question therefore attracts a response in the range 1 (lowest) to 6 (highest). Four of the questions relate to each Schwartz value type. The questionnaire is scored by averaging the responses for the relevant four questions to derive a profile score for each value type (Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity and Security).

Value survey data was available for 40 of the 42 respondents (26 first-line, 10 middle and 6 senior managers). For analysis purposes, scores were designated high, medium or low as follows:

- HIGH: Greater than or equal to 4.5 (4.5 - 6)
- MEDIUM: 2.6 - 4.4
- LOW: Less than or equal to 2.5 (1 - 2.5)

Appendix H

Respondent group scores

The following points summarise the value priorities of the respondent group:

- The greatest proportion of managers had a HIGH values score for Benevolence (83%) and Self-Direction (78%).
- Around half the managers had a HIGH values score for Achievement and Hedonism.
- The values with the lowest number of HIGH scores were Tradition (5%) and Power (10%).
- 20% of managers scored LOW on Power, and 40% scored LOW on Traditionalism.

Based on these scores, it appears that the managers in the study tended towards the Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change motivational dimensions rather than the Conservation and Self-enhancement dimensions of the Schwartz (1992) circular values model (Figure 2, p. 21).

PVQ scores by gender

The breakdown by gender did not show any large variation in value scores.

PVQ scores by manager level

First-line managers:

- Compared with the whole group scores, a similar proportion of first-line managers had HIGH scores for Benevolence, and a slightly lower proportion had HIGH Self-Direction (69%)
- 50% scored HIGH on Security and 38% scored HIGH on Conformity (both greater than the whole group profile)

Middle managers:

- Only 25% scored HIGH on Achievement, and 0% scored HIGH on Power.

Senior managers:

- 100% (6 managers) scored HIGH on Benevolence and Self-direction.
- 0% scored HIGH on Power.

The breakdown of scores by manager level showed that at first-line level, more managers gave a high priority to Security and Conformity compared with the whole group scores. In relation to their roles, this may be expressed as a willingness to follow organisational processes and behavioural norms, and a

concern for job security. It is perhaps surprising, given the higher status of their roles, that a lower proportion of middle managers gave high priority to Achievement, and that no senior or middle managers gave a high priority to Power.

Appendix H Coded interview transcript extract

The following extract from an interview transcript contains an Insko first-line manager's account of a value conflict (VC23) between her and her previous manager. She described him as a bully, and as a new supervisor she had felt under pressure to cope with the new role and the workload, to meet her targets and to remain "professional" towards her team. She felt that her values and work ethic of trying to do a good job clashed with his strong achievement drive, which in her view led him to put his reporting teams under undue pressure to meet their targets and to blame her when the targets were not met. The situation was not resolved until the department was re-organised and her manager was moved to a different role.

The transcript has been annotated to show how it was coded using NVivo. The left-hand column in the table below contains the broad coding categories that break the incident down into its component parts (see Figure 11, p. 125) and the detailed, 'in vivo' codes. These codes correspond to **Steps 1** and **2** of the incident coding process described in Chapter 6, p. 127 (and illustrated in Figure 13). The right-hand column shows the merged/aggregated codes (**Step 3**) and the conceptual clusters to which they were allocated (**Step 4**).

BROAD CODING CATEGORIES, <i>'in vivo' sub-codes & (coder notes)</i>	Transcript extract - VC23 (I: = interviewer, R: = respondent)	Merged/aggregated codes & <i>conceptual clusters: responses (R), justifications (J) & outcomes (O)</i>
VC TYPE= Manager-employee (conflict here between respondent and her own manager)	R: My previous line manager...he was a bully and he doesn't understand he wasn't there to support me. I was a brand new supervisor and I had so much to take on and so much to learn and you know he didn't give me the support I needed to achieve the results I needed to achieve. And then he would report up to the next manager up basically and put a lot of the blame on to me so it was a sort like well I didn't achieve my targets because [MANAGER NAME] didn't produce the work. Or her team we have got red against all of our reported targets because she didn't lead the team to get them to do that and things like that which I didn't find very motivating	

Appendix H

BROAD CODING CATEGORIES, 'in vivo' sub-codes & (coder notes)	<p>Transcript extract - VC23 (I: = interviewer, R: = respondent)</p>	<p>Merged/aggregated codes & <i>conceptual clusters: responses (R), justifications (J) & outcomes (O)</i></p>
<p>REACTION <i>Demotivated</i></p> <p>REACTION <i>Debilitated</i></p> <p>REACTION <i>Undermined</i></p> <p>(her manager's achievement / self-enhancement values)</p> <p>(evidence of value conflict)</p>	<p>and I didn't find very good and it is not very supportive. You know I have got a team of fifteen people. Some are temp some are permanent. I have got to manage the work everything and and I was new to the job. So you weren't getting the support and yes for me that was very that was very debilitating. Sort of make or break type stuff like ok I am obviously I am not cut out to be a supervisor that's what I thought. I thought I wasn't cut out to be a supervisor and that is the way I was being made to feel well actually you know I was challenged on that [in my] performance review - maybe you should consider another job role. Things like that and I started thinking oh hold on a second this is this can't be. It has got to be more to it and</p> <p>I: And what was driving that your manager's behaviour what was important to him do you think at the end of the day?</p> <p>R: I think he was sort of new to the company and he had he was trying to make he had his own agenda. He was brought in as a supervisor and he had been given a promotion not long after he actually became you know to join the company and I think that was his agenda. That was his driving force. He was going to take himself up the ladder and he didn't care who he was going to get or knock down on his way up sort of thing. And</p> <p>I: So he was very keen on progression</p> <p>R: Everything yes and I think everything drove that. His targets I mean his behaviour was just absolutely appalling.</p> <p>I: And so was there a sort of clash of values</p>	<p>Worried/upset</p> <p>Distressed</p> <p>Worried/upset</p>

BROAD CODING CATEGORIES, 'in vivo' sub-codes & (coder notes)	Transcript extract - VC23 (I: = interviewer, R: = respondent)	Merged/aggregated codes & <i>conceptual clusters: responses (R), justifications (J) & outcomes (O)</i>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>Do a good job</i></p> <p>(manager's values)</p>	<p>there between you and him do you think?</p> <p>R: Absolutely</p> <p>I: What was most important to you in that situation do you think?</p> <p>R: Well the thing is for me I wanted to do a good job so I would push myself really really hard and I would make sure that I was doing everything to the best of my ability but then it would seem like the best of my ability was never good enough.</p> <p>I: What was driving that, your wanting to do it to the best of your ability?</p>	<p>(J) <i>Self-focused legitimacy</i> Important to me</p>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>I know I could do it</i></p>	<p>R: Because I knew I could. I knew that it didn't matter what anybody was saying. I knew I could I knew I could be not a wonder supervisor but I knew I could be a good supervisor. And also I knew that I had my team support you see my team. I used</p>	<p>(J) <i>Self-focused legitimacy</i> Important to me</p>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>Team was supporting me</i></p>	<p>to work as part of them I was within the team and I got a promotion to supervisor and my team supported me from the beginning. They were there to make sure that I got as much support as I could but they could see that what was coming back down was not right not fair not true and I wanted to succeed for not just myself but</p>	<p>(J) <i>Others-focused legitimacy</i> Don't let others down</p>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>For the good of the team</i></p>	<p>for my team's sake. I wanted to ...I thought well now I have got to get past this man somehow and well it didn't happen just like that I did crack in the end and I did have to</p>	<p>(J) <i>Others-focused legitimacy</i> Maintain team morale</p>
<p>OUTCOME <i>Unable to cope</i></p>	<p>seek advice from HR and from his line manager.</p> <p>I: So when he put you under pressure and set you a really tight deadline or whatever what was your response? How did you try and</p>	<p>Personal outcome Negative</p>

Appendix H

BROAD CODING CATEGORIES, 'in vivo' sub-codes & (coder notes)	<p>Transcript extract - VC23 (I: = interviewer, R: = respondent)</p>	<p>Merged/aggregated codes & <i>conceptual clusters: responses (R), justifications (J) & outcomes (O)</i></p>
<p>RESPONSE <i>Got on with it and did it</i></p>	<p>deal with that?</p> <p>R: I just got on with it and did it. And that was in the beginning months eventually I started to realise that this isn't working for me and I can't continue doing this but I didn't want to look like I was not coping or ... making my situation worse. So what I started to do was go outside of him so</p>	<p>(R) Values confusion Unresolved compliance</p>
<p>RESPONSE <i>Avoid situation</i></p>	<p>instead of going to him for support or problems or help with whatever it was he was giving me I was going to other managers and asking them. Saying look this my audit points these are this is what I have to do but I don't understand how to do it or I don't know where to go for this information or I don't know how to produce it or present it and they would say oh no</p>	<p>(R) Values confusion Avoid issue</p>
<p>RESPONSE <i>Seek support from others</i></p>	<p>you just have to do this this and this and produce it. It was just I wasn't being given that support in the middle...It was very hard to be honest I tried to I tried not to let my team know. I am not I don't come back to the table and say ah that manager this this and this.</p>	<p>(R) Values confusion Seek moral support from others</p>
<p>RESPONSE <i>Put on an act</i></p>	<p>I: Really</p> <p>R: No I never did that.</p> <p>I: Why not do you think?</p>	<p>(R) Values suspension Put on an act</p>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>Be professional</i></p>	<p>R: Because I don't think it is professional I think it is quite unprofessional because the thing is they still have to report to him in a way you know he is the next manager up. So the way that it works is in my absence or</p>	<p>(J) Role-based legitimacy Part of the job</p>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>For the good of the team</i></p>	<p>if you re not happy with me you need to report to him. And I didn't really want to influence anybody else's working</p>	<p>(J) Others-based legitimacy <i>For the good of the team</i></p>

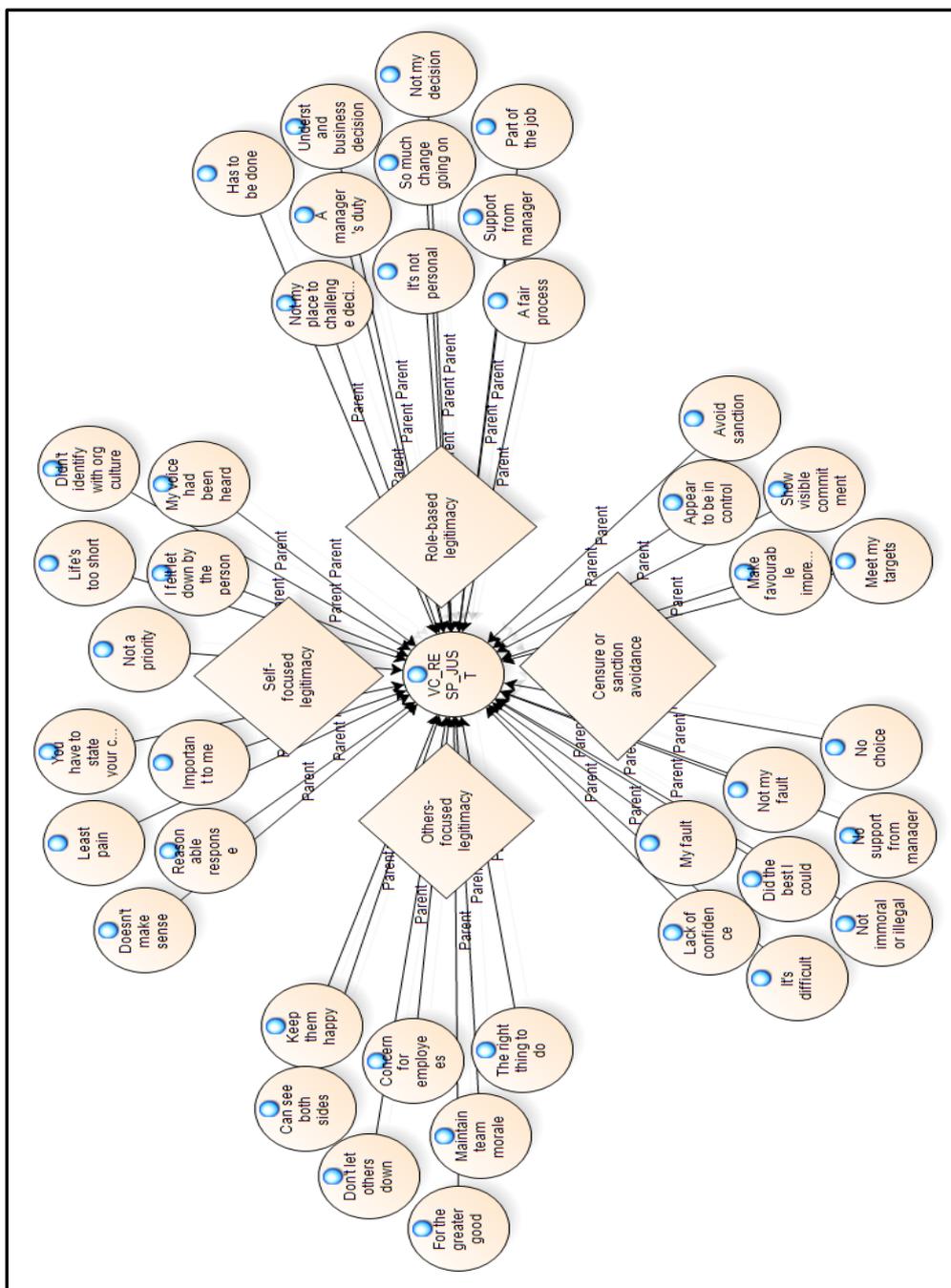
BROAD CODING CATEGORIES, 'in vivo' sub-codes & (coder notes)	Transcript extract - VC23 (I: = interviewer, R: = respondent)	Merged/aggregated codes & <i>conceptual clusters: responses (R), justifications (J) & outcomes (O)</i>
<p>JUSTIFICATION <i>Team morale</i></p> <p>OUTCOME EMPLOYEE (protected team morale so no negative impact)</p> <p>OUTCOME PERSONAL <i>Upset and demoralised</i></p> <p>OUTCOME PERSONAL <i>Mental turmoil</i></p>	<p>relationships with him in case mine was purely a conflict of like personal conflict. Possibly because the way I am my strengths or my values or my outspokenness or whatever is just he doesn't like that but that doesn't mean that somebody else in my team who doesn't have those same characteristics as me might get along fine with him...I didn't because I don't think it is good. My team needed to stay positive they needed to stay motivated they needed just to know that there are people out there who appreciate the hard work they are doing. The challenges they face on a daily basis and if I had let that negativity come into my team well I think half of them would be gone now.</p> <p>I: But what was the impact on you of sort of maintaining that sort of professional stance on you personally</p> <p>R: It was very hard it was exceptionally hard. I didn't enjoy being in that position at all because generally I am quite relaxed and care free and quite I encourage communication within my team I encourage a bit of fun within the team we can have a good laugh we can we all go out together. You know those kind of things and also during the day you don't have to sit there quiet at your desk you can actually talk to your colleague about what you did last night or what you are planning for the weekend. Because I know at the end of the day you are still doing your work and you are producing good results so I encourage that but that is how I would But during that time I was a lot quieter I never spoke to anybody I was so busy going through this mental turmoil. And trying to remain professional and trying to deal with it professionally</p>	<p><i>(J) Others-based legitimacy</i> Maintain team morale</p> <p>Employee outcome Positive</p> <p>Personal outcome Negative</p> <p>Personal outcome Negative</p>

Appendix H

BROAD CODING CATEGORIES, <i>'in vivo' sub-codes & (coder notes)</i>	Transcript extract - VC23 (I: = interviewer, R: = respondent)	Merged/aggregated codes & <i>conceptual clusters: responses (R), justifications (J) & outcomes (O)</i>
OUTCOME SITUATIONAL (no change resulted from manager's response)	<p>because that is just the way that was my work ethic really that came out it just doesn't seem professional really.</p> <p>I: And what happened in the end?</p> <p>R: So what happened in the end was because of [PROJECT NAME] I reported directly to his manager so he was just taken out and put somewhere else and then they didn't replace him.</p>	Situational outcome No resolution

Appendix I Example of clustered codes

The model below was created in NVivo during the incident coding and analysis process. The sub-codes (“child nodes”) capturing Value Conflict Justifications are shown in the circles linking into the central Justification “parent node”. The researcher has arranged the codes into conceptual clusters (shown in the diamond-shape boxes that represent different bases of legitimacy (self-focused, others-focused, role-focused and censure/sanction avoidance).



Appendix J Presentation of research

Conference papers and presentations

- When values don't fit: how managers deal with conflicts between personal and organisational values.
British Academy of Management Conference, University of Cardiff, 11-13 September 2012.
- Personal values and organisational demands: exploring leadership dilemmas from a values perspective.
International Studying Leadership Conference, University of the West of England, Bristol, 11-13 December 2011.
- Dilemmas and choices: managers' responses to value conflicts at work.
Irish Academy of Management Conference, National College of Ireland, Dublin, 1-2 September 2011.
- Holding the line? A study of managers' responses to value conflicts*.
British Academy of Management Conference, Aston Business School, Birmingham, 13-15 September 2011.
*Best Development Paper award
- Examining managers' responses to value conflicts at work: A methodological "research conversation" paper for discussion with Mark Easterby-Smith.
British Academy of Management Doctoral Symposium, Aston Business School, Birmingham, 12-13 September 2011.

Articles

- Dealing with inner tensions and dilemmas.
Hummingbird: University of Southampton doctoral research journal, Issue 2, September 2011

Posters

- Leadership challenges and dilemmas: a value conflicts perspective.
International Leadership Association Conference: "Emerging scholars" event. London, 26-28 October 2011

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