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PURPOSE, PRACTICE AND POWER

**A STUDY OF POWER IN THE WORK OF SEVEN HEADS OF FIELD
OFFICES IN THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of
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ABSTRACT

Interest in the power of heads of field offices in the United Nations Organization (UN) began with the researcher's appointment to such a position and with anecdotal suggestions that any explanation of the powers they held would be complex. For these reasons, this study has the research aim of explaining the power of some UN heads of field offices. The study focusses on seven heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Literature searches indicated that no academic study had been made of any UN field work but the searches produced considerable literature on the UN and a wide range of theories about organizations, leadership and power, related issues of ethics and rationality and useful concepts from the work of Weber and Foucault.

The research is interpretive. A case study and an appropriate conceptual framework were designed to reflect both the literature and the three research questions that promote the aim: organizational bureaucracy, organizational capital and frontline work are the guiding concepts. Because case studies may be challenged for possible lack of rigour and for validity, a number of data collection and analysis methods were used to promote reliability: both the data sources and the analysis checks included participants, UNESCO documents and information from other international bodies. Appropriate literature is also used for theoretical analysis.

The results are presented progressively in three chapters, each chapter focussing on one framework concept and its appropriate question. The relevant data are presented and theoretical analysis, including selected concepts from Weber and Foucault, suggests answers to each question posed. The research results suggest that in the organization the participants gain power from UNESCO's intellectual and ethical purpose but are constrained in its use by processes of the bureaucracy, especially its lines of communication. The participants also have considerable power in organizational capital that includes tangible capital of qualifications, experience, skills, high level of position, the resources of the post in which they work and the intangible capital of the assumptions they hold about their work. At the frontline, although constrained by bureaucratic processes that limit their time for programme work, participants report valuable contributions to UNESCO's development and advocacy work: they gain power from proximity to the countries they serve and from their ethical motivation. They also gain some power in the freedom of distance from their headquarters, thus weakening the possible double jeopardy by being in a class-at-the-frontline and being in a group-not-in-headquarters. The final chapter brings all suggestions together and examines participants' power for sources (as rights or capacities), limitations (as control or domination) and agency (with compliance and resistance); when these perspectives are combined in a circle of power, the study suggests a Janus syndrome in which participants paradoxically are powerful/powerless agents,

sited as they are between the power provision and constraints of both their bureaucracy and the governments and other bodies with whom they work.

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Edna Tait

CONTENTS

Abstract		ii
Acknowledgements		iv
List of Figures		xi
List of Appendices		xii
Abbreviations		xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH AIM		
Introduction		1
Research background		2
	Challenges	3
Research aim		4
Research site		5
	Field offices	6
	Heads of offices	6
Research questions		7
	Guiding questions	7
Research context:	Contradictions	8
	Uncertainties	9
	Access	9
	Timing	10
Focus on power		10
Assumptions		12
Ethical issues		14
Contribution to knowledge		17
Structure of the report		17
Definitions		18
Conclusion		20
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE SURVEY		
Introduction		21
The United Nations:	General	23
	Organization	23
	Practices	24
	Politics	25
UNESCO:	External literature	26
	Internal literature	27

Organization theory:	General	29
	Varied approaches	30
	Mechanistic: tasks	31
	Contingency: processes	32
	Multidirectional: contexts	33
Leadership theory:	General	36
	Varied approaches	37
	Tasks and traits	38
	Processes	39
	Multidirectional contexts	39
Power:	General	41
	Definition and sources	41
	Relationships	43
	Compliance and resistance	44
	Weber: rationalization and ethics	46
	Foucault: knowledge, power and resistance	51
Conclusion		58

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction		61
Interpretive research		61
Conceptual framework:	General	63
	Organizational bureaucracy	63
	Organizational capital	67
	Frontline work	70
Methodology:	General	74
	Design	75
	Validity	77
	Participants	78
	Data collection and analysis	80
Conclusion		86

CHAPTER FOUR: PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Introduction		89
Lines of communication		89
Purpose:	General	90
	UNESCO's vision	91
	An intellectual and ethical mandate	92
Organizational Structure:	Member states: General	94

	General conference and executive board	96
	National commissions	98
	Permanent delegates	100
	Complexities of member states roles	101
Organizational structure:	Bureaucracy: General	102
	Director General	103
	Headquarters	104
	Field offices	115
	Summary of bureaucratic complexities	118
Theoretical analysis:	General	119
	Purpose	120
	Structure	123
	Bureaucracy	129
	Lines of communication	134
	Overview	136
	Final view of UNESCO's organization	137
	Conclusion	138
CHAPTER FIVE: PRACTICE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL		
	Introduction	141
	The concept of organizational capital	142
Tangible capital:	General	142
	Personal assets	143
	Appointment assets	144
	Assets developed with time	147
	Power potential of tangible capital	151
Intangible capital:	General	151
	Constitutional assumptions	153
	Bureaucratic assumptions	158
	Field office assumptions	166
	Power potential of intangible capital	169
	Summary of organizational capital of heads	170
Theoretical analysis:	General	171
	Leadership: traits	171
	Leadership: skills	172
	Leadership: multi-variable contexts	174
	Leadership theory: positional complexities	176
	Leadership theory: the ethics gap	178
	Leadership: power potential	181
	Conclusion	183

CHAPTER SIX: PRACTICE AND THE FRONTLINE

Introduction		186
Roles and responsibilities:	General	187
	Diplomatic role	189
	Administrative role	191
	Technical role	193
Organizational capital at work:	General	195
	Tangible capital	195
	Intangible capital	196
	A typical day	197
Significant frontline properties:	General	200
	Proximity	201
	Distance	202
	Time	204
	Ethics	205
	Overview of frontline properties	207
Work at the frontline:	General	209
	Most successful work	209
	Most important work	210
	Contributions to UNESCO's vision and mandate	211
	Improving frontline work	212
	Power potential of frontline work	212
Summary		213
Theoretical analysis:	General	213
	Roles and responsibilities	214
	Organizational capital at work	216
	Frontline properties	221
Conclusion		234

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE POWER OF SEVEN HEADS OF FIELD OFFICES IN UNESCO

Introduction		237
Step one:	Sources of power	238
	Power from rights and capacities	239
	Step one overview	247
Step two:	Power limitations	248
	Power limited by control and domination	248
	Step two overview	262
Step three:	Participants' agency	264
	Power as compliance and resistance	264
	Step three overview	275

Step four:	The circle of power	276
	Synthesis	276
	The Janus syndrome	278
	Two fundamental problems	280
Conclusion	Paradoxes	281
	Proposals for improving frontline work	282
	Further problems for study	285
	The future	287
Appendices		289
Bibliography		332

List of Figures

Page

Figure 1	Research Aim	4
2	Conceptual framework	63
3	Organizational capital possibilities	68
4	Appropriate organizational capital for leaders	69
5	Possible leadership work	71
6	Overview of methodology	87
7	Simplified overview of UNESCO's structure and lines of communication	95
8	Organizational structure in mechanistic tradition	124
9	Constitutional assumptions	153
10	Assumptions in the bureaucracy	158
11	Participants' assumptions about their work in field offices	166
12	Overview of time distribution of participants' roles	188
13	Diagrammatic representation of frontline properties	207
14	Step one of participants' power	238
15	Step two of participants' power	248
16	Power sources and limitations in UNESCO's bureaucracy	258
17	Step three of participants' power	265
18	Step four: the circle of power	277
19	The Janus syndrome: the paradox of the power of participant heads	278

List of Appendices		Page
Appendix 1	Diagram of the United Nations Organization	290
Appendix 2	Standard position and post advertisement	291
Appendix 3	Constitution of UNESCO	292
Appendix 4	Organizational chart of UNESCO	297
Appendix 5	Questionnaire One	298
Appendix 6	Questionnaire One synthesis of responses	303
Appendix 7	Questionnaire One response sheet for follow up to synthesis	308
Appendix 8	Questionnaire Two	310
Appendix 9	Questionnaire Two synthesis and response sheet for follow up questions	315
Appendix 10	Outline of semi-structured interview	320
Appendix 11	Guide for observation in offices	321
Appendix 12	Initial collation and follow up analysis of operational and core assumptions	322
Appendix 13	Information sent to participants and to UNESCO	324
Appendix 14	Visa approval from UNESCO for the research	328
Appendix 15	Example of Consent Form	331

ABBREVIATIONS

BFC	UNESCO's Bureau of Field Coordination
DFID	Department for Internal Development (of the United Kingdom)
DG	Director General
D(1) D(2)	Director (level one or two)
FABS	UNESCO's Finance and Budgeting System
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FO	Field office
HRM	UNESCO's Human Resources management
HQ	Headquarters
IGO	International Governmental Organization (eg EEC)
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization (eg Oxfam)
ILO	UN International Labour Organization
IMF	UN International Monetary Fund
IOS	UNESCO's Office for Internal Oversight
Ms/s	Member State(s)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization (eg national community care groups)
Natcoms	UNESCO's National Commissions
PP	UNESCO's Participation Programme
P1, P2 , P3 ...	Professional (level one, two, three ...) *
SISTER	UNESCO's System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and the Evaluation of Results
UN	United Nations Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations Commission for Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	UN World Health Organization

* Not to be confused with this report's system of numbering research participants

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH AIM

INTRODUCTION

Tsunami, desertification, genocide, terrorists, refugees ... whenever a major natural or human disaster occurs the international cry is usually that “The UN should do something”. The United Nations Organization (UN) usually does do something but it rarely satisfies anyone. Books and articles offer a variety of reasons for the perceived failures but most claim that the UN is incompetent, corrupt or elitist-driven and dominated by a few countries’ interests. Some commentaries claim that international bodies such as Oxfam or Save the Children Fund are more efficient and effective in responding to national and global problems and others argue that at times the UN makes worse or hinders projects and progress.

This study does not examine the effectiveness of UN work. Nor did the decision to examine the UN arise because of its negative image. It came from work in one of the UN specialist agencies, an experience that raised questions about the role of field staff in UN work. Since the UN is too big for a single research project, the experience suggested that an examination of one small part of the UN system would be interesting and useful. The selected focus of the study is power, not power itself but some powers of some people in one UN agency between 2003 and 2005.

This chapter explains the preparation for the study. It begins with the general research aim and describes the selection of the research site and participants. The study’s specific focus is explained and in this section assumptions about the study are identified and described. The guiding research questions follow and then aspects of the research context, its contradictions and uncertainties are explained; consideration of ethical issues including insider research are a part of the discussion. The proposed contribution to

knowledge, the structure of the research report and some important definitions complete the chapter.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The second world war of the twentieth century finished in 1945. The victors were determined that another should not be possible and they planned for a world in which justice and development would provide peace for everyone. The term development has a multiplicity of meanings. Corruption, incompetence and famines develop, so too do illnesses and storms. For the founders of the UN, however, development meant progress with improved living conditions and opportunities for better lives for the needy in the world. The United Nations Organization would be more effective than the League of Nations it replaced.

More than half a century has passed since the UN was established. The hope was for independent, peaceful and better lives for all. Space exploration, information and leisure technology, medical knowledge, conservation of cultural and natural heritage sites, trading opportunities and many other aspects of life have developed in innovative and useful ways. Yet peace and development have not come. Genocide in Chile, Rwanda, (the former) Yugoslavia and Indonesia have been as barbaric as that of the Holocaust; military invasions, violent coups and 'troubles' continue much as they have always done. The new kind of world war that began on 11 September 2001 in New York may be called international terrorism but, as with other world wars, it affects everyone directly or indirectly and delays peace and development yet again.

Through all of this, UN staff work, and sometimes die, for development and peace. Many are at the frontline of their UN agency's work and the heads of those field offices are responsible for important projects in usually difficult contexts. They face complex situations in and out of their offices and all are working for the same dream: a just, developed, peaceful world. Once protected by their UN status, some are now targets in the

battlefields of the new world war. Others struggle with natural and human disasters, the growing numbers of refugees or projects to improve health, education, communication, trade, agriculture, water supply and poverty.

The challenges

This study began with three challenges: the selection of a manageable site, the focus in that site and appropriate literature in which to ground the research.

Given the range of development work, researchers have a number of possible research sites. Some look to governments and aspects of their activities. Others study aid agencies or donor agencies or focus on a particular international project or a developing country. For this study the UN was selected and inside that organization just one agency and some of its staff.

The second challenge, the selection of a particular focus for the research, was met by suggestions from people with experience in the UN. Loescher (2001: 3), for example, blames lack of progress on “systematic human rights violations,” and this is echoed by Tomasevski (2003: 1): “Asking *why are people poor?* reveals denials of human rights; the search for answers reveals abuse of power.” The study, therefore, does not examine the controversies that have swirled around the UN since its establishment, the quality of staff, effectiveness of programmes or funds expenditure. Instead, the particular concern is the work of some staff in the selected UN agency and, following Foucault’s advice that power can be productive as well as negative, the study focusses on the power those staff have to promote better lives for people.

A third challenge was the selection and use of literature relevant to the chosen research problem. In this study the wide range of often conflicting theory about leadership was not helpful, a problem that is recognized in the literature itself: “Never have so many laboured so long to say so little,” (Bennis and Nanus, 1985 in

Pugh, 1997: 463). Equally diverse is the literature on organizations and the literature on power. However, since work for peace and development necessarily involves the three interacting areas of organizations, leadership and power, all three fields of theory had to be used to test, challenge or support the results of the study.

RESEARCH AIM

If the UN is important for the spread of development, justice and peace in the world, then an understanding of its work is also important. Research might suggest, for example, ways to improve its processes and practices in a changing and imperfect world. However, the UN is the largest and most complex International Governmental Organization (IGO) in the world (Appendix 1) and its size requires selective rather than total examination. The general goal of this research, therefore, was to focus on one UN agency, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and, within that agency, to select only some of its field offices and only some frontline staff in the selected offices. The focussed aim of the research was to examine the work of some heads of field offices and to develop theory about their power to promote the mandate of their UN agency.

Figure 1: Research aim

Question:	What power do the research participant heads of field offices of a UN agency have to promote the mandate of that agency?
Research focus:	What power do research participant heads have in: (a) UNESCO's organization? (b) person, position and post? (c) actual work?
Theorization:	The power of research participant heads of UNESCO field offices to promote the organization's mandate in the UN.

RESEARCH SITE

UNESCO is one of the specialized agencies of the UN system. It was established in 1945 to support international peace and development by promoting the exchange of knowledge and skills, cultural tolerance, and research in the natural and social sciences. In the UN system it is especially responsible for programmes that will help people learn how to reason and cultivate humanistic values. In some ways UNESCO is the school for peace and development in the UN and it is a technical, rather than a funding, agency.

UNESCO has grown in size and programmes since its establishment in Paris in 1945. It started with a focus on education, science and culture but these sectors, as they are called, were expanded to include human and social sciences and communication and information. Inter-sectoral and cross-cutting themes have been added more recently.¹ Initially, UNESCO was to be a body working for “the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind,” (Kirpal et al, in Maheu, 1972:115) but development work grew and became central to its policies and programmes.

UNESCO was selected as the site for the research not only because its work is important but also because it is in the process of reforming its structures, programme and budget processes. It is also examining ways to improve its preparation of heads of office for their work in the field. It was anticipated that the proposed special consultations about improvements to procedures, programmes and budgets with all heads of field offices would be of value for the research.

¹ Inter-sectoral projects are those that involve more than one sector in the planning, funding and implementation. For example, an education project may involve culture and communication sectors to make it sustainable. Cross-cutting themes are key issues that are included in all sectors' work, such as youth development or equity for women or special emphasis on least developed countries.

Field offices

Although a study of UNESCO's headquarters would be valuable, it would not explain the work at the frontline of the organization. The field office is the local face and implementing arm of UNESCO: in the official history of UNESCO, the author apologizes for the lack of coverage of the "prolific activity" of field offices because the coverage of even one would take up "too much space" (Valderrama, 1995: xxv). Field offices serve differing numbers of countries, from 17 (the Pacific office) to one (such as the Jordan office). Much of the work of field office heads is with ministers of governments, their officials, leaders of International Government Organizations (IGOs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), universities and other tertiary institutions. Although regions and countries differ, the responsibilities of most of the offices are the same.

Heads of offices

The offices are staffed with both international specialists and local staff. The head is the key frontline person in the agency's work, one of the international staff and is appointed to manage the office, work as a specialist in one of UNESCO's programme areas and fulfill diplomatic, representational responsibilities. The head is also responsible for the programme work and travel of international staff in his or her office. The many roles intermingle and are complex, in and out of the office. For these reasons the research focussed on heads of offices only.

The research was further limited (initially) to four heads from three of the five UN regions, for two reasons. First, a study of all 52 heads of offices would be unmanageable in the limited time frame of the research. Second, a concentrated focus offered a case study with in-depth data that would promote the generation of a theoretical explanation of participant heads' work. However, during data collection one participating head was transferred to headquarters and to retain four office observations, a fifth

participant was included. As well, because initial data had such similarity, two more participants were included, giving a total of seven, to broaden the range of contributions.²

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The basic research question was: *What powers do some heads of field offices of a UN agency have to promote the mandate of that agency?* This question did not aim to provide a full description of UNESCO's work. Instead it focussed on the powers participating heads have, or do not have, to promote UNESCO's mandate of working for peace and development. The starting point, therefore, was to gain a basic understanding of participants' work and the literature stresses questioning the roles, resources, challenges and contradictions in the office context (Mintzberg, 1973; Oshry, 1995; Stake, 1995). The research also had to gain an understanding of the realities, values, norms and operational assumptions as research participants see them (Argyris in Schein, 1992; Kemmis, 1980). To gather these data more specific research questions were developed, each with a focus on power: power in the organization, power in person, position and post and power in practice.

Guiding questions

**What power do participant heads have in UNESCO's organization?* This question sought data that would provide a broad picture of UNESCO's organization and the powers those participants have in its bureaucracy. It sets the context of participants' work.

**What personal, positional and post power do the participant heads have?* Initially only participants' motivational assumptions were to be examined but their contributions during data collection broadened the picture of their power to include the personal,

² Chapter Three provides a full explanation of the selection of appropriate heads of office for this research.

positional and post power in which their assumptions are grounded.

**What power do participant heads have in their work?* This question sought data that might demonstrate what participants do in the field. The focus was on frontline work and any power it gave them to meet their responsibilities.

The general problem and its three specific questions provided considerable data from a variety of sources. Information came from participants' written and verbal information on their work and its challenges, from observation in their offices, from meetings of all heads of offices and from examination of UNESCO documents including job descriptions, staff rules, criteria for responsibility and accountability, papers on decentralization and relevant documents on the reform process in UNESCO.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

Contradictions

The image of the UN, and its agencies, is problematic. As the literature discussion indicates, the negative commentaries are numerous. UN staff themselves are not always positive.

However, not all reports are negative. UNESCO's work with, for example, the establishment of World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves, the human genome research, the drive for education for all, the campaign for freedom of the media and the work to protect home languages and cultures, receives positive recognition from academics and practitioners around the world. Field offices also receive praise from the countries they serve for their general support.

The explanation for the apparent contradictions may lie with the focus of each commentary. The negative criticism is mostly about the *system* and its *processes* whereas positive views are about

purpose and the *field offices'* work. The contradictory images of the UN, nonetheless, provide the broad context of the research.

Uncertainties

A second problematic feature of the research context is the field office itself. This study of the work of seven heads is sited in a context that is characterized more by what is unknown than what is certain. What do heads of field offices do? How do they meet their responsibilities? Are they able to promote peace and development in the field? UNESCO's mandate in the UN system is to spread knowledge and a basic assumption is that all parts of the organization work for that mandate. If participants' work does not support the mandate, then perhaps they should "cease being operational in the field," as Power et al (2002:278) suggest of some IGO field offices that may not be contributing to their organization's mission.

Access

It is significant that there is no field office research and reasons possibly lie with difficulties of access. For example, the UN specialized agencies are different from all other international bodies because they are UN *and* IGOs. Thus, much has to be learned about organization, context and history. As well, UN bureaucracies are extensive, tightly controlled to protect funds and programmes of work, hierarchical, accountable to the governments of their member states *and* to the UN system as a whole. Entry by outsiders is not easy.³ For all of these reasons, research about any aspect or agency of the UN is challenging. For academics, interested in international organizations and leadership issues, there are many non-UN IGOs more easily accessible for research possibilities.

³ Hancock dedicates his book, *Lords of Poverty*, to the World Bank senior staff who tried to limit his access to information thus convincing him that "the aid business has much to hide," (1989).

Timing

However, this research was timely for two reasons. First, UNESCO embarked on the process of reform when the new Director General took office at the beginning of 2000. If the reforms are to be successful, field office heads must be trained to implement them. The training must address (1) organizational processes and influences, (2) the assumptions, knowledge, skills and experience that heads bring to the work and (3) complexities in the field context. This research provides information that could support the reform process in UNESCO.

Second, the research is also timely because a Director and head of a field office in UNESCO conducted the study. She has held the position and post for nine and a half years and has an understanding of the history, mores, assumptions and contextual challenges of the work of a head of a field office. The complexities of insider research are addressed later in this chapter but insider research for this study was an advantage because it reduced some of the access challenges outlined above. It also enabled open participation in the development of the reforms proposed by the new Director General (Matsuura, 2000, 2001). UNESCO gave the researcher permission for the study.

FOCUS ON POWER

The literature supports the selection of power as an important issue in organizations (Argyris in Pugh, 1997; Jonsson, 1993; Schein, 1992). Its “relative neglect makes it critical,” say Clegg and Hardy (1999:12). The literature stresses the need to examine the many layers, uses and users of power. It identifies varied sources such as Kanter’s proposal that it is about control of the lines of supply, information and support (in Pugh, 1997: 320) and includes Yukl’s list of methods of influence (in Gortner et al, 1997: 320). It stresses the need to examine processes, including power to do and power over (Cohen et al, 2000; Mant, 1997). Research also questions the power in networks, the hidden power of elites in

organizations, workers' compliance when they should resist and the anonymous power of structure and position (Gortner et al, 1997; Kanter in Pugh, 1997; Morgan, 1997).

Significantly, the literature of international non-governmental organizations is particularly concerned about issues of power. Mebrahtu (2002: 515) cites an ActionAid internal document that claims that although "most I(N)GOs have written about empowerment in their literature, most staff within them have suffered from centralist attitudes and disempowering restructuring processes and language from HQ." Coates and David (2002: 515) argue that the way power is created and maintained affects the strategies for advocacy work. Others link power with the funds for development projects (Power et al, 2002: 278) and Roper and Pettit (2002: 270) suggest that I(N)GOs are the only organizations with the power to promote non-Western views that will "reduce dependence on the influence of Western, business-sector theorizing."

The literature also demonstrates what Morgan (1997: 199) calls "the ambiguity of power." Definition is difficult. When it is exercised, is it always a matter of choice, agency and intention? Weber sees a dualism in power, with individuals obeying legitimate authority yet at the same time repressed by that power. But, if a person does not resist is this necessarily powerlessness or the exercise of power of another form? Perhaps power is not just negative or positive, but is also about consensus with shared power providing the means to achieve some agreed worthwhile social goals, as Parsons claims (in Schein, 1992:137). Is power only structural in the Marxist sense of economic and class struggles? What is the extent of the political aspects of power? Where does power arise and how is it used? Foucault is especially interested in how power is exercised. His focus is on power as both resistance and consensus and he claims that power is machinery that catches "those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised," (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 415). Therefore, he says,

people should gain knowledge to avoid its discipline. This he calls a work of freedom.

Although neither his nor any other explanation provides a generally agreed definition of power, for this study Foucault's view of what to examine was useful. He proposes that the area to study is techniques of power at the very smallest level of practice, not the organizations in which power is sited nor the intentions of those exercising the power. The task is to gain knowledge about the way power is exercised, concretely and in detail (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Giddens, 1995). This research follows his view: the research aim was limited in its scope to an examination of the context of field offices and the detailed power experiences of seven heads. Theorization of the sources, uses and results of the exercise of power are limited in the same way. If power is a "mysterious phenomenon that hovers everywhere and underlies everything," as Giddens says (1995: 268), then although this research makes no claims about definition, it may contribute to an understanding of the practice and effect of the power of some heads of field offices in UNESCO.

ASSUMPTIONS

The initial research assumption was that participants would be competent and positive employees of UNESCO because they held high level positions in the organization. This assumption reflected the researcher's perceptions of heads of field offices and, therefore, required a close examination of their qualifications, experience and skills, an examination of their roles and responsibilities in UNESCO documents and information about staff in other IGOs. It also required checks with organization and leadership theory.

A second research assumption was that the defining characteristic of the work of participant heads of office would be a paradox: the powerful-powerless head. This assumption meant that the research had to look for the presence or absence of potential and actual power in the organizational context, in the participants' skills and

resources and in their roles in the field. It required an examination of sources of power and sources of power reduction. It also required the application of theories of power to test the research assumption and the final conclusions.

Participants' assumptions about their work and its power were also examined. One way of describing assumptions is that they are "theories-in-use" and "actually guide behaviour ... tell group members how to perceive, think about and feel about things," (Argyris in Schein, 1992:22). This view reflects the difference between "the theory of stated action and ... the theory of action in practice," (Bloch and Borges, 2002:463) and it is because of the difference that participants' assumptions were examined.

Gortner et al (1997: 364) list five assumptions that influence bureaucratic practices and Bolman and Deal (1997: 40) have a similar list. Schein (1992:53) proposes an examination of basic assumptions about mission and strategy, group boundaries, sharing power and status, rewards and punishment while other lists include assumptions about truth, time and space and those that affect human nature, human activity and human relationships. The first question, however, was whether participants held any agreed assumptions about their work and if they were significant, as Schein (1992) suggests.

This question raised another question: if assumptions are included then should UNESCO's stated principles of operation also be included? Some writers suggest that they are less significant than assumptions because they are redefined and renegotiated in practice. Principles are relative rather than absolute and "may fade away in the routines of everyday experience," but assumptions are the learned and instinctive ways of "getting the job done," (Hilhorst and Schmiemann, discussing the influence of principles in *Medicines Sans Frontieres*, 2002: 491-497). This study, therefore, includes an examination of participants' assumptions about their work but not the changing principles of operation in UNESCO.

ETHICAL ISSUES

The literature contains a special warning for this study. Qualitative research, in which people's lives are closely examined, requires constant vigilance in all aspects and especially in the ethics of the study but "there is still no well-formulated set of ethical guidelines," (Miles and Huberman, in Josselson, 1996: 208). In this study six ethical considerations guided the research.

First, the purpose of the research is ethical in itself: the search for worthwhile knowledge for improved practices is the only reason for research on humans (Mariner in Bankowski, 1993: 46; Popper, 1984:199; Snook, 1999: 72; Swan and Pratt, 1999:10). As well, the Helsinki Declaration of 1982 and its revisions make it clear that ethical principles should be followed for their own sake (Bankowski, 1993) but the literature demonstrates that such a view is simplistic. All decisions and actions in this study were based on the aim to undertake ethical research.

The Ethics Committee of Massey University gave permission for this study and its Code of Ethics has clear requirements and guidelines which have been regarded as minimum standards to meet since, as the literature exemplifies, codes alone do not help the honest researcher nor stop the "hoaxing, forging, trimming, cooking and obfuscation of others," (Greenfield, 1996:34-36).⁴

Second, a study of an organization's work for international peace and development is probably justifiable from any ethical position. However, the literature suggests that any examination of a work place should include a study of the use of power. If research is set in a context of unequal power relations and if the dominant discourses in society reflect those power relationships (Rom, 2001:49; Pring, 2000:111; Swan and Pratt, 1999:7), then social

⁴ The literature has no definitive picture of an ethical researcher but the variety of proposals (Cohen et al, 2000; Newman and Pollnitz, 2000; Snook, 1999) suggests that more research is needed on applied ethics in research.

scientists have an ethical duty to examine and reveal the ways in which power is constructed. The literature, therefore, supports the study's focus on power as ethically justifiable.

Third, the selection of UNESCO as the site for the research raised a special ethical concern. As Schein (1992: 195-207) explains, a study of an organization is potentially an invasion of privacy. "Organizational research of any kind is an intervention and the ethics of research should first of all be the ethics of intervention," (Schein, 1992: 204). The ethics of intervention does not shield an organization from study but in this research methodological concerns included sensitivities to potentially intrusive or harmful intervention that might affect the participants or their work.

Methodological ethical actions included gaining the consent of the UNESCO (Appendix 16) and the participants (Appendix 17) in writing to meet the four *informed consent* criteria of competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension. As well, written consent was gained for *access to the site* of each field office. Office observations were organized and managed with particular care to avoid disturbing or changing participants' work patterns.

Next, the advantages of a staff member conducting the research are indicated above but there are also concerns about insider research. They are predominantly ethical and include concerns that the researcher will be biased, that participants will try to help, or not, according to their views of the researcher or that the research will produce what the researcher's organization wants.⁵ A particular concern is that the researcher is inextricably a part of the research site and brings site-perceptions and experiences that may influence, especially, data collection and analysis and the development of theory. For this study the researcher's assumptions

⁵ These and other concerns can also be applied to non-insider research: the Tasiday hoax of 1971, Milgram's 1994 Obedience to Authority study and Sir Cyril Burt's work on genetics may be extreme examples of unethical research but they exemplify the need for ethical research by any researcher.

are declared above and the methods used to reduce or eliminate their influence are listed. Special sensitivity to the concerns about insider research was an important aspect of the planning and the conduct of this study and required strict attention to methodology and to ambiguities, doubts and uncertainties (Josselson, 1996:277).

Fifth, the literature particularly stresses ethical methodology (Bouma, 2000; Clark, 1997; Cohen et al, 2000; Ellis, 1994; Gillham, 2000; Greenfield, 1996; Harpham, 1999; Homan, 1991; Lincoln, 1998; Lofland, 1995; Merriam, 1998; Newman and Pollnitz, 2000). The critical concern was to indicate as fully as possible the quality of the participants without revealing identities. All heads of offices can be easily identified by their pre-UNESCO history, language traits, specifics of office or countries served and particular achievements in, and worries about, their work. Some very useful contributions could not be used because specificity of the issue or a language style or a necessary reference to headquarters' staff indicated the speaker or writer. Consequently, some of the richness of detail that would strengthen the theorization is absent.

Finally, because it is sometimes the research report and not the conduct of research that produces the most harm, two concerns were monitored during the writing of the report. First, a research report has a power over participants and especially their narratives and what they mean (Lofland, 1995) because authors select which views are included. As well, given Popper's Principle of Fallibility and the possibility that the research findings might be wrong, the report was very carefully prepared with peer and participant consultation as a part of the writing process. As Chapter Three explains, all participants approved each chapter and the final report.

A report may also be misused and so all aspects of the preparation and conduct of the research were monitored by university supervisors to promote sound theorization.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

It is anticipated that this research will make two contributions to knowledge. First, it will make a contribution to theoretical knowledge because the research is the first study of the work of any heads of UN field offices. The data collected and the resulting theory are original contributions to organization, leadership and UN literature.

Second, this research also offers a practical contribution to the work of field staff in UNESCO, other UN agencies and non-UN international organizations, as they try to reform their organizations to match the challenges of the new century.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Chapter One provides the introduction to this research. Chapter Two provides a literature survey in which the range and depth of theory about organizations, leadership and power are provided. This chapter also indicates the variety in the writing about the UN and UNESCO and it has a special focus on Max Weber and Michel Foucault whose ideas promoted useful questions that helped with theorizing.

Chapter Three describes the conceptual framework and the concepts of organizational bureaucracy, organizational capital and frontline work that frame the 'context of occurrence', the field office. This chapter provides a detailed account of the methodology used for this interpretive case study.

Chapter Four is the first of three data chapters. It examines *purpose* and bureaucratic practices and theorizes participant heads' powers in the organization. It suggests that UNESCO's purpose offers important ethical and rational power for their work. However, UNESCO's organization does not fit any theoretical organizational model and its bureaucracy is complex; consequently, separately and together they limit the powers of the participants.

Chapter Five examines *practice* from the perspective of participants' organizational capital and theorizes their personal power. It argues that they have considerable personal power in their academic and experiential skills, in their office and that the assumptions from which they work are also empowering.

Chapter Six describes *practice* from the perspective of the frontline and the conclusion of this chapter is that participants' work in the field is weakened by, especially, bureaucratic time demands but strengthened by aspects of the organization's Constitution, by some properties of the frontline and by their personal power.

Chapter Seven brings together the conclusions from the three previous chapters (sources of power in the organization, participants' personal power and power in their roles) and theorizes that participants do have some power. The claim is that the real paradox is with UNESCO (and the UN generally): it is a powerless/powerful actor in the international work for development and peace. Chapter Seven also suggests further areas for study in UNESCO that would extend this research.

DEFINITIONS

Some words in this study have specific meaning in UNESCO or have varied meanings in the literature. These are clarified as follows.

Discourse is used in the sense of a system that structures the way people perceive reality. Conflicting discursive frameworks interact and are subject to change (Mills, 2003: 55-64). When Foucault's work is discussed his specific meaning of the term is used: whatever constrains or enables writing, speaking and thinking within given historical limits; what can be said, what can be thought (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 31, 36).

Head is one of UNESCO's terms for any person in charge of a field office. When the seven heads in this study are discussed the

term participant is used. However, the term head is used in association with information that applies to all heads, such as the roles and responsibilities of heads.

Position and **post** are two separate concepts in UNESCO. In the literature the word *position* is used to mean both grade or status and the actual work carried out by the employee. This sense of position is also used in this report when the literature is discussed. However, when participants are discussed, *position* means only the appointment as a high level official (usually director) and *post* refers to the place of work. This distinction is necessary because, in headquarters, other directors have different posts.

Power (and its derivatives) is used to mean the ability to participate in decisions about “who gets what, when and how,” (Morgan, 1997:170) and to “make a difference,” (Giddens 1984, in Hindess 1996: 23). No suggestions of source, operation, results, effectiveness or rationality are implied in the meaning unless stated. The text tries to avoid the complexities of Weber’s “all conceivable qualities of a person and all conceivable combination of circumstances,” (Weber, 1978: 53) or Foucault’s “multiplicity of forces,” (in Honneth, 1997: 153) although Foucault’s later definition of power as “a way in which certain actions modify others,” (in Kelly, 1994:263) is useful. Generally, the meaning of power is indicated by the context in which it is used. Further, power is not used as a synonym for influence as some writers determine (Gortner et al, 1997: 321) nor is it a synonym for authority with the relationship Weber and others have described. Participants’ contributions to this study suggest that in UNESCO authority, influence and power should be examined as three separate issues and situations: Chapter Four explores these perceptions in its examination of the authority, power and influence of each part of the organization’s structure and participants provide some examples of the separation of the concepts in references (especially) to some low status but powerful headquarters’ colleagues.

Rational (and its derivatives) is used to mean what is based on reason or what is logical. This usage enables the study to apply Weber's distinction between substantive rationality (an organization's goals) and instrumental rationality (organizational processes) but it avoids treating efficiency as a synonym, as Weber did, since this study indicates that participants do not equate efficiency with rationality in UNESCO's headquarters. This distinction enables the application of Foucault's claim that rationalities are epistemic and so relational.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has set out the preparation for the study of seven of UNESCO's heads of field offices between 2003 and 2005. It has described the background, aim, site and participant selection, research questions and the context of the research. It has also explained the reasons for the focus on power and described the ethical care with which the study was conducted.

Any study of the UN is a complex task. When that study applies organization and leadership theory and focusses on power it is especially challenging. This study, therefore, examines only seven heads of field offices in one UN agency, UNESCO, and the focus is the purpose, practice and power of those heads.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

This study of the work of seven of UNESCO's heads of field offices is informed and supported by literature from four fields of knowledge.

When a study requires more than one field of theory from which to draw guidance with, support for or negation of, data collection, analysis and theorization, and given time and report limitations, it is inevitable that decisions about theorists to include or to exclude will be required. Such decisions have been necessary in each of the four fields of literature described below and the bibliography of this report indicates only those writers cited and not all who were read and then not used. The aim was to keep the study and its literature focussed on participants' perceptions of their power in a UN agency.

The criterion used to guide decisions about inclusion or exclusion for each of the first three areas of literature, therefore, was whether the writer offered a new point that was important for the study or provided a different perspective on a significant theory proposed by another writer. Searches of bibliographies and library lists on the internet seemed to suggest that the major issues and many of the major writers are included in the literature of the UN, organizations and leadership. Perhaps the notable exclusion in the discussions of Chapters Four and Five is Pierre Bourdieu whose concept of cultural capital helped with the development of this study's concept of organizational capital. Initially included in early analyses and drafts of theory, he was withdrawn because the focus of each chapter required such a broad range of literature checks that to privilege one author over others, as his inclusion would have required, was not possible.

However, the literature on power posed a major challenge. Most of the great theorists, whose work contributes to an understanding of the complexities of power, could not be included. Louis Althusser's explanation of agency and structure, Emile Durkheim's focus on values and norms in society, Antonio Gramsci's work on the duality of consciousness imposed by the dominant (capitalist) class and consciousness of lived everyday experiences, Karl Mannheim's examination of the association between knowledge and social structure and social group conditioning of belief, Talcott Parsons' writing on fundamental dilemmas facing social actors; these authorities and more are excluded. Similarly, possible contributors to the issues of ethics and rationality in power, such as the philosophers Immanuel Kant, Soren Kierkegaard, Gottfried Leibniz and Herbert Marcuse, are not included. The reasons for their exclusion are found in the reasons for focussing on Weber and Foucault. Since participants' work power is grounded in an organization, it was logical to apply concepts from the great theoretician of organizations and bureaucracies, Max Weber. Further, since his theories have been challenged for a possible inability to explain resistance or change, it was important to find another major sociologist to present another perspective on organizational structure and power. Michel Foucault's work offered two concepts that could be applied with the two selected from Weber to provide different explanations of the apparently similar issues of agency, rationality and ethics. Size-of-report limitations restricted the number of concepts chosen from Weber and Foucault and thus restricted the use of other concepts from other sociologists.

The chapter begins with accounts and analyses of the UN and its agencies including UNESCO's official publications and relevant non-confidential documents. It also includes accounts of work in NGOs. The literature is varied in approach and content but it provides a sense of the international organizational context in which UNESCO works. It also provides useful referential points, especially for the contributions of the participants in the study.

Second, organization theory and related theories about bureaucracies provide a range of possibilities from which to draw an explanation of UNESCO's purpose, structure and the bureaucracy in which the participants work. This literature is especially focussed on the potential power that the organization provides participants to meet their responsibilities. Third, leadership theory is similarly explored to find a theoretical base from which to analyze the skills and knowledge that participants bring to and gain in their positions. Leadership also includes theory about the assumptions that the participants have about their work.

Fourth, sociologists Max Weber and Michel Foucault provide important questions about the key issue of power and associated issues of knowledge and ethics. Although they have different perspectives, the work of each helps with this examination of the complexities of the power of seven heads of field offices in UNESCO.

THE UNITED NATIONS

General

The UN and its agencies exist to support the improvement of the lives of people in all countries of the world. Unfortunately, the UN rhetoric does not match the reality of politics and power. It does, however, raise expectations and, when reality defeats rhetoric, an increasing number of writers find the UN at fault. The resulting literature, therefore, is often negative and partial in approach. The following selection from the published literature indicates the three main concerns about the UN: the problems of organization, practices and politics.

Organization

The UN generally (and many of its agencies specifically) has been criticized for a variety of organizational reasons. Hancock (1989:

82-84) describes the way the UN “successfully presents itself as the moral centre of the development business,” but its once noble mission has “been long forgotten in the rapid proliferation of its self-perpetuating bureaucracies.” Schlesinger (1997:47-53) describes the UN as a “hidebound organizational edifice,” while O’Brien (1997:4), previously a New Zealand Ambassador to the United Nations, argues that “the case for more efficiency, coordination and streamlining ... is incontrovertible.”

A paper on another specialized UN agency, the World Health Organization, criticizes its “narrow, top down, service oriented approach to health and its centralized, hierarchical bureaucracy,” (Godlee, 1997: 1359). Writing of his time working for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Loescher (2001:2) says that it “has an organizational culture that makes innovation and institutional change difficult,” and he describes a range of problems including the personnel system, weak training problems and the stifling of internal critique.

Practices

The criticism of practices includes the UN banks. A very critical analysis is *Masters of Illusion: the World Bank and the Poverty of Nations*. The author identifies a large number of problems in the World Bank including the promotion system that rewards quantity rather than quality of work. She also provides details of numbers of World Bank projects that resulted in serious harm to people (Caufield, 1996:215).

Hancock’s *Lords of Poverty* includes equally negative descriptions of the UN banks’ practices while Nobel Prize winner Professor Stiglitz (2002: 34) condemns the World Bank’s partner, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), for its secrecy and for policies and practices, including a “one-size-fits-all” approach, that have caused serious economic problems in most of the countries the Fund was supposed to help. He also says of the World Bank where he worked for a time:

“I saw that decisions were often made because of ideology and politics. As a result, many wrong-headed actions were taken, ones that did not solve the problem at hand but that fit with the interests or beliefs of the people in power,” (Stiglitz, 2002: x).

Caulfield and Stiglitz both describe practices that resulted in national leaders’ corrupt use of the banks’ funds, such as IMF funds that disappeared into offshore accounts within hours of arriving in Russia (Stiglitz, 2002:150). Interestingly, in *Education for All Fast Track: The No-Progress Report* (that they didn’t want you to see), a significant body of INGOs and some donors also attack the World Bank (Actionaid et al, 2003).

The literature contains many concerns about practices in other parts of the UN (England, 1998 and 2002; Godlee, 1997; Hancock, 1989; Hoggart, 1978; Jones, 1998; Loescher, 2001; Maheu, 1972). If a central theme were to be identified it would be that the UN and its agencies are subject to governments’ self interests but they could do more for peace and development if they operated more efficiently.

Politics

The political nature of the UN is recognized in the literature. As early as 1948 Eagleton wrote:

“If the United Nations cannot do more than it has, the fault lies with the members who made it and operate it and who, it seems, still prefer the tooth and the fang to international law and order,” (in Archer, 2003:131).

This concern continues more than 50 years later. O’Brien (1997) is critical of the self-interest of member states while Schlesinger (1997: 47-53) describes the UN as a body that was “born of, and remains subject to, politics.” Rieff (2003: 28-32) wonders if the “UN may be ill suited to the 21st century, with its rogue states,

WMD⁶, international terror networks and an interventionist global superpower,” partly because “the basis of the UN has always been hope balanced against realpolitik,” and especially because “member states like the UN as it is - powerless by design.” Chomsky echoes this view, claiming that a campaign against UNESCO in the nineteen seventies and eighties, led by the United States of America, reflected “the reality of what the UN is going to face when it pursues policies that are not in the interest of the great powers,” (Chomsky, 2003: 86).

In general, the literature about the UN is negative. Consequently, the implicit assumption in the literature is that what is known about the headquarters of either the UN, or one of its agencies, is true about the whole organization. As well, the frequent call for internal reform is general rather than specific in its focus and consideration of power and ethics in the UN is implied rather than discussed. It is significant that although UN specialized agencies may be seen as “the court of last resort ... for the billions of people in the poor world,” (Rieff, 2003:28), its critics are often outsiders⁷ and its frontline work is unexamined, even in UNESCO publications.

UNESCO

External literature

Literature about UNESCO reflects the same concerns with organization, practices and politics. In *International Policies for Third World Education: UNESCO, Literacy and Development* Jones (1998: 27) describes what he calls the negative results of “political expediency, budgetary considerations and bureaucratic factors.” Maheu (1972), previously an Assistant Director General

⁶ Weapons of mass destruction.

⁷ The UN discourages staff from publishing their experiences. However, England (UNDP), Hoggart (UNESCO) and Loescher (UNHCR) have published critical books and papers and New Zealander, Dr Andrew Thompson, took successful legal action in 2004 to regain his position with the UN because he co-authored a book that the UN regarded with disfavour. Thompson said he hopes his victory will encourage others to speak out.

of UNESCO and Valderrama (1995), one of UNESCO's official historians, have both published accounts that include critical comment on practices and politics especially.

A more positive analysis comes from the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom which notes of UNESCO that:

“(its) very broadly based mandate carries with it risks of diffusion of effort and overlap with other international organizations – but also opportunities to develop interdisciplinary approaches, ” (Institutional Strategy Paper, 2001:2).

Tomasevski describes UNESCO as the lead international education agency and cites Billing et al's description of UNESCO as the most intellectual of the UN agencies. However, she includes UNESCO in her critical analysis of the lack progress with education for all children as a basic human right.

Internal literature

UNESCO writes and publishes a large number of books and papers on key events or major programme activities. The UNESCO bookshop in Paris contains a range of books in all of its working languages on specialized topics and from all five sectors of its work. Subjects range from promotion of literacy, preservation of traditional cultures, human genome research, protecting human rights and care of the environment to more specific accounts of initiatives such as the World Heritage Convention and the Decade for the Culture of Peace. Publications also include some official general texts, such as the 2003 collection of the current Director General's speeches.

Other UNESCO publications are widely distributed and without charge. Their subjects include programme planning, such as the Medium Term Strategy, or they focus on visions for the future,

such as the Delors report on education. Many publications are reports of conferences and descriptions of particular needs of countries or regions of the world. Some of these publications also include global development issues such as the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development or the campaign for Information for All.

Some general views of UNESCO are also available. Valderrama's official history is basically a broad account of events and their dates. Others provide a closer look at some internal issues. In *The Grand Design* Lacoste makes brief references to early disagreements about UNESCO. He notes the French wish to have a body for intellectual cooperation only and the first Director General's failed attempt to persuade member states that the organization should have a clear philosophy. He also indicates early concerns (in 1958) about "flagrant inefficiency," (Lacoste, 1994:84). An even closer description of UNESCO at work comes from Hoggart (1978) writing of his time as Assistant Director General (head) of Culture. However, the major gap in the literature is, again, the absence of any descriptions of field office work.

UNESCO's published literature contains few in-depth studies of any aspect of the organization's goals and methods beyond small suggestions for new areas of programme work or a new emphasis on some global action or partnership. The world of IGOs and aid is very competitive and it is not surprising that UNESCO does not castigate itself publicly. It needs a good image to attract donors for its programme work

In-house documents are also numerous. Some of these documents are public, but most are not. Many are written for bureaucratic purposes and some are self critical of general and specific sections of UNESCO's programmes and processes. A number of new documents focus on changes as a part of the reform process and include a detailed Table of Delegation of Authority. However, even in the reform process, although the post of heads of field offices in the organization's structure is being re-examined, the

actual process of their work will remain unexamined. The field office head has complex responsibilities for regional work but the what, how and why of the work is not visible in UNESCO's literature.

This research, therefore, focusses on the gap in the UN and UNESCO literature by looking closely at seven field office heads at work.

ORGANIZATION THEORY

General

Organizations matter because they provide purpose and structure to commercial, social, political, military and spiritual aspects of life. They also allow many people to accomplish things with the position, authority and resources only organizations can provide (Gortner et al, 1997: 3). Organization theory, therefore, is important and is empirical, assuming that research and observation will provide knowledge that will improve organizational processes and results.

However, organization theory is a smorgasbord of positivist and interpretivist paradigms, research frameworks, models of analysis (including economics, with its interest in management and results, and biology with its focus on interdependent organs) and explanatory metaphors that range from machine, cave and family, to prison.

Theories focus on subject or type or purpose and within each a different research approach is possible. Political science is interested in the structure and exercise of power relationships; anthropology asks about norms and how they affect implementation of purpose; social psychology is focussed on such problems as leadership and interpersonal relationships; phenomenology finds organizations mechanistic and depersonalizing and psychology looks at the centrality of the

individual. Some theorists have entered organization research through specific topics such as feminism or culture although their “treatments ... obscure more than they illuminate,” say Clegg and Hardy (1999:12). Postmodernist approaches and critical theory also have a place at the table (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan 1997; Pugh, 1997; Sagini, 2001; Schein, 1992; Thomas, 2002).

It is not surprising, therefore, that Bolman and Deal describe the properties of organizations as complex, surprising, deceptive and ambiguous (1997: 22).

Varied approaches

The history of organization theory explains the complexity and the numerous research possibilities. Much of the western theoretical work came after World War Two from the United States of America and focussed on commercial organizations. Specialist tertiary studies of organizations spread from there to Europe in the second half of the twentieth century (Thomas, 2002: 245). Although recent literature occasionally draws on Asian and other approaches, organizational theory remains predominantly western in its approach.

Some academics place organizations in just two groups. Either they are a closed, mechanistic or deterministic system concerned only with internal factors or they are open, organic and responsive to the environment in a variety of ways (Thomas, 2002:190). Sagini (2001) refines closed and open systems further by identifying rational (scientific) or natural (behavioural) models in each. He then claims three systems of organizations as rational, natural or open. Generally, organization theory tends to focus on single organizations but Thomas (2002) suggests a multi-organization approach, either ecological, a study of the survival of the fittest, or institutional, a study of organizations interacting with other organizations. Most writers agree, however, that the three broad approaches of mechanistic, contingency and multi-

directional are a useful approach to organization theory. They also parallel similar approaches in leadership theory described later in this chapter and are, therefore, a useful guide for this study.

Mechanistic: tasks

Claude Saint-Simon (1760-1825) is credited with providing the starting point, with his theory of social change and the need for scientific positivism to explain the laws of organization. Early in the twentieth century, Frederick Taylor (1856-1915) proposed the scientific management of the workplace with division of labour, specialization of tasks and managerial control of the process of production. Max Weber (1864-1920), as a part of his critique of sociology, claimed that rationalization is the common feature of all aspects of life, including organizations. His concept of a rational bureaucracy was especially influential and is discussed later in this study. In the 1960s the Aston Studies set out to develop Weber's concepts into a form that could be used for analysis in a functioning organization and this work continued the focus on mechanistic systems with an emphasis on tasks for the achievement of objectives.

In the mechanistic approach the key features of organizations include specialization, standardization of rules and employment practices, formalized (written) procedures, centralized decision making and clear configuration of such aspects as the length of command (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Pugh, 1997; Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002). Mechanistic theory offers an ideal form for organizational practice and it can be tested scientifically. However, the static nature of a closed system of organization also has potential problems. The emphasis on stability, rationality and efficiency raises concerns that mechanical organizations treat people as instruments or appendages and this may inhibit their ability to develop (Sagini, 2001: 660). The emphasis also underestimates or ignores other organizational features such as instability, power and conflict. A mechanistic organization is not prepared to adjust to change (Gortner, 2002:39)

and, consequently, in the second half of the twentieth century this theoretical framework was challenged on the grounds that it could not explain or predict changing organizational structures and practices.

Contingency: processes

In the 1960s, therefore, a new approach, or phase, emerged and it can be explained in part by the growth of interpretive research and in part by changes in some commercial organizations. Theorists began to describe a different model of organization in which the boundaries of mechanistic organizations are removed, hierarchies are replaced by flatter management systems and internal networks, communication is lateral rather than vertical, information-giving replaces instruction, knowledge is distributed rather than centralized, tasks are continuously redefined and the emphasis is on process and the individual's commitment to the organization instead of the mechanistic expectation of loyalty (Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002).

Tom Wolf's description of Fairchild Semiconductor and the Noyce management approach of no hierarchy and no distinctions between staff and top management is an example of the new nineteen sixties approach. It worked for Fairchild and for the 'Fairchildren' who left to start new companies. They "took the Noyce approach with them," and "turned the Santa Clara Valley into the Silicon Valley," establishing not just companies but communities of committed workers with internalized goals (Wolf, 2000: 37-42). Other organizations looking for new processes tried learning loops, open decision-making and quality circles.

The new emphasis on process and the environment produced new theory about functionalist systems and contingency organizations. Contingent organizations interact with the environment's institutions and those forces that affect the organization but are outside their control. "The organization develops depending on features of its organic form and the environment that sustains

them,” (Clegg and Hardy, 1999:11). The more complex the environment, the more organizations need to respond to it to reduce uncertainty about effectiveness. Contingent organizations are open systems and they influence, and are influenced by, the world around them. “Organizational variables are in a complex interrelationship with one another and with conditions in the environment,” Lawrence et al claim (1967 in Pugh, 1997: 128).

However, the very flexibility that is the feature of this theoretical approach also contains its chief problem. Contingency theorists are relativists and have trouble contributing normative theory for either policy or practice. For example, writers who explore organizational culture as the framework for a theory of open systems meet problems very quickly. Many have a holistic or top-down approach and researchers, such as Schein (1992), criticize their approach. He argues that workers will reject an imposed organizational culture and replace it with their own group culture. In turn, his approach is open to the criticism of fragmentation. Or, an academic such as Thomas (2002) promotes intercultural interaction as the crucial management skill but even he concludes with a list of unresolved challenges. Whether it is through culture or economics or any other approach, the relativist characteristics of contingency organization theory remain a problem for the theorist.

Multidirectional: contexts

The third phase of organization theory attempts to avoid the major difficulties of mechanistic and contingency theories and also tries to avoid having to choose between “retreating into the cave of orthodoxy or free riding on the rising tide of relativism,” (Reed in Clegg, and Hardy, 1999: 26-27). The new approach is trying to find a path that retains the emphasis on rationality but which also includes consideration of human agency and its effects on the organization. As well, the new approach recognizes the importance of context and the need for responsiveness to change but builds in a positivist concern for the necessity of structure especially with large organizations.

Those searching for a multi-directional universal theory are also looking for new ways to examine organizations. Some, such as Hailey and James, are studying what they call the learning organization and the international journal *Development in Practice* devoted volume 12 (2002) to this topic while McWilliam provides a paper stressing new knowledge for new times in the *International Journal of Leadership in Education*. Others look to economic models because the old theoretical distinctions between commercial and private and non-profit organizations have softened as IGOs and INGOs increasingly have to 'sell' their vision and expertise to donors.

One significant influence on organizations and organization theory is the impact of globalization⁸. Globalization is producing "pressures for internal consistency within the organization and pressures for adaptation to the local environment," (Thomas, 2002: 214). The disappearing boundaries of conventional organizational structures and the emergence of networks and virtual organizations mean that a closed system is no longer an appropriate approach to modern goals or functions in a globalized world. Thomas (2002: 5) argues that organizations need greater dynamics in the workplace to be able to respond to environmental changes and developments to such an extent that a contingency focus on processes is inadequate. He also claims that "as globalization increases ...the inadequacy of our present understandings of management to explain and predict behavior in these settings becomes more apparent," (Thomas, 2002: 243).

Contributing to, and an important aspect of, globalization is the increasing use and dominance of information technology (Archer, 2003:181; Thomas, 2002:6). Employees now have access to extraordinary amounts of information, are able to initiate, create and communicate without meeting colleagues and they are able to work across organizational boundaries and from home. "At a

⁸ Definitions of globalization vary but generally focus on the breaking down of national boundaries with the growth of trade, transport, technology, knowledge and international organizations (Stiglitz, 2002: 9; Thomas, 2002: 4).

minimum, the likely effect is that work roles of employees and managers will need to be adjusted to reflect an increasingly information driven environment,” (Thomas, 2002: 6). As well, information technology brings new knowledge of non-Western organizational structures and practices (Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002) that provide further challenges to theorizing about organizations.

With globalization new organizations and new perspectives about organizational form are developing. For example, some theorists are looking at what Thomas (2002) calls an institutional approach by examining international organizations and their networks. He is especially interested in inter-organization networks. Others, such as Jonsson (1993: 464), are interested in this approach: “The relation between general organization theory and the study of international organization has largely been one of mutual neglect,” he says and argues that international organizations should not be examined as stand-alone entities that are separate and different from each other and national organizations. He claims that when organization theory and organizations are brought together the picture is of networking by national and international bureaucrats wielding considerable power.

In another approach, with the changing environment of the international manager, theorists are placing more emphasis on the central importance of interpersonal relations (Thomas, 2002: 4-19) or they take a pessimistic view that the number of IGOs may decline and INGOS may increase:

“(The) continuation of present trends in economic, social and environmental IGOs seems to point to larger bureaucracies, more politicized and less effective organizations, and conferences forever defining problems and setting rules but without the wherewithal to enforce decisions,” (Archer, 2001: 178).

This last view echoes much of the literature on the UN. It also suggests significant difficulties for those wanting to establish organizational theory appropriate for the twenty-first century. It may be multi-directional and able to accommodate a number of different approaches, but be so relativist that it offers no normative guide for study or practice. However, in all new approaches Weber's theorization "continues to be the platform on which all dance," (Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 18) and his emphasis on rationality remains an important focus.

The theories of organization provide an important backdrop for a study sited in an international organization. UNESCO's structure appears to belong to the mechanistic model but its proposed reforms use the language of decentralization and contingency theories. UNESCO's heads, however, work in multi-directional contexts and this study of the research participants' experiences, therefore, draws on all three approaches to organization theory.

LEADERSHIP THEORY

General

The literature does not provide a clear definition of what is meant by leadership. For this research it is taken to mean that it "exists in relationships," (Bolman and Deal, 1997: 294), two or more people are concerned and that "an influence process" is involved (Gortner et al, 1997:317). This may be called "an ability to define the reality of others," and so leadership is "a form of symbolic power," (Morgan, 1997: 189). Others add more detail:

"Leadership is thus a subtle process of mutual influence fusing thought, feeling and action to produce cooperative effort in the service of purposes and values of both the leader and the led," (Bolman and Deal, 1997: 296).

Varied approaches

Schon's image of "the swamp of international leadership" (in Marsick and Cederholm, 1988:5) captures the potential difficulties of developing theory about the work of some of UNESCO's heads of field offices. Leadership issues are as complex as those in organizations and also not easily explained as theory or practice.

The literature has varying explanations for different phases or periods in the development of leadership theory. Thomas, for example, (2002: 148) identifies four approaches: traits, behavioural, contingency and implicit. The behavioural approach is an extension of traits theory and includes possibilities for training. It may include concepts of initiating structure, such as orders to subordinates and may include consideration of employee or production orientation. Contingency theory broadens the focus, recognizes the influence of the environment and includes specific models such as transactional and transformational leadership and the path-goal approach. Implicit leadership theory shifts the focus from the leader to subordinates and examines their perspective of what a leader should be. Sometimes new studies of leadership practices include a focus on charisma and other traits, thus taking theory back to its beginnings.

One of the concerns in the leadership literature is the difference between leaders and managers. Bennis (1989:45) has devised a list of differences but his list assumes ideal practices in each role, undervalues managers' and overemphasizes leaders' roles and skills, thus illustrating some of the difficulties in this area of research. Rost (in Hickman, 1998:97-114) has a useful summary of the history of the leadership theories, including the interweaving of the terms managers and management in the literature and Bolman and Deal (1997:295) explicitly separate the two terms and their roles. Thomas (2002:147-64), however, includes leadership as a part of the work of managers.

The leader/manager debate is important and is revisited in Chapter Six, but this research aims to avoid any preconceptions about the term leader and uses the UNESCO term head/s or participant to indicate assigned status and roles. However, in the following discussion the term leader/s is used because that is the term used in the literature.

The literature stresses the significance of leadership for organizational success. Although they disagree about terms, processes and results, all academics and practitioners offer suggestions for best practice for heads of, for example, schools and businesses but there is little help for heads of field offices in the UN (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Hopkins and Ainscow, 1994; Ikenberry, 1996; Mant, 1997; Marsick and Cederholm, 1998; Sackney et al, 2000; Schein, 1992; Thomas, 2002). It is important, therefore, to examine the theories of leadership to understand the participants and their work. However, the theoretical paths through the swamp are complex. This discussion synthesizes the possibilities into three broad paths.

Tasks and traits

The first path in this field of research is more about people than paths. Leaders need charisma, vision or a variety of other personal traits to identify and achieve worthwhile goals (Rost in Hickman, 1998). The organization sets the objectives and process and leaders use their personal traits to inspire workers to achieve those objectives. In some explanations behaviour theory is included in this phase (Thomas, 2002: 148).

Leaders studied in early research were usually heads of organizations, usually in the fields of education and commerce, and the bureaucratic or technocratic models of organizations often influenced the approach taken by researchers. The research focus on the person suggests that the work path is of lesser importance and the research results offer few best practices, sometimes on the assumption that leadership skills are inherited.

This view of leadership fits with the mechanistic model of organizations where hierarchical organizational structures support (or require) stars as the voice or face of the organization. It can also be justified as a rational way to promote loyalty internally and promote an otherwise closed organization, externally.

Processes

However, if leadership qualities are not inherited and leaders can be trained, what should the training contain? Research interest shifted from what leaders are like to how they work and so processes of leadership became important. These are generally signposted as contingency theories and include approaches such as situational leadership (Bolman and Deal, 1997) and the path-goal theory (Hughes et al in Hickman, 1998). Processes of transaction and transformation are promoted (and criticized) as the most useful for organizational effectiveness and in some explanations they improve on traits theory by distinguishing between management and leadership (Allix, 2000; Geijsel et al, 1999). In general, contingency theories extend the view of leadership but the focus remains on the person not the path, which could explain why some leaders stumble.

Contingency leadership theories match similar developments in organization theory. The new emphasis on process and agency in each enables both approaches to develop a variety of interpretivist models. The new approach also opens both to problems with relativism and offers no predictive theory or clear paths for training for leadership.

Multidirectional contexts

The third theoretical approach shifts the focus from person and processes to the path or the context of the work.

The problem with the unidirectional approaches described above, is that they have no reference to the leader at work in “a reciprocal

relationship” in the context of workplace and organization (Gortner et al, 1997; Nord and Fox in Clegg and Hardy, 1999:157). Researchers now propose multidirectional approaches and these include collective leadership (Allen et al in Hickman, 1998), cultural leadership (Schein, 1992), servant leadership (Greenleaf in Hickman, 1998) and leadership and politics, including interests, conflict and power (Morgan, 1997).

Researchers also recognize the work of leaders who are not the heads of their organization. This multidirectional approach brings together person and path and has considerable potential for training programmes. As well, it links leadership theory with organization theory, in an equal and reciprocal partnership (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Hickman, 1997; Morgan, 1997).

The partnership of leadership and organization theory could close the gap between the theory and reality of practice. However, the similarity of approach to, and reciprocal partnership with, organization theory does not decrease the challenges for researchers and practitioners. Instead, it extends further the range of what is to be included in any theoretical model and relativism continues to be a problem. This is especially so when applied to leaders in an organization that could be a symbol of relativism: UNESCO draws its mandate from the UN, but receives its instructions from governments yet selects its staff from a wide range of international sources.

However, traits, processes and multi-directional contexts are all relevant leadership perspectives for this research. The participant heads’ personal, positional and post assets are examined for the power potential they have for their work and the analysis draws on the different theories of leadership for confirmation, challenge and clarification.

As well, the ethical implications of leadership are important. Leaders are usually described as good or bad but sometimes the term leadership contains such a sense of morality that bad

leadership becomes a contradiction in terms. J.M. Burns indicated this in 1978: “.... leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality,” and “transformational leadership ultimately becomes moral ...” (in Hickman, 1998: 134).

A special focus on ethical leadership is provided by Sergiovanni⁹ who is concerned about the overemphasis on “bureaucratic, psychological and technical-rational authority,” (Sergiovanni, 1992:3). He argues that the moral dimension of leadership should be moved from the periphery to the centre of research and practice and that leadership “should be based on moral authority,” (Ibid: 16). This study, therefore, examines the problem as a part of the context of international work by the participant heads of UNESCO’s field offices.

POWER

General

The literature about the UN, organizations and leadership provides theoretical support for the conceptual framework of this study. The task of examining power inside that framework is guided by some general accounts of power and then by two sociologists: Max Weber and Michel Foucault.¹⁰ The key ideas taken from their work are provided in this chapter as an introduction to the explanation and analysis of participants’ power that is given in the following chapters.

Definition and sources

Bennis predicted in the mid sixties that the power of position would erode as new concepts of power based on cooperation

⁹ Sergiovanni is writing of school leadership and reform but almost all of his text is applicable to leadership generally.

¹⁰ Some of the literature prefers to describe Foucault as a philosopher because he is focussed on an ontology of the present, asking, basically, who are we today? (McHoul and Grace, 1998: viii).

replaced those based on coercion (in Ashkenas et al, 1995: 39). This prediction reflects theorists' interest in power as a productive rather than a negative feature of organizations. Accordingly, many theorists see power as "the capacity to get things to happen," (Bolman and Deal, 1997:164-5) and so "the true sign of power" is accomplishment (Kanter, 1979 in Pugh, 1997:320).

Kanter identifies the sources of organizational power for 'efficacy and capacity' as the three lines of supply, information and support; power may also be augmented in a number of ways including the amount of discretion allowed in the worker's position, centrality to key organizational problems, good sponsors, peer networks and/or recognition from superiors.

Morgan (1997: 171) lists 14 sources of power that include Kanter's lines but adds others such as the use of the structure and rules, formal authority and control of technology and counter-organizations. Morgan also notes that power may be a resource itself or it can be a relationship. The idea of relationship echoes French and Raven's 1959 list of sources as reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert or Yukl's 1994 list of influence tactics (in Gortner et al, 1997: 321) or a definition of power that includes "the potential ability to influence behaviour ... to overcome resistance and to get people to do things they would not otherwise do," (Pfeffer, 1992 in Bolman and Deal, 1997: 165).

Power is weakened if the post holder (often supervisors and specialists) is unable to reward or discipline subordinates or has limited access to information (such as top executives). In these situations the least powerful are those who are least able to organize and structure activities of others for their own interests (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978 in Pugh, 1997: 158). Power is also weakened if post holders are accountable for results but have no access to resources to meet their responsibilities (Kanter, 1979 in Pugh, 1997: 319).

Relationships

Power relationships are important. Fayol links power, authority and responsibility (1916 in Pugh, 1997: 253); Gortner et al (1997: 320-321) propose power and influence to be “broadly synonymous”; Morgan finds a strong relationship in a bureaucracy between its rule and written word; further, power and accountability are “intimately connected” with knowledge, use of rules and bureaucracy’s law-like form of administration (Morgan, 1997:156). Others associate power with the ethical obligation of duty of justice and say that power is to be shared, is “meaningful only in relationship to others” and hoarding “produces a powerless organization,” (Bolman and Deal, 1997: 348).

Relationships between levels of power are also explored: Gortner et al (1997: 276-7) describe the interaction of personal (self-interest) and socialized (organizational interest) power and Bolman and Deal (1997: 349) add a third relationship, that of the group, to the interaction of power relationships in organizations.

The exploration of relationships also includes organizational stability and power and this is especially relevant for large organizations. Hardy and Clegg describe this relationship as the “central paradox of power” (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999; 380). The paradox is that the term organization implies control and stability and organizations increase their power, in theory, by delegating authority according to the rules. Rules entail discretion and so this delegated authority-for-discretion potentially empowers employees but also enables resistance and possible disturbance in the organization. For organizations to remain stable the delegated discretion needs discipline if it is to be reliable. This discipline may come, as Foucault suggests, through surveillance to promote self-monitoring workers or from some other method (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 380) but although workers will try to minimize superiors’ negative interventions, thus promoting stability, the organization can never be totally stable because of the interaction of delegated power and potential resistance.

Shared values may promote stability but Foucault rejects shared values as a way to strengthen the fragility of structures. Instead, he expects power holders to look for more effective ways of holding power but this in turn produces the “paradox of effectiveness” because such measures are only negative and are “basically anti-energy,” (Foucault in Honneth, 1997: 160-166).

Compliance and resistance

Interest in organizational power relationships and the need for stability often focusses on resistance, how it operates and why resistance is usually so infrequent. Accounts include theories of hegemony, power being used to prevent or defeat conflict, organizational controls, the oppressed lacking knowledge or deciding that the cost of resistance is too high and commitment to the goals of the organization (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Sagini, 2001). Hofstede’s 1980 study of work values (and the follow-on studies by other researchers) suggests that compliance and resistance may also have a national cultural dimension even though it is an ‘ecological fallacy’ to apply national descriptions to individuals (Thomas, 2002: 50-68).

Some of the literature examines the forms resistance may take. Bolman and Deal (1997:190) cite research that indicates that individuals who feel powerless may develop manipulative strategies to protect themselves. Argyris (1964, in Bolman and Deal, 1997: 107) expands this claim with a description of six resistance responses to organizational frustration: resignation or frequent absences, becoming passive and indifferent, restricting or harming work productivity, trying to get promoted, forming groups to confront power imbalance or, finally, doing nothing but passing on negative attitudes about work to children. Chomsky suggests that if resistance takes the form of trying to change the minds of the elite and they seem to welcome in the protester, “chances are very strong that you’re doing something wrong ... Why should they have any respect for people who are trying to undermine their power?” (2003: 186).

Theorists such as Marx and Weber tend to see power in terms of social and organizational structure and its processes. Power is used or abused, domination is the general focus of study and challenge, always possible, is *legitimate* resistance. Morgan claims that:

“multinationals come closest to realizing Max Weber’s worst fears with regard to how bureaucratic organizations can become totalitarian regimes serving the interests of the elites, where those in control are able to exercise power that is ‘practically unshatterable’,” (Morgan, 1997: 329).

A different focus also describes organizational structure as the source of power but claims that because position gives legal authority, resistance is a *negative* activity (Hardy and Clegg in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 368-387). Both descriptions of the operation of power are functionalist and can hide such ethical issues as who decides what legitimate authority is and may hide resistance itself. Both views of resistance as legitimate or negative are linear in operation.

Foucault (in McHoul and Grace, 1998) offers another way of considering power: “Power is everywhere ... because it comes from everywhere,” (Ibid: 39) and “Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain,” (Ibid: 89). All people are in the web of power, ‘truth’ or legitimation is time bound and knowledge of the system gives power for resistance. Resistance is *neutral* and actually supports the power system by producing new knowledge and contextual norms. In Foucault’s account, Weber’s rules are replaced with disciplinary or self-monitoring practices and power can be both dominating and productive. Foucault also moves the level of the debate from the macro to the micro use of power, stressing both the importance of the individual (the body) and the operation of resistance as an ethical activity.

It is important to emphasize, also, that Foucault connects power to discourses and gives it historical specificity, hence his examination of how bodies are controlled in modern times when they are not as constrained as they used to be. Sagini (2001: 505-507) seems to be supporting Foucault's thesis when he claims that legitimate power today is limited power because it is exercised judiciously and contextually and he describes UN specialist agencies as exercising power in the light of neorealist and neo-liberalist perspectives. Resistance, in this view, is complex and *constrained*.

From this literature, therefore, a range of issues are identified for examination of participants' power in UNESCO's bureaucracy. The significant concerns are the sources of power, power relationships, the micro operation of power techniques and compliance and resistance.

Weber: rationalization and ethics

General

Max Weber's work has many critics¹¹ and this study does not offer a critique of his work. Instead, two of his major contributions to organization theory are adopted for the analysis of the participants' work. The first is his explanation of the rationalization of economic life, the resulting efficiency of bureaucratic organizations and their effects on people. The second is his explanation of why modern western economic activity developed what he calls the spirit of capitalism, an attitude that "seeks profit rationally and systematically," (Weber, 1930: 27). This attitude developed, he says, because of the "rational ethics of ascetic Protestantism," (Ibid: xxxix).¹²

¹¹ Some Catholics object to his representation of their beliefs and practices, some Protestants object to his emphasis of the force of the Puritan ethos, Marxists object to the power he gives to ideas. Some have accused Weber of writing outside his field to which he responded: "I am not a donkey and I do not have a field," (Tomasevski, 2003: 10).

¹²This was not a mono-causal claim but a part of his (incomplete) sociology of society and economics.

A fuller explanation of each claim follows.

The cage of rationalization

UNESCO's literature shows that it was designed to be a rational organization but what this means requires clarification. To explain a rational labour organization Weber (1978: xxxv-vi, xxxix, 25) lists important contributions to its development: the separation of home and work place, a regular market (rather than political or speculative irrationality), rational book-keeping, administration and legal structures, free labour and the ability and disposition of people to adopt certain types of practical rational conduct. All of these developments were in place when UNESCO was created.

The core of a rational organization is the bureaucracy that, in its ideal form, is hierarchical, neutral in staff selection and has written rules for its organization and control. A bureaucracy is a superior form of worker organization because it organizes staff according to specialization of skills (Weber, 1978: 956-8)¹³. Weber (1930: 106) notes that the specialization of labour enables both qualitative and quantitative development of skills for improved production and for serving the common good.

However, Weber (in Giddens, 1971: 182) also says that bureaucracies are 'escape proof'. Domination and subordination in a bureaucracy are required for efficiency and workers accept the authority of those with higher organizational status because of its legal-rational basis. As well, they accept the bureaucratic cage because they need the organization for payment of their labour. Weber (in Giddens, 1971: 234) extends Marx's claim that capitalism has expropriated the means of production from the worker, by arguing that expropriation applies in any form of hierarchy of authority and he replaces 'means of production' with 'means of administration'. Consequently,

¹³ A fuller account of bureaucracies is given in Chapter Three.

“the great question thus is ... what can we set against this mechanization to preserve a certain section of humanity from this fragmentation of the soul, this complete ascendancy of the bureaucratic ideal of life?” (Weber in Giddens, 1971: 236).

Weber (in Giddens, 1971: 136-7) provides a theoretical answer to his own question in two ways. First, he is a neo-Kantian in his insistence on the separation of facts and values; there is no way to join what is with what ought to be because ethical and factual truths are logically different. So, he stresses that the rational organization he describes is an ideal or pure type, with formal rationality that is useful for demonstrating key characteristics but it is not necessarily a desirable type; the ideal should be used only for comparative purposes to help with examination of a problem. Resistance is possible in real bureaucracies.

Second, any descriptions of collective concepts, such as a bureaucracy, should be in terms of individual actions because an organization is not an acting entity, it is a collection of people who act within its bureaucratic structure and rules. In the structure some may resist the cage’s fragmentation of the soul and certainly conflict will exist alongside consensus as a part of interaction between sectional interests (Weber in Giddens, 1995:68-69). Therefore, Weber says, it is necessary to examine the actions of individuals before attempting any probable generalization about the whole organization.

From this theory, therefore, the study draws three research interests: an ideal of a bureaucracy against which UNESCO’s may be compared, an interest in workers’ activities and a concern for a potential cage of rationalization.

The call of duty

Organization theory supports the view of this study that the participants’ work context is complex. Leadership literature

supports the view that they have significant leadership skills. Reason suggests, therefore, that the participants could leave the UN for other work that is less complex and as well paid. Max Weber's explanation of the call of duty provides a possible reason, a rationality, for their continuing to work in UNESCO.

Rational ethics in the workplace, Weber says, is about a calling or life-task and he identifies its origins in the Calvinists' belief in the predestination of the elect. As a matter of faith Calvinists had to believe they were one of the chosen and they worked tirelessly so that their achievements would indicate their faith and state of grace (Weber, 1978:1198-1200). Their work had to have "impersonal social usefulness" and reflect the "fulfillment of the obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world," (Weber, 1930: 40). Labour had to be performed as if it were an absolute end in itself, not for pleasurable use of the money earned but for the (irrational) sense of having done a job well (Weber, 1930:18-33). Devotion to labour was in itself irrational in terms of happiness-promoting self-interest but absolutely rational in religious terms (Weber, 1930:38-39).

Weber (1930: 64-73) stresses the joyless ascetic nature of "actions under constant self-control with a careful consideration of their ethical consequences," and says that its emphasis on hard work contributed to the rationalization¹⁴ of worldly conduct and especially the ethos of capitalism. With time, a concern for material possessions became the cage from which religious asceticism 'escaped' and, although capitalism, resting on mechanical foundations, no longer needs it, the idea of duty "prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs," says Weber (1930:123-4). Duty in a calling, an obligation felt towards one's profession "no matter whether it appears ... as a utilization of his personal powers or only of his material

¹⁴ But not that the spirit of capitalism is a part of the development of rationalism as some of his critics believe Weber claims (Weber, 1930: 37).

possessions (as capital),” is what Weber (1930: 19) calls “the fundamental basis” of the social ethic of capitalistic culture.

Weber applied

The concepts of a cage of rationalization and a call of duty are used in this study to complement the examination of participants working in a bureaucracy that they describe as difficult. Weber’s concerns with rationalization suggest that real bureaucracies (as well as ideal) have challenges for workers and some of their activities may include resistance. His explanation of the spirit of capitalism helps to explain why participants, even though they describe their bureaucracy negatively, stay in the workplace cage. They are apparently acting irrationally, but may actually be acting purposively and rationally for interests they see as more important. They are in a calling, a vocation, and their focus is ethical rather than material.¹⁵

Weber’s theories suggested, therefore, that this study should include an examination of the rationality of UNESCO and especially its bureaucracy. His work also promotes questions about the resistance he claims is possible in the cage of bureaucratization. Weber’s work further suggests that participants’ power should be considered as a call of duty so that compliance in the cage of bureaucratization is a rational response. An examination of the assumptions participants have about their work was one way to assess their sense of their work as something like a calling.

What was missing, however, was the way to explain the rationalization of a non-ideal bureaucracy and how to analyze

¹⁵ This study acknowledges, as does Weber, that a call to duty may be used by some individuals to explain and excuse actions such as torture, murder or genocide because, the individuals claim, they are serving some higher purpose. However, international norms, set by The Hague Convention and numerous post-war tribunals, deny the claim of duty as a mitigating plea for any behaviour that harms people.

power whether of compliance or resistance. Foucault provided the way forward.

Foucault: knowledge, power and resistance

General

Foucault also has his critics¹⁶ and, as with Weber, this study is not a critique of his work. Although his approach is quite different from Weber's, Foucault says that to abandon the work of Weber (and Kant) is to run the "risk of lapsing into irrationality," (Foucault, 1994: 358) and some of his "complexes of meaning" (Giddens, 1971: 149; Mills, 2003: 50-51) complement Weber's work. However, although both are concerned with knowledge and rationality, Foucault's approach is to examine reason itself, asking about "its indispensability, and, at the same time, its intrinsic dangers," (Foucault, 1994: 358).

Two of Foucault's theories are adopted for this study. First, his explanation of rationalization and its relationship with knowledge suggests an approach for an analysis of UNESCO's bureaucracy that is helpful. The second adopted idea is an extension of the first: Foucault's theory of surveillance that explains why people are not only compliant social beings but are also able to challenge accepted knowledge and behaviour provides a useful explanation of participants' relationship with the bureaucracy, especially.

A fuller explanation of each idea follows.

¹⁶ Some fault his rejection of structuralist explanations of social organization, others say his work lacks depth of archival references, some feminists find his work too male oriented, some academics see his work as insufficiently evaluative and interpretive while others complain that he offers no concrete solutions to problems or that his theories are too difficult to apply. Habermas, his chief critic, objects to his "presentism and relativism". Foucault has also, like Weber, been accused of not staying in one theoretical position, to which he has replied: "Do you think I have worked (like a dog) all those years to say the same thing and not be changed?" (Foucault in Mills, 2003:3).

The cage of knowledge

Foucault is accused of rejecting the Enlightenment with its sense of a continuous development of reason. What he actually says about discourse(s)¹⁷ is that there should be a critique of the meaning of alleged universals such as freedom; “I think there are more secrets, more possible freedoms, and more inventions in our future than we can imagine in humanism,” (Foucault, 1994: 385-6). For Foucault, rationalities in the rules about organizations or truth or behaviour change with time (Danaher, 2000; Foucault, 1994; Mills, 2003) and to support claims about discourses Foucault proposes “local critique” (Foucault, 1994: 379).¹⁸ This explanation shifts the focus from rationalization as a universal force to specific rationalization, relative to its time and in any analysis of an organization knowledge-conclusions should be considered in both universal and relative terms. Knowledge is itself relative, not because, in Enlightenment terms,¹⁹ it progresses with time but because it is a product of its time.

Foucault theorizes that knowledge is not something independent of time and people. In the western world, with the end of autocracies, no final authority exists to determine the position of any discourse and the most powerful displace others through interaction and conflict; in this way new knowledge or discourse is established.

¹⁷ McHoul and Grace claim that Foucault is the “first major writer to pose the question of power in relation to discourse,” (1998: 22).

¹⁸ Foucault (1994) recommends study of a period of no more than twenty years, containing two notable events and an examination with specific criteria regarding received and hidden knowledge.

¹⁹ Generally, the Enlightenment period that began in Europe in the eighteenth century is described as a collection of ideas and attitudes about freedom, justice, and reason that together will bring progress and well-being to the world. Foucault did not reject absolutely the ideas and attitudes of the Enlightenment. He welcomed its provision of critique and the possibility of examining “what we are (which) is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them,” (Foucault in Danaher et al, 2000:10-11).

Foucault's use of the term 'discourses' to refer to time and knowledge is not always clear (Honneth, 1997: 105-148; McHoul and Grace, 1998: 26-56) but generally discourses seem to include not only language but also "norms ... rules ... and systems," (Foucault in Honneth, 1997: 106). Their characteristics are neither as representation nor communication but rather as a means of control because discourses are appropriated by, and are a product of, dominant interests.²⁰ Discursive practices may vary with time but they "don't exist without a certain regime of rationality," Foucault says (in Kelly, 1994: 386).

Dominant discourses are relational to events, ideas and activities in their episteme²¹ (Danaher et al, 2000; Foucault, 1994; Mills, 2003; Smart, 2002) and, consequently, are "limited practical domains," (in McHoul and Grace, 1998: 50). Thus the Enlightenment world view with its focus on reason and justice, progress and freedom, displaced discourses centred on autocracies and produced belief systems such as capitalism, socialism and communism. These, Foucault claims, are in turn being replaced by new knowledge and beliefs in the modern world.

If knowledge is relational then truth and rationality are also relational. In this way Foucault differs from Weber's global focus by saying "we have to ... analyze specific rationalities rather than always invoking the progress of rationalization in general," (Foucault, 1994:329). So rationalization has to be used in a relative and instrumental way and for something to be called rational the episteme's knowledge and rules about true and false have to be used in the judgement (Foucault, 1994: 231,273). This approach to knowledge and its rationality has special implications for

²⁰ Chomsky seems to support this view in his description of the application of a 'false news' law in Canada that "gives the state the power to determine truth and punish deviation from it," (2003: 271).

²¹ An episteme is "a period of history organised around, and explicable in terms of, specific world-views and discourses. They are characterised by institutions, disciplines, knowledges, rules and activities consistent with these world-views," (Danaher et al, 2000: xi).

bureaucracies: Weber looks for a comparison of ideal and real rational bureaucracies but Foucault requires that a bureaucracy be judged by the rationalities of its time. In this study both analyses are provided.

As well, Foucault's description of knowledge has implications for workers: if contextual discourse determines their perception of real and ideal, and their understanding of their lives and what behaviour is acceptable or not (Danaher et al, 2000: 35), then it imprisons them in an epistemic cage of knowledge. In this way "the theory of knowledge also becomes a theory of power," (Honneth, 1997: 153). This position would help to explain docile workers but might not allow conflict and the production of new knowledge. It would deny participants any challenges to the bureaucratic problems they describe. Foucault, however, argues that resistance is possible and he does this with his explanation of power that "is everywhere not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere," (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 106).

The gaze of power

Since it is people who create knowledge it, consequently, dominates and rationalizes their perceptions of life. Knowledge also has norms and these are monitored by the gaze of power. Bentham's panopticon is used as a metaphor for the surveillance techniques that, Foucault says, began in closed institutions but exist today throughout society. Surveillance and the discipline of norms create self-monitoring people who hope to avoid the gaze of power. However, norms of knowledge also have deviancies and the 'technologies of the self' offer possibilities for challenging power using knowledge and its opposites (Danaher et al, 2000; Foucault, 1994; Mills, 2003; Smart, 2002).

Challenge is possible because of the nature of power: "... the exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely knowledge constantly induces effects of power," (Foucault, 1994:

xvi). This power is 'mobile and contingent' because the Enlightenment took power from the rulers and gave it to rationality but its relativity actually left the site of power empty; thus the site can be filled by anyone and no institution or other power can prevent challenge by claiming undisputed access to truth (Danaher et al, 2000: 71-2).

Foucault, therefore, is not interested in who holds power but rather how it operates (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 21). Power "must be analyzed as something which circulates ... Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application," (Foucault in Mills, 2003: 35). Consequently, power is a strategy, not a possession and:

"at the heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom...less of a face-to-face confrontation that paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation," (Foucault, 1994: 342).

In this way all relations are power relations and their operation can be seen well in the relationship between individuals and institutions (Mills, 2003: 35; Smart, 2002: 77).

A study of institutional power usually begins with space. Weber (1930: xxxv) and Foucault (in Danaher et al, 2000) both argue that the spatial separation of home and work was one of the necessary factors for a rational capitalistic organization. However, Foucault explores space more fully because it is "fundamental in any exercise of power," (Foucault, 1994: 361). Space is used to regulate workers by separating them with rules, roles and positions and with its own discourse of normal behaviour (Danaher et al, 2000: 33, 70). Space is also organized so that all activity can be 'seen' and Foucault identifies three ways of 'seeing' or controlling: constant surveillance, normalizing judgements in which violations are corrected by some form of 'punishment' and examination which combines the previous two procedures. Organizational panoptic surveillance is:

“hierarchized, continuous and functional ... organized as a multiple, automatic and anonymous power ... absolutely indiscreet, since it is everywhere, and always alert, since by its very principle it leaves no zone of shade ...” (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 95).

The discourse of the space sets the norms by which workers are judged (a dividing or spatial practice in itself) and disciplinary measures produce compliance. The norms are internalized and individuals become self-monitoring or ‘practised’ (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 71) to avoid the gaze of power. Paradoxically, while the intention of disciplinary techniques is to produce regularity and conformity, because the gaze of power is on each body, it highlights differences and individuality and the result is a multiplicity of individual identities (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 72). As well, the moralizing gaze of authority gives people metaphors of vision and insight and valuable activities to strive for such as gaining knowledge, so that gazing is associated with power, knowledge and value (Danaher et al, 2000; Foucault, 1994; Gordon, 2001; Mills, 2003, Rouse in Gutting, 1994; Smart, 2002).

Foucault (1994: 77) cites religious groups²² as one of the original sources of the panoptic gaze: all who belonged to the group were liable as individuals to supervision by the group. However, the institutionalized and top-down form of panopticism first appeared in closed institutions that, by their existence, demonstrated to all people not only norms of behaviour but also, by the spatial separation of deviants, its discipline. Foucault argues that panopticism spread until today “we live in a society where panopticism reigns,” (Foucault, 1994:85) and “in the great social panopticism, whose function is precisely that of transforming people’s lives into a productive force ... the prison is a reverse image of society,” (Foucault, 1994: 58).

²² Foucault, like Weber, noted Protestant self-regulating practices, citing the Methodists in particular; Weber excludes them from his thesis of the call of duty, however.

Foucault recognizes two forms of power²³: juridical power (held and owned by a few, flowing from top to bottom and primarily repressive) and disciplinary or discursive power (not owned but exercised by all, flowing from bottom to top and productive not repressive). The two forms are not incompatible but in conflict and competition are correlative. It is the latter form that Foucault uses to explain how “the centralized, repressive forms of power” are made possible by “the myriad of power relations at the micro-level of society,” (Foucault in Kelly, 1994: 375).

This concept of power offers a number of reasons for the possibility of resistance in Foucault’s cage of knowledge. First, power is productive: power held by authorities produces its own opposition because (new) norms have (new) opposites. Because no final authority exists for competing discourses, people can choose, using thought, criticism and problematization to consider their position and to try to control it. Thought enables ethical behaviour and Foucault believes that people are able to be ethical beings; for Foucault ethics means the relation one has to oneself (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 24). The technologies of the self allow people to become self-knowing and self-improving for a full life and for the community benefit. With the technologies of the self, they develop self-regulation but this ethical behaviour is not about compliance with rules; it is about freedom to make choices to be an ethical person. This provides the basis for resistance and challenges to power (Danaher et al, 2000; Mills, 2003; Smart, 2002).

Second, if power is a strategy and it always includes resistance then resistance is also a strategy that people are able to exercise. This might suggest that the individual who challenges is not acting freely but is merely an inanimate part of the interplay of power. Foucault denies this and says that those who are involved in power

²³ In later work Foucault combined the two into one, the juridico-discursive concept of power, because there is “a legislative power on one side and an obedient subject on the other,” (in McHoul and Grace, 1998: 88). This combination applies to the prince and citizen, father and child, or to any power relationship.

relations can, by their own actions “escape them, transform them, in a word, cease being submissive,” by “recognizing the relations of power in which they are involved,” (Foucault, 1994: 294). Further, he claims that the most effective form of resistance is that aimed at a technique of power rather than at power itself (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 86). In this way knowledge enables challenges to power.

Foucault applied

The concepts of a cage of knowledge and the gaze of power are used in this study to supplement the analysis of the participants at the frontline of UNESCO’s work. If an organization’s bureaucracy, ideal or real, controls and restricts the agency and power necessary for their work, then they are in Weber’s iron cage and as rational beings they should leave. However, the call of duty, seen especially in their work assumptions, keeps them apparently locked into work they cannot carry out as well as they believe they could and should. This seems to be a rational and ethical explanation of participants’ situation.

Further, if they are also locked into Foucault’s cage of knowledge and constantly under the gaze of power, then their situation seems to be in double jeopardy. However, if, as Foucault claims, knowledge, and its norms and opposites, provides the possibility of resistance then the participants may ‘escape’, using knowledge as ethical behaviour. Knowledge is both their iron cage and an ethical and rational strategy for freedom. Foucault’s ideas suggested that the study should include an examination of participants’ space in UNESCO and the techniques of power and resistance they and their bureaucracy exercise.

CONCLUSION

This survey of literature covers four quite different areas of academic and other writing. Accounts of the UN and its agencies indicate the complex and, at times, controversial context of the

study. The literature comes predominantly from external observers and is generally negative in its concerns about organization, practices and politics. It provides a detailed picture of the challenges facing the UN and its agencies and it also provides useful reference points for understanding participants' contributions to this study.

Organization literature presents a picture of three major shifts in thinking about ideal and real structures and practices. Whether mechanistic with a focus on tasks, contingent with a focus on process or multidirectional with a focus on context as well as task and process, each organizational structure has implications for the appropriate work style of its employees. This literature strongly suggests that employee roles and practices should match the structure of the organization and this should apply to UNESCO and its heads also.

Leadership theory has developed along lines similar to organization theory, with emphasis first on tasks and personal traits of leaders, then on process and more recently on the multidirectional focus of leadership to include context as well as traits and process. The skills, styles and challenges of leadership are explored in the literature and, as with organization theory, no consensus is reached. However, leadership literature provides useful possibilities for the analysis of participants' power and their responses to the organizational challenges they face.

Finally, perspectives on power are explored. A variety of general accounts are examined but two theorists are selected for the particular approaches they provide that are useful for the examination of power in this study. Weber's account of the iron cage and his explanation of the call of duty suggest a way to explain why participants continue to work in a context they say is very difficult: they are exercising a special kind of power by remaining. Foucault's account of the cage of knowledge and the gaze of power complement this analysis. Although caught in the power of the knowledge of their time and with surveillance a

dominant part of their working lives, participants are able to challenge when they choose because power and knowledge also offer opportunities for resistance. Weber and Foucault both assist with this study's provision of a positive account of the power of seven heads of UNESCO's field offices.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the selection of an interpretive study within a qualitative research paradigm and a full discussion of the conceptual framework of organizational bureaucracy, organizational capital and frontline work is provided.

The methodology and time frame of the study are presented, each focal area of the study is explained and difficulties met during the research are included in the discussion.

INTERPRETIVE RESEARCH

One of the challenges of this research was its potential size. It was important to restrict what was to be examined to manageable proportions but it was also important to include any significant influences on participant heads' work in the whole context of UNESCO.

The paradigm of qualitative research offers a variety of approaches for research. An interpretive approach was selected because it is most appropriate for research that examines "situations through the eyes of the participants," (Cohen et al, 2000:137) and so does not know what issues or explanations will emerge. The central endeavour of interpretive research is "to understand the subjective world of human experience," with efforts made to "get inside participants and understand from within," (Cohen et al, 2000: 22). The task is to gather and explain "their interpretations of the world around them," (Cohen et al. 2000: 23).

Interpretive research is value-laden and participants work with the researcher to establish meanings in the research site; those meanings take the place of positivist 'proof' in the theory that is generated. Interpretive research is also time-bound and context-

based and a case study is often used to report the research. Data collection is multi-modal and should be carried out in real situations, overtly but unobtrusively. The researcher is personally involved in this research approach (Cohen et al, 2000:35).

A number of validity challenges arise with interpretive research. The tasks of defining the context site, the possibility of receiving misleading or selective contributions from participants, the possibility of missing important data or the implicit knowledge of participants and the challenge of analyzing and interpreting possibly variant or contradictory data are some of the key concerns.

To promote validity three principles are followed in this research: data used are from the participants and from relevant work documents; each stage of the collection, analysis and theorization process included checks with the participants and with literature from IGOs and NGOs; the final report has the validation of the participants themselves and, finally, process, an important part of the study, is reported carefully for possible replication.

Triangulation is recommended for interpretive research and it may include the use of two or more varied sources and methods of collection, more than one investigator and it may include varied theory perspectives (Delamont, 1992; Gillham, 2000; Yin, 1994). This study used two data sources: the participants and UNESCO documents. It also used four data collection methods with the participants: two structured questionnaires, a taped semi-structured interview, observation of four participants in their offices and discussion with participants in meetings of all heads of offices. Checks were also made with some non-participant heads and other experts not a part of the study. Further, the final report offers different theoretical perspectives from academic, IGO and NGO literature. Time (three years) was taken to gather and analyze data so that cross checks and revisions were possible in an orderly manner. These varied sources and methods aimed to promote consistent, accurate and reliable data, careful interpretation and a reliable report.

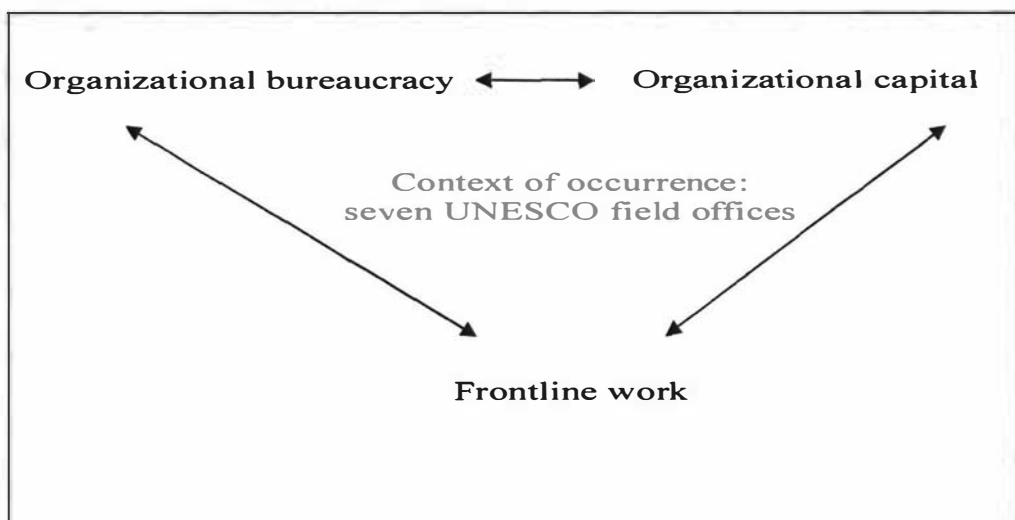
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

General

The conceptual framework was designed to reflect both appropriate theory and those aspects of participants' work likely to be significant in the study.

The 'context of occurrence' (Kemmis, 1980) is the field office. The key research concepts of *organizational bureaucracy*, *organizational capital* and *frontline work* frame the context of occurrence and also meet in it, providing complicated layers of research possibilities. Although the literature recommends an unfolding conceptual framework for research in a new field (Punch, 2000; Strauss and Corbin, 1998), the initial and tentative framework was confirmed in participants' responses and so not changed.

Figure 2: Conceptual framework



Organizational bureaucracy

General

The concept of organizational bureaucracy is drawn from the literature of organization theory and this begins with Weber's description of the importance of bureaucracy:

“(H)owever many people may complain about the ‘bureaucracy’, it would be an illusion to think for a moment that continuous administrative work can be carried out in any field except by means of officials working in offices,” (Weber in Giddens, 1971: 160).

Weber identifies a number of characteristics that distinguish bureaucracies from other kinds of organization. With a focus on efficiency, bureaucracies have specialized functions, their staff are appointed and promoted on seniority or expertise, they have tenure, their authority is regulated by a centralized and hierarchical structure and a complex set of rules governs all activity. Weber claims that rationality (which he uses synonymously with rational efficiency) is the chief characteristic and the advantage of bureaucracies and the technical knowledge of staff is the reason for its superiority. The model assumes an ‘ideal’ universality.

The special issue of rationality in Weber’s model is explored in a variety of ways in the literature (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Thomas, 2002). All agree that rationality is at the centre of the concept of bureaucracy but they offer different perspectives on what it means. Rationality may be about structure or goal or process. It may be technical, economic, social, legal or political (Diesing in Gortner et al, 1997:61). It can also include the rationality of a patriarchal bureaucracy or the reasoning behind discipline or even oppression. The concept of Weberian rationality is complex and its centrality in bureaucracy complicates any theory about bureaucracy. When Foucault’s theory of epistemic rationality is added to research possibilities, it becomes an even more challenging concept.

Concerns

Although Weber’s model continues to dominate organization theory, it is criticized for its assumptions about the way people act and Weber himself is concerned that bureaucracies reduce spontaneity, which he equates with freedom. The view is shared: bureaux are “instruments of class domination,” (Gortner et al,

1997:5) or they are psychic prisons, political systems, cultural constructions or language games (Morgan, 1997).

Other concerns about bureaucracies are found in the literature about, and from, IGOs. “Development and humanitarian organizations are notorious for the imbalance that is almost inevitably found between aspirations, capabilities and resources,” and the result is self-inflicted complexity; “overwork and pressure of work are systemic weaknesses,” (Roper and Pettit, 2002:266).²⁴

Different writers claim:

“Organizational structure and practice is seldom in alignment with development principles, but rather adheres to principles which ensure self-preservation and perpetuation, as reflected in policies and procedures, reporting practices and relationships with communities of need as well as donors and the general public,” (Power et al, 2002:277).

Criticisms also note a gap between practices and core values and claim “that good practice at the field level is not sufficient where organizational practice inhibits or retards learning from the field level,” (Power et al, 2002:274-277). Some researchers claim that bureaucratic reporting is about money not outcomes (Roper and Pettit, 2002:365) or that monitoring and evaluation are used “as instruments of ‘control’ and ‘judgement’,” (Mebrahtu, 2002:505). Hummel (in Gortner et al, 1997:5) claims that social relations become control relations and people are “incapable of emotion and devoid of will; language, once the means of bringing people into communication, becomes the secretive tool of one-way commands.” Burns cites Veblens’ concern that people in bureaucracies are “trained into incapacity,” (Burns in Hickman, 1998:57).

²⁴ Some literature excludes the names of I/NGOs to “avoid unfairly singling out specific organizations that are facing problems or challenges endemic to the INGO sector as a whole,” (Power et al, 2002: 282).

Shifts in theoretical approaches

The theory of organizational bureaucracy began as a prescription for an ideal model. However, in the 1970s, as interpretive research began to raise concerns about bureaucratic theory, some of which are noted in Chapter Two, attention shifted from what people ought to do, to what they actually do. Clegg and Hardy (1999:413) claim Silverman's work as 'pivotal' because he emphasizes people acting in organizations that, as social constructions, are therefore able to be changed. The shift took the theory of organizational bureaucracy from the narrow prescription of positivist science to a broader description of organizational human activity and introduced debate about the relative importance of bureaucratic structure and personal agency for the achievement of an organization's goals. Consequently, current theory describes organizational bureaucracies in terms of their flexibility, staff empowerment, differences and ambivalence, as well as their internal contradictions and contextual challenges.

The broadening of theory, however, has brought new concerns. The first problem is relativism: if organizational bureaucracies can be described in a variety of ways it is difficult to develop a normative theory for either structure or process. The second concern focusses on the influence of Western thinking on the basic premises of theories of organizational bureaucracy. If organizations and bureaux reflect Enlightenment views about the power of (Western) rational thought, for example, then organizations of non-Western countries may be excluded and the theory cannot be normative or prescriptive. New approaches, therefore, attempt to broaden the theory. One such approach (Gortner et al, 1997: 51) lists four perspectives for the concept of organizational bureaucracy:

*law and legal authority, including conflicts between what is effective but not allowed;

*rationality and efficiency; rationality includes purpose (substantive) and methods (instrumental); most researchers agree

on rationality and focus on efficiency, either prescriptive or descriptive;

*psychological and social relationships; and

*politics and power relationships; many theorists avoid political organizations or miss the whole category.

The concept of organizational bureaucracy in this research

In this study, the concept of organizational bureaucracy draws on previous research in three ways: a focus on power, an interest in rationality and a concern for agency and power relationships. Because UNESCO is a political organization, the bureaucracy fits Gortner et al's fourth perspective above but data collection frequently raised the second perspective of rationality and broadened what had to be included in the concept for this research. Both raise questions about lines of authority and information and these are included in the examination of UNESCO's bureaucracy.

Organizational capital

General

The second concept in the research framework is *organizational capital* and it is drawn especially from the literature on organizations and leadership. It is different from what the literature calls social capital²⁵ and focusses more specifically on the assets participants have for their work.

The premise in this concept is that if participants have sufficient and necessary assets then they should be able to promote UNESCO's goals for peace and development. Organizational

²⁵ Studies of social capital are frequently restricted to social interaction or networks in, and between, organizations although some studies note that it is 'tangled up' with other resources (Gabbay and Leenders, 2001: 156).

capital could include a wide variety of variables but for this study they were restricted to the personal, positional and post assets and motivation most likely to give power to the participants.

Organizational capital possibilities

The search in the past for a definition of what (organizational capital) leaders might need for success has been extensive and the result is lists and summaries of lists, syntheses and matrices and studies of studies. *Figure 3* provides an overview of the range of possible approaches broadly grouped as traits, skills and motivation.

Figure 3: Organizational capital possibilities

<i>Traits, skills and motivation</i>		
<i>Traits</i>	<i>Skills</i>	<i>Motivation</i>
Stogdill (1981) <i>capacity achievement responsibility participation situation traits status traits</i>	Katz (1955), Mann (1965) <i>conceptual technical human relations</i> Yukl (1994) <i>(Categories)</i> <i>planning , organizing problem-solving consulting delegating motivating recognizing rewarding networking managing conflict developing/mentoring monitoring supporting clarifying informing</i>	Hertzberg (1959) <i>job context job content</i> McClelland (1975) <i>power achievement affiliation</i> Katz and Kahn (1982) <i>organizational factors</i> Porter-Lawler (1994) <i>internal cognition situational variables</i>
<i>Missing: rationality and ethics</i>		

The gaps in *Figure 3*, of significance for this study, include ethical behaviour and rationality. This study also adds positional (and post) capital and this is discussed in Chapter Five.

Figure 3 demonstrates that many aspects of organizational capital are inter-exchangeable thus complicating any theory about participants' organizational capital. As well, although this is not demonstrated in the figure, most belong to contingency and multidirectional organization theory.

Organization and leadership theory working together

It is useful, therefore to suggest a possible approach that includes all main phases of organization and leadership theory. *Figure 4* below illustrates possibilities for organizational capital appropriate for leaders, depending on how their organization is structured.

Figure 4: Appropriate organizational capital for leaders

Organization theory:	Mechanistic	Contingency	Multi-context
Leadership theory:	<i>traits/ tasks</i>	<i>processes</i>	<i>contexts</i>
Personal resources	accomplish assigned roles	interpret the environment	judgement and partnerships
Responsibility	formal rules to obey	defined limits of authority	defined areas of responsibility
Work interest	self-interest; some loyalty to the organization	loyalty to goals	commitment to goals

The representation indicates historical shifts in appropriate organizational capital. The expansion of the necessary personal resources, the shift from obedience to responsibility and the change from self-interest to other interests, demonstrate why the concept is

important in research. The literature suggests that in modern organizations leaders' organizational capital should be considerable (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997). As well, if an organization is a multi-context organization then leaders' organizational capital should match. Any mismatch, such as a mechanistic organization employing senior staff with multi-context organizational capital, is likely to bring problems that might hinder goal achievement.

The concept of organizational capital in this research

Organizational capital in this research begins with participants' tangible assets of skills and experience gained before appointment and then in their position and post; the literature supports the conclusion that their tangible capital is strong. Organizational capital also covers participants' intangible assets with a focus on those assumptions in the Constitution, bureaucracy and field work that motivate or challenge participants in their work. One aspect of intangible capital that emerged strongly in all participants' responses was an ethical sense of their work in spite of a bureaucracy and culture they frequently described negatively.

Frontline work

General

The third concept in the research framework is *frontline work* and it draws on organization and leadership theory and focusses on the participants at work in the field. INGO experience is valuable when thinking of frontline work.²⁶ As Hilhorst and Schmiemann (2002: 499) note, it is important to ground theory and organizational policies "in the stories of the fieldworkers who are responsible for their implementation," and Marsick and Cederholm (1998:11) talk of "the messy reality of the field." Examination of

²⁶ Examples from NGOs are included as the literature regards their operation as closer to public than private commercial organizations (Gortner et al, 1997: 4).

participants at the frontline is necessary for a picture of their work and the power they have to meet UNESCO's goals.

The literature offers a range of possibilities for examining what leaders actually do. Some are indicated in *Figure five*. These possibilities help with an understanding of participants' work at the frontline.

Figure 5: Possible leadership work at the frontline

Roles	Frames	Tactics
<p>Mintzberg (1975)</p> <p><i>figurehead</i> <i>leader</i> <i>liaison</i> <i>mentor,</i> <i>disseminator</i> <i>spokesperson</i> <i>entrepreneur</i> <i>disturbance-handler</i> <i>resource allocator</i> <i>negotiator</i></p> <p>Senge (1990)</p> <p><i>designer</i> <i>teacher</i> <i>steward</i></p> <p>Missing: moral actions and ethical leadership</p>	<p>Bolman and Deal (1997)</p> <p><i>structural</i> <i>human resources</i> <i>political</i> <i>symbolic</i></p> <p>Morgan (1997) <i>(Organization Metaphors)</i></p> <p><i>machines</i> <i>organisms</i> <i>brains</i> <i>cultures</i> <i>political systems</i> <i>psychic prisons</i> <i>flux and transformation</i> <i>domination</i></p>	<p>Yukl (1994)</p> <p><i>persuasion</i> <i>inspiration</i> <i>consultation</i> <i>ingratiation</i> <i>appeals</i> <i>exchange</i> <i>coalition</i> <i>legitimizing</i> <i>pressure</i></p>

However, the frontline itself needs examination because its properties interact and affect the work. The concept in this study contains the key spatial properties of proximity and distance. Although both terms can imply emotional or psychological ties, in this study they are limited to the physical sense of nearness or separation. The operation of lines of authority and information are again examined in this concept.

Two other properties of the frontline were added by the participants. They are time and ethics. These are not explored in this chapter but are examined fully in the following chapters.

Proximity

Frontline proximity is important and has advantages. This view is endorsed by writers such as Hilhorst and Schiemann (2002:494) describing Medicines Sans Frontieres and by the participants in this study. The participants work closely and regularly with governments and civil society representatives in the countries to whom they are accredited. Positive relationships with regional decision-makers, guiding successful programmes of work, assisting people and countries to achieve even small goals, all bring work satisfaction. They are very accessible to those they serve and can often be quickly helpful at times of crisis.

Proximity has some challenges. Frontline work places special responsibilities on participants to maintain the image of their agency when actions or decisions from headquarters may be working against the image. Because 'boundary-role occupants' are both internal information processors and external representatives, the challenge is to avoid being caught in the "cross fire of divergent role expectations," (Jonsson, 1993: 466). As well, they can also experience pressures for assistance from their countries because those countries can be deceived by the proximity and think that the field offices have the same powers and funding as headquarters.

Lines of communication with member states are usually direct to the national commissions²⁷ or to government officials. This does not mean they are easily managed or efficient and can be technologically difficult in some countries. Postal services may be slow, telephone systems do not always work, fax machines run out of paper and email is not yet available to all national commissions.

²⁷ National commissions are co-operating bodies in each of UNESCO's member states and are explained in Chapter Four.

As well, participants have no authority to require responses even when communication is successful so proximity does not always help in the field.

Generally, proximity is an important property of frontline work and it brings a complex mixture of intimacy and immediacy, frustration and reward to participants' work.

Distance

The property of distance also complicates frontline work. Mebrahtu's description (2002:504-505) of the difficulties of a new monitoring and evaluation process for NGOs in Ethiopia and the differing responses of field and head office staff is a useful illustration of the influence of distance. In UNESCO all heads must follow the same rules and regulations as headquarters staff even though their context is different and the organization's structure requires their geographical and time separation. Distance separates all heads from other senior colleagues in their area of expertise and they must interpret much that they have to do in isolation. Distance also excludes all heads from the chief decision-making sections of the organization and, as a consequence, they cannot easily participate in the establishment of policy.

Modern communication technology helps to close the gap but it brings its own problems of viruses, server failure, attachments overload and headquarters' expectations of access and speed of operation not practical in some offices. The technology brings a flood of 'paper' not previously sent and time saved by it is lost in the field as all heads must deal with memos, Green Notes, press releases, copies of speeches, requests for information and countless instructions, all of which emphasize the distance from headquarters.

Distance excludes all heads from the reward, discipline, appointment or transfer of all except their temporary staff. It also hides the work of UNESCO's heads from the same reward and

discipline processes and so adds to the sense of isolation from the core of the organization. All heads are also distanced from other field office heads and have few opportunities to discuss issues with peers or other colleagues and to see the organization as a whole or the value of their contribution to its purpose.

However, distance provides a degree of freedom, that headquarters staff do not have, to make decisions and to pursue some programme interests. It also offers possibilities for autonomy and challenge. Participants, in one sense, may hide behind distance to avoid or ignore their headquarters' power. The property of distance may bring exclusion and frustration, but it enhances individual organizational freedom and brings rewards to participants' work.

The concept of frontline work in this research

When proximity and distance interact at the frontline of a bureaucratic organization the result is a complex concept and an important part of the conceptual framework. Participants are both positive and negative about proximity to their countries and distance from headquarters. Their addition of time and ethics as further frontline properties complement these properties as later discussion indicates.

METHODOLOGY

General

Methodology had to be responsive to a range of political, organizational and personal sensitivities and a case study design, therefore, was appropriate. It enabled two data sources, a variety of data collection methods and frequent checks with the participants, UNESCO documents and relevant literature.

Design

An interpretive case study was appropriate for this study as the literature suggested (Bouma, 2000; Cohen et al, 2000; Gillham, 2000; Pring, 2000; Punch, 2000; Yin, 1994). It supported the conceptual framework and provided necessary flexibility with both the planned data collection methods and the management of unexpected events during the study. The case study also strengthened reliability by accommodating the collection of the views of more than one head of office.

Case studies are especially appropriate for research in which power is the focus. They are able to provide an in-depth analysis of the complex dynamism of a unique context and offer insights into similar situations. They give knowledge that is contextual, holistic and integrated with “thick descriptions” (Geertz in Gillham, 2000:19) showing “real people in real situations,” (Cohen et al, 2000:181-2). They can explore possible causal relationships in the case and show the influence of the context on both cause and effect (Bouma, 2000; Cohen et al, 2000; Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 1998; Pring, 2000; Yin, 1994).

Case studies are different from most research designs because they do not have specific methods for data collection or analysis and reporting. Consequently, for many years they were regarded as non-scientific. However, it is now accepted that case studies can provide valid, reliable and important contributions to knowledge (Cohen et al, 2000; Gillham, 2000; Yin, 1994). The flexibility of design that used to be denigrated is now regarded as one of its strengths (Cohen et al, 2000; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1994).

Most academics agree that three types of case study are possible: explanatory, exploratory and descriptive (Cohen et al, 2000; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1994). As the study of seven heads of field offices is the first of its kind, an explanatory design is the most appropriate. An exploratory design would be limited in its contributions to literature and a descriptive design would contribute little to literature or practice.

The flexibility of case study design has produced some dissension about the way they should be conducted and the major academic disagreements tend to reflect either the positivist or interpretivist research paradigm.

Disagreement begins with definition of case study. For this research the case study is not the “end-product of field-oriented research,” (Wolcott, 1992 cited in Merriam, 1998:27) nor is it the process of data collection methods (Yin, 1994). Instead, it is the unit or bounded system studied, (Bouma, 2000:91; Cohen et al, 2000:181; Gillham, 2000:1; Merriam, 1998:27; Stake, cited in Yin, 1994:17). In this study the bounded system is the field office, an abstract concept of the seven contemporary and geographical entities in which the complex human behaviour of seven research participants occurs and where phenomena merge with the context, bounded by the time frame of the research. The concept of “ecological psychology” (Gillham, 2000:5) captures this sense of humans interacting with their environment.

A second area of debate focusses on literature reviews, when to do them and for what purpose. Some academics, such as Gillham, (2000) and Pring (2000), say they should not be done first nor used to find a hypothesis to test, as this reflects a positivist, and inappropriate, paradigm and one not appropriate for any enquiry about people.

Many others, however, insist that early literature reviews are essential to establish a sound theoretical framework (Yin, 1994:9), to identify research questions (Merriam, 1998:48-9) and to ensure ethical procedures (Bouma, 2000:195). This study required both approaches: initial exploration to establish the range of existing research and to suggest early questions, followed by ongoing literature reviews to “interact” with the exploration of the case to help “sensitize perceptions,” (Gillham, 2000:37-38).

The other major area of disagreement concerns the place of theory, with consequential implications for questions, data collection, analysis and reporting. Some researchers insist that theories start

the study, questions are established, the site identified and then the theories are tested; results are reported against the theories in a linear-analytical model (Bouma, 2000; Yin, 1994). However, this study followed a design in which a general idea of the possibility of problematic power came first but it had “no privileging of a theoretical position,” (Pring, 2000:41). This ‘atheoretical’ approach is especially useful for areas where there has been little previous research (Merriam citing Lijphart’s term, 1998:38).

For this research the process began with the selection of context and basic problem, then as questions increasingly focussed and data were analyzed, so theory developed and was embedded in the evidence (Gillham, 2000:19-34). The process was cyclic and referential use of literature formed a part of the data analysis.

Validity

Case studies receive a number of challenges. They include claims of lack of rigour with the described methodology, researcher bias, the blurring of reality and truth and difficulties with cross checking. A more frequent challenge is that results cannot be scientifically generalized because they are a single case. These challenges reflect a positivist concern for external validity that is not always appropriate for research in the interpretive tradition. However, they can be answered: case studies are generalizable to theory (Yin, 1994:10), it is possible to generalize from a single case to the class of that case (Cohen et al, 2000:182-3) and case study has concrete universals and naturalistic or reader generalization (Merriam, 1998:207-12).

A third positivist concern is with reliability. How are the findings of case studies to be replicated? Yin (1994) suggests the establishment of a detailed protocol and database for future studies. However, reliability, by most case study definitions, is not possible in the positivist sense (Cohen et al, 2000:184). Merriam (1998) and Gillham (2000) claim, instead, that reliability is established if the study’s results are consistent with the data collected, by an

explicit description of the ‘investigator’s position’ (Merriam, 1998:206-7), triangulation and a clear audit trail.

The report of this research aims to meet the concerns indicated above in a variety of ways. First, as described below, data were collected over three years from UNESCO documents and in four different ways from participants with the aim of gathering as much information as possible. Second, where appropriate, all data were checked against a wide range of UNESCO literature and by appropriate theory for challenge as well as confirmation of findings, a form of theoretical triangulation. Next, the study aims to be “strong in reality,” (Cohen et al, 2000:184) and uses the language of the participants and their perceptions of their context to promote a picture of the case, aiming to ground it in the authority of reader understanding. The report also promotes internal validity and reliability by describing the discipline of the research process itself, what went well with the research and what did not work (Kemmis, 1980; Merriam, 1998).

Participants

UNESCO had 52 offices during the time of the study (2003-2005). Two of these are liaison (political) offices in Geneva and New York and were excluded because their work is not typical of the other 50. As well, heads of UNESCO’s 12 bureaux were excluded from the study because of the atypical extra roles of their offices. This left 38 offices from which participants might come. Because of the complexities of the research, participants needed to have three or more years experience as a head of office and this criterion reduced the number of possible participants to 28. Thus one quarter of appropriate heads of offices in the period of the study participated in the research.

Initially, all of the 28 heads were to be given information about the research and the first four affirmative responses were to be accepted. However, the technical difficulties of this approach, and possible problems with an unbalanced regional representation, brought a change to the process. Instead, a point on the alphabet

was selected and one name at that point, or at the next point below, in each of the four developing regions of the five UN regions of the world²⁸, was sent the information and invited to participate. All four heads accepted, of whom only one was known to the researcher.

During the period of data collection, one head was transferred before observation of work in the office could take place. Consequently, another head was identified alphabetically and accepted the invitation to join the research and this office provided the fourth observation site. At this time two other heads, again identified alphabetically, accepted participation when strong uniformity in participants' responses seemed to suggest that the number was too few. The three new heads' offices were or are in the same regions but in different areas from three of the other four participants. One of the additional participants was known to the supervisor.

The study did not look for ethnic or cultural balance as almost every UNESCO head of office is from a different part of the world. The language of the work with participants was English, one of the UN official languages. In this report, each participant is identified numerically.

Neither did the study look for gender balance as at the time of participant identification only five women were heads of offices. However, the initial selection did produce two women and two men and the final gender balance was three women and four men.

The participants grew up in seven different countries and cultures. They are highly academically qualified and held senior positions of leadership and management in their home countries, in government, inter-government and non-government bodies, or as field work practitioners, before joining UNESCO. All speak and write at least two languages fluently and their skills include

²⁸ The UN regions are: Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America. The last region was excluded from the selection process.

practical and technical knowledge in their field of specialization and the ability to live and work successfully in developing countries. All but one has worked in headquarters as well as in the field and four heads have been head of more than one UNESCO field office. They are people with initiative, energy and considerable inter-personal relationship skills; in general, they are an elite group of international civil servants.

Data collection and analysis

Case studies draw on multiple sources of data and this research gathered data from participants and UNESCO documents and information about IGOS and NGOs. Data from participants came through:

- questionnaires,
- semi-structured taped interviews,
- observation in four of the field offices,
- extra discussions at two meetings (one in Dourdan and the other in Paris) of all heads of offices during 2003 and
- attendance at the same meetings and during a gathering of the heads of offices in the Asia-Pacific region in 2004.

Observation (Appendix 11) of four heads at work was an important data collection method and unless specifically excluded in the text, only those contributions confirmed by observation are included in this report. Attendance at the meetings of heads was also important for confirming, clarifying or emphasizing data to be collected.

At each stage of data collection responses were collated and the results returned to the participants for their responses. This was a useful practice as often participants added supplementary comments in their responses. Data collection and analyses were cyclic and often operated together rather than four single steps of research.

Literature checks of theory and UNESCO documents matched each stage of data collection. UNESCO documents provided organizational information that was necessary for cross checking data and emerging theory. A detailed explanation of the cyclic method of data collection and analysis follows.

Focus one

The first focus aimed to establish the context of participants' work and to start identification of the powers they have to meet their responsibilities. The task was to try to establish an understanding of the way the participants "experience the world," (Connelly and Clandinin, in Smeyers and Verhesschen, 2001: 77). A questionnaire (Appendix 5) was sent to participants for completion. This first questionnaire was an adaptation of the Conditions Scale, offering initial research ideas to which participants responded (Hopkins and Ainscow, 1994). Their answers were collated and the tentative thoughts returned to them for comment (Appendix 6).

In the July 2003 meeting in Dourdan participants completed a brief follow up chart about key tasks and processes to clarify the picture of their work (Appendix 7). They also discussed a second questionnaire (Appendix 8). The collated results (Appendix 9) were discussed with participants during the October meeting in Paris of all UNESCO heads. By the end of 2003 the description of their roles and responsibilities was agreed. As well, participants' responses to the first questionnaires and during the first discussions were full and so data collected during this first step included much detail relevant for the other focal areas.

The roles and considerable work detail were cross checked against UNESCO's head of office job descriptions (Appendix 2) as well as the Table of Delegated Authority lists of authorities and random sampling of other heads' views during the July and October meetings. They were also checked by observation in the field offices of four of the participants. The overall purpose of

UNESCO heads' work was checked against the Constitution of UNESCO (Appendix 3). The work of this focus, including the first thoughts about participants' power, is contained in Chapter Four, Purpose and Organizational Structure.

The visits to the offices also started in 2003 but were spread over a year. Three challenges emerged for this part of the study. First, it was difficult to organize suitable times for visits that did not disrupt, too much, participants' office and travel responsibilities. Second, the participants' host countries were spread across the globe and it was not possible to combine any of the visits. Finally, it took time to organize a replacement office when one participant was transferred before the observation visit but it was important to wait to gain four office observations for a strong cross check of participants' responses for "inconsistencies between stated attitudes and actual behaviour, between formal practices and informal norms," (Martin and Frost in Clegg et al, 1999:350).

Observation (Appendix 11) in the field office visits had the same basic plan: tour of office and meet staff; observe general flow of work in the participant's office; conduct a taped semi-structured interview (Appendix 10); time a day's activities if possible; observe out-of-office work where possible. Observation also included noting the support available for the participant such as numbers of local and international staff and the range of communication technology and it covered participants' work at home. Observation ceased at times when it was not appropriate, such as a courtesy call on the participant by another member of the country's diplomatic corps or when a matter of sensitivity required only the participant head of office present.

It is possible that a research participant will present a façade during observation; it might be possible for seven research participants to do the same thing. However, insider knowledge of the work of a field office, the range of the activities and challenges observed and the checks with IGO and NGO field staff literature, suggest that any pretence about work patterns and concerns was limited. The results of the observations were used to confirm participants'

written responses to the questionnaires. They are also integrated appropriately in all of the following chapters and are used especially in Chapter Six, Practice and the Frontline.

Focus two

This focus aimed to discover what motivated participants to work for peace and development as a UNESCO head of office. The initial intention was to examine the power of key workplace assumptions that might be important for the participants. The task was to find “the underlying assumptions accurately and not to settle for surface manifestations that could reflect very different assumption sets,” (Schein, 1992:206).

However, from participants’ responses to the questionnaires in the first focus area and from observation in the field offices it became clear that a broader focus was needed. Late in 2003 the focus changed to include participants’ experience, skills and resources (what this study calls tangible organizational capital). Work assumptions then became what this study calls intangible capital.

Identifying organizational assumptions and trying to find order in them was the most difficult part of data analysis. Participants described assumptions operating in their work during their tape-recorded semi-structured interviews. These assumptions were extracted, collated as operational and core assumptions (Appendix 12) and sent to participants for comment. They responded with a few changes but the results were inconclusive. The chief problem was that the agreed assumptions had no pattern, some were identified as important for UNESCO but not for the participants and many appeared as both operational and core. A different collation method had to be used.

The new method did not look for organization-wide assumptions but instead identified three separate groups (UNESCO’s Constitution, headquarters and field office) as the organizing structure. Assumptions were then organized as operational or core in the appropriate group. Only those assumptions that all

participants identified were used and the choice of operational or core was determined by the majority decision of participants (shown with added markings and colour in Appendix 12). This process was highly subjective and relied on knowledge of UNESCO and participants' views for matching assumptions with appropriate group and for discarding some assumptions when others seemed to cover the same meaning or effect. The result, however, was a more manageable set of operational and core assumptions and it suggested something useful about participants' motivation. The results of the work of this focus on tangible and intangible capital and further thoughts about participants' power are discussed in Chapter Five, Practice and Organizational Capital.

Focus three

The aim of this focus was to bring together organizational context and participants' capital to show them at work at the frontline. Data collected in the first and second focal areas and during observation in the offices provided a full picture of the activities of participants but to use much of the most interesting data was impossible because of ethical concerns for anonymity of participants. However, an indicative overview was possible and enabled the study to examine the frontline work of UNESCO. The official roles of all heads determined the organization of data in this focus and participants confirmed the structure and content. The results of this focus and continuing thoughts about participants' power are discussed in Chapter Six, Practice and the Frontline.

Focus four

The final focus aimed to combine the kinds of power in participants' work. The challenge was to produce a coherent explanation of power in a complicated organization. The approach chosen combined ideas from Bolman and Deal (1997), Gortner et al (1997), Kanter in Pugh (1997), Morgan (1997) and Thomas (2002) and the explanation was broken into four steps to illustrate

the final theory. The results of this last focus are provided in Chapter Seven, Purpose, Practice and Power. The most difficult part of this final stage was to stop collecting data and to bring a closure to the whole study. Participants continued to contribute and data from varied sources kept coming. The date of May 2005 was set and after that no more data were considered.

Difficulties

Four difficulties with data collection and analysis should be noted. First, the writing of many parts of this report was slow. Although it began at the start of data collection it was cyclic in the same way as the methodology: discussions with the participants often covered more than one focus area and sometimes produced a change in an earlier analysis or a new perspective raised by one participant, and then supported by all participants, required a change in the appropriate part of the text.

Second, data collection and analysis took a lot of time because of the global nature of UNESCO and the regions in which the participants are based. It also took time because participants could not always respond quickly to written communication when they were on duty travel away from offices. As well, the addition of three participants to the original group added strength to the data collection and analysis processes but it took time to 'catch up' the new participants. This was not time lost as their contributions are valuable and they represent a large office in one case and a very difficult area of work in another.

Third, it was at first difficult to be 'researcher' with participants when UNESCO 'colleague' was the common ground between researcher and participants. As well, some initial responses seemed to be carefully worded 'correct answers' rather than a reflection of participants' own views. However, the researcher-participant relationship developed quickly and answers became fuller, less studied and more open.

Finally, because of the concerns about insider research, the ongoing task was to recognize and keep separate the researcher's insider-perceptions so that data collection and their analyses were as unbiased as possible. Multi-modal data collection, frequent checks with the participants, data gathered from UNESCO documents, information about other IGOs and appropriate theory, were all used to balance possible bias in the researcher's prior knowledge of, and experiences in, UNESCO.

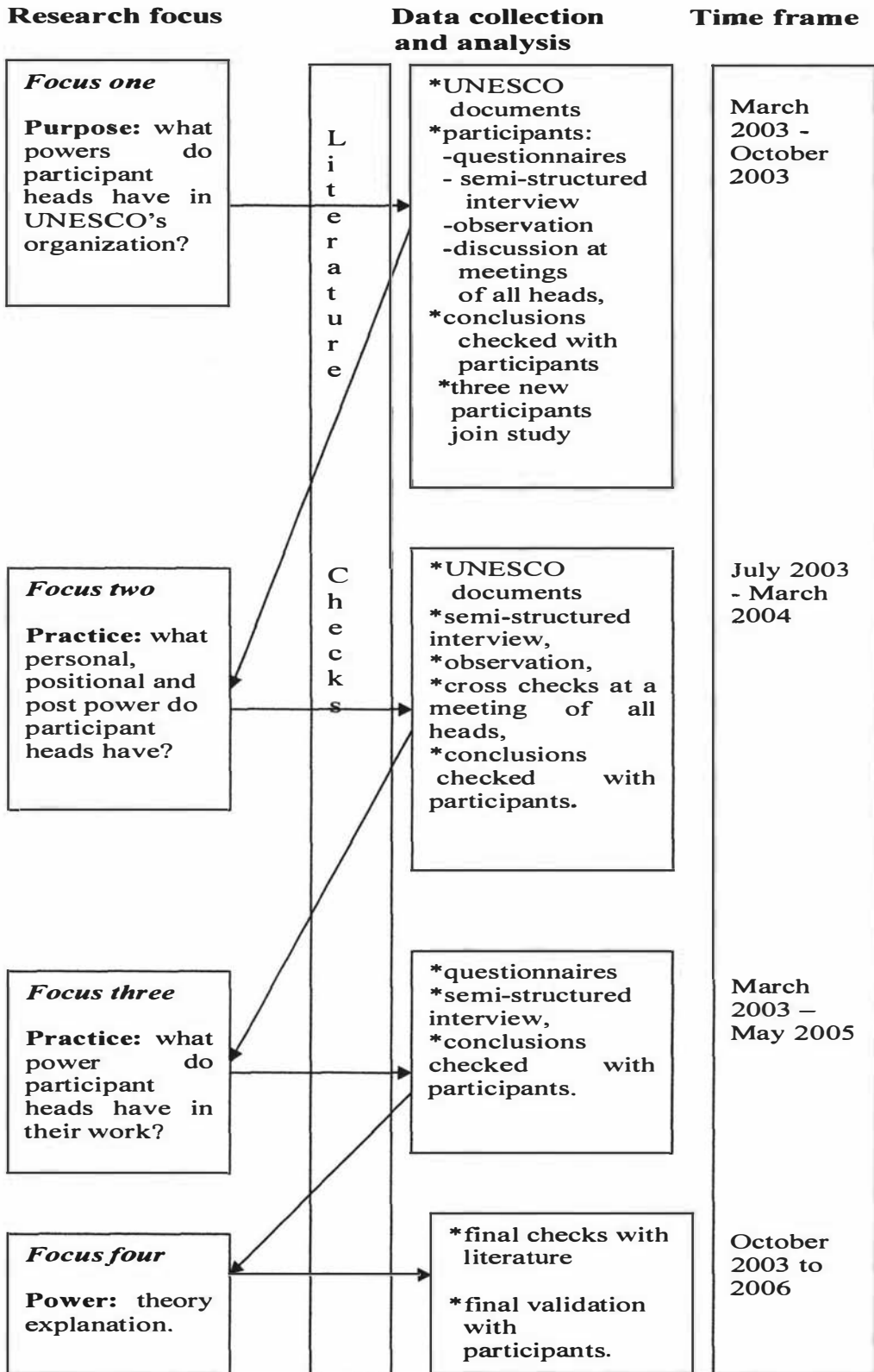
Figure 6 provides an overview of the methodology. It indicates the four focal points and the cyclic method of data collection, analysis and theory checks and development, with a time frame to indicate overlaps.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative research offers choices about approach and an interpretive approach was selected as the most appropriate for this study. Interpretive research has many challenges that must be balanced by careful data collection and triangulation. However, its strengths enable research that is context-bound, it positions participants as the centre of interest and it promotes theorization that is grounded in human experience.

The concepts of organizational bureaucracy, organizational capital and frontline work frame this study of the context of occurrence of participants' work in the field office. *Organizational bureaucracy* focusses on the context in which participants work, *organizational capital* focusses on the tangible and intangible assets that they have for their work and the concept of the *frontline* brings the organizational context and participants' capital together. The framework was both the source of, and support for, the research questions, the collection of data, their categorization, analysis and the development of theory.

Figure 6: Overview of methodology



The case study design was the most appropriate for the research. It enabled varied and cyclic data collection methods to be used including document searches, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observation in the field and cross checks with other non-participant heads. The practical challenge of gathering data from different parts of the world was balanced by fortuitous opportunities for extra face-to-face discussions in unexpected meetings of all heads. The challenge of visiting the offices of the participants was balanced by the opportunity to collect considerable amounts of detailed information not easily gathered by questionnaires.

Data analysis was also cyclic and included cross checks with the participants and a range of UNESCO documents and appropriate theory. It was complicated by ethical concerns for the anonymity of the participants and the complex nature of their work. However, overall, the methodology followed was useful for a first study of seven of UNESCO's heads of offices and their power to promote peace and development in the world.

CHAPTER FOUR

PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

“Field office heads are the bumble bees of the organization. The laws of aerodynamics (set by HQ bureaucracy) say we aren’t capable of flying, we face constant high winds (other UN agencies) and are usually struck by lightning (Governments) but we somehow keep flying.” (P7).

INTRODUCTION

What power do the participant heads have in UNESCO’s organization? The question requires knowledge of UNESCO’s purpose, member states’ roles and its secretariat (bureaucracy). This chapter looks at the lines of authority and information in each as a useful way to examine participants’ power in the organization.

The chapter concludes with theoretical analysis. Purpose, structure and the bureaucracy are examined using models and hypotheses from organization theory and the theory of bureaucracies. The conclusion is that UNESCO is not easily categorized as an organization and the seven heads’ participation in its power processes is equally complex.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

For ease of explanation, communication is separated into *lines of authority* and *lines of information*. The term *line of authority* contains, whether by presence or absence, two concepts: *the right to act* (called authority in this research) and the *requirement to obey* (called control in this research). Authority and control are provided by bureaucratic status and some are explicitly described in UNESCO’s Table of Delegated Authority.²⁹ Other lines of authority come from low status posts that have, nonetheless, power

²⁹This table is an internal document with 38 pages and the 122 types of authority covering authority and accountability in all aspects of representative, administrative and technical work.

to help or hinder participants' work. Lines of authority have implications for accountability and also for reward (helping those who are compliant) and punishment (denying or ignoring those who are not obedient). Generally, lines of authority are significant for the exercise of power in the organization.

Lines of information contain, again by presence or absence, two concepts: *the right to request*, or pass on, information and the expectation that *the request or the information will be treated as important*. Information lines come from both high and low bureaucratic status and from status arising from positions outside the bureaucracy (such as permanent delegates). Lines of information also carry implications for accountability, reward and punishment but their influence, and consequential power potential, may be more indirect than the lines of authority.

Examples of lines of authority and information at work are given throughout this chapter and the power potential in each is identified.

PURPOSE

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed,” (Constitution, Preamble).

General

UNESCO's purpose reflects its origins. During World War Two (from 1942 on) leaders of the Allied nations looked for ways to maintain international security. The League of Nations was reinvented as the United Nations and new agencies of the UN were designed to address such problems as food and health. UNESCO grew from two bodies that existed before World War Two and in the UN system was given the goal of promoting peace and development through knowledge. Three broad methods for

developing and distributing knowledge were identified and these functions became a part of UNESCO's purpose.

UNESCO's vision

UNESCO's 1945 Constitution describes the reasons for its establishment (Appendix 3) and the vision is clear. It was established to promote international peace (Preface of the Constitution). Vision is important says Nanus (in Hickman, 1998:232) because it creates meaning, a worthwhile challenge, something to believe in; it brings the future into the present and creates a common identity. Senge (in Hickman, 1998:489) adds that it is vision that produces the necessary creative tension to inspire people to improve and change.

UNESCO's vision, as a specialized agency of the UN, is given in Article I 1:

“The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.”

The Constitution also describes three broad ways by which the vision is to be met. The emphasis is on collaboration and cooperation to develop and share knowledge by the means of mass communication, international agreements and the conservation of books, art, and monuments of history and science.

Field offices are not mentioned in the elaboration of the way in which UNESCO is to be organized but the vision does include a special provision for national cooperating bodies to act as links between countries and UNESCO (Article VII). UNESCO is the only UN agency with such bodies.

Two other Articles have special significance for the vision. The Constitution prohibits staff from “intervening in matters which are essentially within (member states) domestic jurisdiction” (Article I 3) and Article VI 5 establishes the international status of staff. They “shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any authority external to the Organization.” Given that all field offices and their heads are required to work closely with governments, the practice tests the letter, if not the spirit, of the Articles.

The vision of UNESCO is broad and reflects the time in which it was written. The Constitution makes it clear that UNESCO is to be a functional organization and one of the technical agencies of the UN system. All field office heads are expected to meet both the Constitution’s goal of peace and the operational functions of the agency and so the question of the power they have is important.

An intellectual and ethical mandate

UNESCO’s Constitution gives UNESCO both an ethical and an intellectual mandate in the UN system. In Article I UNESCO’s purpose is unequivocal: “to contribute to peace and security” by improving “universal respect for justice ... law ... human rights and fundamental freedoms” through education, science and culture. The ‘functions’ or ways of doing the work are included in the same Article in general terms. They are: coordinating, cooperating and initiating, in the three areas of education, science and culture.

Recent UNESCO documents (such as the brochure celebrating fifty years of work) are more specific. The organization’s functional purposes are described as: clearing-house for the spread of information, standard-setting for international issues, catalyst for international cooperation, laboratory of anticipatory ideas and capacity-building in Member States. As well, the three work areas of education, science and culture have expanded with the addition of communication (both media and information technology) and

the social and human sciences (2004-5 Approved Programme and Budget). The linking of purpose to functions in Article I provides a clear vision of a world in which peace and knowledge, or ethics and intellect, are intertwined. The purpose has not been amended and so the mandate remains as it was described in 1945.

The research participants are very clear about UNESCO's purpose and functions. All referred to them often in written contributions and interviews.

"The search for peace is absolutely an ethical mission, especially today, and so our work as an intellectual body is critical," (P2).

"We aren't a funding agency or a research agency but cooperate with bodies which are. We are from the beginning an intellectual organization," (P4).

"We have an intellectual and an ethical mandate," (P3).

"It's our raison d'être ... to be an intellectual and moral guide for member states. It's what we do best," (P7).

Lines of communication and power potential

The Constitution is the ultimate authority for everything that UNESCO does. Its lines of *information* reflect the organization's purpose and its lines of *authority* provide the process. From time to time representatives of member states have amended technical details, such as the length of term of office of the Director General, but its essentials have remained largely unchanged.

The power potential of the Constitution is important: the goal of ethical behaviour (peace) is powerful on its own and when the behavioural processes are knowledge-based and are shared with the power-holders of the world, the power potential is significant. All heads of offices are able to draw on this power in their role as representative of the Director General but the power becomes

symbolic rather than real if a head works with a government that does not always recognize the vision or its processes as useful for its needs.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: MEMBER STATES

“UNESCO is a victim of organizational imagination. We should change the Constitution to accommodate reality,” (P4).

General

The Constitution’s original structural requirements were straightforward. The writers wanted a basic hierarchical structure with governments at the top and a simple bureaucracy underneath. It had the structure of (in the order of the Constitution):

General Conference

Executive Board

Bureaucracy: Director General

Secretariat

National Body in each country

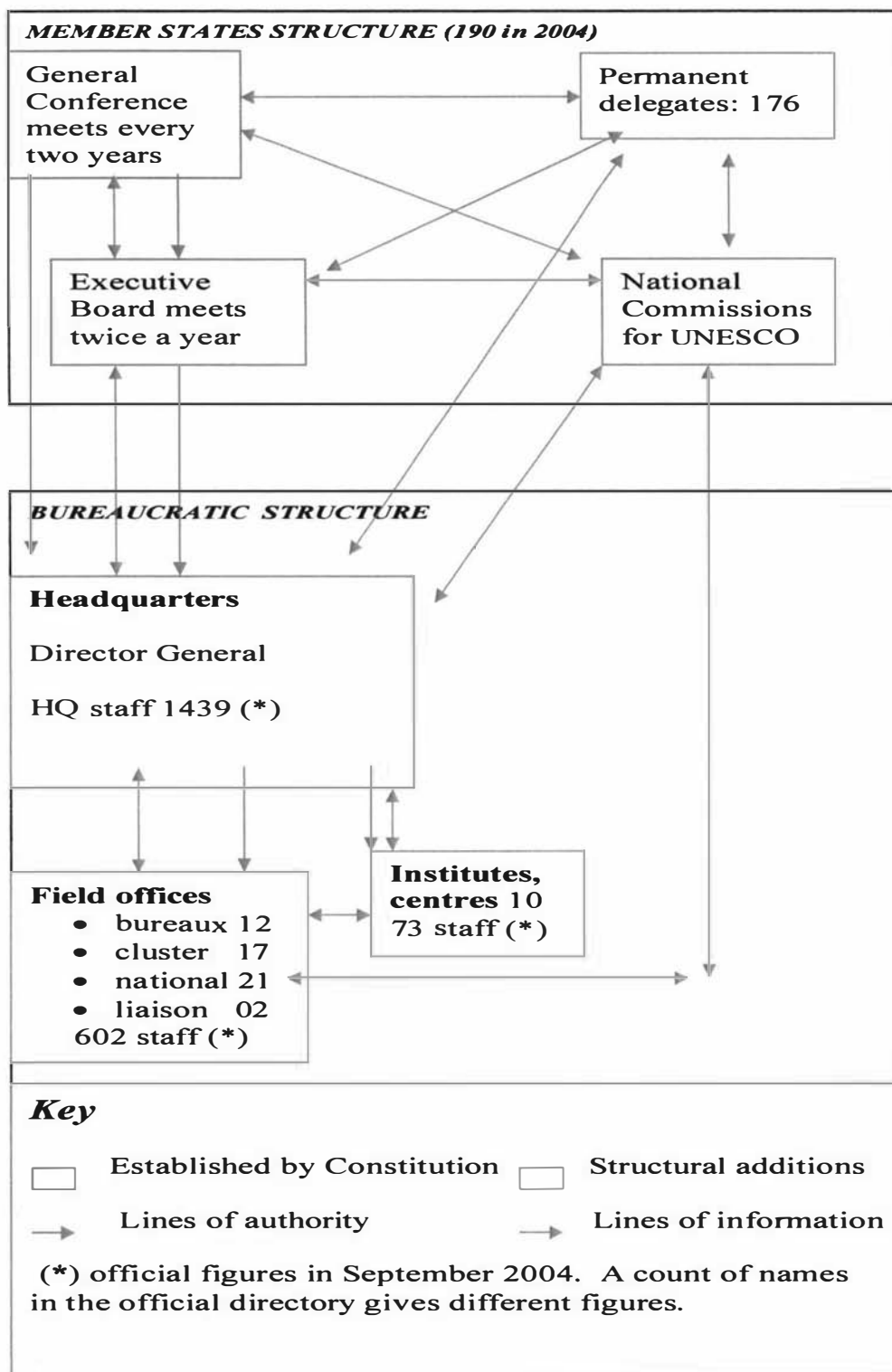
Over the years political decisions of member states added other levels to the structure: the bureaucracy gained field offices and institutes and the structure gained permanent delegates.

The addition of field offices and institutes lengthened the bureaucracy and, with the permanent delegates, increased the administrative work of the bureaucracy. They also expanded the structure’s lines of authority and information.

Although the number of field offices increased in the 1990s they are now considerably reduced but some (bureaux) have been given extra programme and regional responsibilities that have further lengthened structural lines of authority and information.

It is difficult to provide a precise picture of an organization as complex as UNESCO. However, *Figure 7* provides an overview

Figure 7: Simplified overview of UNESCO's structure and lines of communication in 2005



of UNESCO's structure and the bureaucracy within it. The figure also indicates the communication flow in UNESCO. The lines of authority are hierarchical and one-directional (downwards) but the lines of information are less hierarchical (except for those between permanent delegates and headquarters) and are multi-directional.

The figure necessarily simplifies sub-sets of authority lines such as those that operate in headquarters only and it does not indicate the range of information lines that are growing between field offices now that all have access to email.

Further, the figure indicates only in general terms those lines of authority and information in headquarters that overlap to form a broad band of power and it does not show the lines that operate because of delegated authority.

General conference and executive board

The description of member states' roles in the structure follows the hierarchy shown in *Figure 7* starting with general conference and the executive board then considering national commissions and permanent delegates. In each, issues of significance for participants are described and the power potential of the lines of communication is identified.

The Constitution mandated a general conference and an executive board to direct the work of UNESCO. Both organs have feet in the bureaucracy by the means of secretariats in the headquarters. A general conference of member states is held every two years to approve, amongst other things, the programme and budget for the coming biennium. It also approves at every third conference, the six-year plan that biennial plans are to follow. General conference also elects or re-elects the Director General.

An elected executive board meets twice a year and monitors UNESCO's work. Although neither general conference nor executive board is a part of the bureaucracy, their decisions, in theory, determine the work of the bureaucracy.

Participants offered few views on general conferences but they did have some views of the executive board that included:

"Reps on the Executive Board vary in quality. It used to be people who were elected, now its countries and so we don't get the intellectuals as in the past. Stability has gone also," (P2).

"The Board is frustrated with its lack of control," (P6).

"Some members of the X-Board are really conscientious and some return for more than one conference. That's important for knowledge and influence in the board," (P5).

Lines of communication and power potential

General conferences and executive boards have important lines of communication. The lines of *authority* have constitutional status and include specified controls such as approving the direction and content of programmes and budgets. The lines of *information* are also of high status and very influential. Reports for the executive board meetings, for example, are prepared with attention to their wishes and possible reactions. Neither general conference nor executive board has any staff appointment controls but government participants in each can influence decisions through unofficial information lines.

Both sets of lines are focussed on the headquarters level of UNESCO, are formal and follow conventional diplomatic practices. However, much informal communication also occurs between staff and members of general conference and executive board. It is at this level that participants may find and use power to influence debates and decisions, especially with executive board

members from their part of the world. This power is limited and not available to all heads.

National commissions

To promote a partnership with member states for the work for peace, the Constitution established National Cooperating Bodies (National Commissions for UNESCO). They are based usually in education or foreign affairs ministries but in some countries are semi-autonomous bodies. These commissions are expected to have government and civil society membership reflecting UNESCO's areas of interest and they are to act as a conduit between UNESCO and the member state. Strong, active national commissions would mean that every member state shared the work, resources and rewards of UNESCO and so the Constitution did not envisage field offices.

National commissions are not a part of UNESCO's bureaucracy but are a very important part of its structure: staff in the Sector for External Relations and Cooperation (ERC) support and promote their functions. It is significant that UNESCO does not provide funds for government ministries' projects directly, as is usual with many UN agencies, but does provide national commissions with funding, through what is called the Participation Programme (PP), for (usually) national projects. The PP process reflects the original structural intention and is conducted directly between headquarters and the national commissions, bypassing the field offices.

In the reform process, national commissions are calling for a greater role in UNESCO's work although in many countries national commissions are not functioning as originally envisaged and are often no more than a part-time secretary general.³⁰

³⁰ National commissions do not exist in any other UN agency's structure, in part because only UNESCO has a multiplicity of national focal points. The World Health Organization (WHO), for example, works mostly with health ministries; the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) works generally with agriculture authorities.

All participants work closely with representatives of the national commissions of the countries they serve. Experiences are varied.

“Time and money spent on Natcoms is a waste. They are difficult to work with because they don’t know how we work and just want money; they can’t be relied on. Mostly, they’re not real anyway. They’re insisting on a bigger role but....” (P7).

“I generally get on ok with (name of the secretary general) because he’s been around for a while, been to a couple of general conferences and knows what we’re about,” (P2).

“(Name) is impossible and has always been like that. Unreasonable in every way,” (P1).

“I try to work closely with natcoms and most are okay though not very well set up,” (P3).

Lines of communication and power potential

National commissions are to be ‘agencies of liaison’ and their communication lines are specified in the Constitution in Article VII. They are very influential bodies even though their lines of *authority* inside the bureaucracy are limited, sometimes challenged and generally problematic. The PP process appears to be a line of authority but its conditions place the actual control with the bureaucracy. In recent general conferences (2001, 2003) some national commissions have called for a new definitional title to give them visible authority in the organization.

National commissions’ lines of *information*, however, are significant because of their constitutional status. Considerable consultation with, information to and support of, national commissions is a required part of the work of field offices (Appendix 6 indicates some of this). The HQ-managed and

infrequent consultations of national commissions for programme and other purposes are, in the opinion of some participants, superficial and a waste of money. The frequency of communication between national commissions and UNESCO personnel varies considerably, according to geographical, personal and political variables.

Participants' experiences with their national commissions vary and, consequently, relationships contain differing power potential.

Permanent delegates

As well as establishing national commissions, most countries also appoint a permanent delegate to UNESCO. This person is usually a part of his or her embassy in Paris or Brussels and some countries have an office in UNESCO's headquarters.

Permanent delegates were not anticipated in the Constitution nor are they a part of the bureaucracy but are another part of the bureaucracy's work. They are conduits of information between UNESCO and their countries and as high-level diplomats they have direct access to the leadership of the bureaucracy. The 2004 UNESCO Directory lists 176, of the 190, member states with permanent delegates.

"Permanent delegates have more power than they should. Where do they connect with their Natcoms? We end up with more than one master!" (P4).

"Permanent delegates are shadowy powers behind the throne," (P7).

Lines of communication and power potential

Permanent delegates, officially, have only *information* lines but these are very influential because of their diplomatic status. Field offices have little contact with permanent delegates but are

required to include them, as well as national commissions, in notices of official travel to their countries. Permanent delegates' lines are almost totally with headquarters and are generally formal, whether in one-to-one meetings or in the special briefings by headquarters although some informal and unofficial contacts do occur. A good relationship with a permanent delegate provides considerable power to influence decisions and activities indirectly but this possibility is not available for all heads.

The complexities of member states' roles in UNESCO's structure

Member states have access to decision-making in four ways: general conferences, executive board, national commissions and permanent delegates. The roles of each body are different and do not necessarily provide a uniform approach to UNESCO's work. Further, regular changes of people filling the roles may hinder member states' knowledge of UNESCO, its mandate and the way it works. This means that it may be difficult for participants to be fully informed of everything that member states are proposing.

Participants do not have formal access to member states' lines of authority into headquarters and so the power potential of this part of UNESCO's structure lies in a participant's use, or not, of informal lines of communication through personal contacts with executive board, permanent delegates and through the formal lines to national commissions.

Summary

Participants have some concerns with parts of the structure and the political additions complicate their responsibilities as a technical expert and as manager of an office. Generally, however, participants' concerns focus on bureaucratic processes and not the general conference, executive boards, national commissions or permanent delegates.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: BUREAUCRACY

“UNESCO is a fickle beast and I challenge anyone to tame it,” (P7).

General

The bureaucracy of UNESCO³¹ is hierarchical and compartmentalized.³² The following description works through the simplified diagram of the bureaucracy in *Figure 7* above.

The bureaucracy has a Director General and a head office, as required by the Constitution, 52 field offices and 10 specialist institutes, as requested by member states. Participants have few contacts with the institutes and the following description covers only the Director General, headquarters and field office layers of the bureaucracy.

Participants describe the general bureaucratic work context as:

“complex, hierarchical, an instrument of control, not empowering - and ungrateful,” (P1).

“complex, flexible and therefore unequal, as you get what you negotiate, not necessarily a distribution of resources on rational bases; easy to manipulate, often not transparent,” (P3).

“complex, indifferent and instrument of control,” (P4).

“a top down organization. Responsibility is given to heads but they have no ‘real’ power ...HQ makes all the major decisions (except our day-to-day matters),” (P5).

³¹ Appendix 4 is the official 2004 diagram of the bureaucracy.

³² Recent new compartments include the Africa Department, additions to the original three programme sectors and administrative additions of bureaux for Human Resources Management, for Field Coordination and the Office for Internal Oversight.

Director General

A Director General, (DG), elected by member states for a six year term, with one extension of four years permitted, leads a secretariat of staff recruited both locally and internationally. Directors General are more than figureheads. They are able to exert considerable power in the organization and may be very influential in international arenas. As the literature shows, in the past it has been possible for a DG to ignore executive board decisions with impunity while others have been very successful global advocates for a range of development issues.

The current DG, previously a senior Japanese diplomat, was elected by the 1999 General Conference to lead a major reform of UNESCO, the chief aim of which is to decentralize resources and provide more authority to field offices. He was re-elected in 2005 for a second term of four years to continue the reform process.

Lines of communication and power potential

The DG has the strongest lines of *authority* and *information*. His Blue Notes announcing such things as appointments and changes to procedures, and circulars in his name calling for information or special tasks to be accomplished are mandatory for all concerned. All communication lines begin and end with the DG and he has, consequently, a broad band of power.

Participants generally have limited contact with the DG and most ongoing links with Headquarters are with administrative and programme staff. A DG visit to an office and some of its countries is often the rare occasion a participant will spend some concentrated time with the DG, although the time is scattered through official visits and travel. All heads of offices are the official representatives of the DG in their fieldwork but although this title reflects the Constitution and the status of the DG its power is symbolic and carries none of his powers of control.

Headquarters

General

The headquarters part of the bureaucracy has evolved over time and although the reform process aims to reduce its size, it is still the dominant part of the bureaucracy. Participants are frustrated with many aspects of their headquarters' role in the bureaucracy:

"HQ breaks its own rules, like (not informing us about) visits to the field and we still have top down decision-making in spite of decentralization," (P3).

"We drown in paper, procedures, incomprehensible language, unnecessarily complicated procedures," (P4).

"We have jargon in strategy and strategy in our jargon," (P1).

"Here are some oxymorons for you: procedural transparency and reform coherence or best of all: HQ credibility!" (P7).

Participants' concerns with headquarters' processes focussed on staffing, programming and meetings.

Staffing

The total staff of the secretariat is officially stated as 2114 although the UNESCO Directory, 2004, lists 4,820. Either figure is approximate because retirements, resignations, deaths, transfers and appointments produce weekly changes in staff numbers. Of this total, around 602 (or 980) are in the field, 73 (or 550) are in institutes and centres and 1439 (or 3290) are in headquarters. Whatever the true figure, the imbalance between the field and headquarters staffing is evident, although the reform decentralization process aims to close the gap.

At a meeting of all heads during General Conference 2003 the DG announced that hiring and personnel management policies should have three priorities: first, the maintenance of the professional competence of the secretariat, second, the boosting of morale in the secretariat and third, the provision of equitable geographical recruitment of staff. This follows the requirements of the Constitution (Article VI.4). The Bureau of Human Resource Management (HRM) is responsible for all procedures of recruitment and training of staff but the DG has the power of appointment of all professional staff and on a number of occasions overturns the recommendation of the interviewing committee, ignoring the stated priorities and causing concern for the participants receiving the appointees.

Participants are especially worried about staffing and staff in their offices:

“HRM is a model T Ford for the 21st century,” (P4).

“Staff provision is haphazard and varies from sector to sector,” (P2).

“How not to do things. The whole exercise was just bizarre. HQ decide who they want on the selection panels and I guess who they actually want in the various jobs. ‘If the directors want to be there, they can be.’ I think this says everything about (a) our entire decentralization process (b) the contempt with which HQ treats the field and (c) the extraordinary nature of our HRM policies ... The last thing you or I want is someone in a small isolated place who doesn’t want to be there ... that’s a recipe for disaster ... if HQ decide something that’s it these days. I think the whole thing is symptomatic of our general employment and admin procedures. We keep getting mixed messages ... first we hear that a new era has dawned and employment procedures will be honest and transparent. Then we hear that people can just be appointed, willy-nilly. Then we find there is a rotation list. Then we are told that people will be appointed on a regional basis, no matter who

the best qualified might be (if the latter is true, the seeds of destruction of our organization's technical competence might well have been sown). Then we hear that one has to stay in-grade for at least two years before promotion is possible ... but (someone) went from D1 to D2 in three months. Life is full of riddles and inequities, isn't it?" (P6).

"Here's another case ... an education person sent to another office at that government's request. They told me I must live with it. I need a P3 and was told 'if you keep quiet it will be ok'. But what's happened is that the P3 is moving with her post and is to be replaced by a P2 to do the work but she's a statistician. Another concern is the impact on staff when they move: partners have to find new jobs, children, new schools and all change languages. We must have staff training to help develop staff to do the work. Career planning we have to do but it's difficult in UNESCO because the lines aren't clear; people could be more highly motivated if they knew that after a certain number of years and a certain performance they will be recognized. People get stuck in the same position for years unless someone at the top leaves; it takes too much time to get promotion. We spend an enormous amount of time to support staff. Heads do this not HQ. You have to invest so much time and energy in staff cases that it robs you of the time you could spend doing other things," (P3).

"It worries me since a long time, it's a real problem that our staffing procedures are so irrational and it takes so long ... up to two years ... to fill a post. It's a way of saving money but it's bad for work in this office," (P7).

For participants, therefore, staffing problems include slow appointment procedures, staff with inappropriate or no specialization, injustices with promotion, problems with morale and lack of training. Participants' concerns with staffing reflect their responsibility for effective work in their office: unless professional staff are competent and working in their area of

expertise, the quality of programme implementation can be adversely affected.

Lines of communication and power potential

Staffing issues reflect strong bureaucratic lines of *authority* and control. Participants are pleased that the reform process allows them to participate in pre-selection and interviews of new staff but are concerned that they have no authority or control over the final selection. After the interviews an internal committee checks procedures and can alter the nominated person as can the DG when the name finally reaches him. Participants report that they receive no information after the interviews and can wait months before learning who is to come to the office.

Staffing, however, is one process that participants are beginning to challenge and this may include going to headquarters and trying to change the decision. Resistance rarely works and generally, as the participants' comments indicate, staffing remains an area where they have limited power in the lines of authority that determine which professional staff will work in their office.

Programming

UNESCO is not a funding agency. "Its internal budget is less than that of a medium-sized university in an industrialized country,"³³ (Annual Report 2002, Jakarta Office, UNESCO). Much of its programme funds come from donations from developed countries, development banks, corporations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These extra-budgetary funds are donated either for a particular project, such as the global drive for Education For All, or for a specified part of the world, such as the E9 countries³⁴ or for UNESCO to allocate according to its

³³ The budget for the biennium 2004-2005, excluding extra-budgetary funds, was US\$610,000,000; this money is called regular funding.

³⁴ E9 countries are the nine most populous countries in the world.

programme needs. Headquarters and field staff are expected to pursue extra-budgetary funds vigorously.

UNESCO has a six-year plan that is implemented by three two-year programmes. The programme covers each sector³⁵ of education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, communication and information, and culture. The programme also includes inter-sectoral projects (such as information communication technology in schools) and thematic projects (such as those for gender or youth development). Some participants believe that UNESCO's comparative advantage in the UN system is its ability to implement inter-sectoral programmes.

Planning for each programme begins two years before it is to begin and it starts with consultations of sub-regional and regional groupings of member states. All heads of field offices and some headquarters representatives are active participants in the consultation. All heads also work separately with other heads in their region to draft a regional contribution to the planning. If a programme sector has a bureau in the region, field office contributions to that sector are integrated in the regional plan.

Plans are suggestions of priority areas, not specific activities and, because of UNESCO's limited internal funding, may include both regular programme and extra-budgetary funding proposals. All proposals and their suggested budgets are examined in the relevant sector(s) of headquarters and a draft global programme is issued in time for member states to debate its contents during the general conference that precedes the biennium being considered.

After the conference, the draft is issued to all staff as an approved programme and budget for the biennium. All heads have the task of identifying activities, expected outcomes and evaluations for each area of funding allocated to their offices. All heads must then ensure that all of this detailed information is computerized in a

³⁵ The term sector refers to the five areas of knowledge promoted by UNESCO.

global programme called SISTER.³⁶ When the computerized information is approved in headquarters implementation of the new programme begins. At this time a new planning cycle also commences.

Participants are concerned about UNESCO's programming procedures:

"Beware straight-jacketing our work with regional/cluster work plans. We need flexibility in our work," and "One of the goals of UNESCO's work is to develop competency in member states by means of participatory development of projects for capacity building. Producing capacity? More like producing apathy!! We have fill-the-vacuum policies," (P7).

"The C/4 and C/5 aren't decided by General Conference or by Natcoms. It's a scandal. We go through enormous so-called consultations, very costly, but everything ends up generalized," (P4).

"I wonder, too, about all the regional and cluster consultations. The endless budget revisions and plans, not to mention SISTER and FABS³⁷ is all too much sometimes. Meeting after meeting after meeting ... and all to fight over a few dollars," (P6).

"General Conference has little understanding of what's happening. Perhaps a bit more on the budget than the programme. I want to design for my cluster not for HQ. We shouldn't have standard formats, expectations. The work plan process is costly, demotivating and inefficient," (P1).

"We have to beware of rigid materialistic programming," (P3).

³⁶ System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and the Evaluation of Results

³⁷ Finance and Budget System: this is a computerized accounting system that all headquarters and field office staff must use.

“Where there is a national office, it should be involved IN ALL CASES closely from the beginning of the design/planning phases ... the change of mindset among headquarters and regional bureaux colleagues towards decentralization is slow,” (P2).

“I would note that at this stage no field office has any firm commitment of progressive staged progress in development of staffing or resourcing even for the 33 C/5 period starting in 18 months time and being planned now. Consequently, action to develop new areas or to strengthen existing programmes in terms of identified cluster priorities must be taken in the context of complete uncertainty,” (P5).

The planning process had varied challenges for participants:

“We have to match up country priorities, our work plans, CCA/UNDAF³⁸ priorities and our resources. And the CCA etc often conflict with our regional strategies,” (P3).

“How do we integrate our funds (a little) with government funds from bilaterals (a lot)?” (P1).

“Quality control is done by field offices because Paris can’t do it,” (P2).

The planning needs of headquarters and field offices are different. At the Dourdan meeting of all heads in 2003, one bureau head said that in the next planning round he was going to plan for his region not for headquarters. He asked the headquarters staff present to change their planning approach: *“Let’s not have standard formats and expectations.”* His question was answered with another: *“How do we fit specific cluster proposals into the C/4 and C/5?³⁹ They have to be related and integrated into the overall system. We need a unified work budget.”*

³⁸ CCA/UNDAF are processes for combined UN agencies’ analyses of countries’ needs.

³⁹ C/4 is the six year plan; C/5 is the two year programme

“A unified work budget? Not so. The only unifying factor is the staple!” (P4).

The planning process also included varied instructions about completion dates:

“We get confused instructions from Paris: sector by sector and within sectors eg work plans by June for Com, by mid Sep for Culture, by start Sept for Ed ... and some had to go through bureaux and others not and dates were different according to whether the region had a bureaux or not. Then as part of the culture within a culture, work plans are disregarded by HQ in some sectors or changed in others,” (P4).

One participant raised the issue of the planning cycle:

“We start planning for a biennium before the money for this one arrives. UNICEF has a five-year planning cycle. HQ should be responsible for the global mandate and leave us to do ours,” (P7).

A head of office not participating in this study complained during the Dourdan retreat that headquarters decentralizes a project to the field but does not release control of the implementation. Participants share his concern:

“We have steam pudding policies ie money is sent to us, the ingredients, but it’s still organized from Paris ie they do the cooking. No wonder it’s a mess but we get the blame if the stuffing falls out,” (P1).

SISTER also drew criticism. Participants’ complaints in meetings and to each other about SISTER reflect their concern with the time-consuming and technological difficulties of SISTER. They are also concerned with the authorization of their work: junior staff working in SISTER in headquarters, have limited experience and no knowledge of the context and field office’s work, but have the authority to grant or deny approval of field office planning.

“SISTER is taking enormous amounts of time to complete entries, we have no experts in the office and no training,” (P2).

“SISTER and time to complete it and use of visas is bad news. How does a P2/3 in HQ know, for a visa?”⁴⁰ (P6).

Lines of communication and power potential

As participants’ comments indicate, the process for the development of the programme is complex. The lines of *authority* are complicated. Assistant Directors General (ADGs) control the content and budget of programme sectors and their power comes from their bureaucratic status and from general conference decisions. In contrast, those bureaux heads with the responsibility for producing regional sector programmes have the authority to do the work but no control over what happens when the regional programmes reach HQ for integration in the global programme.

The process becomes even more frustrating for participants after the global programme is approved and fieldwork is computerized. SISTER staff have no bureaucratic authority but until field staff fill all of SISTER’s columns and all entries are approved in headquarters, no funds are released to the office(s) concerned. The control of SISTER, therefore, is powerful.

Lines of *information* about programme work are equally complex and include national commissions, headquarters, general conferences and executive boards, as well as all heads. As participants’ comments indicate, they are frustrated that the lines often differ from sector to sector, often have conflicting content, are focused on a uniform programme and imply a full consultation process that is rather limited in its impact on the final programme. Different kinds of field offices further complicate some of the lines of information.

⁴⁰ A visa is the signature of a person approving the contents of the letter, speech or document. Up to 10 visas may be required in headquarters. Field offices also use the system but more simply.

Participants are generally compliant with the demands of programming because their offices need the approvals and the funds for their work. They meet the deadlines with the detail required and ensure that all information is entered in SISTER. However, it is significant that increasingly, numbers of heads are jointly challenging the process: for example, heads from the Asia-Pacific region sent lengthy written statements of their concerns about both lines of authority and information to headquarters during the time of this research.

Meetings

Meetings are important for building staff unity, clarifying and strengthening organizational purpose and processes and providing forums for the exchange of useful information. They can also be valuable opportunities for productive challenge and change. Or they can be a form of hierarchical vertical instruction and another method of control.

Before the reform process began all heads of field offices rarely met as a group. Some met every second year during general conferences but spent most of their time in meetings organized by senior headquarters staff who spoke about headquarters' programmes for, and requirements of, the field. These sessions provided few opportunities for most heads to question or challenge what they were told. The DG also ran a formal meeting of all headquarters' directors and all field heads. A few questions or statements by some heads were possible but the meetings were constrained by size and procedure.

In 2003 changes were introduced. The headquarters' briefings stopped and all heads were able to use their time to follow up their own planning needs and to sit in on conference debates. They also gained a room and time to meet each other informally. A less formal meeting with the DG was also introduced although he spoke for most of the hour. Participants are generally pleased with these changes.

However, participants are concerned about the new meetings organized by the Bureau of Field Coordination (BFC). This bureau has the responsibility of both mentoring and supporting field offices and is an important focal point in headquarters for all heads. During this research, BFC organized special meetings for all heads to discuss a variety of issues. Two were held in 2003 (Dourdan and Paris) and a third in Paris in 2004. The first and third meetings, each of a week, provided considerable opportunity for discussion but the second was for three hours only, most of the time was taken with BFC presentations and some of UNESCO's 52 heads chose not to attend this meeting while others left before it finished. All of these meetings raised expectations that during the period of this research were not being met:

"Where is the feedback from Dourdan? Nothing until Conference and then sketchy... .. A waste of money," (P4).

"Now we have yet another senior managers retreat at HQ during which we will again talk about the same things we have discussed for years. Sorry to sound cynical ...we aren't that kind of people ... but it gets to you...." (P6)

"BFC? They set it up to help us but it doesn't. A couple of good people in it but generally useless. Meetings that go nowhere," (P7).

Lines of communication and power potential

Meetings are a part of the lines of communication and their influence depends on who is leading or controlling the agenda. The meeting with the DG in 2003 had little information value (no new information was given by the DG) but as it was the DG's meeting what he said was expected to be influential, supported by his authority and control of staff.

In contrast, the BFC meetings and retreats were strong in bureaucratic information and carried the authority of the Director

of BFC but their influence with participants was limited (the retreats were seen as a waste of money and in the 2003 Paris meeting, some heads challenged BFC and others left early). However, BFC meetings are important, because all heads are on a direct line of authority from BFC for many parts of their work as the Table of Delegated Authority shows. As well, the Director of BFC has power to enforce desired responses by controlling the allocation of funds for the running costs of the offices and that power encourages compliance with all BFC requests.

Observation at meetings showed that any head may resist some control mechanisms such as avoiding a meeting or leaving it early. As well, the BFC meetings gave new opportunities to all heads to voice concerns: some strong statements by (participant and non-participant) heads about problems with headquarters included the continuing top-down decisions in spite of 'decentralization', difficulties getting answers from headquarters, inadequate staffing in field offices and headquarters breaking its own rules. Some challenged the BFC leadership when their items were excluded from the agenda of the BFC-controlled meeting of heads of offices.

One significant outcome of these and an increasing number of regional meetings of heads is that internal networks of heads are emerging. Many heads are getting to know each other and are working together more. This was especially apparent in 2004 when field offices' share of the administration costs of extra-budgetary funds were withdrawn from field offices and almost every head of office in one region wrote to headquarters to challenge the decision and to support each other's stand. The lines of authority offer limited power to participants but the developing informal lines of information are potentially very powerful.

Field offices

Field offices are now an important part of the bureaucracy. As a senior headquarters director told a meeting of all heads in July 2003: "*Field offices are the major platform for work in the field.*"

Field offices are of three kinds: 21 national offices serve one country, 17 cluster offices serve an average of five countries and 12 bureaux have a regional leadership role in one field of knowledge, such as education. They also have a cluster role. Two other liaison offices in Geneva and New York, complete the field organization.

Participants' views of the field office section of the bureaucracy begin with its structure:

"The field structure is too big, too expensive. And we shouldn't have competition among field offices," (P2).

"I'm not convinced about these new offices: one size doesn't fit all. They aren't helpful," (P6).

"Field offices shouldn't be just a part of the HQ delivery system ... we have an intellectual and ethical mandate ... advocacy for the minds of men!" (P7).

Participants are concerned about uniformity:

"UNESCO must allow offices to be different and also the roles of heads. Why the desire for uniformity? It's an image of a cookie cutter: we are all to look the same and be the same," (P1).

"We aren't all the same but IOS⁴¹ will pull us into line," (P4).

"Audits are about money, rules, authority, not outcomes. There shouldn't be so much emphasis on worst cases, to make us behave 'properly'," (P7).

Status of field offices is a third concern:

⁴¹ Office of Internal Oversight, the internal audit section of UNESCO

“HQ sees field office staff as second class ie they see themselves as thinkers and us as just workers. Decentralization to promote field work? Brains to stay in HQ? No way!” (P2).

“HQ thinks it’s more important than us; bureaux think they are more important than us,” (P1).

Participants are not yet convinced that the decentralization process is working:

“Decentralization is still problematic; it’s supposed to help us but has become an end in itself,” (P3).

Other concerns related to headquarters control of field office activities:

“Is it about control or empowerment? Decisions should be made at the point of knowledge and action,” (P5).

In general, participants are frustrated with a bureaucracy that seems to take no account of the reality of field offices:

“Life is too short for this kind of nonsense. All we want to do is good things for people who need our skills. Instead we have this kind of rubbish. It has reached the stage whereby I hardly know what we are doing anymore. The admin procedures vis-a-vis SISTER and FABS have essentially bogged down everyone in the organization. Endless coordination meetings and cluster meetings and inter-office meetings ... and all we have in the way of RP funds are a few crumbs! The only way to cope is to have full-time programme specialists dealing with just a small number of projects. However ... as office directors we have to do the lot and can’t afford such luxuries,” (P6).

“We should be managed not by control but by liberation, support and trust,” (P5).

“Given the way the organization works, if a country was pressing for someone to become a director, merit isn’t recognized. I was offered a post in Paris but declined. Every single day I’m trying to think: what strategy to use? I have no funds for (sector) and (another sector) is weak. Quite often it is HQ that controls funds ... Competition with ngos for money is a problem. Perhaps if we kept our role to advocacy more than direct implementation? A role of ‘impartial arbiter’? Leave big fund raising to HQ? May be more effective?” (P3).

Lines of communication and power potential

All field office heads are the object of many lines of authority and information. Participants think that most of the bureaucratic communication takes too much time and keeps them from their programme work. They also see field offices treated as second class delivery systems for the headquarters staff. They frequently note problems when they initiate the communication. However, the administrative requirements of the bureaucracy, delivered through lines of authority, are compelling because to ignore them would deny field offices the resources they need for their work. Challenges are few and limited, generally, to occasions when a meeting, for example, permits dissent. Few changes result from challenges as the participants’ comments indicate.

Summary of bureaucratic complexities

“You are exceptional people working in exceptionally difficult circumstances, doing your best in a muddled situation,” (Mannet Consultants to heads of field offices during their 2003 Dourdan Retreat).

The structure of UNESCO is complex. General conferences, executive boards and national commissions are constitutional requirements while field offices, institutes and permanent delegates are responses to political decisions by member states. Lines of

authority and information weave through the structure with varying degrees of formality and significance.

Participants identify difficulties with the structure of the organization but they are especially concerned with the processes of the bureaucracy, especially headquarters' control of programming and staffing and meetings. The *authority* lines of communication are downwards and these contain most challenges for participants' work, requiring considerable reporting on a wide range of matters including programmes, funds, travel, data relating to the countries they serve or completion of forms about staff, UN interaction and work with national commissions. *Information* lines of communication are multi-directional and potentially more useful although participants report frequent non-answering by headquarters staff. They see their power in this complex bureaucracy as partial and problematic.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

General

Organization theory and the theory of organizational bureaucracies offer a number of possible approaches for the theorization of participants' work for UNESCO's purpose and in its structure and bureaucracy. Some key ideas in the work of Weber and Foucault are applied in this analysis to suggest other views of the organization.

Rationality is selected as one focus of the analysis not only because it is a part of the Enlightenment attitude that contributed to UNESCO's establishment but also because it remains a significant feature of theory about modern organizations and their bureaucracies. Rationality, says Weber, gives an organization its legal authority and separates it from organizations based on traditional or charismatic authority (Weber, 1978: 215 on). However, it also brings dangers: "Rational calculation ... reduces every worker to a cog in this (bureaucratic) machine ..." (Weber,

1978: LIX). For these reasons UNESCO's rationality is a useful focus for analysis: a rational organization might offer considerable power potential to its senior staff or it could use them as automatons.

Relativity is the second focus of the analysis. If Foucault is right about knowledge, its epistemic⁴² relativity and its inherent properties of power and resistance, then UNESCO's bureaucracy should be judged by the rationalities of the epistemes of the last sixty years and not some universal ideal. With an epistemic judgement UNESCO takes its place with other development agencies, reflecting, and contributing to the organizational norms of international work.

Purpose

Functionalist

UNESCO's purpose is specific: peace and security need more than "political and economic arrangements of governments" but must be founded on the "intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind," (Constitution, Introduction). This grand vision is restated explicitly as functions and, consequently, UNESCO's purpose is vulnerable to the theoretical difficulties of functionalism.

As far back as 1960 Hans Morgenthau, a traditional realist, noted:

"(T)he contributions international functional agencies make to the well-being of members of all nations fade in to the background. What stands before the eyes of all are the immense political conflicts that divide the great nations ..."
(in Archer, 2001: 121).

⁴² The term episteme used in this analysis is defined as "an open and doubtless indefinitely describable field of relationships," (Foucault in Mills, 2003:62) and "the complex set of relationships between the knowledges which are produced within a particular period and the rules by which new knowledge is generated," (Mills, 2003:62).

More recently, Archer (2001:139) claims that if an organization “treats welfare as an indirect approach to the prevention of warfare,” it may actually create conflict by raising expectations that cannot be met. The functionalist approach under-estimates the power of ideological and ethnic divisions so that:

“functional organizations such as UNESCO, WHO and ILO have been riddled with ideological and racial (or at least North-South) divisions which have reflected political arguments outside the organization but have nevertheless adversely affected their basic work,” (Archer, 2001:139).

Functionalism began with a focus on the interdependence of parts of society and a teleological concern for the consequences of that interdependence. Accordingly, the lack of attention to process assumed unlimited resources, did not easily explain conflict and change and ignored the agency of individuals and their governments. Functionalism answered these challenges with “a theoretical sleight of hand,” (Reed in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 32) using concepts such as dysfunction and differentiation but the challenges weakened the theory.

With the development of contingency theory, functionalism adapted to include systems design as the control mechanism for achieving desired goals. However, the shift added functionalism to the problems of contingency theory and did not resolve the difficulties of functionalism. Neo-functionalist efforts to extend the theory to relationships and supranational decision-making powers have kept the debate alive but have not resolved the problems of functionalism.

For UNESCO, therefore, although it was established as a functional agency of the UN, functionalism offers limited theoretical support for its stated purpose (Archer, 2001; Sagini, 2001).

Rationality

If concerns about functionalism are put aside, it could be claimed that UNESCO's purpose and its functions reflect Enlightenment commitment to reason and to meta-narratives of history and social progress. However, some theorists accuse Enlightenment rationality of producing self-inflicted 'instrumentalization of people' (Alvesson and Deetz in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 188) in part because it has diluted or replaced traditional practices and emotions with an emphasis on scientific reasoning, knowledge acquisition and improved performance. As well, Postmodernists turn from rationality-as-process to focus on rationality-as-results and point to "the endless deferral of social promise," rejecting the view that "more technology, more knowledge and increased rationality will somehow accomplish the promise," (Alvesson and Deetz in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 189).

These challenges would be serious for UNESCO's purpose if UNESCO could not point to practical contributions to the improved lives of people, such as literacy, cash-generation from protected cultural sites and improved water care of some areas of the environment, regardless of whether the work is a part of a grand explanation of social progress or the more micro focus of postmodernists.

Another way forward is also possible. Critical theorists ask for a broad definition of rationality so that "the politically astute intellectual is given an active role in the production of an enlightened understanding," for social progress for all people (Alvesson and Deetz in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 189). The participants are the 'politically astute intellectuals' of the critical theory challenge and they describe UNESCO's purpose as ethical and intellectual. They assume the terms ethical and intellectual are rational in both sense and intent otherwise meaning is evacuated from those terms. This produces a broad definition of rationality and one that reflects the reality of participants' work. The resulting explanation, therefore, in critical theory terms, is that UNESCO's

purpose is logically and intellectually rational (it would be irrational to do nothing about international conflict or to seek war and discourage the spread of knowledge) and it is purposefully and ethically rational (a goal of promoting peace through knowledge is worthwhile and also theoretically possible to achieve).

However, participants experience the problematic interaction of UNESCO's grand ethical and intellectual vision with the pressures of governments' self-interested expectations. They conclude, therefore, that UNESCO's rational purpose is undermined by political influences. The addition of a political analysis is significant. It could be another form of rationality (social progress needs governments' participation) but, if political influences are not rational, then they could undermine any justification of UNESCO's purpose.

Epistemic rationality

When the judgement moves from (Weber's) grand rationality to the relativity of (Foucault's) localized rationalities, UNESCO's purpose seems more rational: it was established to work against the political influence of narrow self-interest among nations; its purpose, therefore, reflects the knowledge of its time and context and stands rational because of it. Accordingly, it could be argued that UNESCO's purpose is, for this time, intellectually and ethically rational for the goal of social progress in the (political) work of an UN IGO and participants can draw power from this epistemic rationality. However, purpose alone is an insufficient source of power for them.

Structure

Partly mechanistic

UNESCO's structure was designed in 1945 and it reflects the theoretical interest in the commercial, mechanistic organizational models of its time. *Figure 8* illustrates this point.

In this structure the commercial goal is to sell a product for a profit and UNESCO's products (education, natural and social sciences, communication and culture) are also to be sold to make a profit (peace).

Figure 8: Organizational structures in the mechanistic tradition

Commercial organization	UNESCO
Shareholders (Owners of the capital)	General Conference (Owners of the capital)
Board of Directors	Executive Board
General Manager	Director General
Staff	Secretariat
Retail outlets	National Commissions

Expansion brings:	
Branch factories/offices	Field offices
External suppliers/out sourcing	Institutes

Rationality

The analogy looks strong and seems to be strengthened with the indicated expansion. Branch offices and external suppliers (field offices and institutes) are to improve sales: by closing the gap between production and a diverse market, UNESCO hopes to make products that are more appropriate for local market consumption. This structure, therefore, appears to be a rational design for an organization with a focus on production (programmes), distribution (knowledge sharing) and profit (peace).

However, the analogy breaks down for UNESCO in two ways. First, institutes are different from external suppliers. They do resemble outsourcing because they are contracted to supply specialist work but, unlike outsourcing, they are a part of the organization's bureaucracy and are very expensive to run.

Second, UNESCO's permanent delegates have no clear role in a mechanistic structure. They most resemble shareholders, some of whom have offices in the factory, who pop in and out of the general manager's office and, in ad hoc ways, influence the what and how of production. Further, UNESCO has limited investment funding for its production of peace and must 'sell' it to stay in business. However, unlike commercial organizations, the market for earning money is internal: donors of funds for programme work are the member states of UNESCO. This is the commercial equivalence of the investors in the factory buying all their own products to ensure that they continue to be made. This situation helps to explain the structure's tolerance of permanent delegates and their influence: it is important to work cooperatively with the owners of the capital needed for production *and* organizational existence.

Theorists confirm this view of the problematic nature of UNESCO's quasi commercial appearance with their discussion of legal, economic and political differences between commercial and public organizations; in the latter "political, not economic, considerations are paramount," (Gortner et al, 1997: 27).

Mechanistic organizations are, by prescription, rational but this is not an appropriate description of UNESCO: expensive outsourcing (institutes) and the bosses buying their own products are not rational economic activities. However, other forms of rationality are possible. For example, UNESCO's structure was designed to be "a network of interdependent parts arranged in a specific sequence and anchored by precisely defined points of resistance or rigidity," (Morgan, 1997:18). This rationality of design appears to be undermined by the addition of permanent delegates but generally rationality may still exist in the structure.

A test of this is Weberian: what is the experience of the participants working in the structure? Their common concern is lack of rationality: executive boards lack knowledge and have inadequate powers, national commissions lack knowledge and

want more power but permanent delegates have considerable power with unknown levels of knowledge. If two key constitutional bodies (executive boards and national commissions) are not able to meet their constitutional duties but the permanent delegates, not envisioned in the original constitution, have considerable influence, then UNESCO is not scientifically or rationally structured (Morgan, 1997; Sagini, 2001).

As well as denying structural rationality, participants' comments also exclude technical, financial and social rationality. If rationality is denied in these ways then so too is legal rationality, by Weber's definition. Of the many forms of rationality possible, the only possibility for UNESCO is political rationality. A political rationality explains why the structure has changed and why less than efficient or effective (or rational in a Weberian sense) executive boards and national commissions have resulted in the growth of influential permanent delegates. Political rationality would also predict similar changes in the future as governments alter UNESCO to meet their (self) interests.

Epistemic rationality

Political rationality leaves UNESCO's structural rationality vulnerable to charges of relativism, given the changing composition of general conferences, executive boards and the changing social and economic interests that member states pursue. If, however, relativism is an acceptable norm for political bodies in this period's accepted knowledge of organizational structures, then UNESCO is rescued by Foucault: the structure may not be mechanistically rational when judged against an ideal but relatively rational in its structure given the knowledge norms of its time. This theory takes UNESCO to a contingency model of organizations.

Partly contingent

A contingency theory analysis of structure proposes rationality by claiming that UNESCO has emerged from, and is continuing to reflect, the political and economic issues of its environment (Gortner et al, 1997). However, difficulties emerge when this theory is applied to UNESCO's structure.

Rationality

Two important aspects of contingency theory do not apply to UNESCO. First, contingency theory expects at least some decentralization of structure and power but UNESCO's structure was designed so that control, through a centralized hierarchy, stayed with the member states and the exercise of power was to be from the top down. Decentralization has not changed this structure and participants are concerned about the failed promises of decentralization.

Second, UNESCO is a distinctive agency of the UN with the constitutional inclusion of extra voices for member states (the national commissions) and with the growth of the position of permanent delegates. Contingency theory retains the requirement of rationality of structure and these are not easily explained as rational.

Epistemic rationality

However, contingency organizations may be described epistemically: the expectation would be that it is rational to adjust to changes in the environment. While this leaves any contingency theory, and theory about UNESCO, open to problems of relativism, if the norm for the structure of international bodies is contingent rationality then UNESCO meets the norm of relative structural rationality. This would again mean a political rationality since it is governments that control UNESCO's structure and

theoretical predictions would be about the possibility of other changes although they could not say of what kind.

Not multidirectional

A multidirectional label, whether rational in the ideal or relative sense, is difficult to apply. UNESCO was established in the mechanistic tradition and still retains many aspects of the original ideal. As well, although some structural changes in response to context appear to signal UNESCO as a contingency structure, important characteristics of contingency models, including decentralization, are missing. Further, the current structure retains the theoretical problems of relativism which multi-directional theory aims to avoid.

Given the difficulties organization theory is having in describing multidirectional models, this theory of organizational structure is of little help with any description of UNESCO's structure.

Overview of structure

If UNESCO's structure does not have consistent and ideal mechanistic, contingent or multidirectional ideal rationality, and if the relative rationality is dependent on the epistemic interests of governments, then any structural description moves from organization theory to political theory. However, a description of any UN agency's structure as political is tautological and it has little predictive potential. At best UNESCO's structure can be described as an instrument in the hands of (some) member states but this makes no claim about current or future rationality.

Participants find UNESCO's structure complex but its relative epistemic rationality may explain why they are not as concerned about it as other aspects of their work context.

Bureaucracy

Partly mechanistic

In organization theory and in the theory of bureaucracies it is the way staff are organized and function that are most closely examined. It is also the part of UNESCO's organization that concerns participants most.

Rationality

UNESCO's official bureaucratic organization is shown in Appendix 4 and it appears to be designed in the classical scientific tradition. It has the key features of Max Weber's ideal, mechanistic model: a specialized purpose, a focus on achievement of tasks, a centralized hierarchy, formalized and written procedures, standardized rules, stability of tenure for staff and a requirement of staff loyalty to the organization (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002). Participants' comments indicate that these features are strong.

However, participants' concerns indicate that the design is not working mechanistically. They talk of inconsistency of rules when the ideal for staff is that "each office has a clearly defined sphere of competence in the legal sense," (Weber, 1947 in Gortner et al, 1997: 54). They are concerned with dispersed and difficult lines of communication although "an employee should receive orders from only one superior," (Morgan, 1997: 19). They cite increasing decentralized responsibilities with no matching authority when in practice "(i)t is meaningless to make someone responsible for work if they are not given appropriate authority to execute that responsibility," (Morgan, 1997: 19). Participants note staff appointments for reasons other than technical skills when Weber's fifth criterion requires staff to be selected on the basis of technical expertise.

In general, participants suggest that the essential characteristics of a mechanistic bureaucracy of rationality, stability and efficiency are problematic in UNESCO. Their views also confirm, as the literature suggests, that a mechanistic bureaucracy presents an ideal that does not anticipate change in structure and does not recognize workers' interaction with each other or the structure (Gortner et al, 1997).

Epistemic rationality

It might be possible to describe UNESCO's bureaucracy as relatively rational. As the literature from NGOs indicates, other international bureaucracies seem to have similar difficulties and this suggests that today's changing context for development work may actually undermine the maintenance of fully rational mechanistic bureaucratic operations. This would mean that the norms in development organizational models would include bureaucracies that are only partly mechanistic because, rationally, they adjust to their time. Such a view takes organizations to contingency theory.

Possibly contingent

If the bureaucracy is not mechanistic, then, logically, it is an organic, open system.

Rationality

The rhetoric of UNESCO's reform process is about decentralization to enable the organization to respond better to its work environment. In the reform rhetoric emphasis is on both process (the Table of Delegated Authority) and agency (for example, the DG requires senior staff to be more proactive in UN activities). These developments suggest that a contingency theory describing a bureaucratic model open to adjustments will apply to the organization. UNESCO's history of adjustments supports that conclusion.

However, contingency theory is not useful for some important reasons. First, UNESCO's changes were responses to decisions by the power-holding member states whose concerns may have been about power and position rather than the achievement of peace. This possibility is suggested by the campaigns of member states to have field offices and institutes established in their countries. The possibility would also be supported by some theorists, such as the realists, for whom international organizations are instruments of state policy and by neo realists who claim that the UN is a reflection of hegemonic power of, especially, the United States of America (Archer, 2001:125).

Second, even after five years of reform, UNESCO's bureaucracy remains hierarchical and the changes only extend and scatter communication lines. This might not matter as contingency theory predicts a wide variety of models for theorization with the emphasis on substantive rationality in purpose and instrumental rationality in structure (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Sagini, 2002). However, contingency theorists do expect flatter management systems, such as a matrix or team structure, and horizontal decision-making groups with real authority, neither of which is to be found in UNESCO. The bureaucracy is still presented in mechanistic terms of hierarchical rationality (especially and visibly with the Table of Delegated Authority). As well, the introduction of SISTER and FABS, to achieve greater efficiency with programmes and budgets, aims to improve centralized control not promote decentralized work. Further, contingent models are, in theory, more not less, effective for staff achievement of goals but participants' comments indicate that the continuing centralized decision-making hinders their efforts to carry out the organization's work.

It appears, therefore, that UNESCO's bureaucracy is less contingent and more mechanistic, at least in some of its dominant hierarchical practices (Archer, 2001; Morgan, 1997; Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002).

Sometimes contingency theory recognizes the importance of information technology. Increased communication flow is important because organizations today need high quality information to manage the uncertainties of the environments in which they operate (Archer, 2001; Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002). Stiglitz (2002: xvi) even claims that more information will lead to better policies and so better results. However, participants indicate that the communication flow is predominantly downwards, it is not efficient and much of it is instruction not the promotion of knowledge and learning predicted by some open models of organization. As participants indicate, the communication flow seems to be introducing more controls of their actions. SISTER, FABS, the Bureau for Field coordination and the Table of Delegated Authority look like mechanistic methodology to improve efficiency but their operation are reducing participants' time to use their technical expertise.

Epistemic rationality

One generalization may be drawn from participants' views and from the NGO literature about the processes of their bureaucracies. They all want improved procedures that are reasoned and will support their work in the different contexts they serve. Bennis (1998: 79) as a part of his claim that this century needs leaders not managers looks for post-bureaucratic organizations that have interactional leadership, encourage conflict, promote learning, reward good staff and promote listeners and those who develop others' talents. Participants agree with this view and in essence they are looking for flexible procedures. If large international organizations are to achieve this they will have to develop some new form of bureaucratic process that has contingent epistemic rationality, acceptable for both staff and theorists.

Not multi-directional

The multi-directional model's structure has three norms: mechanistic rationality, contingent individual agency and

contingent internal and external work contexts. Operational concepts of democracy, justice and equity provide the discipline needed to prevent chaos and the overall goal is flexibility to respond to changes in the work environment. None of the norms can be applied to UNESCO's bureaucracy, as explained above, and participants' comments raise questions about operational concepts of democracy, justice and equity in UNESCO; they suggest that contingency in UNESCO actually produces inefficient pursuit of purpose. The theory itself also has problems: "not much has been done to work out the methodological implications of these attempts at synthesis," (Gagliardi in Clegg and Hardy, 1999:313).

Rationality revisited

These problems could possibly be put aside by explaining the bureaucracy's rationality as epistemic in keeping with the roles of international organizations. Archer (2001: 68-92) defines the roles as instrument, arena and actor. In the first role, an *instrumental* organization is one that is used by some governments for their own purposes. Archer claims that organizations with universal membership will be able to avoid this role. UNESCO has such a membership but Archer under-estimates the influence of donors (at least) in decisions that affect the organization and its bureaucracy. Stiglitz (2002:18-19) recognizes this problem and says of the IMF that it is not representative of the countries it serves and it reflects the interests and perspectives of those who make the decisions. Participants' comments about the influence of permanent delegates also illustrate this point.

In the second role, *arena*, the organization is a forum where members debate issues, gain support for proposals and challenge each other on matters of concern. This is a role that UNESCO's general conference and other regional conferences fulfill. However, when the role of arena is applied to UNESCO it does not account for the programme work that is the chief focus of its bureaucracy nor does it recognize the hidden bureaucratic control of agendas in arena operations.

In the third role of *actor* the organization is autonomous and its norms include “coherent decision-making machinery” (Deutsch, 1966 in Archer, 2001:79). Archer (2001:91) suggests that only if an organization’s constitution has created a strong bureaucracy that is “insulated from interference by the membership,” and given “powerful resources,” will it be an independent actor and able to influence world events. Participants cast doubt on coherency in the bureaucracy and UNESCO is not ‘insulated from interference’ as its history and participants’ comments suggest. However, it is possible that ‘actor’ could mean in the sense of the stage, with the UN following someone else’s script, in which sense UNESCO might be an actor but this interpretation returns UNESCO to an instrumental role.

Of the three roles, the most appropriate explanation of UNESCO’s organization and its bureaucracy is that it is operating as an instrument of its member states. Loescher (2001: 339) makes the same claim about the UNHCR: on many occasions it “became a more overt instrument of state policies and interests.” This explanation accounts for the structural changes and the focus of the bureaucracy on some member states’ requests. It is also theoretically coherent with the earlier conclusion that UNESCO’s bureaucracy, in terms relative to its time, appears to be typical of other development organizations and, therefore, rational at this time.

Lines of communication

Some theorists identify communication as the core of an organization’s structure and process: “Communication and organization are inseparable,” (Gortner et al, 1997: 135). Studies consider such variables as length of the communication lines, degree of formality, controls and interaction with the organization’s structure. Research suggests that centralized organizations have more downwards communication and decentralized organizations have more upwards communication. Other research indicates that environmental complexity increases

the number of communication roles of managers but organizational complexity and dynamism increase the frequency of decisional roles (Thomas, 2002: 24). Studies also describe a variety of methods of communication and their impact on achievement of goals (Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Sagini, 2001; Thomas, 2002). Organizational communication, therefore, is a useful approach for an examination of purpose, member states' roles and the secretariat of UNESCO.

It is difficult to theorize UNESCO's lines of communication according to any of the three broad models of organization that are considered above. On paper, some of the lines of authority are apparently clear and fit the mechanistic model. The Table of Delegated Authority is an excellent example of the work of a scientifically organized bureaucracy. However, as participants frequently explain, it does not work mechanistically since its processes vary so much in practice. Nor does the Table, in operation, fit a contingency or multi-directional model because it maintains, not lessens, centralized control. Similarly, lines of information are so dispersed, and often dependent on people's contacts rather than institutionalized processes, that their contribution to participants' work is problematic.

Theorists claim that lines of communication are the core of an organization's structure and process, for information exchange and as lines of supply. Sagini (2001: 481) further claims that the control system of organizations depends on the communication structure and he cites Etzioni's list of communication purposes: to elicit performance, and to check that quantity and quality meet the organization's specifications. Participants say that in UNESCO communication lines complicate and hinder their power to work for peace and development. This concern exemplifies Foucault's argument that power is best understood not with meta-theory but with an examination of the small or hidden activities of an organization (Mills, 2003: 36).

The lines of communication in UNESCO are a key part of UNESCO's hidden activities. Since each participant is in a distant

space determined by the organization he or she must be managed and connected carefully. Although Foucault (1994: 294) separates power from information communication he does qualify this by recognizing that all relations are power relations. Thus, when headquarters requires information, denies a request or withholds resources from any office it is exercising power discreetly but effectively. Conversely, participants also have access to this hidden process with their individual responses to headquarters' communications to them.

It is especially the lines of authority in UNESCO that are the lines of surveillance and that carry the bureaucratic panoptic gaze. They establish organizational norms in such activities as SISTER, FABS and other forms of reporting and in staffing and programme design and in doing so also establish deviant behaviour: participants who do not meet the norms are 'punished' with non-supply of resources or inadequate staffing or non-answers to mail. This exercise of power is hidden as it is carried out on an individual basis, generally through email, and unless participants are able to share information it remains invisible. Chomsky (2003: 278-9) attacks the technologies of communication as "another technique for control and manipulation," and "if you can eliminate things like face-to-face contact and direct interaction ... you've made (people) more inhuman, and therefore more controllable." The exercise of power in the communication lines does not show in UNESCO's official organizational diagram but is the focus of most of the participants' contributions to this explanation of UNESCO work processes.

Overview of bureaucracy

Participants report UNESCO's bureaucracy negatively. They are concerned about its rationality and the time they spend on administration. The bureaucracy does appear, however, to be best described as an instrument for governments and the bureaucracy is necessarily designed so that headquarters is able to keep governments satisfied. Hancock (1989:72-75) calls this "bureaucratic survivalism" and lists contradictory beliefs in

development that have co-existed as “whims of fashion” with a resulting “lack of coherence in the development drive.” UNESCO ‘stays in business’ with its focus on governments’ changing requests; its lines of communication, especially the lines of authority, are important control mechanisms of field staff to help it ‘stay in business’.

Participants’ reports also contain a strong belief in the need for justice and a more ethical use of power in their bureaucracy. The literature is generally silent about ethics and bureaucracies and “ethical issues associated with the use of power are shielded from view,” (Clegg and Hardy, 1999:375). With UNESCO’s widely dispersed field offices it is possible for power and ethical issues to be hidden in the bureaucratic processes.

FINAL VIEW OF UNESCO’S ORGANIZATION

Weber’s interest in social structure focussed on organizations and their bureaucracies and he drew attention to rationality and efficiency. This is the ‘right’ Weber (Burrell in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 389). It is useful, as well, to apply other theoretical approaches to the conclusions above by asking: what is the most appropriate description of UNESCO’s purpose, structure and bureaucracy? A neorealist would claim that UNESCO’s organization reflects the hegemony of its most powerful members. A structuralist would modify the political analysis with an account of social division, either economic, gender or non-Western and read participants’ accounts as indicative of their lack of control of resources because they lack power in the structure and bureaucracy. Critical theorists would describe UNESCO as “one mechanism through which the universal norms of a world hegemony are expressed,” (Cox in Archer, 2001:165) because they reflect dominant powers’ interests, are products of that order, legitimize its norms, co-opt elites from non dominant countries and absorb and remake counter hegemonies. Foucault would deny the sense of independent world hegemony but would identify contextual norms that have shaped and still control UNESCO.

In each of these differing accounts, political power is at the centre of analysis but this offers little as an explanation of UNESCO's purpose, structure and bureaucracy. Although political power⁴³ has influenced structure and bureaucratic processes so that their rationality cannot be easily generalized, yet the Constitution gives the organization a grand intellectual and ethical purpose that goes beyond member states' power. Consequently, UNESCO evades neat theoretical categorization.

Weber was also concerned with the dehumanizing effects of the mechanistic model and this 'left' Weber found "administration 'without regards for persons' deeply morally and politically problematic," (Marsden and Townley in Clegg and Hardy, 199: 408). He stressed, therefore, that the ideal mechanistic model was not necessarily the best. Participants say that UNESCO has no regard for its staff, a possible indication that although UNESCO does not appear to fit fully the mechanistic model, it may have some of the model's weaknesses. UNESCO, therefore, appears to be neither organizationally ideal nor, from participants' perspectives, the best in which to promote peace and development.

CONCLUSION

UNESCO's mandate in the UN system is straightforward: it is to work for peace by developing and spreading knowledge. However, its organization is complex and has evolved as Member States add to the structure and so to the work of the bureaucracy. The structure includes organs that work almost independently of each other and the bureaucracy, but they have feet in the bureaucracy and influence its operation. Thus the 2004 bureaucratic structure and processes reflect both UNESCO's constitution and its history. It is hierarchical in organization and centralized in focus, in spite of a reform process to decentralize the organization, and participants' contributions suggest that Weber

⁴³ In a UNESCO book to mark twenty five years of existence, it is claimed that "UNESCO is designed to fulfill a conscious political purpose," (Pompei et al, in Maheu, 1972:16).

was right to be concerned about the negative impact of bureaucracies on their staff.

Field offices are one of the additions to the original bureaucracy established by the Constitution and participants are committed to the organization's purpose. They generally accept the structure although have some concerns about executive boards, national commissions and permanent delegates. They are more concerned with organizational bureaucracy, its lack of rationality and the difficulties it creates for them and the consequential reduction of the time they can give to their specialist, technical work.

Lines of authority and information are complex and generally enable headquarters to retain power. Lines of authority are one-directional and are controlled in headquarters while the lines of information are multi-directional. The influence of both sets varies greatly according to status and personal contacts. This complicates the work of the bureaucracy and, consequently, the work of the participants. They have few opportunities to challenge and are usually compliant users of the communication lines because they need the organization's resources for their fieldwork. Rewards and punishment are managed through the lines of communication, demonstrating the centrality of power control in the organization and strongly suggestive of Foucault's theory of the gaze of power.

Theoretical analysis of UNESCO's purpose, structure and bureaucracy suggests that the organization does not easily fit any standard model of theorization. It has features of many theoretical perspectives and research approaches but UNESCO's differences and contradictions are significant. UNESCO's organization is partly mechanistic and partly contingent, with a centralized political presence that influences its structure and bureaucracy. Further, participants' contributions suggest that even the intellectual and ethical purpose of UNESCO is weakened by the bureaucracy in which they work. Consequently, the answer to the chapter's opening question is that the organization's purpose offers considerable power but the roles of member states and the

operation of the bureaucracy limit power for the participant heads of field offices.

One of the participants offers a possible summary of the chapter:

“Directors have a great deal of responsibility thrust upon them (especially as certifying officers) but very little real authority to make decisions. For example, you can’t choose your own staff. When things go well ... no problem. When things go wrong ... the Director has to carry the can, regardless. We don’t have enough good quality staff (professional officers) in field offices and that’s HQ at fault. In every office I’ve been in there’s been gaps. I’m not convinced that the bureau office idea is helpful. It just adds another layer of bureaucracy to the whole process. Wouldn’t it be easier, for example, simply to be allocated a slice of the overall RP budget so that we can plan our own activities with our MS? And Natcoms can be a blessing or a burden: we must devise a workable mechanism to ensure that we are playing on the same team and all have an understanding of the way UNESCO works. As well, new systems, like SISTER and FABS, have made our work increasingly difficult. Add to all of this, Gen Conf and X-Bd decisions ... In fact, things have become so complicated that one wonders if anyone understands what we are supposed to be doing and how we are expected to do it!” (P6).

CHAPTER FIVE

PRACTICE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL

“I’m not sure the organization is always looking for leadership. In other words I’m not sure that they see leadership as a critical role of a head,” (P3).

INTRODUCTION

What personal, positional and post powers do the seven participant heads of field offices have? The focus of the study moves from UNESCO’s organization to the participants themselves. They suggest in the previous chapter that their work in the bureaucracy is difficult and a possible explanation for their concerns might be that they do not have the necessary skills for work in the field. Or, it might also be suggested that these are just seven disgruntled employees with no commitment to UNESCO and their work. This chapter negates both views.

The concept of organizational capital is defined simply as the assets participants have and use in their work and this capital can be both *tangible* and *intangible*. *Tangible capital* is what participants bring to position and post, what they gain on appointment and what they develop over time. The study found a wide range of tangible assets with considerable power potential. *Intangible capital* has been limited in this study to the shared assumptions that participants say are important for their work. The assumptions are explained and their varying power potential is described. This section of the chapter finishes with an overview of participants’ organizational capital and expands on ethical issues introduced in Chapter Four.

The chapter concludes with the application of relevant theory to the conclusions about participants’ organizational capital. Key ideas from Weber and Foucault are also applied to assist the analysis and the conclusion reached is that, because of the assets

they hold, participants have the necessary organizational capital and power potential for their work.

THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL

“We have to know the bureaucracy, the field context and then exercise good judgement,” (P2).

The concept of tangible and intangible organizational capital is useful because it allows discussion of more than the usual leadership list of traits, skills and context by including important assets such as office staff and resources. It also allows the inclusion of liabilities that may affect the use of capital. In this chapter the concept structures the discussion of the power potential that participants have to promote UNESCO’s work for peace and development.

Organizational capital is important because its quantity influences success. Participants describe a number of challenges they face and overcome because of their ability to draw on their organizational assets:

“There are huge differences between rhetoric, rules and practice and we have to know how to meet them all,” (P3).

“La langue de bois⁴⁴ is UNESCO’s language and we have to learn it to evade it,” (P4).

“We have to know how to develop a programme, write funding projects, approach donors, manage resources, how to be a diplomat ... how to walk on water! And you have to learn when to fight,” (P2).

TANGIBLE CAPITAL

“I have no money but I’m nice,” (P7).

⁴⁴ The wooden tongue

General

In UNESCO all heads' positions are near the top of the hierarchy, usually at the Director level, and the positions carry considerable status within and outside UNESCO. All heads begin their work with academic qualifications, skills and work experience, they gain more assets on appointment to position and a post and over time they develop others that will support their work. These are described separately although in practice they are intertwined.

Personal assets

A copy of the standard advertisement for a head of office position and post is attached as Appendix 2. Applicants are expected to have appropriate high-level qualifications and relevant work experience at a senior level in their previous appointment. The advertisement indicates that the appointee will need a variety of personal and professional skills or 'competencies' to meet the responsibilities of the post. Three major roles are described (diplomatic, management and technical) and each is complex and challenging.

The participants in this study brought considerable personal capital to their posts. All have high-level qualifications including doctorates, they have had successful work experience in government, non-government bodies or universities, in their own and other countries and all have held leadership roles before taking up their post as a UNESCO head of office. The particular skills that the participants had at the time of appointment include planning and implementing programmes of work, writing project documents, making speeches, managing offices and leading staff. All work in at least two languages, some have published academic books and articles and all are expert users of various information technologies. They are successful and highly accomplished people.

However, participants identify skills that they did not have at the time of their appointment. Chief of these was the diplomatic role

as UNESCO representative and a second was working with the media. The lack of these is a potential liability. These skills have to be learned by experience and they reappear below under 'Assets developed with time'.

Appointment assets

Appointment immediately brings new assets. The first of these is the *diplomatic status*⁴⁵ of the position. This provides rights and privileges while living in the host country and when travelling as a UNESCO head of office. It also provides entry to social, economic and political groups not otherwise easily entered; all heads, for example, are able to meet the political leaders of their cluster countries with assurance, not only because the country is a member of UNESCO but also because of their diplomatic status. This status also provides a number of work advantages including access to civil service decision-makers and their staff, all major information networks in the office's region and participation in a wide range of high level consultations.

Diplomatic and UN status, however, can also be a problem: it raises expectations in some countries that heads are like leaders of national diplomatic posts and with the same sort of influence and funds. Heads are rarely recruited from a diplomatic corps and so have to learn the skills of diplomatic conversation and behaviour ... and tactful rejection of funding requests.

"I really needed training with how to do this work, the diplomatic side of things," (P2).

The second asset all heads gain with posting is an *office*. It may be provided by the host government, it may be a leased building or it may be in a UN House with some costs such as guards and generator shared with other UN agencies. It may include one or more cars but one will be an official car from which the UN flag

⁴⁵ Senior staff in the UN, including heads of field offices, carry red UN passports while most staff carry the usual blue UN passport.

flies. The office information technology may be advanced or need to be established and the number and condition of workspaces, furniture and equipment will also vary. Whatever the office is like, it is an important asset for heads. It provides an extension to their status (they are diplomatic representatives *and* head of office) and it provides the base from which all heads work.

“The office is ok, good position and plenty of space. It’s an old house and hard to keep clean but we are alright here. It’s a good base,” (P2).

However, all heads are responsible for all office work, including the complex accounting and reporting systems, as the Table of Delegated Authority and Reporting by Directors/Heads⁴⁶ require. Consequently, they must use other assets to ensure that the office does not become a liability with high management demands that seriously reduce time for development work. The success of this challenge depends, especially, on the availability and skill of support staff in the office.

“I do my best with what we have here but I do need more staff... and time! The struggle to get resources is so draining ... I fear for my health sometimes,” (P1).

Staff are the third asset all heads gain on appointment. They are of two kinds. The majority will be locally-recruited and may be as few as a secretary and a driver or may include numbers of secretaries and other support staff including computer expert, librarian, receptionist and cleaner. As well, the office may have one or more internationally-recruited professional staff each of whom is responsible for one of UNESCO’s five areas of work. Many offices also have a professional administrative officer to oversee the detail of the rules of expenditure and accounting. Staff are an asset because they enable the head to manage the office efficiently and to meet the expectations of UNESCO and its

⁴⁶ Internal documents detailing these responsibilities.

Constitution in the part of the world they serve; this work heads could not do alone.

However, staffing can also be a liability. Chapter Four explained the process for appointment of international staff and local staff selection has also to be approved by headquarters, yet all heads are responsible for all staff matters including their performance and development. Problems come if staff numbers are too few and if staff skills and experience are inadequate or inappropriate for the work. Participants had a number of concerns about staffing:

“This is a culture of impunity. We all know stories of slack staff,” (P3).

“Some staff do almost nothing, but continue to receive salaries, so others think, why should I work hard? (Just go to the 7th floor coffee shop in HQ at any time of the day for proof). It is impossible to sack or severely censure any staff member, no matter how bad they might be. Periodic performance reports are not worth the paper they are written on as to give a ‘bad’ report will embroil the supervisor in years of fighting and acrimony (It is easier for bosses to take the line of least resistance and staff know this). A certain level of inefficiency is tolerated within the organization (ie people are not under great pressure to perform and if they only work at 50% of their capacity, so what?). If you perform poorly, you will be promoted (ie your supervisor will offload you),” (P6).

The fourth asset is *funding and a programme of work* and it is difficult to separate these because they work together. Funding is of three kinds: money to run the office, funding for regular programme work and extra-budgetary funds for special and usually large projects. The programme and special projects are the reason for the existence of the office. They contribute to the development of member states and raise UNESCO’s profile generally and the office’s specifically. For the participants, programme and project work are an asset. First, this work is approved by the member states and so is ‘neutral’ or clear of ‘donor agenda’ accusations.

Second, the work provides satisfying academic, managerial and leadership challenges for participants.

“The work is good and it’s the best part of all of this. It’s taken time but there are very fine networks and projects now and good media coverage,” (P4).

“I get most satisfaction from work like (named) because I can see it makes a difference to some people ... how they are ... or live,” (P5).

The challenges of participants’ work include the number of programmes and projects and the amount of funding provided for each. Programme and project work are never a liability but contributing factors, such as the variables of staff numbers and skills and the level of office technology, may promote or hinder progress and successful completion.

In summary, therefore, all heads gain many useful assets on appointment and even if they are limited in number and quality, they are the essential base for work to meet the requirements of the Constitution. However, appointment assets can be affected by liabilities that include personal skills gaps, time management and staffing difficulties.

Assets developed with time

Many heads of office are appointed from outside UNESCO and also from outside the UN system and so they have to develop some assets that a head promoted within UNESCO may already have. This section covers what participants as new heads have to gain with time.

The first of these is *knowledge of the bureaucracy*, how it works, what to expect, what to follow or to disregard and what is important. Some procedures are very complex and may be technologically centralized beyond the capacity of the new head’s

office; changes are frequent. Gaining this asset is not easy as briefing on appointment does not provide it and the many volumes of rules and regulations are useful for checking a single issue but are not a guide to the overall system. Early knowledge of the bureaucracy is important for following work processes successfully. More significantly, good knowledge is essential for gaining anything a head or a staff member may need from the organization. A good use of this asset can improve staffing, develop the physical assets of the office, strengthen programme work and generally promote effective and efficient work. In contrast, inadequate knowledge of the bureaucracy is a serious liability and for the opposite reasons. Knowledge of the bureaucracy, however, is not enough on its own:

“We have to understand the stakes in a fight and work around them,” (P4).

“Risks aren’t allowed, mistakes not forgiven. It’s all comply, conform, cooperate! We have a culture of silence and compliance. And - mistakes aren’t admitted in HQ and aren’t allowed in the field office. All this we must learn,” (P7).

New heads, therefore, also need to develop good *reliable friends* in headquarters. These friends are essential conduits of information, providers of documents and answers to questions not answered by the appropriate headquarters person and they generally keep heads up to date with new developments and gossip. The more highly placed the friend is the better, as such friends can also help clarify confused instructions or help with special requests either directly or as an intermediary. It is noteworthy, however, that participants identify two junior staff in the Human Resources Management section of headquarters as invaluable for help with staffing rules and regulations. Their knowledge rather than their post in headquarters and their willingness to be a ‘friend’ are important. A lack of reliable friends in headquarters is a liability.

“After a lot of prodding, interviews for the post were finally held in May but the appointment was not made until September. In (named sector) the person at the top of the list was sent to another office. I negotiate and negotiate. I get other people to negotiate and eventually get a result,” (P3).

“Lobbying HQ is constant!” (P4).

The next asset to be developed is *good partnerships* with host government, its national commission and the governments and national commissions of all other countries in the cluster served by the office. This is one of the most difficult challenges. Host governments may be active in UNESCO or not. Their national commissions may be fully established or not. The two may work together or not. If a national commission exists only in the person of an already busy line ministry official he or she may exercise considerable power or do little unless asked. He or she may be difficult to establish any relationship with or may not be very energetic. Heads with very good relationships with governments and national commissions have strong assets for their work. Ministers will support the work of the office, in some cases also with cash contributions, and the national commissions will be productive and reliable partners. However, a number of participants report relationship problems with some or all of their national commissions that are draining of time, energy and good health and hinder successful programme work:

“Natcoms were created because there were no field offices and they were to be the presence in the field. Now they are in competition all the time with field offices. Natcoms are another system of control, they apply veto to even visits to their country; are getting aggressive and calling for more power ie money,” (P4).

All heads are expected to develop good partnerships with all appropriate development bodies in their region. These will include other UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs and any other important

institutions such as the leading universities, technical and teachers' colleges, specialist commissions for such things as energy, HIV/AIDS, human rights or disaster management. They must also have excellent relationships with any political forums and they must especially develop excellent relationships with representatives of donor countries. When good working relationships exist with development partners, UNESCO's work is supplemented and complemented by joint and parallel activities and shared or donated funding. In this way UNESCO and member states and the partners all gain. However, if relationships are new or problematic, all heads' work is more difficult, especially if donor funding or partners for joint projects are needed.

"Partnerships ... I've developed five left hands and ten right hands!" (P3).

Partnerships, although developed for work purposes, are often based on personal knowledge and contacts. A new head, no matter how successful and experienced in another post, will have to start again to redevelop the partnerships established by the previous head. The potential liability is that participants will use much time in maintaining partnerships to the detriment of their development work.

"I expect to spend a lot of time with donors especially but also key ngos. I hope that it will be good for the work but can't always be sure," (P4).

Finally, the *media* are important assets for participants. A positive image of the field office and UNESCO comes from regular and accurate reporting of the field office's work and the coverage of global messages about UN and International Days of special significance such as media freedom, protection of the environment, human rights and teachers' days. All heads have to develop reliable media contacts and also learn the skills of writing media releases and being interviewed by radio and television. A lack of

media skills can be a liability and all heads must quickly learn how to turn a potential difficulty into an asset.

"I've had to learn how to deal with tv especially. And we get coverage almost weekly in the papers, it's good," (P7).

"I've become quite good with the media but I had to learn," (P4).

Generally, therefore, all heads develop a number of extra assets as a necessary part of their work including knowledge of the bureaucracy, reliable friends, good partnerships and media skills. A gap in this knowledge can be a liability.

Power potential of tangible capital

When they are combined, participants' personal, positional and post assets offer considerable potential power. The power is basically intellectual, using high level planning, communicating and problem-solving skills, and it is also ethical with its focus on the promotion of peace and development. However, power potential can be weakened if any of the items listed as tangible capital is weak or missing and becomes a liability.

INTANGIBLE CAPITAL

"Our work is important even if we count for little," (P2).

General

The second part of organizational capital is intangible and focusses on the organizational assumptions that participants share about their work. Intangible capital in this research does not include personality and character traits, nor does it include home, religious, gender or other cultural considerations because although important, in UNESCO they are too variable: each of the current 52 heads comes from a different country, with very different religious, home and gender experiences and knowledge. It would not be possible in

this study to try to include them as a part of intangible capital and one participant saw the heterogeneous nature of staff as a problem for UNESCO:

“The international, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual nature of the staff of UNESCO makes the organization inherently lacking in coherence and almost impossible to manage. How can all these people from different societies, geographical backgrounds, varied skill levels and bureaucracies agree on anything?” (P6).

Assumptions are the taken-for-granted ‘knowledge’ or “unconscious patterns of behaviour and control,” (Morgan, 1997:248) in some part of life. They are usually unspoken but accepted as authentic and consequently guide people’s behaviour so that they act instinctively in the context of the assumption. Theory suggests that when assumptions about a workplace are shared, they are strong determinants of group and individual behaviour in that workplace (Gortner et al, 1997; Schein, 1992). Assumptions are learned in a variety of ways:

“We are seasoned in all sorts of ways. Assumptions at work are shared by briefings, watching, listening; osmosis plus a political sense,” (P4).

“We learn them from meetings of all kinds; from gossip, experience, emails gossip; ‘Everyone knows that ...’” (P7).

Participants’ inclusion of significant assumptions in the Constitution and the bureaucracy was an unexpected finding and extended the concept of intangible capital. The assumptions they describe are of two kinds. First, they identify assumptions that are current ‘knowledge’ and, because they may change with time, these are called operational assumptions. Second, participants identify the more significant core assumptions that underlie operational assumptions. A core assumption is the fundamental

‘knowledge’ that produces, permits, promotes and protects all the operational assumptions.

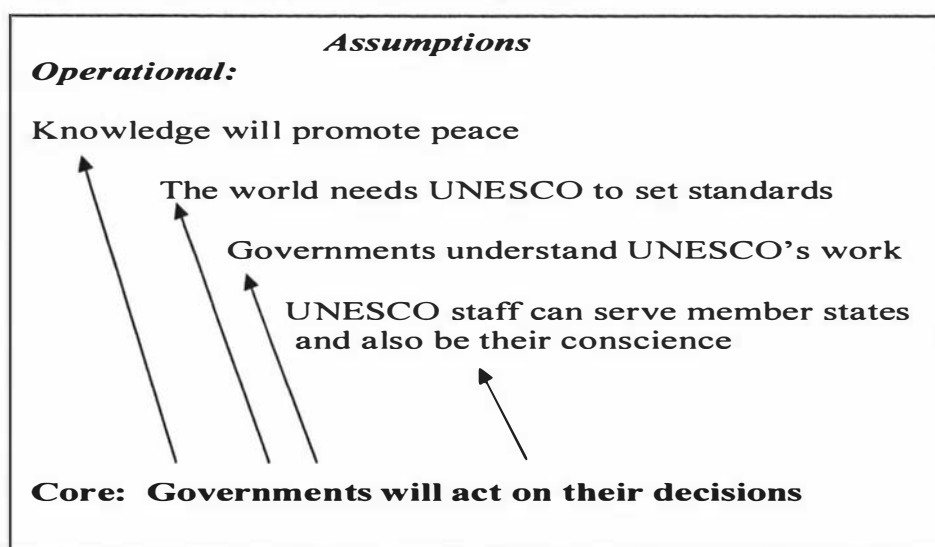
Participants identify groups of significant organizational assumptions, some of which they challenge as untrue or unhelpful and which are liabilities, not assets, in their work. Those assumptions participants identify as theirs suggest power potential for their work.

The following section examines the identified assumptions first in UNESCO’s Constitution, then the bureaucracy and finally of the participants and identifies the operational and core assumptions in each.

Constitutional assumptions

It is important to note that the Constitution does not assume that governments want world peace. The constitution is quite clear that a desire for peace has to be developed and it sets out how this can be done. In the proposals for building the ‘defences of peace’ participants identify four operational assumptions and the core assumption from which they come, as *Figure 9* shows.

Figure 9 Constitutional assumptions



Knowledge will promote world peace

This assumption produces the welfare or functionalist approach of UNESCO, described in Chapter Four. Two difficulties can be seen in this assumption. First, although the Constitution specified in 1945 the kinds of knowledge that would promote peace, member states have since added new fields, thus raising questions about what kinds of knowledge are really needed and who should decide. Second, this assumption operates in spite of overwhelming evidence that some of the most knowledgeable people have committed many of the worst atrocities and initiated many of the worst wars in history.⁴⁷ However, although the assumption begs many questions about knowledge, it survives because it also carries the vision of a better world that is morally defensible, even if not rationally demonstrable.

Although participants acknowledge the difficulties in this assumption it is accepted as capital because a different assumption, that knowledge will hinder world peace, is unacceptable to them.

“Peace is the ultimate goal but so much of our work is for smaller things. I hope that they will all help build a better world somehow,” (P1).

The world needs UNESCO to set standards

The second assumption determines that UNESCO will continue to produce conventions, recommendations, guidelines, predictive reports and conferences because the Constitution assumes that only UNESCO does this work. Since the Constitution was written, other UN agencies, such as ILO, WHO, UNICEF, have also become global standard-setting bodies but the assumption survives because it reflects the ethical intentions of the Constitution, what

⁴⁷ Dr Ishii Shiro’s experiments with Chinese prisoners during World War Two paralleled the degree of torture and deaths of Dr Mengele’s experiments in the same war but are less well-known. Most major conflicts in history have been initiated by the formally educated leaders of the world.

Weber calls the ethic of ultimate ends (Gortner et al, 1997: 3321). If peace is the ultimate end, then globally acceptable standards of behaviour are necessary and it does not matter if more than one international organization is doing this work. For participants this assumption is useful capital because it does not contradict their work and at times complements it.

“Yes, certainly other UN agencies set standards and also other groups ... but it’s okay ... Better to have more than one,” (P4).

Governments understand UNESCO’s work

This assumption contains a number of fallacies: that all governments are stable entities with established procedures for retaining institutional memory, that political representatives have the time to study large amounts of paper about UNESCO’s programmes and budgets, that all participants in general conferences understand and can follow procedures and that all are present for all debates and votes.

The assumption also implies the same things about government representatives on executive boards and in national commissions. Further, the assumption implies willingness and ability to evaluate detailed and complex programme and budgetary matters. However, recorded and anecdotal history indicates that the assumption has limited foundation but survives because UNESCO is, as Chapter Four explains, primarily an instrumental organization and, in theory, governments, as the policy-makers and ‘owners’ of UNESCO, understand its work. Participants challenge this assumption, as Chapter Four indicates, and it is a liability in their work.

“If it weren’t so serious it would be a joke. So many are really like kids grabbing at the lowest hanging fruit, and no intention of doing the hard things ... or doing them so that they aren’t any trouble, ” (P7).

UNESCO staff can serve member states and also be their conscience

The fourth assumption underlines the bipolarity of the work of all international staff, whether in headquarters or in the field. Regularly, all heads work with governments for development purposes. Most governments prefer money to homilies⁴⁸ and governments added the development role to UNESCO's work in 1960 (Hoggart, 1978:31). This work is requested by member states (in general conferences) because it is practical and has, usually, visible benefits for countries. Because a general conference has approved the work it is mandatory and must be carried out. However, all heads of field offices must also promote global standards for such ethical issues as human rights, freedom of the media, gender equity, protection of the environment and education for all and these are not always as popular with governments.

This assumption creates difficulties for participants at times, since much of their programme work contains implicit advocacy work.

"How can we be both servant and conscience? We have to try and I often find ways of building the ethical part in so that it's acceptable and not threatening," (P3).

"A lot of my work has intrinsic morality (eg named large scale project) and so I am both project leader and a guardian for what is good in it," (P2).

In spite of the resulting operational challenges, the assumption survives because UNESCO's Constitution places advocacy work as its fundamental ethical mandate.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ A senior Minister at an international meeting in 2000 told ministerial colleagues that UNESCO was best for "girls, gold and glory."

⁴⁹ One Director General of UNESCO, Renee Maheu, claimed that UNESCO "must become the conscience of each (country) if it is to embody the will of all," (Behrstock, 1987: 183).

Core: governments will action the decisions they make in UNESCO's name

Operational assumptions can change. Others take their place. However, regardless of what operational assumptions are drawn from the Constitution, all give way to the core assumption that governments, having joined UNESCO, will comply with and action the decisions they make in UNESCO's name. This core assumption is theoretically rational but demonstrably unfounded. Conventions are written but not signed, recommendations are passed but ignored, policies are set but not followed and conferences are enjoyed and forgotten. Further, even where there is compliance it is culturally and politically conditioned so that responses may be partial compliance or a redefinition of the original global agreement.

"Of course, all international agreements are moderated in the national context ... if done at all ... because political and cultural agenda take over once the minister gets home ... and culture is often a good let out for some of the hard things like freedom of the press or human rights," (P7).

However, the assumption survives because any other core assumption about governments' compliance with their UNESCO decisions would be irrational.

The core assumption of the Constitution is important for all heads' work. Everything they do carries the authority of an international agreement. This is valuable for programme work and significant for advocacy, especially of issues that are sensitive or difficult in national contexts. The power of the assumption supports participants' work. Whether they are proposing policy to give all children a place in primary school, advocating work for reporting progress towards the Millennium Development Goals or supporting the protection of the media, participants are powerful because of the core assumption that governments will comply with

the standards they have themselves established in a UNESCO forum.

“Some MS are good to work with. They know what we’re about and don’t mess me around. But others ... the problem is the natcoms and anyway, we aren’t the only game in town. The donors give more money and have tough agendas to be met for their money so I’m not surprised that our MS talk one thing in Paris and another ... or nothing ... at home,” (P1).

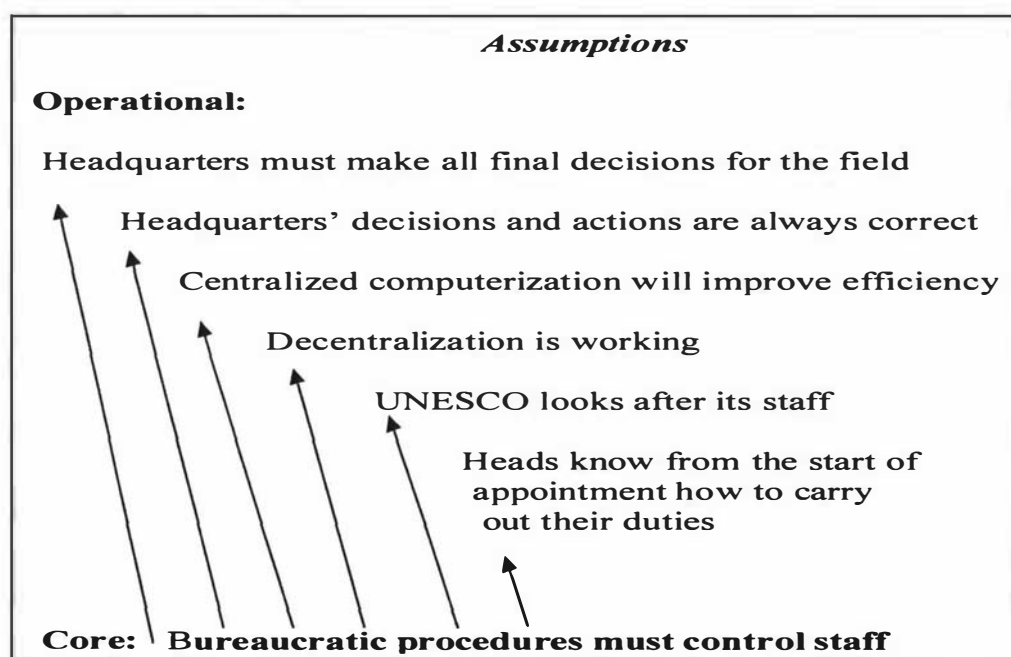
Bureaucratic assumptions

Participants suggest that many assumptions are operational in UNESCO’s bureaucracy and that staff identification of some may vary depending on staff status and post in headquarters or the field.

“One size assumption doesn’t fit all. It depends on your level in UNESCO and there’ll be a difference between P1 and D1; there are probably layers of assumptions,” (P6).

However, for participants the key assumptions in the bureaucracy are as shown in *Figure 10*.

Figure 10: Assumptions in the bureaucracy



Headquarters must make all final decisions for the field

This assumption is a reflection of UNESCO's history when there was only a central headquarters with no, and then a few, field offices. As well, it is a response to the growth of field offices, many of them large in size or in the range of their work. Although some form of decision-making control is needed in a large organization, participants believe that the assumption reflects a serious division between headquarters and the field:

"We need to change the culture of headquarters re the gap between FOs and HQ; for the overall impact of organization, we need to be a part of it," (P1).

Participants believe that until this assumption changes, centralized policies and procedures will remain in one form or another. Knowledge about field contexts, understanding of field challenges and, generally, experience of field office work, will be presumed to be known by headquarters staff or, if not known, considered to be of no significance.

"HQ has no idea about the field (holidays, needs, culture, time-zones etc) and it shows. How can they decide everything for us?" (P3).

Participants contest the assumption. In the decentralization meetings with headquarters staff they vigorously defended the logic of at least programme decisions being made at the field level. However, a more centralized process with tighter deadlines for programming for the biennium 2006-7 was introduced instead. At the time of this research no power for participants could be found in this assumption.

Headquarters' decisions and actions are always correct

This assumption is a natural partner for the first. In their written and spoken contributions, participants provided many accounts of

problems they met with decisions from headquarters. Some describe the source of the assumption as:

“HQ treats FO personnel with a degree of indifference and, sometimes, contempt. Someone in HQ once told me that a P5 at HQ is ‘worth’ more than a D1 in the field,” (P6).

“HQ people think we have easy lives,” (P4).

“If you question you are a trouble maker or guilty of verbal harassment! HQ and the hierarchy are protected by protocol and practice. I’ve learned now what to avoid and what to pursue,” (P7).

Participants reject this assumption and contest it often. Direct challenges are generally unsuccessful but participants report that quiet and often persistent lobbying or bargaining can sometimes produce small changes in a decision from headquarters. In this way some of their tangible capital, such as a good friend in Paris or in-depth knowledge of the system, is used to produce a result acceptable in the field.

Centralized computerization will improve efficiency

Organizations need efficient implementation of work, accurate accounting of expenditure, prompt reporting and careful evaluation of results. UNESCO has purchased the complex computerized programmes of SISTER and FABS that centralize control of the programmes and funding of all field offices in headquarters. The purchase is based on an assumption that computerization will promote efficient implementation and reporting because everything will be monitored and controlled in headquarters. The assumption overlooks the technical difficulties with connectivity in the field and, more importantly, it takes no account of the contribution of people to the implementation of work in the field.

“Those systems are about control not empowerment,” (P5).

“I just can’t believe how complicated these systems are ... it’s not a good use of time even if they worked,” (P6).

Further, centralized computerization cannot improve poor performance nor can it add anything to excellent work. As well, the time staff need to use the system can affect quantity of work if not the quality. Staff in both headquarters and the field have complained about the technical difficulties of SISTER but challenges to the principle of computerized centralization of programme and funding decision-making have produced no changes. Participants note that the introduction of the systems, with no prior training for field staff, does not reflect well on headquarters:

“We don’t have an ethical culture of any kind. Management of change is bad. Easy to provide information about systems but we need training to change behaviour. Its all Paris and bureaucracy and their political agenda: the basic aim is to placate governments not help FOs,” (P4).

This assumption and the extra work it produces for participants is, at the time of this study, a liability.

Decentralization is working

This operational assumption appears to contradict the first two assumptions but is actually complementary. In essence, decentralization is about responsibility and accountability for the management of those things that are not centralized and the stated aims are about the provision of staff and technology to field offices. However, the practice is about more detailed reporting from them; the assumption seems to be based on a belief that if all heads report more uniformly about programme funding and implementation then decentralization is achieved. The assumption overlooks the lack of resources, including the staff needed for effective management, and it does not include decision-making

about programmes and funding, staff appointments or office purchases:

“We have no control over central decision-making or generic orientation. A group of heads may have more weight over decision-making in the future if and when the programme changes and becomes bottom up and so improve our position,” (P2).

Decentralization, in practice in the field, is about controlling all heads’ management, not empowering their leadership. In spite of the call (at the three meetings of all heads and from national commissions) for decentralization that would include programme decision-making at the field level, no changes were made during the time of this research.⁵⁰

“We have little power. At best we interpret the context and implement programmes,” (P4).

At the time of data collection this assumption was strongly challenged by all heads. Although little changed as a result of the challenges, the new regional meetings may produce closer networking amongst all heads and with ‘unity in opposition’ they may develop shared capital that will strengthen future challenges and bring some decentralization.

UNESCO looks after its staff

One of the dominant issues that emerged in interviews was participants’ concerns for their staff and two participants laughed at the idea that UNESCO looks after its staff. They all describe efforts to support, promote and guide staff individually or as a group. They noted that a new staff development programme had good rhetoric but inadequate funds and their own new group training was inadequate:

⁵⁰ UNFPA provides offices with envelopes of funding and leaves the decisions to the field offices. WHO also gives offices country budgets.

“The new directors’ training is just about ‘being nice to each other and working together’,” (P2).

They all described the difficulties they met with headquarters’ staff and the bureaucracy when they tried to help a staff member. They gave examples of staff whose work was inadequate but who benefitted in the system.

“If you muck up, they shift you and on promotion. It’s a joke!” (P7).

Participants spoke frequently of an unfair system that gave promotions to some while other excellent staff could not be helped.

“There is no point in applying for another job within UNESCO because everything is already ‘foreseen’ (ie people feel that HRM is just ‘going through the motions’ when they advertise posts and that the outcome is already arranged. Once you are in the field, you will never be promoted (or transferred to a higher graded post at HQ). National staff (GS, L or NPO level) will never be able to become P level officers, no matter what their skills and qualifications,” (P6).

“Who can know how we are doing our work? I only once had a chance to comment on my performance report,” (P3).

“Promotion? Be close to someone in HQ or have a powerful government push for you!” (P4).⁵¹

This assumption concerns participants because of its impact on their staff. No participant was able to suggest a way of gaining some capital from it for their work and its use as a site for contestation is seen as limited.

⁵¹ This comment is ironic but it reflects a problem that Loescher identifies in UNHCR (2001: 360).

Heads know from the start of appointment how to carry out their duties

UNESCO's appointment procedures are complex. Applications are detailed and are carefully scrutinized by three different groups of headquarters' staff before someone is offered a post. Participants believe that it could be expected that headquarters' knowledge of the skills gaps of the appointee would ensure that the appointee received some training in the gaps before taking up a head's post. Instead, briefing is generalized and about financial responsibilities and meeting people in headquarters who will be colleagues and supervisors. Participants say that the assumption survives because headquarters either considers the gaps as unimportant or believes that all heads can learn the missing skills when they are needed. It might also reflect another view:

"I was told in HQ that field work is easy," (P2).

"They said a head has an easy life," (P3).

Participants identify above, important skills gaps including diplomatic skills and working with the media. Other heads in the 2003 Dourdan meeting said they needed training in special skills for working with government officials. During data collection in 2004, UNESCO headquarters issued a circular that specified controls on all heads' media statements, suggesting that some heads had met difficulties with the media. It was interesting that the circular required prior approval from headquarters before any major media contact by a field office head. Generally, this assumption affects the participants in different ways, according to their previous work experience, but participants would welcome an assumption that appointees may need some specific training⁵² on appointment.

⁵² Loescher writes also of training as "one of the weakest elements," in UNHCR (2001:361).

Core: bureaucratic procedures must control staff

Participants believe that a bureaucracy that is focussed only on the operation of its headquarters will generally have a core assumption about control of field staff for the benefit of that headquarters.

“You will be asked for “urgent” requests from HQ day and night ... but when you ask HQ for help, there is a long delay in answering ... they are totally concerned about themselves and have no thought for us ... it’s all about control and not support,” (P6).

“The bureaucracy is important but shouldn’t be an end in itself,” (P2).

Participants contest the core assumption and over the years have seen changes in rhetoric but no corresponding procedural responses of any significance. Their call for ‘real’ decentralization, for example, is a call for more power in the field but this has not happened. Participants are resigned to the situation:

“They don’t want us thinking, just following,” (P4).

“It’s impossible to change anything (ie our organization has a life of its own and there is no way to influence change),” (P6).

“I get so tired of fighting. I’m starting to take off my dog clothes,” (P7).⁵³

This core assumption of the bureaucracy is contested strongly by participants and it may remain a limitation of their powers unless

⁵³ England (2001), a field head in UNDP circulated in the UN an article he had written in which he used an analogy from Bennis’s book “Managing People is like Herding Cats”. England argued that UN staff are cats in dogs’ clothing: they appear to be dogs, eager to fit in and easily trained when actually they are cats, independent, individualistic and difficult to unite.

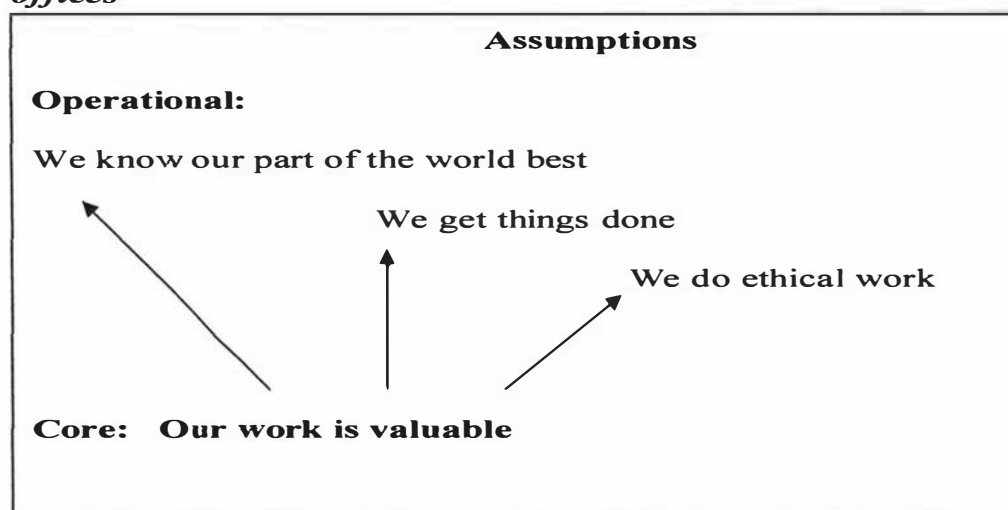
the new networks of all heads bring changes through some ‘unity in opposition’. Participants note that UNESCO’s mandate is to empower the people of the world but the organization seems unwilling to start with its own people. One participant summarized the situation as:

“In UNESCO, values have been degraded over 25 years,” (P4).

Participants’ assumptions about field office work

Figure 11 indicates participants’ assumptions about their work and these assumptions dominated their contributions to this study

Figure 11: Participants’ assumptions about their work in field offices



We know our part of the world best

In all of their written responses and interviews participants gave numerous examples of their in-depth knowledge of the countries they serve and the people with whom they work. Often this information was given as a part of an example of headquarters’ lack of knowledge of what the office needed to meet cluster countries’ needs. All participants believe that their local knowledge is critical organizational capital otherwise there would be no point in having field offices.

“The real impact of field offices should be our local knowledge, our close working relationships with governments and ngos, for example. This is where the programme really counts and UNESCO has a real advantage in the UN with its field offices,” (P6).

“I’ve worked hard to get to know my area, people and what could be done to help. And it’s not been easy but it’s important. This is our role and our advantage as a UN agency ... it’s what we are so good at and why field offices must be strong,” (P2).

“When you think about our work, it’s easy to worry but our local presence is significant. I’ve developed strong contacts because I’m here, contactable and often can help in small or policy ways,” (P4).

“HQ can’t match our on-the-ground knowledge and they should recognize how important it is. That’s why I’m frustrated with the C/5 process ... it doesn’t allow use of what we know,” (P7).

We get things done

Observation visits to each of the offices confirmed the written and verbal descriptions of achievements, from the relatively small, such as a meeting, to the quite large, such as a major project. The range of ‘things getting done’ included significant contributions to international drives for the Millennium Development Goals, Education for All, support for women and girls and the restoration and preservation of natural and cultural heritage sites. More region-specific work included major projects in the natural and social sciences, training workshops in all of UNESCO’s five fields of work and a number of innovative approaches to promoting freedom of information and educating for peace. Participants talk of the difficulties they meet and complications but they agree that an assumption of achievement is a powerful motivator for their work.

“This is my second office and when I look back on all the projects we’ve done in both regions I feel good about my work,” (P3).

“I’m very pleased with the progress of (named work). We’ll hand it back to the government ... and they’ll be able to look after it well. I think our work is very fine and it’s sustainable,” (P2).

“This project has been difficult but look at the results! And all my MS have taken part and all are agreed. It’s an excellent result,” (P1).

We do ethical work

In-depth knowledge of their cluster of countries enables participants to work in relevant, practical and ethical ways for UNESCO’s broad mandate. In all interviews participants spoke at length about their work and the results they are achieving. All believe that their contributions in the field are valuable for the people they serve. They spoke of reaching people living away from the capital cities and of promoting practical projects for the less privileged in society.

“I work really hard to know my MSs. I travel all over so that it’s not just the city that gets the attention but also people in the country areas. This is important. It’s part of the ethical mission as I see it. It’s one of the reasons my (named) project has worked so well,” (P1).

“The ethical role we have is best seen in the work we do. When I think of the advocacy work especially, I’m hopeful that some of it will be seeds planted ... and they will grow into better lives for women, children, all people. It may be slow but it’s important,” (P3).

“I think my work is ethical ... having an effect ... the new networks are bringing academics and practitioners together so well,” (P6).

Core: Our work is valuable

The operational assumptions participants have about their work flow directly from their belief in the value of their work. They believe that they make a difference because their work is relevant to the countries and it has both development and ethical qualities. They describe with enthusiasm results achieved, often in spite of difficulties, and their contribution to a national policy or the wellbeing of a group of people or the progress of an international movement. The power potential of this core assumption is considerable.

“Of course we have problems with HQ but in the end our work matters because we are here, we are working with local people and at least some of our programmes are sustainable. That’s why field work is the core business of UNESCO. It’s valuable because it’s grounded in reality,” (P7).

Power potential of intangible capital

The assumptions in the Constitution are political and non-contestable. They may not always reflect the world in which all participants work but they provide legitimacy for that work. The core assumption (governments will act on their decisions) empowers participants to promote UNESCO’s mandate: they are, after all, following member states’ decisions.

The assumptions in the bureaucracy are contestable and participants separately and jointly challenge some of them. Although individual contestation is rarely successful, the joint power of challenge by all heads does occasionally change rhetoric, if not organizational practice. The power of challenge, however, may lie in the growth of the network of all heads with possible consequential changes to assumptions and practices in the future.

The field office assumptions are powerful. Participants believe that what they do is valuable because they know their countries,

they are successful with project work and the goal of helping people is ethical. The assumptions motivate participants in their work in the field and also in their dealings with the frustrations and complications of the bureaucracy.

The three groups of assumptions can be examined in a variety of ways but for this study, only their ethical and rational nature is considered. The Constitution's assumptions provide an ethical and rational mandate that is both visionary and motivational. The assumptions participants share about the field reflects the same ethical and rational vision and links their work directly to the Constitution: the potential power is, therefore, considerable. In contrast, participants see the assumptions in the bureaucracy as negative or 'wrong' because their practical effect is a hindrance of their work to serve member states. Participants have both ethical and rational concerns for quality work and, consequently, a bureaucracy with assumptions that hinders work appears to be, at least, irrational and, given its mandate for peace and development, also unethical.

"I could do so much more if it weren't for all this trouble. It's just so draining, so infuriating ... so much time wasted ... and I spend so much of my own time like this trip to (named place) because it's the best way to work," (P1).

SUMMARY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL OF PARTICIPANTS

"I think a head of an office needs such a wide range of skills, it's impossible to list them ... talking, reading, writing, coping with HQ, dealing with natcoms, writing projects, finding donors, watching over the office, looking after staff ... all in a great big pot and we pull out what we have to do and always, in spite of everything we keep going because in the end the work is worthwhile," (P7).

When participants' tangible capital is combined with their intangible capital the result is a picture of highly skilled people who believe in their work. Their tangible capital reflects both intellectual and ethical power potential. England says of UN staff generally that they are "a remarkable range of talented people," (2001:1) and the organizational capital of the participants in this study appears to support his claim. At this point it could be claimed that they do have the necessary power potential to promote UNESCO's mandate. However, as in the previous chapter, the bureaucracy emerges as a complication and this will be considered further in the following chapter.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

General

When participants' organizational capital is assessed for potential power for effective leadership, the literature supports the claim that they are highly accomplished individuals. Although no agreement is reached on a single approach to effective leadership, a variety of traits, skills and processes and motivational factors are available with which to assess participants' capital.

Leadership: traits

Traits theory is most appropriate for mechanistic organizations and, as the previous chapter suggests, UNESCO has some characteristics of such an organization. Stogdill (in Gortner et al, 1997:335-6), after an extensive survey of the research, produced a list of six traits: capacity (including intelligence and verbal facility), achievement (including scholarship), responsibility (including initiative and persistence), participation (including cooperation), status (including socio-economic position) and situation (including skills and needs and interest of followers). A number of questions are begged in the list such as what is meant by intelligence or persistence and socio-economic position is not a trait. However, as a basic list it is a useful place to start this

assessment: participants win their posts because their tangible capital on appointment includes each of the Stogdill's six traits.

Other lists of traits, including charisma⁵⁴ (Bennis, 1999) and attributes of passion and vision, courage and risk-taking (Bolman and Deal, 1997:297) could be used to assess participants' organizational capital but with no defining instrument, no definite answer is possible. Perhaps the most useful approach is offered by Nord and Fox who welcome traits theory as one sign that the individual remains a focus in some leadership theory (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 142-165) when group dynamics and other approaches seem to bury individuality.

Generally, participants pass the traits test for a mechanistic organization – or for any other theoretical model.

Leadership: skills

This set of theories belongs generally to a contingency view of leadership. Such an approach is very useful for organizations where goals are clear and roles can be specified according to the leadership situation. UNESCO has clear goals and defined roles for staff and, again, participants' skills should be appropriate for such an organization.

However, assessment is difficult as the literature has no agreed synthesis of leadership skills. When any list is applied to participants' skills, challenges from competing perspectives are possible but by most lists' judgements, participants start with, and gain, a considerable range of skills that are suitable for contingency (and also mechanistic) organizations. Gortner et al (1997:337), for example, suggest that Katz (1955) and Mann (1965) have a useful approach with their broad division of conceptual, technical or human relations skills. Bennis (1999: 100) also has a list of three skills but with quite different content:

⁵⁴ Weber identifies this trait as of importance in the mechanistic organization.

he looks for the 'rare qualities' of: ability to articulate a vision and make it happen, ability to embrace error and so encourage risk-taking and ability to encourage 'reflective talkback' with a trusted truth-teller. Wolf (1999:334-7) agrees that consistently effective leaders of non profit organizations demonstrate vision and a commitment to the organization's mission, but he adds community knowledge, engagement and relationships, organizational management, articulation of the vision and specific attributes that include personal vision, authenticity and agile minds. Yukl (in Gortner, 1997: 349) has an even longer list but he groups his 14 categories⁵⁵ under four headings: making decisions, influencing people, building relationships and giving-seeking information.

The literature is especially interested in skills for working with people. Ashkenas et al (1995: 210-11) claim that "managers need superb listening skills, a variety of problem-solving techniques and an ability to build consensus," while Thomas (2002: 149-150) cites behaviours of initiating structure and consideration and suggests that a definition of leadership skills may be culturally influenced. Some researchers consider transactional and transformational leadership skills important (J.M. Burns in Pugh 1997: 464; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997) while the theory of implicit leadership suggests that others' views of a person's skills are a useful way to consider leadership skills (Clegg and Hardy, 1999). Although the concern of this study is on participants' potential power rather than their office behaviour, observation visits suggest that positive results would emerge if such data were collected.

This smorgasbord of leadership skills can be expanded because many of them are interchangeable with lists of traits and this further dilutes any chance of a predictive framework for assessment of skills. However, when tested against any of the lists, participants have high level and multiple leadership skills and competencies.

⁵⁵ The full list is given in Chapter Three *Figure 3*.

Leadership situation: multi-variable contexts and motivation

The third major approach to leadership stresses the situation of the leader. Leadership-in-context theory adds (amongst others) organizational goals, resources, and external environment to traits and skills and argues that the situation determines the combination needed for success. Situational theory, consequently, has problems of relativity but it does move theoretical focus from the person and the process to multi-variable situations and requires attention to the actual behaviour of leaders. Of use for this study, a situational focus also includes attention to motivation. In general, and especially for multi-directional organizations, leaders need motivation to work with commitment, energy and intelligence according to the context and its challenges (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997; Mant, 1997; Thomas, 2002).

An important motivational factor in participants' work appears to be the assumptions they hold about their work. The literature about organizational assumptions warns that simplification of assumptions is unwise because assumptions differ between public and private organizations (Gortner et al, 1997: 18) and are not the same in public and international organizations (Bartlett and Ghoshal in Pugh, 1997: 66-80). For these reasons no claims are made about assumptions except that they are the participants' intangible capital.

Weber (in Giddens 1971:149) warns of the complexity of any discussion of human behaviour and he has stringent (rational) requirements for causal adequacy of stated motives: the same motive may produce different actions and similar actions may come from different motives. Given these difficulties it is not surprising that the literature has a variety of approaches to worker/leader motivation.

Perhaps the work motivation theory closest to Weber's requirements is the Porter-Lawler model in which effort and

expectancy of organizational reward are linked to performance and outcome. The problem with the model, however, as Lawler acknowledges is that “its theoretical strength has proved a drawback to its practical application,” (Gortner, 1997: 285).

More manageable approaches start with Herzberg who developed Maslow’s hierarchy of needs into a two-factor theory of motivation. What he called hygiene factors focussed on the work context and factors included policies and administration, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations and money, status and security. His motivator factors focussed on work content and covered achievement, recognition, challenging work, responsibility and growth and development (Herzberg in Gortner et al, 1997:270-280).

When participants’ intangible capital is assessed by the two-factor theory, the results are interesting. The assumptions participants identify in the Constitution (core: governments will act on their decisions) and in UNESCO’s bureaucracy (core: bureaucratic procedures should control staff) belong mostly to work *context* and, therefore, are what Herzberg calls dissatisfaction factors. The assumptions participants identify as their own (core: our work is valuable) belong in work *content* and are satisfaction factors. Significantly it is only work content that motivates for effective leadership; the two sets of factors are different and while changes within work context may reduce dissatisfaction they do not provide satisfaction. This theory suggests, therefore, that participants’ assumptions about their work content are significant especially given the dissatisfaction assumptions they hold about their work context.

Another approach also focusses on the individual and proposes three social motivational factors for effectiveness. McClelland (in Gortner et al, 1997: 336) identifies three needs: power, achievement and affiliation and two of these appear in participants’ assumptions about their work. Their assumptions about field work are essentially about the power they have (especially their specific

knowledge of their part of the world and the power of worthwhile work) and about achievement (We get things done). A need for affiliation does not appear in the assumptions, possibly because participants necessarily work in geographical isolation.

Finally, while participants' motivational assumptions are strong, it has to be noted that they reject some of the organizational assumptions they identify as significant in UNESCO. Katz and Kahn (1982, in Gortner et al, 1997: 277-279) suggest that this is the most common form of workers' motivation and call it 'partial internalization': workers internalize values (assumptions) that concern their own work but not those of the organization as a whole. Thomas (2002: 212) echoes this idea with his proposal of selective motivation.

It can be concluded that participants' assumptions may keep them locked in an organizational cage that they find difficult but the cage enables them to do work they describe positively. Generally, therefore, the literature supports, in a variety of ways, the importance of motivation and participants' field work assumptions seem to be appropriate motivators, even if Weber's causal requirements are difficult to meet.

Leadership theory: positional complexities

The literature, as Chapter Two explains, complicates rather than clarifies the significance of power in position and post. For example, Barach and Eckhardt (in Hickman, 1998:71) identify three key elements that make up positional power but Hughes et al (in Hickman, 1998: 146) place positional power as the weakest of the three elements of 'situational favourability'. This study claims that situation does provide power and it goes further than many theorists by including the physical as well as the associated assets of position and post because participants spoke often of these resources and their positive and negative effects on their work.

The key positional and post resources participants identify are status, an office, staff and programmes. These reflect the bureaucratic organization that Weber (1968: 956-968) describes: a clearly defined place in the hierarchy and so society (Weber's 'social esteem'), a place to work ('bureau'), other employees to support that work ('subordinates') and clearly defined responsibilities ('official duties'). Position and post also have 'rules' that are an important part of the rationality of bureaucracies. In the ideal bureaucracy these assets provide "the optimum possibility for carrying through the principle of specializing administrative functions according to purely objective considerations," (Weber, 1968: 975). Therefore, position and post in a bureaucracy should give participants optimum power for their work.

However, Weber qualifies this possibility in two ways. First, as discussed in Chapter Three, Weber recognizes that the ideal he describes is a logical not a real entity and so individuals' experiences are a better gauge of the real functioning of their bureaucracy. Second, Weber also anticipates that real bureaucracies may actually reduce rather than promote the human capacity of employees, "all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation," (Weber in Giddens, 1971: 216) and so the potential power to be productive employees. It is sometimes argued that social development is meant to promote individual self-realization through work. Given Weber's view that in the western world social development is shaped in part by capitalism and more significantly by its scientific, technological and bureaucratic base, the rationalization of which work against self-realization (Giddens, 1997:574), then participants are in a situation where their capital wins, and keeps them in, a place to work but the workplace then limits their use of what gained them that position and post.

Given these restrictions, Weber would recognize participants' concerns about the potential liabilities of some of their positional

and post assets and the consequential reduction of their power to contribute fully to UNESCO's mandate in the UN.

From another perspective Foucault would also recognize the concerns but he offers a different explanation. His focus on space is especially useful. When participants are appointed to an office they fill a space⁵⁶ that is already established in the organization's structure. The space has organization-determined characteristics such as status, connections with others, a physical bounded area, (limited) resources, rules and all controlled by (communication) techniques of surveillance. The organization sets, monitors and judges norms of behaviour and punishes when it determines necessary, all to promote self-monitoring and disciplined employees (Foucault, 1994; Mills, 2003). In this way the organization limits or reduces the power participants say they need to use fully the knowledge and skills they have for their work.

Participants, therefore, gain positional and post assets that appear to offer them power to achieve work goals but the space they occupy restricts that power. However, this situation is not all negative. Space also has its own knowledge, or discourse, that talks of and to itself (Danaher et al, 2000: 33) and, therefore, contains potential power. Foucault (1994: 294) insists that where power is exercised resistance also is possible: "there are a thousand things that can be done ... by those who, recognizing the relations of power in which they are involved, have decided to resist ...". Thus, participants may gain positional and post powers but may also have to exercise the power of resistance if they are to keep them.

Leadership theory: the ethics gap

Participants' contributions have explicit and implicit references to moral action: their explicit support of UNESCO's ethical mission

⁵⁶ Heads of offices actually fill two spaces, one according to their position or status level and the second, the actual post or work they are to undertake. These meet in the field and so are discussed as one space in this part of the explanation.

and their work for it and their implicit rejection of bureaucratic assumptions they believe to be unethical are examples of their sensitivity to the moral dimension of their work. This study is not assessing whether participants are ethical or unethical but many of their responses suggest that they regularly consider the ethics of both the processes in, and consequences of, their own and the bureaucracy's actions especially in terms of the impact of those decisions on the countries they serve.

The leadership literature generally lacks in-depth exploration of moral traits, skills for ethical leadership or ethical principles as motivation. Some writers examine the problem in the abstract: Gini (in Hickman, 1998:360-70) discusses 'moral leadership' as a possible oxymoron, proposes Dewey's definition of ethics as 'reflective conduct' (rather than achievement) that is to be measured in terms of intention, commitment and effort and argues it is not enough to do "the right thing". Howell and Avolio (in Hickman, 1998: 170) also support the idea that ethical behaviour is about doing what is right, not doing the right thing and Ciulla (in Hickman, 1998: 372) proposes 'moral imagination' as a process.

One of the fullest accounts of moral leadership is provided by Sergiovanni. His goal is school improvement and to achieve this he stresses that moral authority must be an integral part of leadership, along with vision and values. He proposes a shift from "What gets rewarded gets done," and "What is rewarding gets done," to "What is good gets done," (Sergiovanni, 1992:27). The shift moves leadership from extrinsic and intrinsic gain to duty or obligation. This is not a denial of other leadership skills but a repositioning of the moral dimension.

Generally, however, the relativist nature of these discussions offers little real help to participants looking for ethical guidance. Some theorists do discuss the ethics of organizational behaviour but with limited scope or focus. Bolman and Deal (1997) use a chapter to examine organizational frames in which the Aristotelian ethic of 'doing well' that includes integrity, is applied but, although

individual leaders are cited as good examples, the focus is on organizational, not individual, ethics and power. Mant (1997:2) also includes ethical considerations “because it would be stupid to ignore the issue,” but concentrates on ethics as intelligence because “the main reason why leaders fail is that those who do are often *not up to the job*”. In the debate about social structure and agency what appears to be a moral argument may actually be about intelligence, he says, (1997: 129-30). Of other theorists, Morgan (1997:248) gives one line to a recognition of the ethical dimensions of organizations while Thomas (2002: 104-113) offers advice on ethical decision-making in international work and says that the ethics gap in leadership literature is because leaders “are reluctant to have their ‘ethics’ directly observed or measured, empirical tests are rare,” (Ibid:104). However, Weber suggests another way of assessing the ethical aspects of participants’ capital.

Weber argues that it is not possible to decide rationally⁵⁷ between competing values nor is it possible to derive universal ethics from science (Giddens, 1971: 195). Instead he proposes two approaches for assessing ethical behaviour. The first, the ethics of responsibility, includes five actions to be assessed: acquiring capacity, making choices, seeing relationships, understanding implications of choices and recognizing direct and indirect effects of goals. The second, the ethics of ultimate ends, is about intentions and assesses behaviour that adheres to a high purpose although pursued irrationally with no expectation of intermediary gain (Gortner et al, 1997: 328-30).

Participants’ organizational capital reflects these two ethical approaches. First, they have the tangible capital to be careful practitioners of the ethics of responsibility. The ideal is “service in the interest of the rational organization of our social environment,” (Weber, 1930: 64) and although the ideal is a pure type “in a logical and not an exemplary sense,” (Giddens, 1971: 142) it can

⁵⁷ Weber’s definition of rational is “the highest degree of verifiable certainty” (Weber, 1978:5) but he also notes that some ultimate ends or values may be not be understood completely even though it may be possible to “grasp them intellectually,” (Ibid).

still provide a basis for comparison. Participants work in the real world but, as international civil servants working for an organization with an ethical mandate, it is important logically that their tangible capital includes, as it does, the skills Weber lists for the ethics of responsibility.

Second, participants' intangible organizational capital reflects Weber's second approach, the ethics of ultimate ends. They believe their work is valuable, worthwhile and ethical because it will promote the ideal of peace and development. As international civil servants participants follow the ethic of neutrality in terms of work with countries but they have strong ethical visions for the results of that work and they pursue the ideal.

In general, participants' capital follows the pattern of Weber's concept of a calling.⁵⁸ First, although they begin with considerable tangible assets, gained from previous life tasks, they continue to develop skills and knowledge even for an organization they describe as difficult. They also reinvest their capital in their work, as in the ethics of Protestantism, as an obligation to their profession and as a reflection of their position in the world. This sense of obligation to use their personal capital for the benefit of others is, as Weber (1930: 64) says, irrational in that it will not bring them pleasure "in the flesh," either with promotion (their views on these limited expectations are clear) or a life of luxury (since most of UNESCO's heads of offices work in developing countries). However, it is rational in that the profit is better work and a job well done.

Leadership: power potential

Although some theorists identify particular assets as important including: "Friends in high places ... informal networks ... all provide a source of power to those involved," (Morgan, 1997:186) or claim that leaders "must be willing to make enemies," (J.M. Burns in Gortner et al, 1997: 331), they all generally agree that a

⁵⁸ Explained in Chapter Two.

diversity of traits, skills and motivation is necessary for leadership. This study claims that, whatever framework or perspective or single issue is offered, the literature, in its diversity, supports a claim that participants do have sufficient and necessary traits, skills, experience and motivation for a variety of organizational models and these provide potential power for their work.

J.M. Burns, however, warns (in Hickman, 1998: 56) that bureaucracies discourage the kind of power that is generated by the tapping of motivational bases and the marshalling of personal - rather than organizational - resources, thus the many assets that should increase participants' power may, instead, become ineffective because of bureaucratic control. Further, if real bureaucracies stifle innovative leadership (Weber) or they use techniques by which employees are controlled (Foucault) then participants will either accept a limited role or find ways of resisting to use more of their capital for the vision set by the organization.

Most theorists talk of capital in terms of goods and money belonging to companies or groups of privileged people in society and sometimes people are also included (Morgan, 1997: 312). It could be argued, therefore, that participants are owned by, or are assets of, UNESCO and are to be used as UNESCO decides. If that is the case, then any discussion of the use of organizational capital should include the proposition that it is also owned by UNESCO. Foucault might agree. If organizations have "a set of rules by which truth is produced," (Foucault in Danaher et al, 2000: 40) and these truth claims include the norm of accumulating knowledge, then participants' capital becomes UNESCO's capital. In this view, their capital is not personal and individual but organizational and shared. Further, this view enables UNESCO to make participants its subjects; they must reference themselves to the organization's truths and become self-monitoring employees. They develop, for example, any extra assets they might lack on appointment thus expanding their organizational capital, even though most theorists, including Weber (1978: 958), expect the

missing skills to be filled by organizational training rather than left to the employee to fill. The same view would also claim that UNESCO ensures that participants learn the field work assumptions necessary to keep them motivated by means of its control techniques. Thus, the argument would be that although organizational capital appears to be about positive and powerful self discipline and motivation, it is actually a part of the organization's 'games of truth'.

However, a view that participants are only subjects and are caught in the power of UNESCO's discourse is denied in this study. Instead, as explained above, power in Foucault's terms always includes challenge and, as their rejection of the assumptions in the bureaucracy indicates, participants are able to resist organizational 'truths'. Participants do own their capital and, ironically, although all heads' power is accumulated by UNESCO, that same capital is what they use to challenge organizational truths.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has used the concept of organizational capital to describe the assets participants have to meet the responsibilities of their work. Capital is of two kinds, tangible and intangible. Tangible capital includes the skills and achievements participants have on appointment, those they gain with the position and post and others they develop after time in the organization. Intangible capital focusses on three groups of assumptions participants identify as important for their work: assumptions in the constitution, assumptions in the bureaucracy and their assumptions about their own work. In each group operational and core assumptions are identified and participants indicate the significance of each, whether as power providers or power limiting in the field.

When participants' capital is examined it appears that they are people of talent and resources (tangible capital) and with strong motivation and ethical standards (intangible capital). Their skills

and assumptions link directly to UNESCO's constitution and are appropriate for support of its goals. The challenge for participants is the bureaucracy in which they work, in part because it fits no standard organizational pattern and in part because participants believe that aspects of its processes limit their work.

The theoretical analysis confirms participants' capital as valuable even though the literature has problems with diversity and relativity. Since no predictive models exist, it can be claimed only that the power of participants' tangible capital is theoretically considerable if, in practice, sometimes limited. Participants' intangible capital is strong by a Weberian assessment and although they may be locked in Weber's iron cage of a bureaucracy and their sense of truth and self may be constructed by Foucault's iron cage of knowledge, both Weber and Foucault recognize the potential power of resistance. Participants have such significant amounts of capital that while they may not escape the bureaucratic / knowledge cage, they may have enough power to bend the bars a little. The answer to the question for this chapter, therefore, is that participants do have power in their tangible and intangible capital.

A possible summary of the chapter comes from one of the participants:

"Of course we aren't perfect, no one is. But I have a lot of respect for most heads and the work they do. I sometimes think we have ... need to have all ... so many skills and to find time to do everything. Experience in Paris is useful but it's not enough for the field. I think we need training before we start in the field but then UNESCO wouldn't know what to give us. Most have no idea of what it's like. I think communicating is very important and there's so many different kinds ... staff are very important and then there's the government officials here, the natcom, other UN colleagues, donors ... all need a special approach. And our work is so important ... we have the responsibility of advocacy for our ethical mandate. That's why I do the best I can. It's not easy but it's

valuable work and we do achieve good results ... like (named project),” (P2).

CHAPTER SIX

PRACTICE AND THE FRONTLINE

“If I had a lover, how could I look after him? If I did nothing? Or something different? Nobody would notice. I could give receptions, reply to those emails that would strategically place me in a good life. Be nice to everybody. But professional pride doesn’t allow me not to work,” (P1).

INTRODUCTION

What power do the participants have in their actual work? The answer is provided by a further re-focussing of the study. Chapter Four assessed participants’ power in the purpose and bureaucratic context of their work and Chapter Five examined the power of the organizational capital they have for their roles and responsibilities. This chapter brings organizational context and organizational capital together in participants’ work at the frontline and assesses their power in practice. The account that follows draws on information provided by the participants, observation in offices and meetings of all UNESCO heads of office.

It is important to note that although participants’ contributions to the study were often negative, the working atmosphere of all offices was noticeably positive and cordial. It should also be noted that because the visits had the potential to change what was being observed, observation was kept as discreet as possible. However, participants and staff were busy during visits and they had little time to try to create false impressions for a researcher they knew to be familiar with the content and pace of their work.

The chapter begins with a description of work in each of the three roles of head of office and suggests that although participants’ daily responsibilities vary, some common themes about frontline work can be identified. It then considers organizational capital at work, in which administration dominates, and gives an overview of a ‘typical day in the office’. The chapter continues with an analysis of the frontline context. Proximity, distance, time and

ethics are the key properties and challenges of frontline work and each has a positive contribution to, or negative limitation of, participants' power. Their views of success and difficulties at the frontline are explored and they indicate that, although the bureaucratic and country context is difficult, they have power to do some important and successful work, nonetheless.

A theoretical analysis concludes the chapter. It examines the varied approaches in literature then analyzes first, participants' roles and responsibilities, second, their organizational capital at work with a special look at the effect of communication lines on that work and, third, the participants' views of the properties of frontline work. The analysis concludes with an examination of the source of participants' power as either being-at-the-frontline or not-being-in-headquarters.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

"To bring peace, the only way is through the field. And that's us. The UN is diplomatic and political but UNESCO is in the field," (P2).

General

In this study the term administration is not used to imply any kind of trait, behaviour or other leadership or management characteristic but simply to separate the role of head of office from those of diplomacy and technical expert. Participants generally use the terms management and administration as if synonymous and talk of leadership as something different:

"Leadership is something more than just filling the three roles ... it's something we should bring to our work, like commitment and integrity but even more than that," (P7).

The complex interaction of people and paper in participants' work reflects, but does not help with, the problem of conceptual distinctions between leader and manager. The focus of this

chapter, therefore, is on the power in, not the labels of, the work of the participants.

All heads of offices have the same three roles: diplomatic, administrative and technical. A sample post description (Appendix 2) sets out in a general way some of the responsibilities involved in each role. Once appointed each head is given a more specific job description based on the previous incumbent's assessment of time to be spent on work in each role but no check is made of the use of, or compliance with, this job description and participants establish their own work rhythms

"I had no job description and didn't ask for one; made my own to suit the work. I've learned to keep people informed of our work, send documents to ADGs and central services, get on with natcoms and cover your back and document, document; you end up questioning yourself; we are totally exposed, totally alone. BFC should protect us but needs resources; ambiguities in executive board and conference decisions are very bad," (P1).

Figure 12: Overview of time distribution of participants' roles

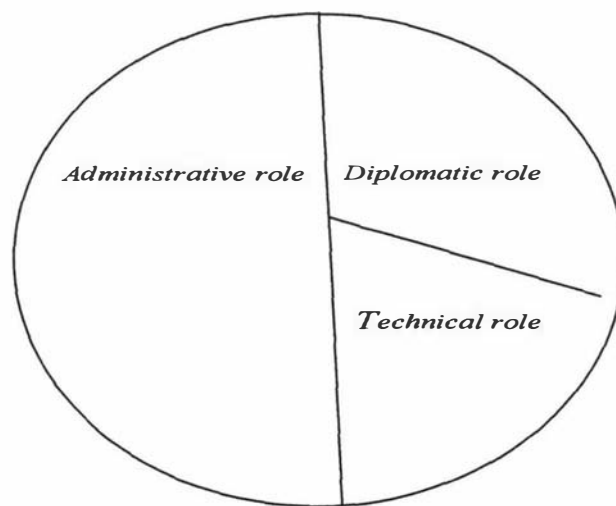


Figure 12 is indicative only because of the observed differences in participants' work patterns.

At the start of the study participants were invited to provide two words that best describe their work. Although mentor, negotiator, leader and figurehead were included in their choices, the one word common in all responses was manager. One participant reported technical work taking the largest amount of time although during observation only administrative and diplomatic activities were performed. Another reported *“very little technical expert work,”* (P2) and a high loading of diplomatic and administrative activities; observation confirmed this report. A third reported the diplomatic role as the smallest and *“managing, very large,”* (P1) and observation confirmed this. Generally, however, almost all participants reported administration as the largest role and observation confirmed these reports. One comment summed up the tone of many responses:

“Heads shouldn’t be just managers. We are specialists and lead by intellect as well as position. Paris has an accountant’s vision. They’re blankly bureaucratic. We aren’t managers of Coca Cola, we are leaders in an intellectual organization,” (P4).

Diplomatic role

The post advertisement lists the main responsibilities of this role. All heads are the UNESCO representative in the host country and other member states of the cluster with the responsibility of informing ‘high officials’ and the media of UNESCO’s policies and ongoing programmes and activities and providing policy advice to ministers and other decision-makers as appropriate. In this role, particularly, all heads are the face and voice of UNESCO at the frontline. These generalities, in practice, turn into a wide variety of activities that include, especially, attendance at a range of ceremonies and meetings and considerable verbal and written communication. Participants agree that time allocation in this role begins with host and cluster governments, followed by UN agencies, civil society bodies, diplomatic corps and NGOs and ends with the media. Some of the diplomatic work is outside office hours.

During the office visits, observed diplomatic activities included meetings with other UN heads of office (half a day), receiving new heads of embassies paying courtesy calls (half an hour each visit), media interviews (an hour), openings of events (half a day), welcoming consultants and other visitors to the office (half an hour each time) and travel and visits to areas out of the capital for representational purposes (two days). Reported but not observed are the required official visits to cluster countries. These can be as brief as two days or may take up to a week, depending on proximity and transport availability.

Observation also covered participants' evening and weekend activities and these included taking part in a televised discussion about a UN-wide education drive (full evening), a celebration of a leader's birthday in the host country (full evening), celebration of a national day (all day), the launch of a new cultural heritage site (weekend travel to site and more than half a day for the launch) and receptions for special events (full evenings).

The major theme of diplomatic work is cooperation and it sometimes complicates participants' planning for other work as almost all diplomatic activities are initiated by another body.

"I sometimes receive an 'invitation' to something only hours before it happens. This makes it very hard to manage daily schedules and keep to them all the time ... I can't decline because it's important to be seen as cooperative but often have to make quick changes that affect someone else," (P7).

Two participants said this work gave the most freedom for decision-making and two participants report diplomatic work as the most important because it enables the participant to:

"be an advocate for UNESCO to enhance people and credibility," (P3) and to

“influence national authorities in policy-making in ed, culture and com because UNESCO is very much respected in (country) and national authorities are building their capacities,” (P2).

Three participants noted the complexities of the role:

“All of our work has a political base. Governments control what we do and also want to take as much as possible. They want more from us than they give us so we have to be very careful with this diplomatic work,” (P7).

“This is my most difficult work because we have no training in diplomatic etiquette, no budget to entertain authorities and donors at the level they entertain us and because representation at ceremonies are generally foreseen at the last minute, upsetting all careful planning of the programme,” (P2).

“I find the receptions and social events a drain because for (number of) countries, something important one should not miss is always happening in one country while you are in another!” (P3).

Administrative role

The official tasks for this role are indicated as “management of the Office’s human resources, administration and operations, in line with the Organization’s policies and procedures, including effective internal controls”. In practice, in the field they become more specific and include responsibility for: all funds, both local currency and us\$ accounts, the maintenance of physical resources (office building, vehicles, information technology, sometimes a library, inventory), staff (including leave, performance reports, training, travel), communication (headquarters, national commissions, partners, consultants, diplomatic pouch, distribution of documents, pamphlets and books sent out by headquarters), maintenance of office systems and executive board and general conference contributions.

As with the diplomatic role, some of the administrative work is carried out in the evenings and on weekends. During office visits, observed work outside office hours included answering emails (every evening in one case, Saturday morning in another, spread over a weekend in a third), checking a report from a staff member (one evening), editing a paper for headquarters (one evening), checking travel orders (short time after the office closed for the lunch break), checking and signing payment vouchers (about three hours after the office closed at the end of a day) and preparation of papers for, or responses, to headquarters (two evenings).

During office hours all of the activities of the administrative role were observed from time to time but the dominant activity of participants was working with paper. However, interaction with staff, often on administrative matters, was also observed. Staff came to the participant's space to report on work completed, ask questions, discuss a problem or participate in the planning of some activity. The participants also moved about their offices, talking socially or professionally to staff and checking systems or physical resources.

Participants agree that the major themes of these varied responsibilities are essentially monitoring and communicating. Time used for monitoring is primarily with staff and then (in cooperation with an administrative officer if such a post is established) systems maintenance and funds and physical resources management. Time used for communicating is shared first with headquarters and staff, followed by national commissions, partners and finally the media. Participants are divided about the degree of autonomy they have in this role but agree that monitoring (staff, systems, funds, physical resources) is necessary for, and results in, an effective office and an effective office is necessary for effective programme work.

Participants made a variety of comments about their administrative work.

“It is the most important and it involves delegating some representation tasks to staff and supervising technical aspects done by staff. The role of head has a multiplier effect, by delegation to others. This is why the role of head must be done every day. But all three roles should take equal time because for our impact a good balance is necessary between internal and external work,” (P2).

“This role takes the most time because of dramatic shortage of staff; my most difficult work is bureaucratic relations with Headquarters because it takes a lot of time with meager results,” (P4).

“Our admin work depends on staff competencies and this can make it difficult. It is actually most difficult staying on top of the emails and the other correspondence from Paris,” (P3).

“Field offices see an answer in every problem; Headquarters see a problem in every answer,” (P5).

“This is the most difficult, dealing with the bureaucracy; the system is time-consuming and wasteful of resource ... we receive too many emails and requests for info from HQ. There is no coordination of anything at HQ so the same questions are asked by each sector. This is time consuming and annoying. Usually the answer is needed by ‘tomorrow’. Even the smallest form (with a budget) takes half a day to complete and, therefore, our working days are endlessly interrupted,” (P6).

Technical role

The responsibilities listed for this role begin and are scattered through post advertisements. They include “the formulation, execution and evaluation of the programmes ... providing intellectual, strategic and operational leadership in planning and implementing activities ... responding to priority needs ... generating projects and mobilizing corresponding funding ...

consistent strategies ... pro-active, innovative and responsive programming.”

Few technical activities were observed because visits were timed not to coincide with project implementation as these necessarily take place away from offices. Observed activities that are a part of the technical role included, in two offices, participants spending time with staff members checking proposed projects for extra budgetary funding; in another the participant head congratulated a staff member for completing some SISTER entries while in all offices some of the emails and papers read during the visit concerned programming matters sent by headquarters.

The major themes of this role are monitoring, primarily of regular programme work and then of extra budgetary projects, and communicating, first with cluster governments and then other organizations. Two participants believe they should have some freedom for decision-making in this role and it should take most of their time *“because it is the core of all activities in the office,”* (P4). Participants’ comments on their technical work varied.

“We are mostly managers ... do our programme work without programme specialists,” (P3).

“I also think that, as directors, we have far too little time to devise long-term strategies and plans. The recent BFC meeting in Paris should have been one such chance but it got bogged down in day-to-day hassles. We need to sit down and see where UNESCO is going in the next three to five years. There is also the need to remember that every region has different needs and there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution,” (P6).

“We were recruited for our specialist expertise but have become bureaucrats, managers of contracts and we use consultants for intellectual work. We should use our own resources,” (P2).

“We are supposed to do intersectoral and multisectoral work but the sectors in Paris can’t be unified so there’s no possibility of unity and this makes programme work a real challenge,” (P5).

“Headquarters do many things (normative) that we could do, that we should do, but can’t because we have no resources,” (P1).

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL AT WORK

“I seem to do so much talking every day. It’s important for getting and giving information ... for advocacy,” (P3).

General

Evidence of both tangible and intangible capital at work was checked during observation visits. Although the key themes participants identify (above) in their roles are cooperation for diplomacy and monitoring and communication for both their administrative and technical roles, they agree that much of their work is based on communication since monitoring and cooperation involve communication also. This was confirmed during observation visits and verbal communication reflected a number of their tangible assets.

Tangible capital

Participants’ communication during interviews, observation and with their staff held considerable knowledge of UNESCO and especially the bureaucracy and how to work within it. Their talk also revealed partnerships they have established in their cluster countries and programme talk showed skills with planning and funding projects. The talk revealed liabilities with staffing problems: *“What a contradiction! We are responsible for staff but can’t appoint them,” (P5)* but participants recognized the assets of good staff with praise and thanks for their work. *“If we don’t look after junior staff, they are badly treated by HQ,” (P4).* In two offices, especially, some of the talk concerned particular liabilities

with funding for programme work. *“Do it all without resources is the Golden Rule,”* (P3). In three of the visits the talk drew on learned diplomatic skills and in another two the talk reflected skills needed to work with the media, either face-to-face or on the telephone.

Participants’ talk indicated administrative skills as they worked through problems with the bureaucracy over vehicles, storage, maintenance and running costs. Participants’ status was also indicated through talk: the diplomatic courtesy calls, invitations to high level government social functions and meetings and media requests for interviews were all because the participant is the highest UNESCO official in the country.

Participants at work also use written communication skills with mail, prepared speeches and papers especially and some of these activities were observed during observation. Generally, the wide range of skills that they possess is most often used through communication.

Intangible capital

It was more difficult to assess intangible capital during the visits. Participants’ talk with staff included references to the importance and value of field activities and to the ethical mandate of UNESCO. It also included mention of false assumptions in headquarters, especially about field office work. *“They believe they have to control us to make sure we comply, conform and cooperate!”* (P7). However, the good ‘feel’ of the offices is possibly a better indication of participants’ assumptions about field work and these are communicated to their staff. Further, observation and talk showed participants to be positive and committed, in spite of negativity about aspects of their work context, suggesting that their intangible capital is working as the unspoken but authentic guide of their work behaviour as suggested in Chapter Five.

A typical day

If written and verbal communication is the dominant activity in participants' work then observation showed frequent changes of activity as the dominant pattern. Participants' ability to switch from topic to topic, from a problem to planning, from staff member to government official was demonstrated every day. Previous experience in senior positions helped participants to work in this judder bar activity pattern. However, not all activities were brief. All diplomatic and media work took lengthy periods of time. Some work with staff and some checking of documents were lengthy and carried out with no interruptions.

Participants started their day before the rest of the staff, usually about 7.30am, and began reading their email. Most of the email came from different sections of headquarters and included requests for information, notification of a new appointment to one office, copies of DG speeches, agenda information for an Executive Board meeting, responses to requests from the participants about equipment or other resources, new requirements or rulings and considerable material for advocacy of some UNESCO programmes. Email from other sources included requests from NGOs for project funds, curriculum vitae from consultants and information exchanges between other heads of office. Surface mail and the diplomatic pouch from headquarters sometimes duplicated some of the email but headquarters also sent sets of books for office libraries or for distribution to cluster countries, a variety of reports and notices of responses required by all or some heads on different matters. Quiet work with mail in the mornings was brief. When the offices opened at 8am participants became busy with other activities and dealt with email and paper mail whenever an opportunity arose, sometimes during lunch breaks, after the office closed and in the evenings.

Activities after 8am varied greatly between the offices and in each office from day to day. The dominant activities were working with people and paper and included expected and unexpected visitors,

staff with queries, forms to be checked, vouchers or cheques to be signed and reports to be read. Telephone calls came from staff, the media and host government officials and all participants held small meetings for planning with some staff. All participants also had to attend meetings out of the office. Time with paper was used for checking speeches to be made, reading a project proposal, drafting a staff performance report and, especially, drafting information or completing forms for headquarters.

The end of the day does not bring an end to participants' work. As described above, they often have diplomatic functions to attend or they stay on to complete mail and other tasks. One participant continued work with email at home.

Participants' comments on the work that took the most time in any day varied:

*"representation because it involves **lengthy**⁵⁹ opening/closures of ceremonies, dinners, preparation of speeches," (P2);*

"reviewing and correcting documents because of the relative inexperience of the interns, volunteers and young consultants who are retained by this office," (P1);

"liaising at all levels, 'massaging' contacts; this includes staying on top of correspondence and giving guidance to staff," (P3);

"management and HQ correspondence and general nonsense," (P6);

"dealing with the daily stuff from HQ and trying to do everything they keep asking for," (P7);

"dealing with Paris and the bureaucracy," (P4).

⁵⁹ Participant's emphasis.

During observation in offices some examples of resistance and challenge in the bureaucracy were observed and participants spoke of responses to messages that concerned them. One described a request from headquarters that was illegal and withdrawn only after four email exchanges. Another participant explained a failed attempt to fix a staffing problem while a third described gaining support from a national commission to press for what was needed in the region. Two participants use a technique of giving a Paris recipient a date for an answer after which, if no answer is received, the proposed action will happen. Another explained how to avoid some senior staff when action was wanted on a project. Generally, resistance and challenge techniques reflected participants' views of what would be best for the office and the countries they serve.

"I sometimes take the path of least resistance and ignore something or I send a very brief note back saying they already have the report. I don't challenge because it takes too much nervous energy. I prefer to keep the energy that I have, to do the best job I can," (P1).

"No point in fighting, you end up losing. Just ignore whatever it is and get on with real work," (P4).

"I refused to do something once ... they wanted me to go to a (named) meeting that wasn't even important, they just wanted someone to sit in a chair, represent the DG and do nothing else ... because I'd already agreed to go to (named) conference and had written my speech ... some junior secretary emailed back that the DG was more important than the conference but nothing else happened ... as far as I know," (P7).

Participants also indicated some stress in their work:

"I sometimes feel I'm surrounded – with all these arrows pointing at me and none positive. HQ not letting us make decisions and natcoms coming after us ... I have to try to put a finger in HQ's dyke and all the other dykes are collapsing around me. How am I

to try to maintain the momentum, my enthusiasm and staff motivation?” (P1).

Generally, participants’ work cannot be easily reduced to a statement about their three roles or about significant procedures. It is marked by its variety of task and process and every day in every office was different. Communication of different kinds certainly dominated daily activities but its purpose and methodology varied greatly. One common element was dealing with mail from headquarters but all mail had different content and required different responses. Another common element was the work’s strong orientation to people but again the interactions varied according to the people and the task.

In essence, observation confirmed that the work of the participants is dominated by administrative requirements, is complex and reflects the particular part of the frontline in which they are posted.

SIGNIFICANT FRONTLINE PROPERTIES

“Do we maintain the internet or invent the grid?” (P4).

General

In the planning of this study it was anticipated that the concept of the frontline would have two significant spatial properties: proximity and distance. Participants’ contributions confirm this assumption but they add two more properties: time and ethics. Generally they are concerned about all aspects of the gap between the field and headquarters. Their views seem to be held by at least some colleagues in headquarters: at a 2002 meeting of UNESCO and other professional staff in Bangkok, one of the headquarters staff said: “We are trying to simplify processes ... it will take time. We know we need to change the gap between headquarters and field offices.”

Proximity

Participants indicate many positive aspects of their proximity to their countries and the people they are trying to help.

“Being close to my cluster is positively and utterly valuable, I can do so much more than if I was in Paris. National development is about working from the grassroots up, identifying needs, finding solutions that match UNESCO’s mandate and then seeing where you can go from there,” (P1).

Proximity enables participants to develop in-depth knowledge of their cluster countries, especially because they are able to move out of the capital cities. Advocacy, therefore, is also more relevant because of participants’ familiarity with their countries, their development issues and concerns.

“Proximity improves my work because of easy access to partners as well as being able to be in touch with the context,” (P3).

Proximity also enables communication in real time with countries served: they can respond quickly to requests from media, requests for technical advice or short notice requests for attendance at official functions or meetings. They are able to develop personal and good relationships with partners in the cluster and officials in government and other organizations including UN agencies.

“I think UNESCO is closer to the countries because they know and like ... I hope they like or respect our work,” (P4).

In general, proximity enables participants to maintain UNESCO’s image, develop partnerships and cooperate whenever possible.

Participants also identify one major difficulty with proximity, that of relationships with national commissions. National commission cooperation varies and is not easy even when positive because of UNESCO’s programming processes.

“They do so little, expect so much and blame all their inadequacies on us because we are available,” (P7).

In this respect, participants are caught between being both representative of the organization and the information processor for development work. They are close, accessible and not hidden by the distance of headquarters. Consequently, participants can feel under pressure and they work hard to maintain good relationships with the national commissions and policy makers as well as HQ.

“It’s the lemon syndrome: we are squeezed by natcoms, HQ, everyone!” (P1).

“Anything I do, right or wrong, is commented upon in this country where UNESCO is very visible,” (P2).

“This office has weak relations with the cluster but I’m strengthening them,” (P3).

Distance

Participants’ views about the effect of their distance from headquarters are also both positive and negative. The first key advantage they identify is freedom from headquarters internal processes and other problems:

“Distance makes it easier; we are less hampered by hierarchical structure (eg getting things visa’d) and networking with HQ colleagues smoothes potential distance difficulties,” (P3).

The second important advantage is relative independence:

“It increases the autonomy but can become a dual management hassle,” (P5).

"I don't tell headquarters everything to maintain some sort of autonomy," (P4).

"I am thankful that my office is far away from HQ. The further we are from HQ, the more autonomy we enjoy. Also, if you are a long way from HQ, it is less likely that you will have missions visiting. Missions are time-consuming beyond belief and usually result in reports that gather dust on the shelf," (P6).

The disadvantages include the need for friends and networking with colleagues in Headquarters, exclusion from final decisions about programmes for their cluster and lack of recognition; three participants talk of indifference and lack of gratitude as a result of the distance between headquarters and the frontline. One participant spoke of a project initiated in headquarters in which, he was told, his only participation was *"to do the dirty work,"* (P2) while they kept hold of the project. The same participant reports:

"It affects the way I have so little feedback from HQ on initiatives, on the projects that I initiate in the field," (P2).

In general, distance, like proximity, has both positive and negative effects on participants' work:

"It's a positive when they leave us alone but a negative when they interfere as it's often hard to deal with them," (P1).

Distance also has negative implications for communication and while participants agree that communication (with headquarters, national commissions, staff, media) is important for effective work they also indicate frustration with UNESCO's lines of authority and information.⁶⁰ Almost all communication from headquarters has one focus, a head of office, and the senders often expect or require quick responses, regardless of the amount of work needed to respond. In contrast, the lines from the field to headquarters are

⁶⁰ Chapter Four describes these lines, their content and power.

necessarily multi-directional and participants' messages carry no authority and little influence.

"Our information goes to Paris but isn't properly channeled or even read. Do different units talk to each other?" (P3).

"It's a real challenge: one field activity may require communication with three different sections of HQ...very hard," (P2).

Participants are also concerned with the slow movement of information and they suggest that often the lines of communication do not help, and at times hinder, their work.

"How does the bureaucracy help us? It tries to control us! Slows us down, as we wait for answers (and we have to ask about so many things!)," (P1).

Time

Participants are concerned with time in two ways and the first is time taken with administration that could be used for technical work. They believe that they spend too much time on paper when it should be with programme work. They also spend a lot of time with people, both staff and government and other officials, only some of which is programme related.

"The work that should take the most time is developing strong partnerships and relations with outside partners because this task can lead to resource mobilization and a greater scope for UNESCO action. This is also the most difficult work; I have to deal with too many partners: national commissions, host government, headquarters, regional bureaux as well as civil society," (P1).

"Too often there are different requirements from different divisions or sectors and what a waste of time trying to sort it all out," (P7).

“There’s too much in the box to see out of it. I wish admin things were just easier, more logical. Time spent running ... chasing funds. Human rights things should be smoother and FABS too. Think what we could have been doing instead. Free up our energies used in admin. Great staff helps but I need some admin help,” (P3).

“I shouldn’t be spending so much time on bureaucratic nonsense ... I can ignore some ... I can’t ignore everything they send ...” (P4).

The second concern is with time delays in communication with headquarters.

“When will there ever be linkages between BSP, IOS, BFC? Too often we lose time because we’re held up waiting for something from one when a joint message would clarify everything,” (P4).

“It’s bureaucracy gone mad. Where is institutional responsibility/accountability? Paris goes on holiday mid year when most of us aren’t and no one is in charge and even if someone does answer there’s no responsibility taken,” (P6).

“We have our major break over Christmas but Paris has theirs in July ... or August ... so they send us emails wanting things immediately, like between Christmas and New Year! If we are away we could miss out on something or get a rocket for answering late,” (P7).

Ethics

Some specific ethical concerns arise in frontline work. Participants must use all of their skills, balancing the technical and ethical challenges with the political context, to promote UNESCO’s mandate.

“Some issues are tricky. In the Communication sector, for example, people intellectually agree with freedom of expression but emotionally and politically have difficulties with it. The US invaded Iraq with embedded journalists supporting the war so why can't local journalists support their country? So, we have to push our mandate without offending. Instead, we look at national goals. Communication is also a human rights issue and as these are government goals they can be advocated more easily. We push educational diversity and culture but must be politically sensitive. You don't want to be offensive because that's the easiest way not to be able to promote your mandate,” (P3).

“I think human values are more substantially thought of in my region, and that's because of careful work and advocacy,” (P4).

“I watch for opportunities ... chances that may come up ... to promote difficult things like conservation or human rights in a way that fits government policies and isn't going to lose me my voice with the minister or whoever,” (P5).

“I worry that the ethical mission is lost in admin work,” (P1).

“We work in places where corruption is rife, how can I deal with this? And places coming out of genocide. But I'm supposed to be neutral ... ” (P7).

From a different ethical perspective, one participant noted “cultural terrorism” when projects are initiated and implemented in that head's cluster without consultation or notification:

“I have to do damage control when, out of the blue, a proposal arrives at the natcom from HQ or the regional bureau. The natcom comes to see me and I know nothing about it!” (P2).

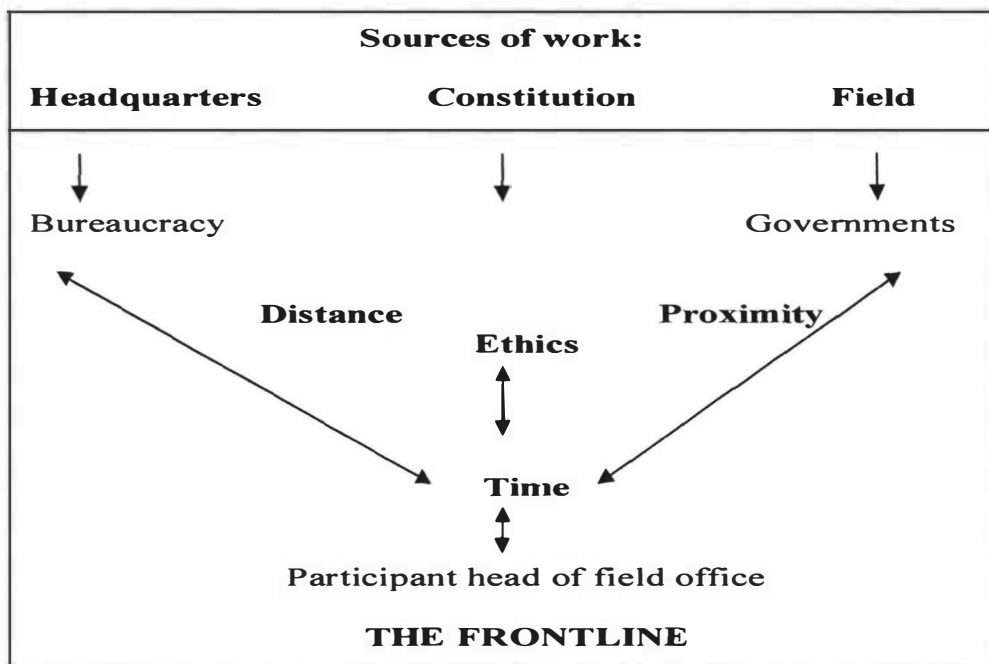
Participants also are uncomfortable that:

“We expect governments to do extra work in the name of counterpart training by UNESCO ... by all sorts of aid groups ... then we complain when they don’t meet their promises because they have too much to do,” (P7).

Overview of frontline properties

Proximity to cluster countries and distance from headquarters are complementary properties of frontline work and time management and ethical sensitivities add complexity to their interaction. As *Figure 13* indicates time management is the property that is most affected by the other properties and by the sources of participants’ work.

Figure 13 Diagrammatic representation of frontline properties



The explanation of time’s dominance is the administrative load. Although each of the three roles of a head of office carries numerous duties and activities requiring a wide range of skills, in day-to-day work more time is needed, and more organizational capital is used, for administration work than for diplomatic or technical work. Participants agree that the administrative load is

too large because they believe their most important work is developing partnerships and team building and their most successful work is planning with partners, all to support programme development. They also agree that the most difficult part of the work is effective coordination of efforts in the complexity of the context. This includes the bureaucracy, described variously as hierarchical, complex, not empowering, not transparent, mechanistic and an instrument of control. Time management is affected by proximity and distance and especially UNESCO's ethical mandate for advocacy:

"Speeches and publications are very important; our impact isn't necessarily through the best funded programme: advocacy can be significant," (P5).

The consequence of the administrative load, therefore, is the problem of time management, not only with the frequency of changing activities, and skills needed for each, in any day's work but also time used for:

managing the workload: *"I sometimes work up to 80% of weekends to stay on top of things," (P1) and "I try to avoid the petty things," (P2);*

participating in shared UN agency work: *"Generally, I keep a low profile, have an occasional presence; sometimes I go to meetings, sometimes I don't; meetings can be a waste of time and I have no funds for UN projects; how do we beat the World Bank?" (P4) and*

implementing programme work: *"There are too few staff. I end up doing bits and pieces of everything. In previous offices it was the same," (P6).*

If frontline work is dominated by administration and if time is a problem then it could be concluded that participants have little power to promote UNESCO's goal of peace and development. A closer assessment of frontline work, however, suggests otherwise.

WORK AT THE FRONTLINE

General

Participants provide the first answers to the question that opens this chapter: they believe they do have power in their actual work. Depending on the differing combinations of the four perspectives of proximity, distance, time management and ethical issues in frontline work, participants have differing views on the degree of independence, and so power, that they have in each role. Three feel they have most autonomy as head of office and least as a diplomatic representative and two reverse the order. Another believes the technical work gives most independence and office management least “*because of rules governing staffing, funds etc,*” (P3).

Most successful work

When asked about their best and most successful work for UNESCO, most participants spoke about the need for good administration to support their work.

“My most successful work so far is the reorganization of the office and the development of a strategic vision in collaboration with the National Commissions because this has created the beginning of a team spirit on which I count to build our work and attain our objectives,” (P1).

“I am most successful as head of office (admin work) because my team of professional staff has the critical mass that allows me to respond to a large number of requests and needs from the authorities, headquarters and partners,” (P2).

“Best work? Staff things: we can’t have UNESCO ideals for other people and not for us, our staff. (Named staff member) has been complimented by HQ but I couldn’t get a post for him until a new project came up ... and now he’s doing both jobs. Temporary

posts are a concern as people doing them do great work for very little,” (P3).

In one office with strong staffing the response was different:

“My most successful work was the launching and consolidating of (named project) because it gives political and technical back up needed; it also improves the image of UNESCO in the region,” (P4).

Most important work

A second question about their most important work drew responses that focussed on partnerships and programme work.

“It is important to me to do a professional job; to do my best. My most important work is devising solutions for development problems, using technical teams and personal contacts,” (P4).

“My most important work now is building the team between the office and the cluster countries and within the office; I must start building bridges with donors also. All of this will empower us to address the mandate of UNESCO,” (P3).

“The most important work I do is to try to enhance the visibility of the organization and develop partnerships because this approach helps greatly in strengthening the credibility of the organization and securing extra budgetary funds,” (P1).

“My most important work is advocacy on (named issue). That’s also where I’m most comfortable. That’s where I can see the message pass through. I’m positive about my diplomatic role and facilitating relationships with governments and partners. As for managing, I’m getting better now; at least there’s an understanding at headquarters that we need to act as managers and be trained as such which never existed before. Problem is that

there's no management expertise of field offices at headquarters," (P2).

"My most important work is building networks in the region so that ... well, I hope ... I think the work will help people to become independent and help each other," (P7).

Contributions to UNESCO's vision and mandate

Finally, when participants were asked which part of their work contributes most to UNESCO's vision and mandate, the answers excluded administration and reflected common themes of programming and advocacy.

"advocacy to enhance people's lives and UNESCO's credibility," (P1);

"partnerships, the implementation and impact of programmes because those are the things that touch and reach member states," (P3);

"influence national authorities in policy-making; responding to ongoing demands from governments and civil society organizations because it has immediate impact," (P2);

"do quality control because it's not done in Paris and can't be," (P4);

"working with governments," (P5) and

"good programmes to keep UNESCO's image strong and respected," (P7).

Participants gave many examples of projects and programmes they have implemented successfully, most of which were known to the researcher but which cannot be listed to protect confidentiality.

Improving frontline work

Participants were also asked to indicate what would increase their power to meet UNESCO's mandate and all of the answers focussed on providing effective programme work in the field: more and better staff, more funding to implement programmes, field office flexibility with the use resources, support from headquarters and improved headquarters credibility. In contrast when asked what they could use less of, participants' replies focussed on the bureaucracy and included: less arrogance and pomp; an end to the small tasks so that they would have more time to deal with bigger things; an end to implementation of fictitious tasks at headquarters on programme management; an end to the continuous reporting; and removal of obsessive control procedures. One participant noted that until the bureaucracy changed, the core of their work would be *"don't upset govts, spend the money, please IOS and protect staff,"* (H6)⁶¹. A summary of the general view of all participants about ways to increase their power is provided in:

"Decentralization to promote field work? A good balance would be HQ working for global initiatives and field offices working for implementation but it's not working like it should. I hope it will," (P2).

Power potential in frontline work

Participants believe they have power in their frontline work, even if administration dominates their work and time is a problem. Their responses indicate that although frontline power is challenged by the bureaucracy's inadequate provision of resources for staffing and programming (especially) and by relationships with national commissions, their power is also extended by the properties of the frontline itself. First, proximity to their cluster allows participants to gain special knowledge, strengthen relationships and implement local projects, none of which is possible from headquarters.

⁶¹ An ironical comment, this translates as "Keep everyone happy: governments, UNESCO headquarters and office staff."

Distance from headquarters allows participants to avoid or control aspects of bureaucratic demands to provide some autonomy and freedom for localized decision-making. Time usage may be a challenge but is controlled by participants, not by headquarters, and so provides opportunities to juggle work demands not always possible in headquarters. Finally, although participants, almost daily, meet ethical challenges in their work, their power in the field is greatly strengthened by the ethical mandate of UNESCO's Constitution and their own assumptions about their work.

SUMMARY

"Generally ... well most of the time I'm pleased with the work I've started in this region. It's not going to be easy but with good partnerships it will be effective. And our advocacy role is already strong in (named area) as you saw, when the media pick up a message and run it," (P3).

The roles and responsibilities of participants are complex and a typical day is dominated by administration, with frequently changing activities, many involving communication. Participants' organizational capital (the high level skills and strong motivation described in Chapter Five) is used in a variety of ways each day and the frontline work is influenced by issues of proximity, distance, time and ethics. Participants are agreed that they want more time to use their technical skills for more programme work. However, they are pleased with the success of their programme work and they believe that they are contributing positively to UNESCO's mandate.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

General

Participants' contributions and observation of their work, provide a positive answer to this chapter's question and the literature on organizational work and leadership supports (or does not negate)

their views. After a brief comment on the complexities in relevant theory, this analysis focusses on roles and responsibilities, organizational capital at work and properties of the frontline to demonstrate that participants' work does contain sources of power as they claim.

Roles and responsibilities: varied approaches in the literature

General

Descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of a post are broad but they indicate that the work is to be high level leadership. However, participants report that although they are designated senior officers in UNESCO much of their work is basic administration. This apparent contradiction between words and practice is reflected in the literature and the complexities of theoretical analysis of high level work.

Manager-leader

One of the difficulties is the inter-action of the concepts of manager and leader. As Rost (1991 in Hickman, 1998: 98-114) argues, research usually produces considerable data about managing and supervising but few about leadership and he argues that the difference lies not in traits and behaviour but process. However, his own four differences between leaders and managers are more semantic than actual. Mintzberg (1973) claims that formal authority gives status that in turn gives roles and he builds a tree of ten roles of the manager but they include 'leader', 'spokesperson' and 'figurehead'.

Handy (1985) separates leader and manager but is careful to discuss the difficulties of definition of each. Gortner et al (1997), cite J.M.Burns (1978) and his list of 130 definitions of leadership and they cite Bennis's (1989) 12 distinctions between leader and manager. However, their own contribution is equally complex: they apply leadership to the three levels of executive, manager and

supervisor, with a focus on process and group influence. Similarly, Heifetz (1994 in Hickrnan, 1998: 343-356) suggests that leadership is most usefully described as an activity, thus allowing for it at all levels from top to bottom of a (work place) social structure. None of the approaches negates participants' views of their work but since no agreed description of leader or manager exists, this study applies all appropriate theory to their work at the frontline.

Other approaches

Participants would recognize the many theories about power in roles and responsibilities.⁶² Two groupings are indicative of the range. First, some theorists including Mintzberg (1973), Senge (1990) and Thomas (2002) describe roles with varying names and similar responsibilities but different emphases. Mintzberg, for example, (in Pugh, 1997: 312) stresses that his roles are inseparable in operation while Thomas has a strong emphasis on cross cultural management. As well, he links roles with processes: "Notable is the extent to which what managers do involves interactions with other people," (Thomas, 2002:20).

Another theorist, Morgan (1997), has a similar approach, using metaphors in which to explore key roles. One metaphor, 'organization as brains', might apply to UNESCO: in this he would look for broadly defined work roles with multi-skilled people operating in a holographic structure with considerable independence. Bolman and Deal (1997) also include process in their roles or 'frames' of work while Handy (1985) differentiates between the roles of leader and manager in his extensive discussion of the work of senior staff. While no single approach fits participants, the substance of all of these roles applies at some to time to their work and this, therefore, suggests that their designated roles do give participants some power.

⁶² The range of leadership theory possibilities is given in Chapter Three *Figure five*

Second, and in contrast, some of the literature argues that it is situation and not positions or their roles that are the important characteristic of leaders and their power. Yukl (1994), for example, discusses nine tactics of influence that are used by leaders in their work (in Gortner et al, 1997: 319-320). They include rational persuasion, consultation and coalition and all are used, Yukl stresses, in a concerted way because different situations need different tactics. For Yukl (and Gortner et al), bureaucratic authority gives legitimate power or a specific range of influence, but a leader's influence may go beyond his authority. Accordingly, only one of Yukl's tactics (that of legitimating), draws on position for influence.

Hughes et al in discussing contingency theories of leadership (1996, in Hickman, 1998: 146-156) also place little importance on positional power. They argue that position is the weakest element in power favourability and that it is situation that gives leadership its power. This different approach does not undermine the positive answer participants give about their power: when their diplomatic and programme work are examined from this perspective they do have situation favourability and so power, at least on paper.

However, all of this literature, and mostly by omission, places little stress on administrative work. It is possible that this aspect of participants' work reduces the potential power of their roles and situation. A closer assessment of their organizational capital at work confirms this view.

Organizational capital at work and its constraints

General

Bennis (1998:7) may be right about leaders: "if you meet one, you meet one." It is difficult to develop a generalization about participants at work and the literature offers varying possibilities. Bolman and Deal (1997: 143) report that "(m)anagers spend most of their time in conversations and meetings, in groups and

committees, over coffee or lunch, on the phone, or, in recent years, on the net,” and this generalization sometimes applies to a part of participants’ work. However, Bolman and Deal (1997: 266) also claim that “(c)ontrol is an illusion and rationality an afterthought,” but observation of their work suggests that this does not fit participants and their work at all. From a different perspective, Thomas (2002: 21) lists 11 characteristics of managerial work that include the combination of specialist and professional work, much time spent on hoc problems of organization and regulation and varying patterns of communication and this is closer to how participants use their organizational capital.

Mintzberg (1975, in Pugh, 1997: 298-303)) is also appropriate: managers’ work is “enormously complicated and difficult,” with activities characterized by unrelenting pace, brevity, variety and discontinuity. They have, he observed, responsibility for both exceptions and regular duties including ceremonies, negotiation and processing information and they favour verbal media such as the phone and meetings. His summary most closely matches participants’ work except that he claims managers prefer action and dislike reflective activities. This does not apply to participants. A critical part of their work is the planning of projects and programmes for the countries they serve. Participants carefully accumulate local and regional knowledge and discuss it with their staff before developing programmes that seem, after much reflection, to offer the best solutions to the problems. This part of their work is recognizable in J.M. Burns (1978, in Pugh, 1997: 464) who sees leadership as “a mobilization process by persons with motives and values, various ‘resources in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by leaders and followers’.”

From the literature one message is clear: leadership/management is important and theorists have high expectations of organizational capital at work. It should combine specialist and managerial skills (Mintzberg, 1973:4; Thomas, 2002:21), intellect and action (Gortner et al, 1997: 330; Mant, 1997:26), superior interpersonal

skills “for survival in a conflict avoiding situation,” (England, 2001:5) or a wide variety of other skills according to the organization and work context (Bennis, 1998; Bolman and Deal, 1997; Clegg and Hardy, 1999). Participants meet all of the expectations, using their skills each day in frequently changing tasks for the larger goal of supporting UNESCO’s mandate. However, even if they are meeting theoretical expectations, it does not necessarily follow that they have power, especially given their concerns about their administrative loads. The dominant activity in this administrative work is communication and it is important, therefore, to focus on communication to test participants’ power more closely.

Communication

UNESCO’s communication lines are described in Chapter Four. They provide partial and problematic power for participants because while the Constitution gives considerable symbolic power, the organization’s structure and its bureaucracy have complex lines of authority and information that participants find frustrating and time consuming. As Chapter Four indicates, the focus of frustration is especially on lines of authority that control much of their work. Many organization theorists emphasize the central position of communication (Ashkenas et al, 1995; Bolman and Deal, 1997; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Sagini, 2001; Schein, 1992; Thomas, 2002) and many see communication as one system of control.

Control

Technology has both improved and complicated communication. It enables a stronger, faster and potentially more useful exchange of information but “technological advances make central control possible to a degree never before envisaged,” (Gardner, 1990 in Hickman, 1998: 62). Morgan suggests that micro-processing could be a way of increasing power at the local levels of an organization but in practice it increases power at the centre. “Thus executives in remote parts of the world ... perform under the watchful eye of

the computer, which reports almost every move to someone or some point at the heart of the information system,” (Morgan, 1997: 180).

Other theorists support this concern with organizational communication as a control system (Ashkenas et al, 1995; Gortner et al, 1997). Gortner et al (1997: 185), for example, see control as “a fundamental management task,” linked to communication and decision-making but warn that “overemphasis on directives can foster the kind of authoritarian atmosphere that leads to problems in control,” (Ibid: 146). England (2001:7) claims that the UN “tends uses process controls to ensure compliance and conformity,” and he argues that staff are like cats: they learn to comply in form but not in substance. Some of the participants’ contributions echo this view.

Gardner (1990 in Hickman, 1998: 61-2) also looks at control. He writes of large organizations with their “huge headquarters staffs to monitor and analyze. Substructures proliferate, an elaborate organization chart emerges and obsessive attempts to coordinate follow.” The result, he says, is that people feel anonymous and powerless. Consequently, Gardner separates the formal channels of the organization chart from the informal networks that are the “favoured instruments of the natural leaders and power brokers,” (Gardner 1990 in Hickman, 1998: 62). The growing strength of regional meetings and consequential increased email exchanges suggests this is beginning to happen amongst all UNESCO heads.

Generally, participants’ concerns are reflected in the literature. As observation showed, they all select quiet times in or away from the office to give considered responses to email communication and other administrative work. This is an effective exercise to ensure best use of intellectual skills and frontline experience and it reduces the sense of powerlessness that Gardner describes.

Participants often talk of problems with communication and control in a bureaucracy that claims to be decentralizing. The

literature also recognizes this problem. Morgan links communication, control and decentralization noting that the goal may be decentralization but the organization is:

“hamstrung by traditional patterns of thinking about control and accountability. As a result, the new units get enmeshed in report-writing and rule-following requirements and other hierarchical requirements that make them extensions of the central bureaucracy,” (Morgan 1994 in Pugh 1997: 525).

J.M. Burns (1978, in Hickman, 1997:57) has a similar view, claiming that in bureaucracies the individual is lost and human ends are taken over by organizational means, with paper work designed to help communication blocking or distorting it. “Once-rational procedure becomes foolish routine,” he says. Sergiovanni agrees: “controls become ends in themselves,” he says (1992:4) and result in goal displacement. He also claims that “paper work is often the villain,” in what he calls bureaucratic interference and he regrets that some “administrators capitulate and spend much of their time and effort handling this paperwork,” so that little time is left for more important matters.

However, others claim that decentralization is not the issue but agree that organizational success factors such as role clarity and control no longer work; instead they “constrain speed, flexibility, integration and innovation,” (Ashkenas et al, 1995: 7-9). Organizations should have ‘boundaryless’ communication in which information, resources and ideas pass quickly. The question of decentralization matters to participants, not in itself but in its failed promises and they believe they could use their skills more usefully on programme work rather than on communication to meet bureaucratic control requirements.

It could be claimed that participants lose power in UNESCO’s communication system because they are in the field. Nohria (1992 in Hickman, 1998: 293) agrees that being central in communication networks is a source of power but notes a more

important source of power may be to be surrounded by ‘structural holes’, that is, to be in the middle of disorganized contacts. The participants could be so described, given the range of contacts they have outside the organization for whom they are the conduit of UNESCO information. With these contacts they do have considerable information control.

Finally, another way to assess the power of the participants’ organizational capital at work in a controlled context is to apply a check list of powers that a high level leader might exercise. Barach and Eckhardt (1996 in Hickman, 1998: 71) provide a useful list. Participants do not have reward or coercive power over their international staff and little over locally-employed staff. They have little or no referent power as a result of people wanting to identify with their power. However, they do have legitimate power because of their position and post and they do have expert power because of the knowledge and skills they possess. They also have control over the information from the networks in their region.

This mixed picture supports participants’ description of their situation: lines of authority control much of what they are able to do but while the effect of the control may be a challenge to the tangible capital participants bring to their work it cannot take it away. Further, the intangible capital participants identify as a part of their capital is also powerful and irreducible.

Frontline properties

General

Another way to theorize participants’ power is to examine their work in the context of the properties of frontline work in their organization. All aid employees “play a crucial role in the field and bear a tremendous responsibility,” (Hancock, 1989: 7) and Gardner claims:

“Every organization has its frontline activities – selling, fighting, healing, teaching – and its bureaucratic or executive-level activities. Both are important but the frontline activities take place far from the executive’s swivel chair. The frontline people who wrestle with action problems every day know a lot more than anyone ever asks them,” (Gardner, 1990 in Hickman, 1998:63).

Morgan (1997: 179) identifies this knowledge and information as a source of power and extends the idea to include boundaries between units in an organization. “Boundary management of the interface between work groups or of the organization and its environment can provide knowledge and so power,” he says.

However, this power may be challenged. A number of theorists (Bennis, 1998; Bolman and Deal, 1997; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Gortner et al, 1997) identify conflict in organizations as inevitable and the conflict can include those at the frontline. J.M. Burns, citing Kahn, (1978 in Hickman, 1998: 57-58) says that posts near the ‘skin or boundary’ are likely to be conflict ridden according to the extent to which the workers are given ‘free play’ and activities are ‘stifled, permitted or encouraged’. Burns also claims that the core of bureaucratic conflict is a struggle for power and prestige.

Given the views of power and conflict in the literature and participants’ concerns about ‘recentralization’ it is useful to re-examine frontline properties as both a source of power and a site of conflict.

Proximity and distance

The literature supports participants’ views that proximity and distance, two properties of the frontline, can be important sources of power. Participants are able to do what Ashkenas et al (1995:126-127) call moving the back room of resources and competencies to the front room of customers. This process is supported by increased autonomy because of distance from

headquarters. Distance does require the development of informal networks of communication, both task related or social, that facilitate, among other things, “informal learning and feedback,” (Sagini, 2001: 348-9) but informal communication is also a source of power not only because it is hidden from headquarters but also because it provides knowledge otherwise withheld from the frontline.

However, proximity power may be weakened (difficulties with national commissions and distance may reduce the conferred power of reward and recognition from headquarters) but participants say, and the literature confirms, that these problems may be secondary to other aspects of their work: job satisfaction (Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997) and self-concept (Thomas, 2002) are more important power sources for the participants.

Time

The third property of the frontline is time. The issue of time and organizations is long standing. Mintzberg (1973: 88-89) notes the problem of time taken to make a resource decision and possible consequences if it is too fast or too slow and participants recognize the latter problem especially. Some theorists say a good organizational use of time would be to put aside organizational fads and concentrate on results (Nohria in Ashkenas et al, 1995: 334-335).

Ashkenas et al (1995: 287, 295), recognizing difficulties of distance and time with the exchange of data and information recommend ways to improve time usage, including regular face-to-face meetings and video conferencing to provide day to day contacts. For the participants these suggestions are not useful. As the discussion on meetings in Chapter Four suggests, pre set agendas, limited opportunity for discussion and the time used with travel would worsen not improve time problems at the frontline. Video conferencing would also increase not lessen time used for administrative purposes.

Morgan (1997: 78-83) has a different approach and offers Simon's work on the bounded rationality of workers and Simon's claim that workers make decisions on a basis of 'good enough' with a limited search for information and using rules of thumb. Consequently organizations have to be content with 'satisficing'. This claim may be accurate about commercial and industrial organizations but as participants' workplace assumptions indicate, they are not content with 'good enough' which is why they want more time to prepare programmes and why participants want those programmes to be more reflective of their region's needs.

A full discussion of time and its complexity is provided by Hassard (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999:327-344). Time is both linear, matching most organizations' hierarchical bureaucracies but it can also be circular or rhythmic. In large organizations it is the core of its structure. It is a valuable and scarce resource in the centre and at the boundaries of an organization and the differences at the macro and micro levels have to be managed. Because organizations have to control uncertainties in the workplace and in the environment, normative procedures can become control devices although intending only to promote smooth cooperation and coordination.

Hassard identifies a number of challenges in time management including role overload because of scarcity of time relative to required tasks and he suggests that in the field time used for travelling and waiting is wasted time. What is needed is flexibility for boundary functions and for workers to be given temporal autonomy. The goal is to minimize centralized decisions and communication because these use time and cost money. As Hassard says, when participants join UNESCO, they join its time structure but healthy organizations adapt so participants endorse his call for temporal autonomy in frontline work not only because "many people like to be in full control over their life space," (Morgan, 1997: 181-2) but also because increased autonomy would give them more power with their time management.

Ethics

The fourth property of the frontline is ethics. Organization and leadership literature are marked by their relative inattention to ethical behaviour of leaders or to ethical frontline work. Many writers offer one or two lines only. Handy (1985: 62) notes a possible problem with roles if company ethics differ from a person's own moral standards; Bolman and Deal (1997: 345) say that leadership is an ethic, a gift of oneself; Morgan (1997: 248) includes a reference to the ethical dimension of organizations in his discussion of the metaphor of organizations as psychic prisons; Gortner et al (1997: 328) cite J.M. Burns' view that transformational leadership work helps others to achieve their aspirations and so moves human understanding to "a new moral and ethical level," but they also warn that although some organization literature has considered ethical processes it has ignored the purpose and ends of organizational behaviour and they suggest that leadership requires attention to both.

A closer examination of organizational ethics is provided by Fineman (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 297-8). He suggests that the field of organizational ethics rests on "the assumption that moral behaviour is important but problematic", that in practice corporate values determine organizational moralities and that these are maintained by, for example, staff fears of non-promotion and/or leadership appeals to staff loyalty. He cites the 1974 Milgram experiment that demonstrated that people will obey authoritative commands in spite of their own moral repugnance at hurting another person. Each of Fineman's approaches provides useful background but participants' contributions suggest that a different explanation of ethics at work at the frontline is possible.

Participants gain power in their work by the ethical mission of UNESCO (Weber's ethics of ultimate ends) and by their own ethical sense of why and how they are working for development (Weber's ethics of responsibility). Participants want to promote peace and development and they want the best ways to achieve this

goal. In one sense, these desires weaken Weber's claim that "The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so," (Weber, 1930: 123) because in that specific sense they are closer to the Puritan than to the iron cage. However, Weber's ethics of purpose and process are important sources of power at the frontline, with participants trying to avoid using "morally dubious means" (Weber, 1958 in Giddens, 1971: 136) to achieve their ends and at times using processes that attempt an identification with truth (Giddens, 1971: 137) rather than a rational calculation of consequences.

Weber (1958, in Giddens, 1971:137) accepts the complexity of motivation and the difficulties of "the paradox of consequences" and argues for probability as the test of a generalization. He requires the probability that "a given observable event ... will be followed by another," (Weber, 1958 in Giddens, 1971: 149). Participants' discussion of the purpose of their work, their field work assumptions and their accommodation of the problems they meet suggest a pattern of probability: they will continue to pursue ethical ends with ethical processes as consistently as possible. The claim of probability Weber would accept since he describes four types of social conduct⁶³ and expects "a mixture of elements from more than one type," (Giddens, 1971: 153).

The property of ethics is difficult to observe or demonstrate although Sergiovanni provides school examples of moral leadership in practice with named exemplary leaders. Participants' contributions about the specific difficulties they have met in their work at the frontline are not included in this study: issues of confidentiality over-ride any possible benefits that might come from their inclusion. However, theoretical rather than empirical support suggests that ethics of purpose and process count, as participants say they count.

⁶³ The four types are purposively rational, value rational, affective and traditional and these act as ideals against which deviations can be measured (in Giddens, 1971: 152-3).

Power at the frontline

The literature is generally in accord that when leadership roles, abilities and experience interact with frontline properties the resulting operation of power is complex. If power is “the capacity to get things done,” (Bolman and Deal, 1997: 165) then participants have power because they report that although their capacity at the frontline is limited or constrained they do ‘get things done’. The particular constraints identified in participants’ accounts and recognized in the literature are time management and headquarters’ control through communication. Balancing these constraints are the positive aspects of proximity and distance and underpinning both constraints and positives is the strong self-concept that they are working ethically and achieving worthwhile, ethical goals.

No participant talked of wanting prestige or promotion and those who looked for recognition by headquarters did so in the hope that it might improve their autonomy and so their work possibilities. They all talk of the difficulties of being responsible for important work and accountable for results but limited in resources so limited in power. They believe they can achieve more if headquarters did not dominate their work time and processes. Kanter (1979, in Pugh, 1997: 319) agrees with Morgan that power in an organization can mean efficiency and capacity but that accountability without power creates frustration and failure. Participants frequently express frustration but no sense of failure.

Finally, two other perspectives of power in frontline work are possible.

The organizational class of being-at-the-frontline

The first perspective focusses on class and the inevitable social conflict for power and prestige that theorists expect in organizations. Weber (1978: xxxv) sees society as “an arena for group conflicts” although not class or other “world-formulae”

struggles as some sociologists claim. Instead, he says that while capital (or property) is an important consideration in a discussion of class division it is not the only consideration (Giddens, 1971:195). He includes other possibilities such as shared political ambitions or shared power-holding, neither of which may reflect a common economic situation. Participants' capital, their academic and experiential skills and achievements, could be regarded as primarily financial capital since it gains and keeps them in employment and offers possibilities of status and reward in UNESCO. However, although participants are classed as a part of UNESCO's directorate because of their directorate-equivalent position, organizational capital and remuneration, they are more like a sub-class of the directorate because they do not share the same power as the headquarters directors in the organization. The significant characteristic of their class as 'frontline workers', therefore, is their shared power limitations.

In this way class could be the basis of the problems with headquarters' colleagues that they describe and the class is organizationally structured. This is predicted by Weber (as noted in Chapter Two): people "struggle most of the time under created laws and within established organizations," (Weber, 1978: xxxv). Participants' sub class in the directorate, therefore, that of *being-in-the-field*, is determined by their limited power and it leaves them vulnerable to domination by headquarters.

Such an explanation is supported by Weber (1978:54): "If it possesses an administrative staff, an organization is always to some degree based on domination," and "In general, an effectively ruling organization is also an administrative one," with its mode of administration and the character of personnel dependent "on the way domination is legitimized". Domination for Weber is complex. It is not only entwined with administration, it includes authority, obedience to commands, it may include power and influence and it implies compliance even where there is not consent because people act from habit, legitimacy or self interest (Weber, 1978:51, 212). Domination and administration are

interdependent, Weber says, so if participants look for a more democratic or more equitable share of the directorate class power in UNESCO to reduce domination, and although they meet Weber's precondition of relative equality of participants, they are unlikely to succeed. "'(D)emocracy' as such is opposed to the 'rule' of bureaucracy in spite of and perhaps because of its unavoidable and yet unintended promotion of bureaucracy," because it produces breaks in bureaucratic patterns and organization, says Weber (1978: 991).

Further, any increase in field directors' powers might provide discretion and innovation and this would be irrational because it departs from the norms of the preexisting social order (Giddens, 1971: 213). Given that Weber (1978; 53) defines power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which the probability rests", the probability is that participants are caught in the cage of rationalization in which their sub-class logically will keep them.

However, although participants' compliance with non-ideal bureaucratic measures in the field may be explained as rational, in Weber's terms, resistance is still possible when participants are motivated by ethical considerations. In this way their class of being-at-the-frontline may be determined by their limited power which logically reinforces their sub-class but, paradoxically, the sub-class provides opportunities for the production of power because participants at the frontline are closer to the site of UNESCO's ultimate ends. This proximity provides special knowledge which, with their intangible capital especially, empowers participants when in conflict with bureaucratic control in their non-ideal organization.

The organizational group of not-being-in-headquarters

A second perspective also has its focus on differentiation but with a different explanation of power, compliance and resistance. Staff

images of UNESCO are rare but a common term for the Paris headquarters is 'the house' and it is used as in "They say in the house that ..." and "The house will not like ..." The term reflects UNESCO's emblem of a classical building; it also reflects the hundreds of offices in which headquarters staff are based and the term's usage indicates a discourse of truth that is confined to the house. This image of 'the house' suggests two associated issues for the assessment of participants' power at the frontline, those of headquarters' knowledge and surveillance of staff not in Paris.

Participants speak frequently of headquarters' lack of knowledge about their work, of headquarters dictating what they should do or using wrongly-based knowledge in its processes. More significantly, they are critical of the assumptions in the bureaucracy's processes. It could be claimed that participants seem to be working in a different discourse from Paris. If the field and headquarters are treated as different societies then Foucault offers a useful explanation. He claims that truth is relational:

"Each society has its regime of truth ... the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances that enable one to distinguish true and false statements; the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded values in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true," (Foucault, 1994: 131).

Thus, it can be claimed, that the epistemic truths (or the Enlightenment rationalities) at the time of UNESCO's establishment were embodied in the new organization and shifts in truth continued to be collected in Paris where they were incorporated as UNESCO's own knowledge. This knowledge gave UNESCO its direction and processes and new staff in 'the house' learned its rules and were monitored easily because of their place in the house.

However, when field offices were established, the discourse had to adjust and develop some new knowledge about a new group of staff,⁶⁴ those *not-in-headquarters*. The new knowledge had to develop, especially, truths about staff status and importance. Paris employees gained proof of their importance because of field staff exclusion from ‘the house’ and ‘the house’ had proof of its importance with the organization’s continuing accumulation of human capital and knowledge; this importance also gave Paris staff further proof of their status (Foucault, 1994: 85). The result was that not-being-in-headquarters became a space of different and lesser status and those who were in it required special treatment. This treatment was determined by headquarters’ knowledge which, Foucault says, can have the effects and functions of enslavement and domination (1994: 291). Field office staff, therefore, are vulnerable to the effects of their exclusion, that of the domination predicted by Foucault. They are caught in the cage of headquarters’ knowledge by not-being-in-headquarters.

The second issue arising from spatial separation from ‘the house’ is about surveillance. Foucault (1984: 361) claims that “space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power,” and this perspective brings into focus two other effects of spatial differentiation in UNESCO. First, it strengthens the norm of being-in-headquarters and second, and consequently, it requires techniques to ensure that the outsiders meet all the other norms of headquarters as far as possible. Foucault claims that the separation of people (in prisons, schools, asylums) was a measure developed to bring them back to the norm:

“Disciplinary space tends to be divided into as many sections as there are bodies or elements to be distributed ... Its aim was to establish presences and absences, useful communications, to interrupt others, to be able at each moment to supervise the

⁶⁴ The literature suggests these new truths were not confined to UNESCO but became part of all development organizations’ knowledge, almost a discourse of field staff and their work (Chapters One and Three).

conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits,” (Foucault, 1975 in Gutting, 1994: 95).

In UNESCO separation is not for discipline but the consequential techniques of control reflect Foucault’s explanation of surveillance, power and resistance.

The interaction of power and knowledge, surveillance and resistance in UNESCO has developed a discourse in which headquarters’ knowledge is true or “(s)ome statements are more authorized than others, in that they are more associated with those in positions of power or with institutions,” (Mills, 2003: 65). If the privileged position of headquarters and its truths were to last headquarters had to develop techniques of surveillance and discipline over staff at the frontline. This was complicated because not only were all heads away from *the* house but also they were each in different and separate houses.

However, Foucault explains that individuals are not supervised because they are a group but because they join the group as an individual and then the structure of the supervision constitutes them as a group (1994: 77). Thus all heads became a part of the organizational group of not-being-in-headquarters because they required special surveillance. Paradoxically, surveillance has to work with each as an individual and this has the unintended effect of making them important “by delivering individual variations of behaviour,” to headquarters (Foucault, 1994:169).

In UNESCO surveillance, or the gaze of power, is conveyed through its communication system and is complex:

“In panopticism, the supervision of individuals is not carried out at the level of what one does but of what one is, not at the level of what one does but what one might do,” (Foucault, 1994: 70-71).

UNESCO's communication system, therefore, has to convey both knowledge about its truths and norms and also what is expected of field office directors. Given the size of the organization and the broad areas of its work, multiple possibilities for contradictions and conflict exist and so extra-ordinary amounts of communication control are needed. As well, and especially, the norms of responsibility and accountability must be maintained in the field and so reporting requirements form an important part of the communication system. Control of those not-in-headquarters is essential if the organization is to function smoothly. Participants respond by spending a lot of time on communication with headquarters and so reinforce its power. In Foucault's terms they become self-monitoring and try to meet headquarters norms.

The interaction of UNESCO's cage of knowledge and its process of communication control could suggest that participants will always work to comply with headquarters. However, participants also have knowledge, including their own spatialized knowledge of the field (Foucault, 1994: 362-3) and as Foucault argues, they are able to use this to analyze their position because truth and knowledge are not opposed to power but are involved in it (Danaher et al, 2000: 63). Since power is everywhere and since norms have opposites there are many possibilities for resistance (Mills, 2003: 40; Smart, 2002: 77) and participants as self-knowing and ethical individuals have the freedom to exercise the power they do have as a strategy to resist aspects of headquarters' knowledge and its domination. Thus although resistance, in Weber's terms, could have ethical motivation; resistance in Foucault's terms reflects ethical behaviour.

When participants' power in their work at the frontline is assessed in the light of the literature and especially from the perspectives of Weber and Foucault it can be claimed that they do have some power. For a variety of reasons they generally comply with headquarters but resistance is always possible. It might be seen as "leadership by outrage," or "loyal opposition," (Sergiovanni, 1992:130, 143) but its exercise is an exercise of power.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has described participants' practice at the frontline and assessed their power to contribute to UNESCO's mandate for peace and development. It began with an explanation of roles and responsibilities and then focussed on participants' use of their tangible and intangible capital and gave an outline of a typical day. This was followed by an examination of the properties of the frontline and their effect on participants' work. This part of the chapter concluded with participants' own assessment of success and their suggestions of changes to improve frontline work. The picture of frontline work that emerges from participants' contributions is one of wide responsibilities, busy days and nights using necessarily considerable organizational capital at a frontline that has variable power-producing properties. The picture suggests, nonetheless, that participants do have some power to meet their responsibilities.

The second part of this chapter assessed the picture using organizational and leadership literature and applied theories about power from Weber and Foucault. The absence of an agreed view of leadership in organizations is a difficulty and all approaches could apply to participants at some time when their roles and their organizational capital are considered. However, the range did indicate that the work was important. Further, much of the literature supports participants' concerns about time used for administration and the impact of communication and control on their work.

When power at the frontline is assessed, Weber's theories of class and social conflict suggest that participants may appear to be disadvantaged by what this study calls their organizational class of being-at-the-frontline. Foucault's theory of knowledge and control by surveillance also suggest powerlessness because participants are in the group of not-being-at-headquarters (Foucault, 1994: 85). However, both theorists argue that although compliance has rationality, either universal (Weber) or epistemic (Foucault),

resistance is also possible. Weber's generalized view is that in the inevitable organizational conflict in non-ideal organizations ethical motivation will empower challenge while Foucault provides a detailed description of the use of self-knowledge as ethical behaviour with which to use power as resistance. Both theories explain and support participants' accounts of their compliance and resistance in their work and the answer to this chapter's question is that they may be at-the-frontline or not-at-headquarters but they have power and it comes from a variety of sources.

Two participants provide final comments on work at the frontline:

"Basically, I'm handling my job as if headquarters really didn't exist. I know the system, how it works. I do the best I can. I try to uphold the ideals ... and the best way is to ignore what goes on in headquarters. I sometimes say, 'Look, there's two UNESCOs. One is the bureaucracy, the politics at headquarters, the other one is the real life, what we have here (in the field)'. Here we are serving the member states. What we are doing, what I hope we are doing, will have some lasting value. We have to try to leave traces ... Within the complex environment of headquarters, national commissions, permanent delegates who fight each other, host government, the UN system ... I build a cocoon of professionalism and try to go forward ... try within this little world to deliver the outputs that I think are going to help the member states," (P1).

"Work's not something you just up and do and say here it is. You think it through and deal with it in a particular way, to make some impact. We massage roles, nurture an idea. Doesn't happen quickly: massage it, let it rest, pick it up, deal with it some more, find other advocates and so on. You keep thinking: are you fulfilling your role as a partner in development? Advocacy is indirect such as appropriate messages; I look for entry points for advocacy. Process is by massage as well as message. UNESCO is the member states and that's who we serve and it includes ngos etc but everyone thinks of member states as governments. Many of those we work with are the privileged in the society/country.

Associate experts also come only from developed countries that can afford them so I also try to take the UN to the people, meet people in the communities," (P3).

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE POWER OF SEVEN HEADS OF FIELD OFFICES IN
UNESCO

“Sometimes we seem to have too much power even, limitless power in some things and in others we can’t even buy two pieces of paper,” (P1).

INTRODUCTION

When the bureaucracy, organizational capital and frontline work are brought together what power do participants have to contribute to UNESCO’s work? Foucault argues that it is not possible to identify sources of power other than as ‘discourse’ and this study answers the question by examining the discourse suggested by participants. Four steps are used to develop a circle of power and each step is tested for contrary examples or other negations of its claim.

In the first step the demonstrable sources of power are identified and their power-potential is analysed as a right or as capacity. The second step identifies what limits or affects participants’ power. In this step, the limitations of participants’ power are explained as control and domination and the claim is that participants lose power out of, as well as inside, the organization.

The third step describes participants’ agency in the field. This step integrates the interaction of frontline properties with participants’ situation of being both in the class of being-at-the-frontline as well as in the group of not-being-in-headquarters. Issues of power as compliance and resistance are discussed and the suggestion is that participants regain some of the power lost in step two.

The final step is the synthesis of power as rights and capacity, power limitations and power regained in practice in the field. The conclusion is that for participants a double paradox exists: they are both powerful and powerless in their organization *and* they are

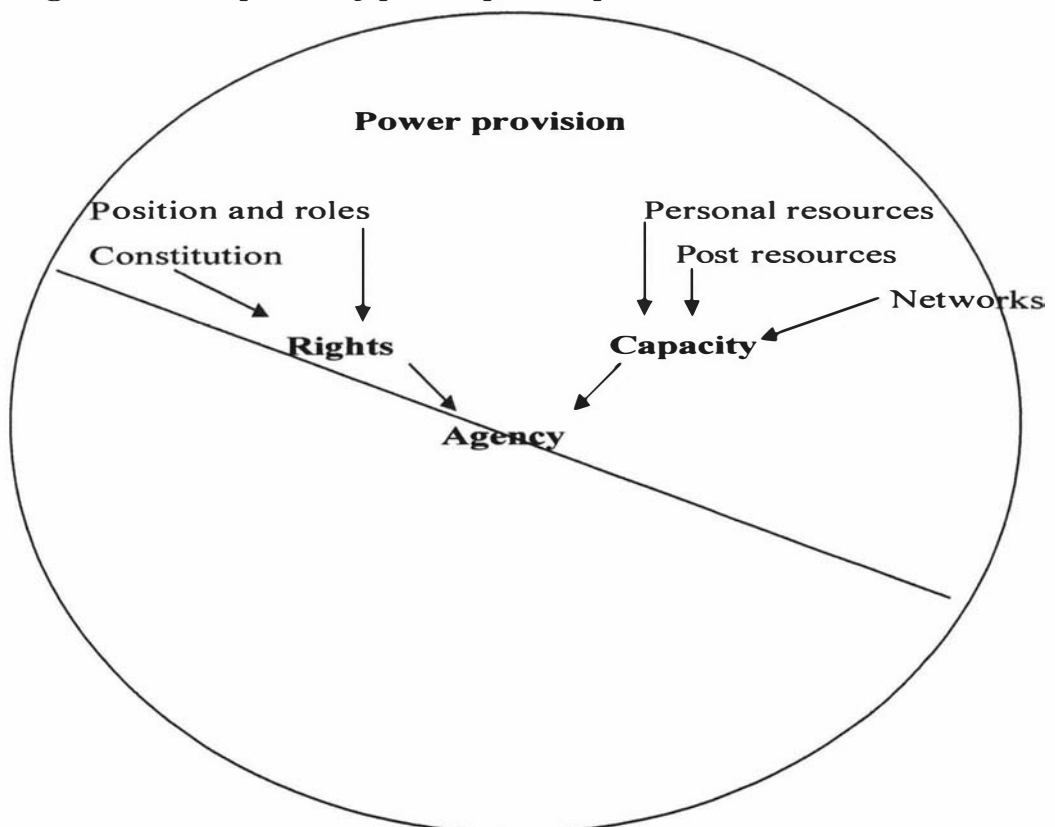
limited at the frontline by governments who also control the work of the organization. A model of what this study calls the Janus syndrome is provided and the theorization concludes with suggestions for changes to some parts of the context of participants' work.

A first study of any problem is difficult. The chapter concludes, therefore, with a discussion of the limitations of the research, alternative approaches to the study of participants' power and other research topics that would complement or challenge the results in this report.

STEP ONE: SOURCES OF POWER

"We do have power ... it's not easy to measure generally and often I feel so frustrated by what's happening but then I look at what I'm doing. It's a struggle sometimes but I go from hope to worry and then to pleasure almost every day," (P3).

Figure 14: Step one of participants' power



Power from rights and capacities

It is possible to describe power as a formal *right* to act with an entailed obligation by other(s) to obey. However, step one of this study identifies only the central, regulated and legitimate *rights* of participants as power sources and no sense of any obligation by others to obey is implied. Obligations to obey are discussed in step two and step three examines participants' power not to obey.

A second source of power in this step focusses on *capacity* and two explanations are offered. The first is that power is the capacity to act because of knowledge or skill; this is the power of the expert, one who knows how to get things done. Thus power as a generalized ability to act is synonymous with capacity; power may be limited or distorted by incapacity or power may not use all capacity but nonetheless power and capacity entail each other. In this view participants' tangible organizational capital is a part of their power. A different explanation suggests that capacity is only potential and may be unused because of lack of power: first the knowledge is acquired and then power from some other source enables action. In this explanation participants' skills would be irrelevant until they were empowered by position, post or resources. In either view, capacity is a source of power for participants.

The Constitution: power as a right

UNESCO's Constitution is the first source of participants' power. Because it is a legal document, signed by governments, it gives participants the right as UNESCO staff to work for the decisions of those governments. It confers on them formal authority to act in special ways with given instructions. As well, because its purpose was, and remains, rational, it gives the right to work for peace and development since reason would deny a right to work for conflict and poverty. The Constitution also specifies five important functions (information exchange, standard setting, catalytic work, anticipatory ideas and training) that can be summarized as

developing knowledge. These functions give rights to participate in the specific activities of knowledge development, whether as head of a field office or acting as a representative of the Director General. Finally, the Constitution has an ethical intent: “it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed” and this goal of ultimate ends confers on participants the right of advocacy for peace.

Some theorists support the idea of the power of vision: “There is no more powerful engine driving an organization towards excellence and long range success than an attractive, worthwhile and achievable vision of the future, widely shared,” (Nanus in Gortner et al, 1997: 327). Sergiovanni (1992) also emphasizes the power of purpose, compelling ideas and vision. However, other theorists raise doubts. Weber (1968: 55) says that it is “not possible to define a political organization in terms of the end to which its action is devoted,” and he expects any assessment to be based on the ideal or real operation of bureaucracy and the people in it.⁶⁵ Archer (2001), Reed in Clegg and Hardy (1999) and Sagini (2001) all claim that a functionalist purpose has a number of problems: welfare does not prevent warfare, unlimited resources are needed and functionalist purposes have processes that ignore the agency of governments.

Further problems are met when the Constitution is tested as a document of Enlightenment thinking: it might fail because of theoretical problems with the Enlightenment. “Couldn’t it be concluded that the Enlightenment’s promise of attaining freedom through the exercise of reason has been turned upside down, resulting in a domination by reason itself, which increasingly usurps the place of freedom?” asks Foucault (1994: 273). Even if reason is not behaving as Foucault describes, other theorists are concerned that rationality appears to be slow in producing results

⁶⁵ Weber’s concerns about bureaucratic processes once brought him to declare at a meeting “The passion for bureaucratization at this meeting drives us to despair,” (1978: LIX).

and that rational functions are undermined by government's self interest.

The challenges are important and might weaken the Constitution's potential power to provide rights if they were universally held beliefs. Instead, in the international political arena, the Constitution passes the epistemic test of rationality, is accepted as a legal document and consequently provides powerful rights for participants. If these rights did not exist they could not even begin their work and they are clear that the starting point of their power is their Constitutional rights.

"We are first and foremost an intellectual organization with an ethical mission. This is our rightful work and our vision, if you like ... to help others live better than they do," (P3).

Bureaucratic position and roles: power from rights

Whether it is an ideal bureaucracy such as Weber describes or one that is less rational, bureaucracies nonetheless provide power to their staff. UNESCO's bureaucracy provides two important sources of power: the position to which participants are appointed and the roles they are to fill. The position for most UNESCO heads is at the director level and carries organizational rights such as moving expenses, UN salary, pension, health care, hardship allowances, travel and stay costs for missions. This first group of rights are held by all UN staff and reflect the rights of status in the UN.

Position also confers the right of attendance at directorate-level meetings in headquarters, the right to participate in meetings of other heads and the right to participate in the selection of international staff to be posted to their office. These rights are significant. Directorate-level meetings have the potential to provide information even if they fail to meet participants' expectations as indicated in Chapter Four; meetings with other heads provide information and also opportunities to share problems

and look for solutions and so are sources of power for participants. Participation in the selection of staff is a critical right that participants have stressed because of the necessity of appropriate programme support in the field.

The bureaucracy also provides power as a right in the particular work required of participants. The Constitution empowers participants with a general purpose and general functions but the bureaucracy provides more specific powers in the three roles given to all heads. The roles of diplomat, expert and administrator each contains important rights in the field. These rights empower participants to work with high-level government leaders and officials, contribute to international meetings and programmes and control the day-to-day operation of the office, all with the authority of their position. The absence of one of these rights would weaken, and the interaction of roles strengthens, the power that participants may use in their work.

The literature is generally silent about rights in position. However, most theorists discuss power in position, perhaps with the implicit view that power implies rights. Johanson (in Gabbay and Leenders, 2001: 239) claims that the connection between formal position and organizational power is well established in the research. Mintzberg (1975 in Pugh 1997:303) recognizes that position gives authority and so gives access to people and to information while others (Clegg and Hardy, 1997; Gortner et al, 1997; Morgan, 1997) explore a variety of other sources of power held by high level leaders. For participants, the rights provided by their position are exemplified by the lack of the same rights of their staff.

Participants' views suggest that UNESCO does not meet the standards of Weber's ideal, rational bureaucracy, with rules of conduct and rights of each worker both specified and followed. UNESCO, however, does often reflect Foucault's analysis of an organizational blank face of power with rights mattering only if they meet or deviate from the norms of what is accepted as true in

the organization. Participants, whether working in a non-ideal bureaucracy or in Foucault's system of surveillance, use rights of position and roles; not to have those rights would site them in some other position and some other roles. The participants in this study frequently indicate concerns with the way their rights-based powers are undermined because they know they have them.

"I'm often finding out that someone from HQ or (named bureau) is here without telling me. They know the rule, they have no right to do this but they do ... I tell (name) about it and they explain but it's not right" (P2).

Tangible capital: power from capacity

The tangible organizational capital that participants have and gain provides them with considerable power as capacity. As Chapter Five describes, their knowledge and skills before appointment are impressive and the skills they gain once appointed, increase their capacity. The literature, whether it focusses on traits, tasks or processes, supports this claim. Some theorists identify personal capacity as especially important because it enhances the power provided by position (and post) with influence that may go beyond the authority of position (Gortner et al, 1997: 319-21) while others summarize this idea as: "Power is the ability to influence," (Bennis, 1998:169).

A different perspective comes from Weber who differentiates between the power of *knowing* and the power of *owning* (Hardy and Clegg in Clegg and Hardy, 1999:369). By adapting Weber's view it is possible to claim two sources of capacity power for participants. First, they have the power of knowing, of being experts and so have capacity power. Second, participants are not workers as Marx describes, with no ownership of their tools, but are knowledge workers and own the tools of production. As specialists they may need organizations in which to use their knowledge but organizations "need knowledge workers far more than knowledge workers need them," (Drucker, 1994, in Hickman,

1998: 548). Thus, when participants win a position and post in UNESCO they continue to own their skills and this improves their power also.

Another view of power and capacity is possible. Foucault rejects power as a quantitative capacity because it is in and out of hierarchies and cannot be generalized. Instead, he regards power as a “structure of actions ... instruments, techniques and procedures,” (Foucault 1980, in Hindess, 1996: 141). In this view participants’ personal skills provide no power, either known or owned. However, Foucault does believe that knowledge “authorizes and legitimates the use of power,” (Foucault in Danaher et al, 2000: 24-26) and in this approach participants’ personal capacities may not entail power but justify their use of it.

Whether participants’ tangible organizational capital is, theoretically, capacity with entailed power or capacity empowered by the organization or capacity that legitimizes power use, in practice it is significant power in their work. If participants had no knowledge, experience or skills they would not win a position in UNESCO and any discussion of their capacity power would be meaningless.

“I’ve gained the knowledge and experience over many years and so I know what to do here. It’s really more about being free of Paris to do what should be done,” (P4).

Post resources: power as capacity

Power as capacity also includes the resources participants gain with their post: an office with a range of physical resources, staff and a programme of work with some funding. Although these resources are sometimes problems for participants, without them their power would be severely limited. The problems may reduce the effective operation of the office but, as with personal capacity, the resources are theoretically ‘owned’ as capital for their work. The ‘ownership’ comes from the authority UNESCO gives the

participants: they may use and are responsible for the assets of the post. This authority gives them what Weber calls legitimate power and what Foucault (although he is less concerned with legitimacy than he is with techniques and rationalities of power) calls juridical power. Post resources, consequently, provide capacity power.

Organization theory has little to say about power in post because it does not separate position and post. Much of the literature presumes all workers to be in the same site or, when international organizations are discussed, it presumes they are to operate as profit-making bodies. A typical contribution comes from Bartlett and Ghoshal (1987, in Pugh, 1997:80) who argue that transnational commercial organizations should aim for “rebalancing power relationships,” and preventing “entrenched power bases,” by task differentiation not similarity, unit interdependence not dependence and with central coordination and cooperation rather than control. As well, even when aid agencies or public bodies are considered (Archer, 2001; Gortner et al, 1997) power is referenced to position rather than post. In spite of the gap in the literature, however, posts do give participants’ capacity power: it is logically impossible to be a field office head without an office.

“I have a good staff and good technology and that is important for our work,” (P5).

Networks: power as capacity

It is generally agreed that “the individual is continuously constituted and constructed through social relationships, discourses and practices,” (Townley in Clegg, 1999:151) and networks are a part of this process. Some theorists are interested in organizational networks and Johanson’s work (in Gabbay and Leenders, 2001) suggests that they play a significant part in employees’ power potential and usage. Nohria provides a very useful overview of organizational networks theory. A network may be based upon friendships, advice or conversational links across formal boundaries, it may be weak or strong, its members although

possibly constrained by the network are also purposeful agents in its operation. Networks are social constructions and will change but they also provide power and, consequently, are important in the study of organizations (Nohria 1992 in Hickman, 1998: 290-3).

Both Weber and Foucault recognize the importance of the individual in the group although from different perspectives. Weber's explanation is more static than Foucault's claim (in Kelly, 1994: 253; McHoul and Grace, 1993:89) that individuals are the vehicles of power that circulates in a network of relations. Each, however, believes that collective power provides capacity to members of the group. Participants made reference to a variety of sources of support: friends in headquarters, regional meetings of heads and, especially, the various groups of partners in the field. These sources of support are valuable for using and building capacity. As Morgan says, "informal networks for touching base, sounding out or merely shooting the breeze – all provide a source of power to those involved," (Morgan, 1997: 186).

Equally valuable are the embryonic networks amongst all heads and they have the potential to develop into sites for collective power. This is beginning to happen as indicated in Chapter Four, with some regional heads' groups challenging some of the bureaucracy's processes. Participants' networks are informal and discreet and peer group interaction away from the gaze of power is significant not only because it strengthens capacity but also because it develops a "hidden transcript" that may reflect members' views more accurately than the "public performance," (Scott, 1990, in Mills, 2003:41). Observation revealed some of the hidden transcripts of the participants in the meetings of all heads. When they are with peers the group is a safe site for the expression of concerns. As well, regional meetings and informal networks provide knowledge that the bureaucracy does not know they have, nor does it know that the questions have even been asked, and so they provide informational power for all heads.

If networks do not increase or strengthen participants will not lose the capacity offered by their existing networks or their own ad hoc meetings.

“I’m really pleased with the strength of our regional networks ... four are really strong and a couple of others are growing ... it’s good for the region and useful ... helpful for me,” (P7).

Step one overview

Figure 14 above provides an overview of the significant sources of power for participants. In the circle of power, constitutional, positional, personal and post resources are powerful either as of right or as capacity. Networks are sited just outside the circle of power because they are not yet used consistently but have the potential to be significant if they were to be developed. When power as rights and capacity meet in the person of the participant, the picture is positive: participants have power to support UNESCO’s goals of peace and development.

One test of this claim is to imagine participants working in the field without the Constitution, position and roles, post, personal skills and networks. Such a person is probably a temporary volunteer and powerless. A different test would be to imagine that only some of the identified power sources were missing: a head of office working for an organization with no Constitution or without seniority of position or with no friends in headquarters would be a head with fewer powers, either as of right or capacity.

The final test, however, is to examine the work achievements of the participants. Each has established or strengthened networks of academics or decision-makers, raised public awareness of global drives for education and information for all people, run training programmes in all sectors of UNESCO’s work, implemented a wide variety of activities, again in all sectors, that have supported national and international campaigns for sustainable development.

None of this work would have been possible if the participants lacked power in the field.

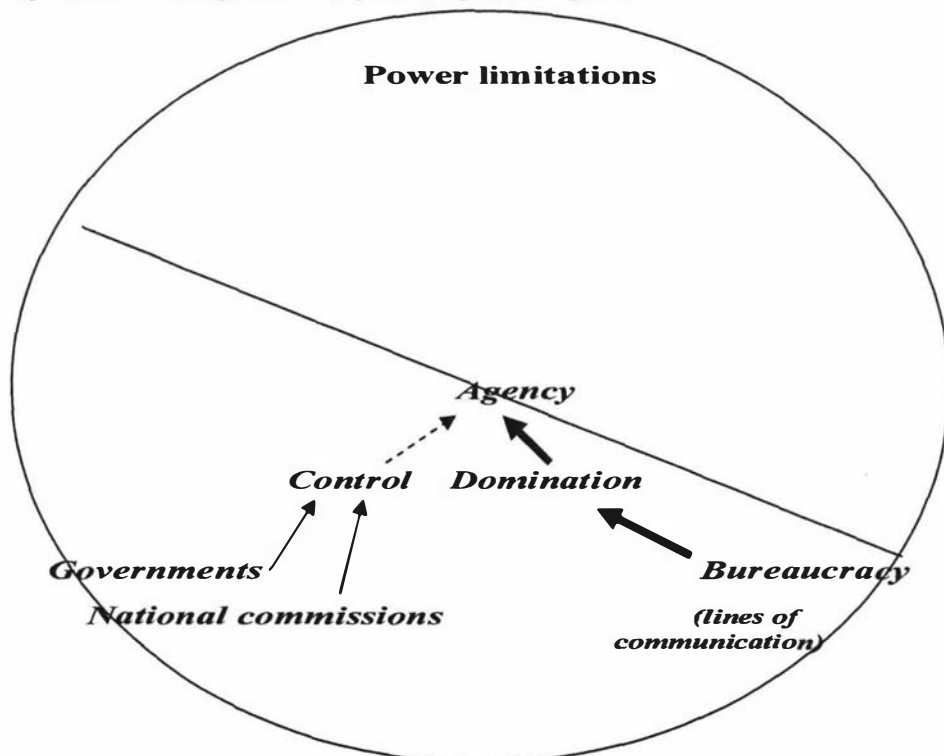
STEP TWO: POWER LIMITATIONS

“Peace is political. We promote, advocate but aren’t the decision-makers, in the house or out of it” (P4).

Power limited by control and domination

In 1916 Fayol described the principles of good management with the theme of ‘all things in proportion’. His description of authority included “the right to give orders and the power to exact obedience” and he was careful to explain that such authority entailed responsibility, even though, he said, it is difficult to effect responsible, or sanction irresponsible, management in large organizations (in Pugh 1997: 255). This step, therefore, suggests that a study of ‘proportion’ in power use requires consideration of responsibility and rationality as tests of power as control or domination.

Figure 15: Step two of participants’ power



Control and domination

Both Weber and Foucault use the term domination when describing power in organizations. In a 1976 lecture Foucault argued that, in the triangle of “the rules of right, the mechanisms of power and the effects of truth,” the discourse and techniques of right have hidden domination and its consequences. “Right should be viewed ... not in terms of a legitimacy to be established but in terms of the methods of subjugation that it instigates,” he said, and so rights should be examined as transmitters of domination at the level of the individual where power “surmounts the rules of rights,” (Foucault in Kelly, 1994: 31-4).

Responsibility and rationality

Responsibility and rationality in power are linked. Responsible organizational authority is about control for efficiency, effectiveness and stability and also for employee equity and productivity. Control is based, as Weber (1978: 809-838) prescribes, on a general rationality but he differentiates between formal rationality and substantive rationality, recognizing that organizations may be logical in purpose and process but nonetheless produce unintended negative results. Consequently, he distinguishes between power that will be successful even if there is some resistance, power as domination that will be obeyed and power as discipline that will produce compliance because of habit (Weber, 1930; 1978).

Foucault, however, is more interested in the specific rationalities, their power mechanisms and epistemic norms that explain the existence of domination (Foucault, 1994; Gutting, 1994; Mills, 2003). Although his approach is different, he agrees with Weber that rationality in organizations is important, that organizational rationalization could have the unintended consequence of domination and he separates power as a general concept from domination (McHoul and Grace, 1993).

Other theorists raise a similar concern. Morgan (1997:340), in his metaphor of organizations as instruments of domination, emphasizes the “double-edged nature of rationality,” and others write of “the disjunction between intention and effect,” (Mills, 2003: 50). Mills also extends the study of organizational power as domination to include the effect of groups outside an institution.

This step, therefore, includes an explanation of the power of governments and their national commissions to indicate that even if the bureaucracy did not limit participants’ power, other more politically powerful bodies do so. Further, Morgan (1997: 341) suggests that a key question in a discussion of power and rationality is “Rational for whom?” and, in answer to that question, it could be claimed that the exercise of control in UNESCO may appear rational to those leading the bureaucracy, but for participants it appears as irrational domination, out of proportion to their position and designated roles.

Problems of proportion may not be unintentional. Organizational power is necessarily focussed on the tension between employees who want more than they are allowed and the organization’s restriction of employees’ power because they need stability for survival. Organizational power is also about the tensions between the organization and the context in which it works. At stake in both tensions is freedom and the power to exercise or restrict decision-making. It is possible, therefore, that domination may not be an unintended side effect of rationality and control. Instead, it may be, as Morgan (1997:341-3) suggests, an integral part of the rationalization of the work of some organizations and may also be intrinsic in the power of bodies associated with UNESCO in the context of its work.

From these different perspectives, this study claims that responsibility and rationality are important issues when control and domination are examined as sources of power limitations.

Governments: power as control

The basic rationality supporting governments' power⁶⁶ internationally is that they are sovereign and have absolute authority over their own affairs. It would be irrational to generalize their power in any other way. This sovereignty is recognized and illustrated by international criticism when a nation's sovereignty is challenged by, for example, invasion or when a country has a national crisis that is ignored until and unless its government requests or allows outside help.⁶⁷

The sovereignty of governments is guaranteed by the United Nations Charter and almost every other international agreement that governments elect to sign, including UNESCO's Constitution. This sovereignty is intrinsic in all political activity and, in theory, guarantees absolute freedom for that activity.

History, of course, demonstrates that some governments lose their freedom to act for a time or completely. This may happen for a variety of reasons and at issue is the consent of the people of the nation or other international bodies. Generally, however, theorists interested in power wonder why people so often consent to their own (national) subjugation (Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 373).

For IGOs, two explanations are possible and the first is theoretical and prompted by Foucault who denies Weber's reasons for consent (habit, expediency or recognition of legal authority). Although he recognizes governments' centralized power to rule, his focus on governments' power is not from the perspective of legitimacy and consent but from the perspective of rationalities and the way governments conduct themselves. Because power is diffuse and

⁶⁶ The term government in this discussion is used as a generic term to cover all forms of national control. It also refers only to independent states and does not include territories or other political alliances in which governing power is limited. Further, this discussion is focussed on governments in their international roles only.

⁶⁷ The genocide in Rwanda and the non-intervention to help with famine in Zimbabwe are examples of this point.

relatively rational other forces make people docile to that rule (Hindess, 1996: 141-147). He argues that consent is merely one of the rationalities of government and the consequence is that governments' power is neither ultimate nor unassailable.

Although Foucault's theory is challenged by some theorists it does offer the possibility of resistance: governments lose power because although domination may be a logical condition of liberty people are free to resist it nonetheless. However, instances of governments' powers being challenged are the exception and the general state is that their actions control the freedom of people in their countries and in IGOs.

The second explanation of consent is practical. In UNESCO, the situation for the participants is that they are international civil servants, based in countries not their own, absolutely dependent on governments' good will and vulnerable because they are separated from their headquarters. Even if participants were to develop strong networks in and out of UNESCO, and although they work for agreed governmental decisions, the power they hold as right or capacity is nonetheless controlled by the ultimate authority and freedom of governments.

The work, therefore, of any IGO is difficult and for a UN IGO is especially difficult. Governments contribute to the costs of, for example, UNESCO's administration and programme work. During conferences of member states, the government representatives establish or change policies and approve the focus of the programmes and budgets. Through a number of official and unofficial methods they also monitor internal and external activities. In return they expect to receive projects, appointment of nationals and other benefits from their membership.

Most relevant and important of all, however, only governments have the critical political power to respond to the work of a UN

IGO.⁶⁸ UN agencies and their staff may advocate free trade or freedom of speech, better health policies or peace and security but only governments make the decisions to turn those visions into national policy and practice.

Governments' power goes further: UN agencies may try to meet their mandate but are often hindered by governments' intervention in their work or by their withholding of necessary resources. The literature on UN agencies and the "perilous path" they walk between their mandate and "the sovereign prerogatives and interests of states," (Loescher, 2001: 2) is considerable. As Chapter Two indicates, observers and experts have found fault with the UN and its agencies but they also identify the considerable control that governments exercise over UN policies and practices – and many of their leadership appointments.

Loescher's history of the UNHCR (2001) provides numerous examples of the control governments have over the theoretically neutral UN agencies while Behrstock (1987) provides a detailed explanation of the dismissal of seven staff from UNESCO who, although international civil servants and outside the jurisdiction of their national (US) government, failed to satisfy that government of their loyalty during the McCarthy period of the 1950s⁶⁹. Ironically, the same government withdrew from UNESCO in 1983 because of "trends ... that ... have served the political purposes of member states rather than the international vocation," (Behrstock, 1987: 161) and returned in 2003 when happier with the new Director General. These actions may not be in proportion with general views of rational international behaviour but they are not exceptional: the United Kingdom and Singapore withdrew from

⁶⁸ Some government officials have a negative view of this IGO work: at a meeting in 2004 one commented: "The UN is paving new roads to peace? All the new roads will bring is girls, guns and viruses!"

⁶⁹ The seven staff then faced "often passportless exile and a hazardous existence seeking non-blacklisted jobs," until almost a year later when the International Labour Organization's Administrative Tribunal ruled in 1955 that the decision to dismiss should be rescinded; UNESCO had to pay two years' salary to each person by way of indemnity (Behrstock, 1987: 66).

UNESCO for similar reasons and the United Kingdom returned towards the end of the term of the previous DG (Federico Mayor). In these situations the rationality of power is truly relative.

The power and freedom of governments cannot be underestimated or overlooked in any assessment of UNESCO or the participants' work. Gortner et al (1997: 19-23) claim that public organizations are "authoritative in the deepest and most formal sense," and that "empowerment is a distinguishing characteristic," of public organizations. However, in practice, although IGOs are public bodies in the international sense, their freedom of choice is controlled by governments, at both the national and international levels (Jonsson, in *International Organizations*, 1993: 471); they are only as free to act as governments allow.⁷⁰ Because the assumptions in UNESCO's Constitution (Chapter Five) are founded on hope rather than governments' practice, UNESCO's and participants' powers are limited. The reverse of this claim is also true: if governments did follow their agreements, all international bodies would gain considerable power and their staff in the field would be greatly empowered.

UNESCO's freedom as an international standard setting body or as an important international vehicle for knowledge exchange is, therefore, constrained by political will. Further, even if participants had full temporal authority within UNESCO, as suggested in Chapter Six, their work at the frontline is with governments' approval and is possible only if that approval is full, sincere and includes a "willingness to cooperate with regional offices," (Loescher, 2001: 211). If governments (and especially major donor governments) ignore their own decisions at, for example, general conferences or decide to violate or not put into effect international conventions and treaties, or choose to flout

⁷⁰ Jonsson (1993: 473) also notes that the power of governments in international organizations has led to an underestimation of the power of international civil servants, especially as 'clearing houses' of information.

international legal norms,⁷¹ then the participants are in a weak position. If they challenge something, a government may declare them *persona non grata* and expel them⁷² or their headquarters may quickly have to transfer them to another post. The alternative for participants is to use a combination of diplomatic and ethical skills and try to achieve as much as possible. This is not “satisficing” nor is it “quietism ... the sin of silence,” (Bennis, 1998: 114). It is ‘optimizing’ the situation (Johansen, 2001 in Gabbay and Leenders, 2001: 250) with the hope of building confidence slowly when building it totally is not possible.

This step claims, therefore, that governments’ power limits participants’ power.

“Governments are sovereign so our powers are irrelevant. The key for us is advocacy,” (P4).

National commissions: power as control

National commissions began as an integral part of the initial rational structure of UNESCO with a power sharing role as the link between their governments and UNESCO. However, participants’ contributions in Chapter Four and internal documents indicate that the vision of the founders of UNESCO of national commissions cooperating with the organization to spread knowledge and understanding in their own countries does not always happen.

The addition, therefore, of national commissions to the list of power limitations is problematic theoretically and in practice.

⁷¹ Loescher’s indictment of the many governments who flout international norms is matched by Hancock’s detailed survey of governments of the ‘Third World’ with no popular mandate, “Most are infected by the virus of corruption,” and “In 1988 some twenty-nine developing countries in Africa, ten in South America, six in the Middle East, three in South Asia and ten more in the Far East were ruled by the military – with most of the rest labouring under one or other form of civilian tyranny,” (1989: 64-67). Although the figures today have altered the basic point remains valid.

⁷² A recent example of this occurred to a staff member of the World Bank in Papua New Guinea.

Theoretically, national commissions are the voice of their governments and should reflect governments' views and practices. National commissions should also reflect and support UNESCO's policies and programmes because they have been approved by their own governments. As well, theoretically, if governments were sources of power national commissions would be also. However, in practice, and not always because governments are ignoring or avoiding international agreements they have signed, some national commissions' activities do not match the theory, are very difficult to work with and reduce participants' power to promote those agreements.

In contrast however, some participants work with strong, supportive and well established commissions and few power limitations are experienced. Finally, a third group of national commissions exist that usually are weak in their own capacity, often have little knowledge of UNESCO and see it only as a source of funding. These latter commissions are also frustrating to work with and take up valuable time.

The situation of national commissions is also problematic. If field offices had not been added to UNESCO's structure then national commissions might have developed differently and become productively powerful in their role. However, the partnership originally envisaged is not working well and the result is that they are an integrated layer of control that is generally disempowering for participants.

Three kinds of literature about national commissions exist: internal documents from headquarters to field staff requiring them to work closely with national commissions, a document describing best practices for national commissions⁷³ and general publicity material that indicates their role in the organization. All of these documents contain an implicit assumption that national commissions are

⁷³ It is interesting that the national commissions described as models are all from large or wealthy countries and so offer small and developing countries ideals that are beyond their capacity.

working as envisaged and, therefore, are powerful ‘partners’ in spite of headquarters’ knowledge of the disempowering work of many of them.

Organization literature, does not cover (and possibly does not even know about) national commissions. The gap in the literature is explicable in terms of UNESCO’s unusual structure. Chapter Four (*figure 8*) suggests that they might be considered, in a commercial context, as retail outlets but as organization theory indicates in the same chapter, UNESCO’s need to sell its product to governments and their national commissions undermines this rationality. Further, UNESCO’s structure, with field offices working for the same purposes as national commissions, does not fit any organizational model and consequently they have limited practical or theoretical rationality. The consequence is that the effect of their control of participants’ work is out of proportion to the roles they currently fill.

However, national commissions do have intrinsic power because of their place in the Constitution regardless of how they are operating and so, with their strengths and weaknesses, are placed in the circle of power as limitations; they will not be otherwise unless they all become as the Constitution envisaged: strong conduits of knowledge between their governments and UNESCO.

One thing is clear: if, somehow, participants could develop and participate in networks of active and effective national commissions the power capacity of both groups would increase, both as public performance and in hidden transcript.

“National commissions? An impossible situation! Some are ok like (names) and I generally have no problems but they can be difficult ... we should either sort out their work or get rid of them ... or do something ... anything to make them partners or nothing ... ”(P7).

Bureaucratic processes: power as domination

UNESCO's bureaucracy is described in detail in Chapter Four. Its original logic was in the mechanistic tradition and its processes were intended to be rational. Time, changes to structure and work, governments' interests and a large increase in membership have altered the focus and processes of the bureaucracy. Participants indicate concerns with many aspects of UNESCO's structure and bureaucracy but concerns with its processes, and especially the lines of communication, suggest domination as predicted by Weber and Foucault.

Kanter (1979 in Pugh, 1997: 322) offers an overview of power or powerlessness in organizations that is a useful starting point for the explanation of UNESCO and bureaucratic power. When appropriate factors from Kanter's list are adjusted to reflect participants' views and UNESCO documents a mixed picture emerges as *Figure 16* suggests.

Figure 16: Power sources and limitations in UNESCO's bureaucracy (adapted from Kanter 1979)

Factors	Power source if factor is	Power is limited if factor is
Rules Established routines in office Task variety in the field Rewards for reliability Rewards for good performance Central administrative requirements Approvals for non-routine decisions Physical location Task-problem relationship Focus of most daily work Contact with senior officials Participation in field meetings Participation in headquarters' meetings Subordinates prospects	few few high few many few few central central out of unit high many many high	many* many low many few many many distant peripheral in work unit low few few low
* bold indicates participants' position		

In this analysis four bureaucratic factors are a power source for participants but ten factors limit their power. It is significant that headquarters generally ignores both reliability and good performance but maintains a close watch on administrative activity. Participants' distance from Paris necessarily excludes them from directorate meetings and regular contact with senior officials and so disempowers but participation in field meetings is important for knowledge and building local networks and these empower. The overall picture is of participants powerful in some programme work (tasks and field meetings) but generally limited in and by their administrative work because of centralized requirements.

England's experience as a field head in the UN Development Programme (UNDP) is another useful contribution to a discussion of bureaucracies. Weber argues that bureaucracies hold a promise of freedom because collective reason liberates people and collective skills empower them. England (1998:2) denies Weber's claim and argues instead that collective decision-making weakens leadership, produces ambiguity and obfuscation in instructions to staff (instructions "tend to be characterized by ambiguity, symbolism, unrealism and inadequate backup,") and eliminates individual responsibility. In another article he quotes Sir Robert Jackson: "For many years, I have looked for the 'brain' which guides the policies and operations of the UN development system. The search has been in vain," (England, 2002: 17, Footnote 29).

This claim can be explained by the mandatory use of the visa in UN bureaucracies and it echoes Foucault's thesis that the author is dead: writing is not only the voice of the individual but also the voices of historical and contextual influences (Danaher et al, 2000: 154; Gutting, 1994:39; Mills, 2003: 22). Collectivization may bring power, as Weber, says, but "power becomes anonymous partly because it is difficult to determine who has decisive control, partly because the processes of exerting power are hidden from view," (Jonsson in *International Organizations*, 1993: 471).

Weber is especially interested in rational-legal domination where rules, regulations and procedures legitimize power and enable bureaucracies to be “a power instrument of the first order,” (Morgan, 1997: 304-5) even if that rationality has unintended side effects of domination. However, even domination can be explained rationally. Bureaucracies dislike clash and controversy because they threaten stability and they prize consistency, predictability, stability and efficiency more than creativity and principle (J. M. Burns 1978, in Hickman, 1998: 55).

It is logical, therefore, that bureaucracies must control their staff, by monitoring activity and results, to ensure compliance with organizational rules and goals and the continuation of the organization. In this view, control processes are stability measures and reflect not only centralized power but also headquarters' right or obligation to ensure the survival of the organization - and so also its staff. Of course, this view assumes that field work has no positive effect on survival and that field staff rights from whatever source may be subsumed by the right of organizational survival. However, if rights have an ethical sense to them, then this gives an ethical rationale for organizational rules that necessarily must dominate of staff.

UNESCO was not designed to have a dominating bureaucracy. Even when field offices were added to the structure, the idea of partnership with national commissions guided the decision. However, history shows that the organization and national commissions developed in different ways and away from the vision. Further, the growth in the number of field offices created tensions about freedom and the resulting domination is now an integral part of all of the bureaucracy's processes. This is not unusual: the IGO literature (Chapters One and Two) indicates that the same challenges and consequences can also be found in the operation of their bureaucracies.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Foucault emphasizes the need to examine organizational procedures and techniques to show their

power configuration. “(R)elationships of communication produce effects of power,” (Foucault in Kelly, 1994: 265) and are the way organizations such as UNESCO institutionalize their discourse; they set both the norms and techniques for surveillance (Mills, 2003:61).

Lines of authority

When this theory is applied to UNESCO it can be seen that the power relationships between headquarters and staff are identifiable in UNESCO’s communication processes. The central bureaucracy interprets the principal instruments of power and for participants these are especially the lines of authority. Participants indicate that bureaucratic techniques of control in communication include not answering their questions, withholding some information, sending frequent memos about what all heads are to say and do, often referring to the extensive Administrative Guidelines and sending daily commands for information or other responses. The Table of Delegated Authority is a special authoritative control mechanism.

The bureaucratic techniques in *Figure 16* suggest the pattern Foucault describes (Kelly, 1994:167-8): constant surveillance through lines of authority, normalizing judgement (such as central decision-making for the field) and examination that uses the Table of Delegated Authority for both surveillance and judgement. The lines are UNESCO’s panopticon equivalent: the gaze of power intends to influence participants’ choices and so normalize what they do. However, since participants are theoretically free to resist, the test of the bureaucracy’s domination is not its quantity but its effectiveness (Foucault in Hindess, 1996: 96-136).

Participants are clear about the effect of the bureaucracy’s domination of their work through communication as their contributions in Chapters Four and Six indicate. Weber expects communication lines to be rational and efficient. Participants find them otherwise. They take up too much time and their content is too often contradictory, irrelevant or unnecessary. Further, the new

technology that should empower participants in bureaucratic communication has become another form of control (Morgan, 1997: 180).

England (2001: 7) agrees: “The UN system tends to use process controls to ensure compliance and conformity,” and he also claims “that there is a constant tendency for the UN system to devote too much time to its own internal processes,” and “... there are often clearly declining returns on the time spent,” (England 1998:7). Whether they are Weber’s rules of process or Foucault’s surveillance techniques, the lines of authority in both quantity and effectiveness are techniques of domination, requiring participants’ obedience.

The conclusion to be drawn from this explanation is that bureaucratic exercise of power in UNESCO may be rationally in proportion for the maintenance of organizational stability and survival but for participants it is out of proportion for the effective use of their organizational capital.

“Sometimes I really wonder about this organization ... it’s almost as if they don’t want us to succeed ... the nonsense that comes out ... the incredible things like the meetings and demands for something ... and staffing ... there’s so much that should be fixed. Paris has no idea,” (P6).

Step two overview

Governments’ (and national commissions’) power is intrinsic and although their power may vary and is sometimes challenged, they are usually free to act as they choose. Their use of power could be described as rational and moral: it is rational because any form of organization requires stability. It is moral in the sense that governments have the responsibility to survive to care for their people. However, the effect of the use of power is limitations of participants’ power in their work.

In UNESCO power as domination was not intended but developed and is most visible in its bureaucratic processes. Foucault (1988, in Hindess, 1996: 19) would explain that the technologies of authority are located “between the games of power and the states of domination,” and the lines of authority in UNESCO reflect this situation especially. Their existence also suggests that UNESCO does not have “identitative power” with strong field staff loyalty and compliance, so overt controls are needed (Gortner et al, 1997: 205).

The chief source of concern in this step is when the rational and moral focus of control is on processes of work rather than results, so that processes become the results (Hancock, 1989: 101) or that “process (comes) before substance and form before function ... controls become ends in themselves,” (Sergiovanni, 1992: 40). The literature and participants’ experience support the view that UNESCO’s emphasis on normalizing field behaviour through its lines of authority turns the lines into power techniques for surveillance and control and they become the end of, rather than the process for, participants’ work. It is at this point that control becomes domination.

The test of the claims about the domination in this step would be to imagine participants with considerable autonomy in the organization. It would increase their power but they would still be limited in the field because of the power of governments and national commissions. Conversely, if nothing changed in the bureaucracy but governments and national commissions became fully cooperative, participants would remain limited in power because of the operation of the bureaucracy.

In practice, the domination is balanced by participants’ powers as described in Step One and by their resistance or ‘loyal opposition’ but as participants indicate, they frequently feel dominated by the control of headquarters.

STEP THREE: PARTICIPANTS' AGENCY

"What would be happening if we weren't here? Who would be the advocates for this (named) programme? Who would have organized it, managed the funds, monitor ...? When we hand it over to the government it will be established, a real benefit to the country ... it is already ... I think our work is valuable," (P3).

Power as compliance and resistance

Theorists list a variety of power sources that include expertise, educational attainment and formal position (Nohria 1992, in Hickman, 1998:293) while others add the ability to reward or apply coercive measures, legitimacy of position and psychological association with a group (Gortner et al, 1997: 321). As steps one and two indicate, participants have personal capacity and the rights of position and post but they do not have abilities to reward or coerce and their group association is tentative. Further, they do not have control over what Nohria (1992:293) calls critical resources and contingencies, as step two suggests. However, they do have a special power in their control of compliance and resistance in the many paradoxes of leadership that Barach and Eckhardt identify (1996, in Hickman, 1998: 68-78).

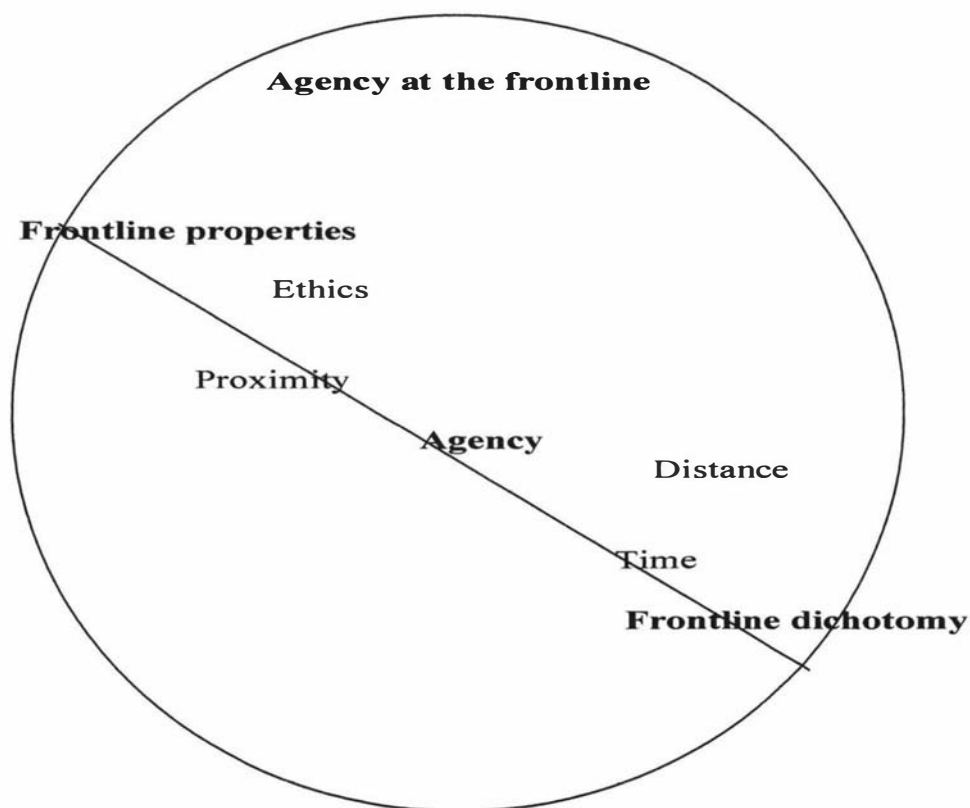
Freedom of choice

Weber and Foucault are both interested in the freedom of the individual in an organization. For Foucault (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 59, 70) there is always a correlative field of knowledge with every relationship of power and he argues that knowledge is necessary to keep the "games of power ... played with the minimum of domination," (Foucault in Hindess, 1996: 153). Knowledge acquisition is especially important for resistance and its operation requires freedom. The work of both theorists indicates that issues of freedom are important and so they are revisited in this step. Compliance and resistance are exercises of individual choice and even if participants have only compliance or resistance

(thus logically no unfree action) the selection of one action is an exercise of freedom to reject another.

UNESCO's rhetoric says that all heads are important and previous chapters have stressed their considerable organizational capital. Therefore, if "power ultimately rests with the governed," (Barach and Eckhardt, 1996, in Hickman, 1998: 67-68) then participants are able to use position and personal capacity to comply with or resist techniques of power in UNESCO. Foucault (1979, in McHoul and Grace, 1998:85) stresses that relationships of power are productive and this is the theme of this step: participants' exercise of freedom in their work is always intended to be productive. In this step only the bureaucracy is used as the focus of an explanation of participants' power as compliance or challenge.

Figure 17: Step three of participants' power



Power as compliance

When compliance in organizations is considered, it is clear that consent may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for either a causal or predictive explanation. Consent usually means a full knowledge of choices, sufficient reasoning to evaluate options, freedom in which to make them and a willingness to exercise rational choice. Theorists, however, provide varied explanations for obedience. Weber's three explanations of habit, expediency and belief in legitimacy (Giddens, 1971:157; Weber, 1978: XC; LXXXIX) are more general than Foucault's claim that people consent because they are trained into responsible behaviour by their previous education and experience then spatially separated and trained again with the normative gaze of others, in and out of surveillance. Consent, from either perspective, is a problematic concept.

Participants' motives for obeying can be explained in both Weberian and Foucauldian terms. First, headquarters' communication carries the legitimacy of the centralized authority of the bureaucracy and it is expediency, or the consequences of non compliance, on which participants focus. This does not mean that compliance is a negative response. Participants use their power as reasoning people to decide the most productive response to bureaucratic domination. If they obey, resources are provided, necessary approvals are given or important information is provided. Generally, participants decide more is to be gained with compliance than resistance.

Second, Foucault's thesis of knowledge is also suggested. Because of the combination of their experiences before joining, and their spatial separation in UNESCO, they have learned to be self-monitoring: new knowledge, such as the diplomatic and media skills not provided by the bureaucracy are needed in their work and are quickly learned.

Interestingly, as participants' contributions and *Figure 16* indicate, obedience does not bring reward. J.M. Burns (1978, in Hickman, 1998:58) claims, that "at the root of bureaucratic conflict lies some kind of struggle for power and prestige," but participants' work is rarely recognized by UNESCO's bureaucracy and their struggles are for freedom not prestige. Further, UNESCO's surveillance highlights deviancies and differences for correction but not exemplary conduct for recognition (Foucault in McHoul and Grace, 1998: 72).

If UNESCO's bureaucracy has to limit participants' freedom to preserve the organization then it might be claimed, by rational calculation, that the power of the bureaucracy would be difficult to resist not only because hierarchical domination is difficult to resist but also because the intent of preserving stability has a moral sense to it. This moral concern for stability may, therefore, explain why some organizations "manufacture consent" (Hardy and Clegg in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 322). Compliance may be gained in ways that deny rational consent; consent may not be requested but action or non-action justified as consensual because of lack of resistance, compliance may be forced with no attempt at justification or compliance may be so often exercised that it becomes a norm of behaviour and consent is presumed.

Further, organizations may restrict options, exclude issues from decision-making groups, shape perceptions so that employees "accept their role in the existing order of things," (Hardy and Clegg in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 373) or outflank employees "because they do not know enough to resist – or because they know rather too much concerning the futility of such action," (Ibid: 374). Manufactured consent is useful for organizations as it prevents conflict from becoming public (Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Hindess, 1996) and hidden conflict cannot attract support from others who are dissatisfied. In these ways manufactured consent provides hidden support for bureaucratic power, regardless of the reason for its exercise. Weber expects thoughts and desires to set the context of power but in manufactured consent thoughts are the

result of power and any examination of the ethical issues involved will be difficult.

In UNESCO it is unusual for either compliance or resistance to be generally visible and this is partly because of manufactured consent (such as the control of meeting agendas described in Chapter Four) but especially because of the size of headquarters with five programme areas and numerous administrative units spread across three main buildings in two different streets. This quantitative explanation of the bureaucracy is important. Lines of authority may, as surveillance techniques, provide information to headquarters about participants' differences and deviancies but this does not make them individually important.

Further, the unequal numerical relationship of power between headquarters and the field is visible to participants in the daily numerous bureaucratic communications they receive; although communications have many sources, all are sent to the head of office and the cumulative effect is powerful. However, participants' responses are returned to the source of the communication and so are scattered through the bureaucracy. Importantly, they are not aggregated in any central office. Continuing compliance, therefore, is not only the expected norm; it is visible in only one small part of the bureaucracy - a reason for the bureaucracy's non recognition of good work. Conversely, challenge is so infrequent and not 'normal' that it draws attention to itself wherever it is aimed and this produces a response of bureaucratic power to manage the challenge to keep it hidden.

Foucault claims that thought is what enables an individual to determine action with, or reaction to, any problem and that thought is, therefore, a freedom "in relation to what one does," (Foucault in Kelly, 1994: 260). He also claims that in turn freedom is the condition and content of morality and it is critical thinking that brings mature adulthood in which people assume responsibility for their lives (Kelly, 1994: 260). In this way people become ethical by Foucault's terms: "What is morality if not the practice of

liberty?” Participants, therefore, use their reasoning to determine what they will do. Compliance may have differing explanations but, in general, participants use the freedom that post separation offers to exercise reasoned and responsible compliance with the intention of enhancing their work in the field. It may seem ironical that some cite their most successful work as their office work but each does so with the qualification that a well organized office is necessary for programme work.

Power as resistance or challenge

Weber’s explanations of compliance (habit, expediency and recognition of legal authority) if reversed might explain some resistance. However, these reasons are not sufficient to explain participants’ resistance and other explanations may be more probable. The claim is that an explanation for resistance and challenge lies with frontline properties.

Weber expects resistance as a natural part of social interaction in organizations. In *Economy and Society* he provides detailed explanations of legitimate authority, domination of different types and changes in history but his concern is generally with the reasons for holding power. People may “withdraw their recognition,” of charismatic leaders (1978: 1115) or “struggle ... against created laws,” (Weber, 1978: XXXV) but Weber says little about how they do this in his explanation of social justice and individual rights.

Foucault, in contrast, is concerned with the techniques of resistance and claims that resistance is only possible when people use reason based on a critical assessment of reason’s epistemic conditions and limits (Kelly, 1994: 261-8). His explanation is presented not in terms of general principles of rationality but in terms of rationalities that are “local, specific and historically contingent,” (Kelly, 1994: 228). Resistance, therefore, is most usefully aimed at specific techniques of power. He claims that:

“the problem is not of trying to dissolve (the relations of power) in the utopia of a perfectly transparent communication but to give oneself the rules of law, the techniques of management, and also the ethics, the ethos, the practices of self, which would allow these games of power to be played with a minimum of domination,” (1988, in Kelly, 1994: 391).⁷⁴

Foucault’s explanation underpins this account of participants’ resistance and the term is restricted to those small actions participants often take in their work.

Proximity and distance: context of minor resistance

As Chapter Six indicates, participants’ resistance includes ignoring emails from Paris, not telling headquarters everything, refusing to do the same work twice for different sections of the bureaucracy by referring the second request back to the first requestee, delaying answers, avoiding speaking to senior people when more junior staff are likely to provide success, organizing support from a strong national commission, lobbying, asking ‘network’ friends in headquarters for information to help with resistance or trying to change a decision by telephoning rather than putting something in writing. These actions are hidden, individual, on-going, bring few repercussions and are sometimes successful.

Two reasons explain these minor and usually condoned acts of resistance. First, when participants’ views about proximity are examined, the dominant view is that being close to the countries they serve gives knowledge that is in opposition to *headquarters’ lack of knowledge*. Not all headquarters staff have familiarity with

⁷⁴ In this claim Foucault is not proposing a normative ideal of humans. Rather, their non-ideal is the result of domination and anything else is utopia, he claims (Hindess, 1996: 149). As well, by ethics Foucault means the relation one has to oneself (McHoul and Grace, 1998: 24).

countries served by the post⁷⁵ and, significantly, they do not know much about the work of the office itself. Their knowledge is confined to a particular programme or administrative function and little more. Participants' superior local knowledge is a significant reason for much of their resistance and in this way they are empowered by the space of the field office.

Second, being distant from headquarters not only increases participants' autonomy but also increases headquarters' *surveillance difficulties*. Participants say that different sections of headquarters do not talk to each other; they say that some of their mail is not read or answered too late to be effective and they say that some of their communications are dealt with by junior staff. As well, as explained above, the size of the central bureaucracy makes it impossible for any centralized surveillance of what they are doing: their acts of resistance are not aggregated and so are hidden. Consequently, participants are able to exercise small and calculated acts of resistance because of *headquarters' lack of knowledge* and because its size produces *surveillance difficulties*.

Time and ethics: explanations for challenge

Participants move from small acts of resistance to larger and more difficult actions that, in this section, are called challenges. Participants talk of direct refusal to carry out orders and this study notes occasions when, as members of groups of heads, jointly or individually but in partnership, they sent strong statements of concern to headquarters, such as the appeal to the rules that give them the right to participate in interviews of candidates for posts in their offices. Some participants also spoke of visits they made to Paris to try to change a decision. These actions are visible, often group-based, infrequent, bring few repercussions and are sometimes successful. Challenges (as well as resistance), in

⁷⁵ When a DG visit to a country is being planned the appropriate field office is asked to supply considerable political, social, economic and other information for his briefing.

keeping with Foucault's advice, are always aimed at a specific mechanism of power and not at the organization (Mills, 2003: 38).

The frontline properties of time and ethics suggest reasons for challenges. Participants spend a lot of their time on a variety of administrative work, time that is lost to programming. As the discussion of their organizational capital indicates, they regret this loss of time. *Challenge takes time to prepare*, especially if it is in cooperation with other heads or partners and participants will not lightly give up such time when they believe that, usually, it will fail.

Hassard (in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 327-344) explores images of time and its "inevitable scarcity," in organizations and emphasizes that whether time is metaphorically cyclic or linear, it is important. As Hassard explains, participants' experience of time is different from that of colleagues in headquarters because they must handle everything but the same items are dealt with by numerous individuals in the bureaucracy. Consequently, the time balance favours bureaucratic power and suggests a reason for the few challenges.

However, Weber's account (1978:590-601) of the tensions and compromises between religious ethics and politics suggests that considerations of time may be outweighed by other considerations. This is not a claim that participants have strong religious beliefs that influence their work but they frequently talk of the ethical issues in their work. Consequently, the *strong ethical nature of their intangible capital* will sometimes over ride time and possible failure considerations and participants will chose a response that matches what Weber calls the ethics of responsibility (Chapter Five).

Participants know that theoretically they have the freedom to choose what to do and that only one right choice is available. They also know that they must use reason to make the right decision but if the bureaucracy is defining reason in pragmatic terms of

governments' interests then reason may not provide the right choice. Participants, consequently, must trust their belief in the ethics of their practice. As one participant said:

“UNESCO has huge contradictions but we work on conviction,”
(P4).

Participants, therefore, challenge infrequently because it *takes time to prepare* and the norm of time usage favours the bureaucracy but they do challenge occasionally because of the *strong ethical nature of their intangible capital*.

Frontline dichotomy: power and freedom

Foucault claims:

“I think it is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated they become impossible to understand. Each can only be understood through the other,”
(1994:356).

This claim indicates a dichotomy of the frontline.

When participants' options for compliance and resistance are considered, the frontline dichotomy looks like double jeopardy. The organizational class of being-at-the-frontline and the group of not-being-in-headquarters is each disempowering because of spatial differentiation and the consequential, space reinforcing, limitation of their power. Consequently, participants appear to be caught in Weber's cage of rationalization or Foucault's cage of knowledge and, ironically, help to reinforce the categorizations by their compliance and (in Foucault's view) assisting with their own surveillance.

However, the frontline separation is also the state of freedom in which participants exercise their options for compliance or resistance. The state of *being separate*, therefore, is not necessarily always disempowering and it provides three important freedoms: freedom to develop field partnerships for support, freedom to take initiatives that are unknown to the central bureaucracy and freedom to use field knowledge to explain and justify actions, especially those of resistance. Each of these freedoms is balanced, as explained above, by rational calculations of probable results. Because participants are not in headquarters they are not visible and the class or group that defines them also loses them in the many corridors of centralized bureaucracy. It is too hard to watch all heads all the time, (which is why UNESCO tries to make them self-regulating) and some heads are able to slip through the gaps of surveillance (Danaher et al, 2000: 75).

The freedom of the state of *being separate* is supported by England's image of cats in dogs' clothing: participants appear compliant but in practice are actually more categorically autonomous than the bureaucracy knows (England, 2001:7). One way in which participants reveal their cat-like individuality is with the rejection of assumptions in headquarters' operation. Their rejection may be conditioned by epistemic discourse or it may be the result of pragmatic appraisal of the context of their work but whatever its source, participants, although committed to UNESCO's goals, reject the assumptions of its bureaucratic processes.

The condition of *being separate* also has its problems. It offers a point of entry for the bureaucracy to challenge field offices and all heads, because separateness opposes the norm of organizational unity and this may explain the increasing centralization that participants describe. More importantly *being separate* enables the bureaucracy to dominate each head one at a time so that domination is hidden. Participants' intangible capital, therefore, might not be the source and strength of their challenges but could be explained as the result of careful organizational conditioning to

ensure their general commitment and compliance. However, this possibility implies a sophistication of surveillance and control that is not evident: it may be that “surveillance techniques have become a fundamental part of life in modern western societies,” (Danaher et al, 2000: 54) but they are not yet fully developed in UNESCO.

“When I think about what to do I try to balance our ethical mission against whatever I’m worried about. I know the needs here but time is limited to try to change something from Paris,” (P2).

Step three overview

In this step participants’ power at the frontline is explained in two ways: through the practices of compliance and resistance and through the frontline dichotomy of separateness that gives participants some freedom of decision-making.

Foucault’s emphasis on the techniques of power suggests that participants’ knowledge of bureaucratic processes and effects is important for resistance and compliance. As well, Weber’s inclusion of values and beliefs in his description of what shapes both society and individual actions, suggests that participants’ intangible capital is significant when challenge, especially, is considered. Although Foucault does not support the idea of the autonomous moral person in systems of control he does believe that people:

“can critically-reflectively detach themselves from these systems; they can in any case make creative use of whatever space for formation of the self these systems permit or provide,” (McCarthy, 1990 in Kelly, 1994: 268)

At the frontline this is what participants are doing. Perhaps the final way of explaining this is: “There is nothing to be said about freedom, except that within its space we construct our ethics and our lives,” (Hacking in Kelly, 1994: 306).

This step, therefore, claims that participants gain power because they are at the frontline. *Separateness* gives them freedom in which to exercise compliance and resistance and their reasons for doing so arise from the interaction of frontline properties. The rationalities of their situation and the practice of responsible ethics provide opportunities in which power is used either to comply or resist.

One test of this claim is to imagine that the bureaucracy had very effective control systems that reduced participants to formulaic work only. Compliance and resistance then cease to exist as options because participants' freedom to exercise agency has gone. A different test is to imagine the bureaucracy holding all the field knowledge currently held by participants. This would produce changes in processes that in turn would improve participants' power.

In practice, participants are close to Sergiovanni's "loyal opposition" and their use of power to comply or resist is strongly guided by their strong sense of "what is good gets done" (Sergiovanni, 1992: 27).

STEP FOUR: THE CIRCLE OF POWER

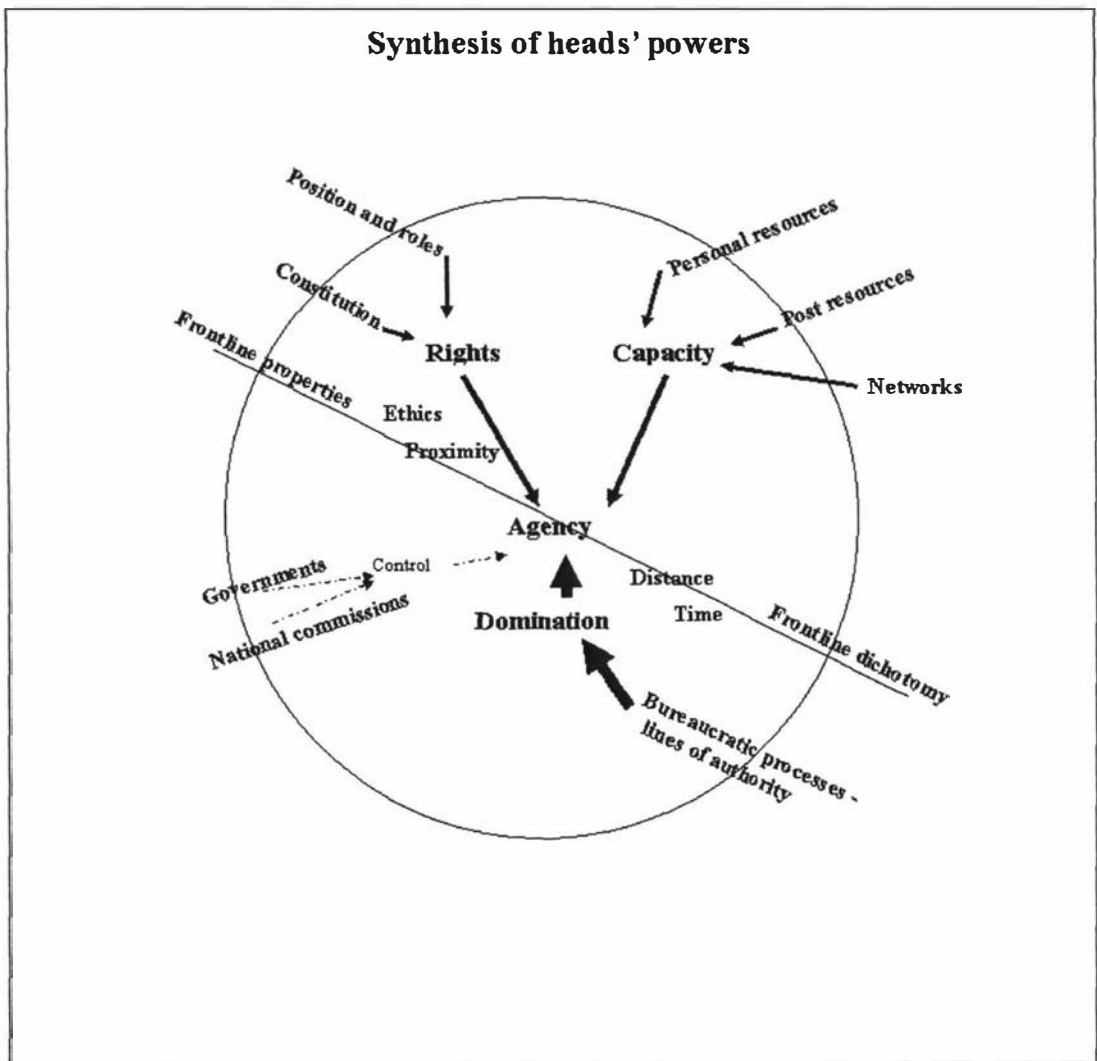
" I always felt that a P5 regional sector adviser was the best post you could get in UNESCO ...working in one's own field of competence, never having to have the hassles of management (personnel, vehicles, recruitment, responsibility for accounts etc) and just dealing with a small number of projects. How nice would that be?" (P6).

Synthesis

When the preceding steps are combined as shown in *Figure 17*, a complex and interactive picture of participants' power emerges. It can be summarized as:

Power gained as a right or as capacity, is exercised and evidenced in programme work and in compliance, resistance and challenge in the freedom of separateness at the frontline but is constrained by the integral control of governments and national commissions and by processes in the bureaucracy.

Figure 18: Step four: the circle of participants' power



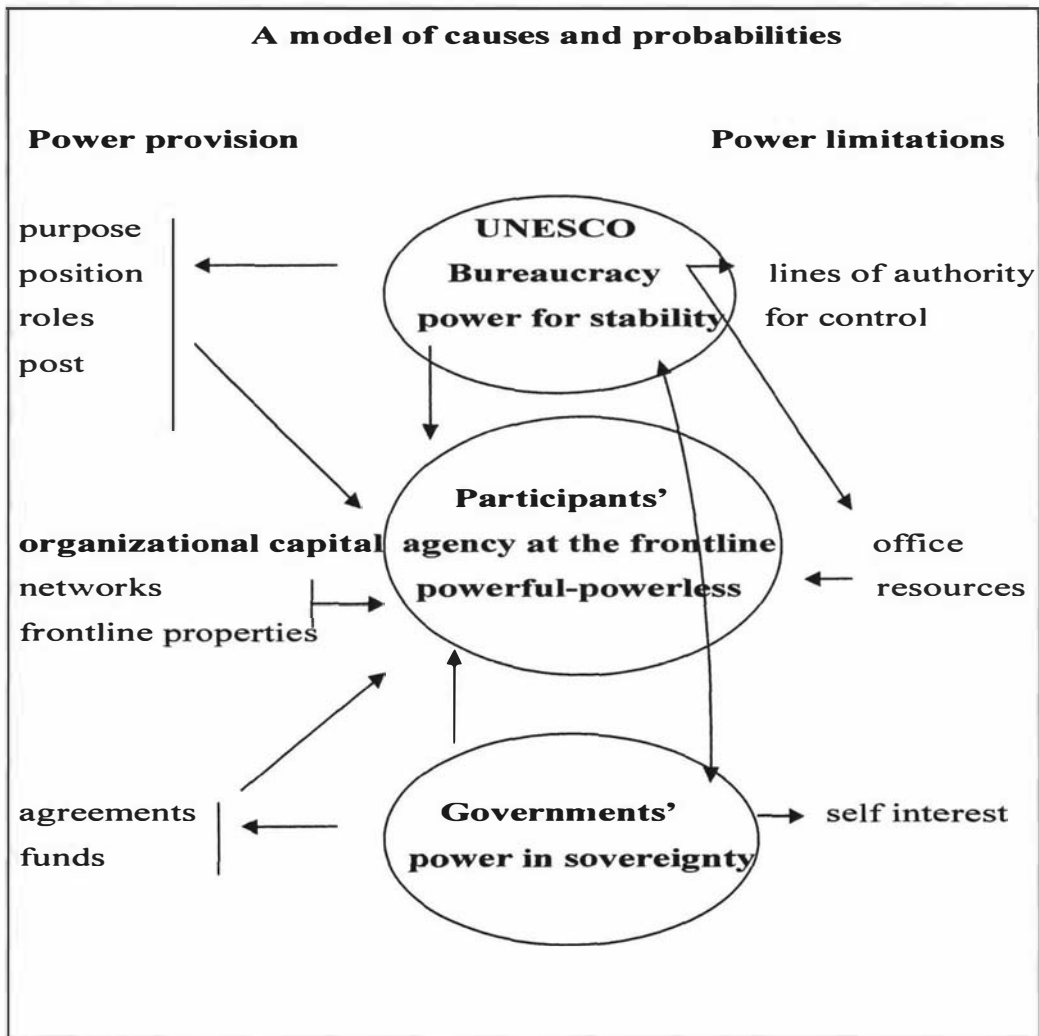
Participants' power position in UNESCO, therefore, is problematic and paradoxical. It is problematic because their power is constrained from two directions. It is paradoxical because, as the boundary managers of their field environment, they are squeezed, as one participant said, by competing forces, but in spite of those

constraints, participants do exercise power in the organization and in their cluster countries to support work for peace and development.

The Janus syndrome

Figure 19 reorders and simplifies the circle of power to provide a model of participant’s power, called in this study the Janus syndrome.

Figure 19: the Janus syndrome: the paradox of the power of participants



Participants in some ways are the Janus of UNESCO: they represent the past and the future and they represent peace and development through knowledge. However, one face is necessarily focussed on the organization and its imperatives while the other face is turned to the doors of the countries they serve.

The model reflects the conceptual framework with its integration of bureaucracy, organizational capital and the frontline and the conclusions reached in each concept. The three views of power discussed in this chapter (sources, limitations and agency) are also integrated. The model places the bureaucracy symbolically in a dominant position since participants are employed by and responsible to UNESCO and it is bureaucratic processes that concern participants especially. The inclusion of governments reflects the other major concern of participants and also the role governments play in the Janus syndrome.

The model has predictive potential, according to the properties of each item and their variations in time. Significant changes in one will produce changes in all others and in the resulting situation participant heads' power will also change. Following Weber's advice, this study offers predictive probabilities. The probabilities are first, that participant heads in any future research will be as capable and committed as those in this study. Second, it is probable that the considerable power those participants have in their organizational capital will continue to be constrained by the bureaucracy to maintain organizational stability. Third, it is probable that those participants will also continue to be caught between bureaucratic belief in, and the practice of, control and the sovereignty and self-interest of governments. Next, it is probable that the participants' separation from their headquarters, although making them different, will continue to offer freedom for compliance, resistance or challenge and that whatever choice is made it will be a positive use of knowledge and power, either as a calculation that obedience will bring most rewards or as a belief that resistance or challenge will have more value for the programmes they are developing.

Two fundamental problems

Participants' power is neither inconsequential nor absolute. However, two fundamental problems with their power are visible in this analysis. First, UNESCO uses bureaucratic processes that do not fit current international needs (Archer, 2001; Ashkenas et al, 1995; Clegg and Hardy, 1999; Hickman, 1998; Morgan, 1997). Although its history and responses to member states interests have produced changes to structure and work, UNESCO's bureaucratic processes have merely grown. The result is a partly mechanistic, partly contingent instrumental organization that continues to operate with systems from a previous time. Morgan (1997:156) could be describing the effect when he explains that it is rare for an organization to be just autocratic but "many organizations have strong autocratic tendencies and characteristics." The literature is clear that organizations need some form of rationality but it should be appropriate for its context. If participants continue to work in contexts characterized by political instability, poverty, human rights violations and a paucity of literacy then the organizational structure that intends to improve those conditions should be structured to support participants' work.

The second problem follows from the first. UNESCO's bureaucratic processes do not match the organizational skills of participants. England (2001:1) says that "(T)he UN system ... finds it difficult to achieve an optimal balance between the disciplines of an institution and the individuality of its staff," and this study supports his view. The bureaucratic operations are hierarchical and dominating and, in theory, require staff who are focussed on their administrative work. However, participants are also diplomats and technical experts and the bureaucracy's domination of time reduces the work that can be carried out in these roles. The result is a mis-match between bureaucratic requirements and participants' knowledge, experience and skills that, participants' responses indicate, limits their contribution to peace and development.

Bennis and Nanus (1985:5-6) claim that “The key driver in the twenty-first century is likely to be the speed and turbulence of technological of change – a virtual tsunami of change,” and, consequently, most organizations will be filled with knowledge workers and will be flatter and less hierarchical. The participants have knowledge, experience and skills - and roles and responsibilities - that would be more useful in a less hierarchical organization. As long as the mis-match between organizational capital and the organization’s bureaucratic model lasts, participants will not be able to use all of their capital to support UNESCO’s mandate.

CONCLUSION

“We have a grand visionand small tasks,” (P1).

Paradoxes

The initial assumption of this study was that the defining characteristic of the participants would be a paradox: the powerful-powerless participant head of a UN field office. The conclusion reached is that the paradox exists but it is contained in a second paradox that positions UNESCO as a powerful voice of international standards and hopes but powerless when constrained by national interests and actions.

Discussion of the second paradox, the powerful-powerless organization, is outside this research but for the first paradox a possible theory can be developed using ideas from Weber and Foucault. “If the accumulation of capital was one of the fundamental traits of our society, the same is true of the accumulation of knowledge,” (Foucault, 1994: 291). UNESCO has accumulated considerable knowledge in the bodies of its staff. Knowledge accumulation has to be turned into productivity and this could be difficult when that knowledge is owned by the staff, not the organization.

However, UNESCO has its own forms of polymorphous, polyvalent power. They include economic (provision of salary and other monetary support), political (set the rules, give orders) and juridical (punish and reward). These powers enable UNESCO to buy an individual's knowledge and time and turn them into labour time. It does this through "a whole set of little powers," (Foucault, 1994: 87) that are constantly exercised by surveillance so that participants become self-monitoring and also instruments of their own domination. Knowledge accumulation is not separate from the mechanisms of those little powers and its accumulation and control realize Weber's fear that although work should bring self-realization, the effects of its rationality may prevent this and curtail participants' power. Consequently, participants must use Weber's ethics of responsibility or Foucault's practices of the self, with some resistance and challenge, in the freedom of their separate space, to avoid absolute domination by the bureaucracy and to enhance their power.

Peace and development cannot be generalized, centralized or bureaucratized. In an organization that appears to reflect England's claim of the paradox of "half anarchy and half micromanagement," participants are critical staff in UNESCO's frontline work for knowledge exchange and acquisition for peace and development. As long as they are constrained in their power they believe they will not be able to support the vision as well as is possible.

Proposals for improving frontline work

"This is all about the difference between making us do what is good for us and allowing us to choose what is good for us. We need real regional desks in BFC with posts of P5 in training to replace heads, then HQ might have better knowledge of what should happen in the field," (P6).

Participants believe some changes would improve their frontline power and also strengthen UNESCO as an organization.

First and generally, participants agree that a more focussed approach to the division of work is needed. They suggest that headquarters should have only a global focus while they implement the programmes. Funding used by headquarters for their special interests should be allocated to the field to strengthen that work.

Second, the bureaucracy should follow Drucker's advice (in Ashkenas et al, 1995: 328) to leaders of staff who are keen and able: "get out of their way." Participants believe that all heads should be allowed more autonomy especially in their programme work. The bureaucracy should allow them to develop programmes according to their cluster of countries' needs and these regional proposals should not be buried in the global and generalizing programmes of headquarters. Further, the bureaucracy should stop using all heads as distant secretaries: country data, previously sent reports and responses to the many questionnaires should be centrally accessible and not have to be re-sent each time someone in headquarters wants a copy.

Next, UNESCO's rhetoric about reform is about decentralization and implementation of that reform could be improved by just a few changes. First, participants think that heads of large offices or clusters should have a deputy or other staff members to respond to all routine and repetitive administrative work. This work should be separate from that of any finance management post the office may and ought to receive. Second, a unit in headquarters should be established to centralize, clarify and reduce the communication overload. BFC already exists and could be such a unit but it would have to be staffed appropriately. It could be a good training area for headquarters staff interested in becoming a head of office and should include training in such skills gaps as participants identify. Generally, the goal of the unit has to be to reduce the pressure of lines of authority and make lines of information more useful.

Third, participants believe all heads should have more authority in the selection of international staff for their office and they should

have real power, including resources, for staff development, sanctions and rewards. The intent of these proposals is to “liberate their potential and increase capacity,” (Hickman, 1998: 565)

Fourth, and more difficult, are proposals that address deep-seated assumptions in the bureaucracy. For the changes above to happen, a centralized will must exist. However, the assumptions participants identify in the bureaucracy suggest that the will is not yet present. If the twenty-first century needs UNESCO as an international organization to promote the value and acquisition of knowledge, and its inherent virtues of ethics, justice and development so that war is no longer a technique of diplomacy or an instrument of governments’ policies, then UNESCO must practise some of the lessons she teaches. In particular, the bureaucracy has to develop assumptions that allow decentralized decision-making, encourage initiative, understand mistakes and promote all heads from being separate-and-needing-control to being partners-and-needing-support.

Participants indicate another change could be made to the anomalous position, roles and powers of national commissions. If UNESCO clarified the work they and field offices carry out some field difficulties would be resolved quickly. If all governments supported their national commissions with full and knowledgeable staff, their role in UNESCO would also improve. Governments will not allocate resources to national commissions unless they value the work they do; this is an advocacy role UNESCO headquarters could undertake strenuously.

The final change, and one that interests organization and leadership literature, is the development of networks. Participants suggest that an important contribution to their power would be institutionalized and regular meetings with other heads, both in regions and in headquarters. However, these meetings would establish useful networks only if heads set the agenda and manage the meeting. Manufacturing consent in meetings is discussed above and should have no place in a heads’ network.

“What more can we do? Be more proactive re teaching peace values, more on conflict resolution methods, training for peace ... there’s so much more we could do,” (P4).

Further problems for study

Much more needs to be learned about heads and their work and many questions are still to be asked. Further studies with a similar group of heads, either in UNESCO or in other UN agencies, or with heads who are newer in their posts than the more experienced heads in this study would be valuable. The challenge would be, in Foucault’s terms, less about revealing an individual’s traits and skills but more broadly about “rendering the individual knowable,” (Townley 1994, in Clegg and Hardy, 1999: 151).

An obvious first question about heads of offices is whether the financial rewards of UN work have any influence on their continuing to work in the UN when so much about it frustrates them. Some writers suggest that for at least some heads, salary and other generous conditions of employment are the only reason for staying and one scathingly labels many field workers as the “aristocracy of mercy,” (Hancock, 1989: 75). Others, however, claim: “The evidence seems clear: self-interest is not powerful enough to account fully for human motivation,” (Sergiovanni, 1992: 23). A closer focus on motivation might challenge the assumptions about field work that are described in Chapter Five and could lead into interesting psychological studies of heads at work.

A second question could focus on the Table of Delegated Authority. If the operation of all, or a representative sample of, the 122 types of authority were examined for compliance and resistance a very full picture of UNESCO’s bureaucracy at work would be possible.

A different question could examine heads’ programme work closely for its impact in the countries they serve. This study did

not try to cover programme effectiveness but some of the literature is critical about results (Caufield, 1996; Hancock, 1989, Jones, 1988; Stiglitz, 2002). Some action research might aim to improve some known problematic projects by gaining permission for heads to use more initiative than they are currently allowed. Would the results be different if heads had no increase in power but had the extra time they say they need?

The literature also stresses the inter-organizational characteristic of much international work and this is another area for more research. Participants work to develop partnerships and value them but they say they have too many partners and too little time. How can this problem be resolved?

To challenge or qualify participants' views it would be valuable to ask this study's questions of directors who are in headquarters, especially those who have never worked in the field. Equally interesting would be similar questions to field office staff who are not the heads. The literature is clear that leadership studies should include 'followers' and their perceptions of whatever the focus of the research is (Barach and Eckhardt, in Hickman, 1998: 51-2; Hughes et al, 1996 in Hickman 1998: 75-6).

A further balance would be research with national commissions, members of executive board, permanent delegates and any other significant groups with whom all heads work. Some of this research could develop a more in-depth understanding of official and hidden power in UNESCO, as the literature suggests. It would be important also to develop case studies of IGOs and INGOs as their literature suggests similar bureaucratic challenges and similar problems for field staff.

Since the impression most people have of the UN and its agencies comes from the media, it would be useful to have a longitudinal study of some international television, radio and print coverage of the UN to identify range of topics, approaches and depth of coverage. It is possible that a 'good press' might be significant

because “the media have played a central role in the development of modern institutions,” (Giddens, 1997: 379).

Relativism is a major concern in theory and it has been so for this research. Further study would provide valuable knowledge of the important, generally hidden work of heads and it might also provide theory that has stronger predictive capabilities than contained in this report. Further studies would then also provide a sound base from which improvements to policies and practices could be developed. This work might start with Foucault’s interest in the “the possibility of being other than we are, of thinking other than we do,” (Kelly, 1994: 299) and show what heads in the future could become.

The future

Until much more is known about the work of UN heads of field offices, it is probable that their situation and experiences will not change. They will continue to be powerful as highly placed, skilled and motivated agents of their agencies yet limited in power as their bureaucracies and governments determine. It is improbable that UN bureaucracies will change significantly but it is probable that, if networks, especially of peers, and of improved national commissions, grow stronger, then heads’ power will increase.

It is often said that if UNESCO did not exist it would have to be created because its work is so important. Its successes in many areas of knowledge are significant for national development and peace and more is to be done. However, as long as governments control the organization and its context, UNESCO and the UN generally will remain powerful-powerless bodies, limited by interests outside of their control. Nonetheless, the reform process in UNESCO is ongoing and it is possible that further changes may improve the practices that participants describe negatively. Until these changes come about, the participants, like Janus, will continue to face both ways at the bridge of knowledge that links the UN and national development. They exemplify the paradox of

the powerful/powerless in any level of any society: they are sometimes free to choose but are more often free to choose what is permitted.

Participants' power at the frontline may be problematic but all spoke enthusiastically about their programme work and its ethical mission, as is indicated by two participants whose positive words conclude this study.

"We serve our committee and are the conscience of the world. How to do both? How to serve your board of directors and maintain your conscience? Well, you can't play the game if you are out of the game. So we must maintain our conscience and stay in the game. We must maintain also our credibility. We must stay in the game and not offend. There's a lot of tension in the world in the way some of the board members behave. A possible answer is to counter balance the powerful by working to ensure the less powerful operate from a conscience and an ethical mandate. And to give them skills to help themselves. Is there anyone else to do our work? Others, but we have a neutrality and that's special. The power of the UN is that no government will willingly turn a back on it. People turn their back on UNESCO but for very specific reasons and interestingly, they come back," (P3).

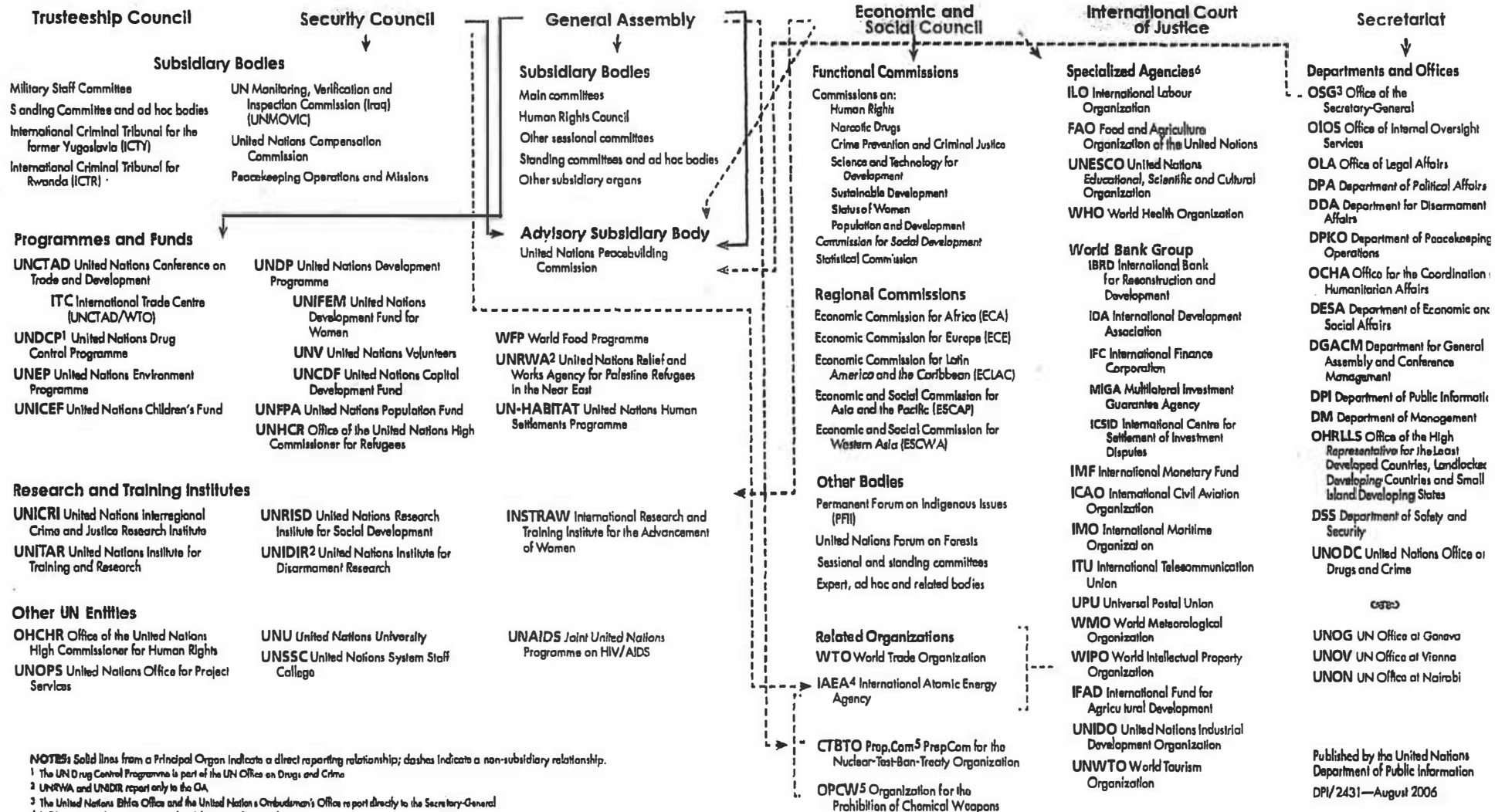
"Much of our work is invisible. Networks, advocacy, contributions to meetings ... I think our power is that we push not our own agendas like donors. Our messages might be hard, like freedom of the press but we carry valuable ideas that generally are hard to deny ... at least openly. And we don't cause trouble for governments. We are technical, practical and that's really a big help to everyone. In our region UNESCO is seen as useful and that's good, I think. We can't solve all the problems but ... we can't give all the answers but sometimes we have good questions, well ... challenges perhaps. The power of heads since many years ago is in our intellectual and ethical advocacy and that's important," (P7).

APPENDICES

	Page	
Appendix 1	Diagram of the United Nations Organization	290
Appendix 2	Standard position and post advertisement	291
Appendix 3	Constitution of UNESCO	292
Appendix 4	Organizational chart of UNESCO	297
Appendix 5	Questionnaire One	298
Appendix 6	Questionnaire One synthesis of responses	303
Appendix 7	Questionnaire One response sheet for follow up to synthesis	308
Appendix 8	Questionnaire Two	310
Appendix 9	Questionnaire Two synthesis and response sheet for follow up questions	315
Appendix 10	Outline of semi-structured interview	320
Appendix 11	Guide for observation in offices	321
Appendix 12	Initial collation and follow up analysis of operational and core assumptions	322
Appendix 13	Information sent to participants and to UNESCO	324
Appendix 14	Visa approval from UNESCO for the research	328
Appendix 15	Example of Consent Form	331

The United Nations System

Principal Organs



NOTES: Solid lines from a Principal Organ indicate a direct reporting relationship; dashes indicate a non-subsidiary relationship.

¹ The UN Drug Control Programme is part of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime

² UNRWA and UNIDIR report only to the GA.

³ The United Nations Ethics Office and the United Nations Ombudsman's Office report directly to the Secretary-General

⁴ IAEA reports to the Security Council and the General Assembly (GA)

⁵ The CTBTO Prep.Com and OPCW report to the GA

⁶ Specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the UN and each other through the coordinating machinery of the ECOSOC at the intergovernmental level, and through the Chief Executive Board for coordination (CEB) at the inter-secretariat level.

STANDARD POSITION AND POST ADVERTISEMENT



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Director (D-1)
UNESCO Office in:

FOR UNESCO STAFF MEMBERS AND IN THE UN SYSTEM ONLY

Main responsibilities

Under the overall authority of the Director-General and the supervision of the Director, Bureau for Field Coordination, and in close consultation with all Assistant Directors-General, the Director of UNESCO Office ~~XXXXXX~~ will be responsible for the formulation, execution and evaluation of the programmes of the Office and for the management of the Office. This will include providing intellectual, strategic and operational leadership in planning and implementing activities responding to priority needs of the Member States of the Cluster ~~XXXXXX~~ in all fields of competence of UNESCO (education, sciences, culture and communication); maintaining close consultation and cooperation with national authorities, with UN agencies as part of the UN country teams, with development banks, NGOs, and bilateral organizations with a view to providing input for sub-regional, regional and global programming; generating projects and mobilizing corresponding funding from extra budgetary sources. This will also include the management of the Office's human resources,

administration and operations, in line with the Organization's policies and procedures, including effective internal controls.

The incumbent will act as UNESCO Representative in the host country of ~~XXXXXX~~ and other Member States of the Cluster, informing high officials and the media alike of UNESCO's policies and ongoing programmes and activities, and providing policy advice to Ministers, and other decision-makers as appropriate. He/she will maintain close consultative relations with the National Commissions for UNESCO, develop synergies with and among them and strengthen their capacities. The incumbent will also work closely with the Organization's programme sectors at Headquarters, with the specialized regional offices and other cluster and national offices in the region to ensure consistent strategies as well as pro-active, innovative and responsive programming.

Qualifications and experience

- Higher university degree at doctoral level or equivalent, in a field related to UNESCO's mandate.
- At least 10 years' relevant professional experience, including wide experience in development issues related to the fields of competence of UNESCO, in association with national and international organizations.

- Basic computer skills.
- Excellent command of written and spoken French and good working knowledge of English, other working languages of the General Conference (Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish) would be an asset.

Competencies

The successful candidate should be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Ability to plan strategically and manage an extensive programme;
- Provide intellectual leadership for the staff; lead and motivate

- teams in a multicultural environment; ensure continuous, training and development of staff;
- Communicate effectively and persuasively, orally and in writing.
- Establish plans and priorities and implement them effectively.

Terms and conditions

The post is at grade D 1 common to the United Nations system, with a salary composed of base salary and post adjustment, which, at the present dollar exchange rate, totals approximately

US\$91,500 (without dependants) or US\$99,000 (with dependants) per annum, exempt from taxation. In addition, an international benefits package is offered.

How to apply:

Staff members of UNESCO and the UN system wishing to apply should use the website: <http://www.unesco.org/joining/>.

Should you not have easy access to Internet, you may exceptionally, send your full application in English or French to Chief, Recruitment and Staffing Section, Bureau of Human Resources Management, 7 Place de Fontenay 75352 Paris 07-SP, France. Applications should reach UNESCO at the latest 7 May 2003. Please quote post number ~~XXXXXX~~

Applications from qualified women candidates are encouraged, as are applications from under- or non-represented Member States

Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

'Since wars begin
in the minds of men,
it is in the minds of men
that the defences of peace
must be constructed'

The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare:

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;

That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

For these reasons, the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives;

In consequence whereof they do hereby create the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the purpose of advancing, through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind for which the United Nations Organization was established and which its Charter proclaims.

ARTICLE I. *Purposes and functions*

1. The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world,

without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.

2. To realize this purpose the Organization will:
 - (a) Collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image;
 - (b) Give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture:
By collaborating with Members, at their request, in the development of educational activities;
By instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social;
By suggesting educational methods best suited to prepare the children of the world for the responsibilities of freedom;
 - (c) Maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge:
By assuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science, and recommending to the nations concerned the necessary international conventions;
By encouraging co-operation among the nations in all branches of intellectual activity, including the international exchange of persons active in the fields of education, science and culture and the exchange of publications, objects of artistic and scientific interest and other materials of information;
By initiating methods of international co-operation calculated to give the people of all countries access to printed and published materials produced by any of them.
3. With a view to preserving the independence, integrity and fruitful diversity of the cultures and educational systems of the States Members of the Organization, the Organization is prohibited from intervening in matters which are essentially within their domestic jurisdiction.

ARTICLE II. *Membership*

1. Membership of the United Nations Organization shall carry with it the right to membership of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
2. Subject to the conditions of the Agreement between this Organization and the United Nations Organization, approved pursuant to Article X of this Constitution, States not Members of the United Nations Organization may be admitted to membership of the

- Organization, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference.
3. Territories or groups of territories which are not responsible for the conduct of their international relations may be admitted as Associate Members by the General Conference by a two-thirds majority of Members present and voting, upon application made on behalf of such territory or group of territories by the Member or other authority having responsibility for their international relations. The nature and extent of the rights and obligations of Associate Members shall be determined by the General Conference.
 4. Members of the Organization which are suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership of the United Nations Organization shall, upon the request of the latter, be suspended from the rights and privileges of this Organization.
 5. Members of the Organization which are expelled from the United Nations Organization shall automatically cease to be Members of this Organization.
 6. Any Member State or Associate Member of the Organization may withdraw from the Organization by notice addressed to the Director-General. Such notice shall take effect on 31 December of the year following that during which the notice was given. No such withdrawal shall affect the financial obligations owed to the Organization on the date the withdrawal takes effect. Notice of withdrawal by an Associate Member shall be given on its behalf by the Member State or other authority having responsibility for its international relations.

ARTICLE III. *Organs*

The Organization shall include a General Conference, an Executive Board and a Secretariat

ARTICLE IV. *The General Conference*

A. *Composition*

1. The General Conference shall consist of the representatives of the States Members of the Organization. The Government of each Member State shall appoint not more than five delegates, who shall be selected after consultation with the National Commission, if established, or with educational, scientific and cultural bodies.

B. *Functions*

2. The General Conference shall determine the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization. It shall take decisions on programmes submitted to it by the Executive Board.
3. The General Conference shall, when it deems desirable and in accordance with the regulations to be made by it, summon international conferences of States on education, the sciences and humanities or the dissemination of knowledge; non-governmental conferences on the same subjects may be summoned by the General Conference or by the Executive Board in accordance with such regulations.
4. The General Conference shall, in adopting proposals for submission to the Member States, distinguish between recommendations and international conventions submitted for their approval. In the former case a majority vote shall suffice; in the latter case a two-thirds majority shall be required. Each of the Member States shall submit recommendations or conventions to its competent authorities within a period of one year from the close of the session of the General Conference at which they were adopted.
5. Subject to the provisions of Article V, paragraph 6 (c), the General Conference shall advise the United Nations Organization on the educational, scientific and cultural aspects of matters of concern to the latter, in accordance with the terms and procedure agreed upon between the appropriate authorities of the two Organizations.
6. The General Conference shall receive and consider the reports sent to the Organization by Member States on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in paragraph 4 above or, if it so decides, analytical summaries of these reports.

7. The General Conference shall elect the members of the Executive Board and, on the recommendation of the Board, shall appoint the Director-General.

C. *Voting*

8. (a) Each Member State shall have one vote in the General Conference. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority except in cases in which a two-thirds majority is required by the provisions of this Constitution, or the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference. A majority shall be a majority of the Members present and voting.
- (b) A Member State shall have no vote in the General Conference if the total amount of contributions due from it exceeds the total amount of contributions payable by it for the current year and the immediately preceding calendar year.
- (c) The General Conference may nevertheless permit such a Member State to vote, if it is satisfied that failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member State.

D. *Procedure*

9. (a) The General Conference shall meet in ordinary session every two years. It may meet in extraordinary session if it decides to do so itself or if summoned by the Executive Board, or on the demand of at least one third of the Member States.
- (b) At each session the location of its next ordinary session shall be designated by the General Conference. The location of an extraordinary session shall be decided by the General Conference if the session is summoned by it, or otherwise by the Executive Board.
10. The General Conference shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall at each session elect a President and other officers.
11. The General Conference shall set up special and technical committees and such other subsidiary organs as may be necessary for its purposes.
12. The General Conference shall cause arrangements to be made for public access to meetings, subject to such regulations as it shall prescribe.

E. *Observers*

13. The General Conference, on the recommendation of the Executive Board and by a two-thirds majority vote, subject to its rules of procedure, invite as observers at specified sessions of the Conference or of its commissions representatives of international organizations, such as those referred to in Article XI, paragraph 1.
14. When consultative arrangements have been approved by the Executive Board for such international non-governmental or semi-governmental organizations in the manner provided in Article XI, paragraph 4, those organizations shall be invited to send observers to sessions of the General Conference and its commissions.

ARTICLE V. *Executive Board*

A. *Composition*

1. (a) The Executive Board shall be elected by the General Conference and it shall consist of fifty-eight Member States. The President of the General Conference shall sit *ex officio* in an advisory capacity on the Executive Board.
- (b) Elected States Members of the Executive Board are hereinafter referred to as 'Members' of the Executive Board.
2. (a) Each Member of the Executive Board shall appoint one representative. It may also appoint alternates.
- (b) In selecting its representative on the Executive Board, the Member of the Executive Board shall endeavour to appoint a person qualified in one or more of the fields of competence of UNESCO and with the necessary experience and capacity to fulfil the administrative and executive duties of the Board. Bearing in mind the importance of continuity, each representative shall be appointed for the duration of the term of the elected Member of the Executive Board, unless exceptional circumstances warrant his replacement. The alternates appointed by each Member of the Executive Board shall act in the absence of its representative in all his functions.

3. In electing Members to the Executive Board, the General Conference shall have regard to the diversity of cultures and a balanced geographical distribution.
4. (a) Members of the Executive Board shall serve from the close of the General Conference which elected them until the close of the second ordinary session of the General Conference following that election. The General Conference shall, at each of its ordinary sessions, elect the number of Members of the Executive Board required to fill vacancies occurring at the end of the session.
- (b) Members of the Executive Board are eligible for re-election. Re-elected Members of the Executive Board shall endeavour to change their representatives on the Board.
5. In the event of the withdrawal from the Organization of a Member of the Executive Board, its term of office shall be terminated on the date when the withdrawal becomes effective.
- B. *Functions*
6. (a) The Executive Board shall prepare the agenda for the General Conference. It shall examine the programme of work for the Organization and corresponding budget estimates submitted to it by the Director-General in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article VI and shall submit them with such recommendations as it considers desirable to the General Conference.
- (b) The Executive Board, acting under the authority of the General Conference, shall be responsible for the execution of the programme adopted by the Conference. In accordance with the decisions of the General Conference and having regard to circumstances arising between two ordinary sessions, the Executive Board shall take all necessary measures to ensure the effective and rational execution of the programme by the Director-General.
- (c) Between ordinary sessions of the General Conference, the Board may discharge the functions of adviser to the United Nations, set forth in Article IV, paragraph 5, whenever the problem upon which advice is sought has already been dealt with in principle by the Conference, or when the solution is implicit in decisions of the Conference.
7. The Executive Board shall recommend to the General Conference the admission of new Members to the Organization.
8. Subject to decisions of the General Conference, the Executive Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall elect its officers from among its members.
9. The Executive Board shall meet in regular session at least four times during a biennium and may meet in special session if convoked by the Chairman on his initiative or upon the request of six members of the Executive Board.
10. The Chairman of the Executive Board shall present, on behalf of the Board, to the General Conference at each ordinary session, with or without comments, the reports on the activities of the Organization which the Director-General is required to prepare in accordance with the provisions of Article VI.3 (b).
11. The Executive Board shall make all necessary arrangements to consult the representatives of international organizations or qualified persons concerned with questions within its competence.
12. Between sessions of the General Conference, the Executive Board may request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice on legal questions arising within the field of the Organization's activities.
13. The Executive Board shall also exercise the powers delegated to it by the General Conference on behalf of the Conference as a whole.

ARTICLE VI. *Secretariat*

1. The Secretariat shall consist of a Director-General and such staff as may be required.
2. The Director-General shall be nominated by the Executive Board and appointed by the General Conference for a period of six years, under such conditions as the Conference may approve. The Director-General may be appointed for a further term of six years but shall not be eligible for reappointment for a subsequent term.

The Director-General shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization.

3. (a) The Director-General, or a deputy designated by him, shall participate, without the right to vote, in all meetings of the General Conference, of the Executive Board, and of the Committees of the Organization. He shall formulate proposals for appropriate action by the Conference and the Board, and shall prepare for submission to the Board a draft programme of work for the Organization with corresponding budget estimates.
- (b) The Director-General shall prepare and communicate to Member States and to the Executive Board periodical reports on the activities of the Organization. The General Conference shall determine the periods to be covered by these reports.
4. The Director-General shall appoint the staff of the Secretariat in accordance with staff regulations to be approved by the General Conference. Subject to the paramount consideration of securing the highest standards of integrity, efficiency and technical competence, appointment to the staff shall be on as wide a geographical basis as possible.
5. The responsibilities of the Director-General and of the staff shall be exclusively international in character. In the discharge of their duties they shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might prejudice their positions as international officials. Each State Member of the Organization undertakes to respect the international character of the responsibilities of the Director-General and the staff, and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties.
6. Nothing in this Article shall preclude the Organization from entering into special arrangements within the United Nations Organization for common services and staff and for the interchange of personnel.

ARTICLE VII. *National co-operating bodies*

1. Each Member State shall make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the government and such bodies.
2. National Commissions or National Co-operating Bodies, where they exist, shall act in an advisory capacity to their respective delegations to the General Conference, to the representatives and alternates of their countries on the Executive Board and to their Governments in matters relating to the Organization and shall function as agencies of liaison in all matters of interest to it.
3. The Organization may, on the request of a Member State, delegate, either temporarily or permanently, a member of its Secretariat to serve on the National Commission of that State, in order to assist in the development of its work.

ARTICLE VIII. *Reports by Member States*

Each Member State shall submit to the Organization, at such time and in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference, reports on the laws, regulations and statistics relating to its educational, scientific and cultural institutions and activities, and on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in Article IV, paragraph 1.

ARTICLE IX. *Budget*

1. The budget shall be administered by the Organization.
2. The General Conference shall approve and give final effect to the budget and to the apportionment of financial responsibility among the States Members of the Organization subject to such arrangement with the United Nations as may be provided in the agreement to be entered into pursuant to Article X.

Organization, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference.

3. Territories or groups of territories which are not responsible for the conduct of their international relations may be admitted as Associate Members by the General Conference by a two-thirds majority of Members present and voting, upon application made on behalf of such territory or group of territories by the Member or other authority having responsibility for their international relations. The nature and extent of the rights and obligations of Associate Members shall be determined by the General Conference.
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B. *Functions*

2. The General Conference shall determine the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization. It shall take decisions on programmes submitted to it by the Executive Board.
3. The General Conference shall, when it deems desirable and in accordance with the regulations to be made by it, summon international conferences of States on education, the sciences and humanities or the dissemination of knowledge; non-governmental conferences on the same subjects may be summoned by the General Conference or by the Executive Board in accordance with such regulations.
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6. The General Conference shall receive and consider the reports sent to the Organization by Member States on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in paragraph 4 above or, if it so decides, analytical summaries of these reports.

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(b) A Member State shall have no vote in the General Conference if the total amount of contributions due from it exceeds the total amount of contributions payable by it for the current year and the immediately preceding calendar year.
(c) The General Conference may nevertheless permit such a Member State to vote, if it is satisfied that failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member State.

D. *Procedure*

9. (a) The General Conference shall meet in ordinary session every two years. It may meet in extraordinary session if it decides, to do so itself or if summoned by the Executive Board, or on the demand of at least one third of the Member States.
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12. The General Conference shall cause arrangements to be made for public access to meetings, subject to such regulations as it shall prescribe.

E. *Observers*

13. The General Conference, on the recommendation of the Executive Board and by a two-thirds majority may, subject to its rules of procedure, invite as observers at specified sessions of the Conference or of its commissions representatives of international organizations, such as those referred to in Article XI, paragraph 4.
14. When consultative arrangements have been approved by the Executive Board for such international non-governmental or semi-governmental organizations in the manner provided in Article XI, paragraph 4, those organizations shall be invited to send observers to sessions of the General Conference and its commissions.

ARTICLE V. *Executive Board*

A. *Composition*

1. (a) The Executive Board shall be elected by the General Conference and it shall consist of fifty-eight Member States. The President of the General Conference shall sit *ex officio* in an advisory capacity on the Executive Board.
(b) Elected States Members of the Executive Board are hereinafter referred to as 'Members' of the Executive Board.
2. (a) Each Member of the Executive Board shall appoint one representative. It may also appoint alternates.
(b) In selecting its representative on the Executive Board, the Member of the Executive Board shall endeavour to appoint a person qualified in one or more of the fields of competence of UNESCO and with the necessary experience and capacity to fulfil the administrative and executive duties of the Board. Bearing in mind the importance of continuity, each representative shall be appointed for the duration of the term of the elected Member of the Executive Board, unless exceptional circumstances warrant his replacement. The alternate appointed by each Member of the Executive Board shall act in the absence of its representative in all his functions.

3. The Director-General may accept voluntary contributions, gifts, bequests and subventions directly from governments, public and private institutions, associations and private persons, subject to the conditions specified in the Financial Regulations.

ARTICLE X. *Relations with the United Nations Organization*

This Organization shall be brought into relation with the United Nations Organization, as soon as practicable, as one of the Specialized Agencies referred to in Article 57 of the Charter of the United Nations. This relationship shall be effected through an agreement with the United Nations Organization under Article 63 of the Charter, which agreement shall be subject to the approval of the General Conference of this Organization. The agreement shall provide for effective co-operation between the two Organizations in the pursuit of their common purposes, and at the same time shall recognize the autonomy of this Organization, within the fields of its competence as defined in this Constitution. Such agreement may, among other matters, provide for the approval and financing of the budget of the Organization by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

ARTICLE XI. *Relations with other specialized international organizations and agencies*

1. This Organization may co-operate with other specialized inter-governmental organizations and agencies whose interests and activities are related to its purposes. To this end the Director-General, acting under the general authority of the Executive Board, may establish effective working relationships with such organizations and agencies and establish such joint committees as may be necessary to assure effective co-operation. Any formal arrangements entered into with such organizations or agencies shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Board.
2. Whenever the General Conference of this Organization and the competent authorities of any other specialized inter-governmental organizations or agencies whose purpose and functions lie within the competence of this Organization deem it desirable to effect a transfer of their resources and activities to this Organization, the Director-General, subject to the approval of the Conference, may enter into mutually acceptable arrangements for this purpose.
3. This Organization may make appropriate arrangements with other inter-governmental organizations for reciprocal representation at meetings.
4. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization may make suitable arrangements for consultation and co-operation with non-governmental international organizations concerned with matters within its competence, and may invite them to undertake specific tasks. Such co-operation may also include appropriate participation by representatives of such organizations on advisory committees set up by the General Conference.

ARTICLE XII. *Legal status of the Organization*

The provisions of Articles 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations Organization concerning the legal status of that Organization,

its privileges and immunities, shall apply in the same way to this Organization.

ARTICLE XIII. *Amendments*

1. Proposals for amendments to this Constitution shall become effective upon receiving the approval of the General Conference by a two-thirds majority; provided, however, that those amendments which involve fundamental alterations in the aims of the Organization or new obligations for the Member States shall require subsequent acceptance on the part of two thirds of the Member States before they come into force. The draft texts of proposed amendments shall be communicated by the Director-General to the Member States at least six months in advance of their consideration by the General Conference.
2. The General Conference shall have power to adopt by a two-third majority rules of procedure for carrying out the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE XIV. *Interpretation*

1. The English and French texts of this Constitution shall be regarded as equally authoritative.
2. Any question or dispute concerning the interpretation of this Constitution shall be referred for determination to the International Court of Justice or to an arbitral tribunal, as the General Conference may determine under its Rules of Procedure.

ARTICLE XV. *Entry into force*

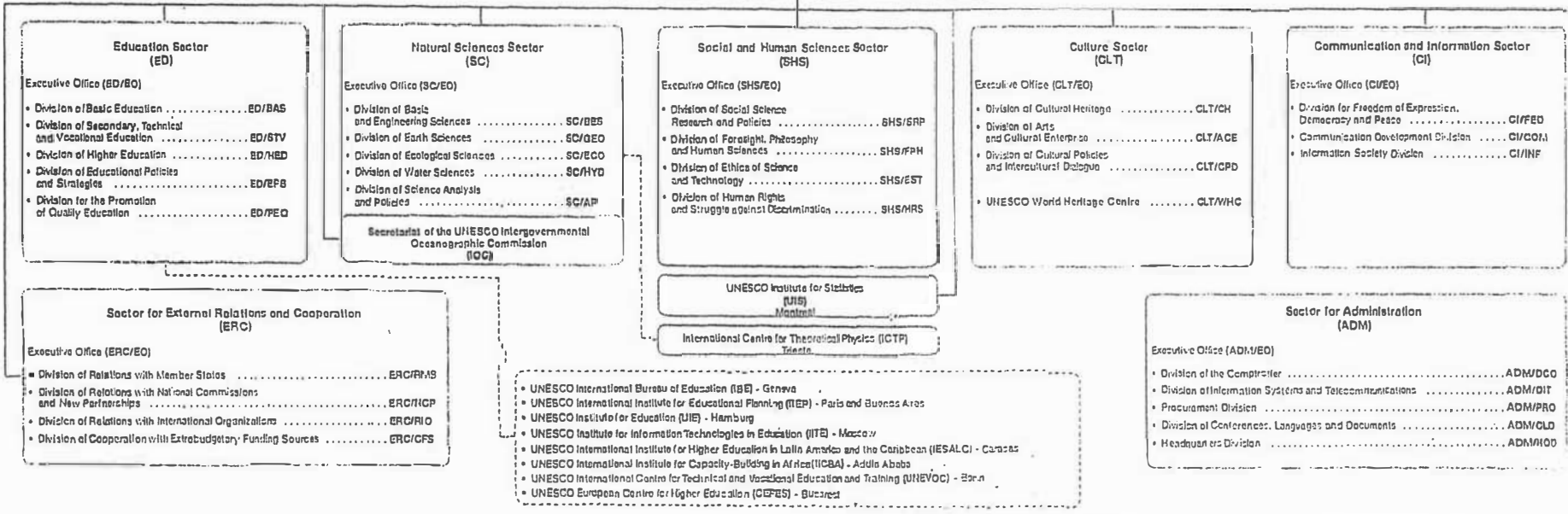
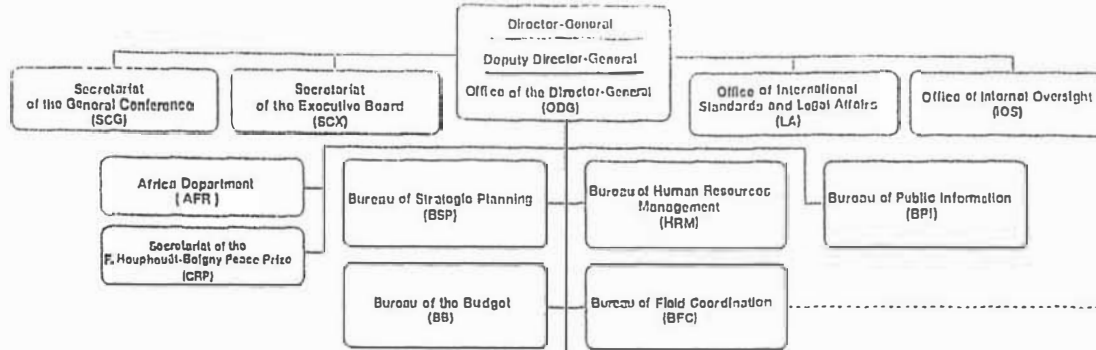
1. This Constitution shall be subject to acceptance. The instrument of acceptance shall be deposited with the Government of the United Kingdom.
2. This Constitution shall remain open for signature in the archives of the Government of the United Kingdom. Signature may take place either before or after the deposit of the instrument of acceptance. No acceptance shall be valid unless preceded or followed by signature. However, a State that has withdrawn from the Organization shall simply deposit a new instrument of acceptance in order to resume membership.
3. This Constitution shall come into force when it has been accepted by twenty of its signatories. Subsequent acceptances shall take effect immediately.
4. The Government of the United Kingdom will inform all Members of the United Nations and the Director-General of the receipt of all instruments of acceptance and of the date on which the Constitution comes into force in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

In faith whereof, the undersigned, duly authorized to that effect, have signed this Constitution in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

Done in London the sixteenth day of November, one thousand nine hundred and forty-five, in a single copy, in the English and French languages, of which certified copies will be communicated by the Government of the United Kingdom to the Governments of all the Members of the United Nations.



**Organizational Chart
of the UNESCO Secretariat
2002-2003**



UNESCO ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



297

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Questionnaire one

Explanation

The aim of this first questionnaire is to find out what heads of field offices do and how they carry out their work. The questionnaire is arranged according to the three roles heads are required to fulfill.

Instructions for completion

A: a number of tasks, and the processes for their completion, are listed under each role.

1. Mark the Yes/No columns appropriately to indicate if you do/do not carry out that task or process.
2. Add tasks or processes to each column that, from your experience, are a part of the work of the role. This may include expanding items already listed.
3. Use the last column for comments about frequency or anything else you may wish to say. Obstacles and problems that may affect the process or advantages and support you have that help the process should be noted.

B: please answer the questions in the spaces provided.

Please return the completed questionnaire by (insert date) to: ednatait@samoa.ws or by diplomatic pouch to Edna Tait Director, UNESCO, Apia, Samoa.

Please note: completion and return of this questionnaire implies that you consent to answer the questions. Thank you for your participation.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 02/137. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this project, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Regional Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North; telephone (646) 350 5249 or email S.V.Rumball@massey.ac.nz

Role one: diplomatic representative of the Director General and UNESCO

Task	y/N	Process	y/N	Comment
UN cooperation		Attend meetings eg Heads of Agencies.		
IGO cooperation		Attend meetings, information exchange.		
Diplomatic corps participation		Attend meetings, lunches, dinners		
Host government contacts		Meetings with PM, Ministers, senior officials. Attend ceremonies, parties, parades. Communicate messages to/from Headquarters.		
Contacts with governments in office cluster		Visit heads, Ministers, senior officials at least once a year.		
Contacts with civil society organizations		Letters, phone calls, meetings.		
Media contacts		Interviews writing articles, press releases.		
UNESCO's image development		Writing and giving speeches at conferences.		

Role two: head of office

Task	Y/N	Process	Y/N	Comment
<p>Funds: (local currency US\$ and FABS)</p> <p>Physical resources: (lease, vehicles, computers, printers etc, library, cleaners)</p> <p>Staff: (local, international, training, leave, biennial performance reports)</p> <p>Communication: (mail, diplomatic pouch, visitors, instructions from Hqrs, Reports for Hqrs.)</p> <p>Systems: (registry, local network, copyright, distribution procedures)</p> <p>General Conferences:</p> <p>National Commissions</p>		<p>Approve all accounts, check, sign cheques, check monthly reconciliation.</p> <p>Monitor: - inventory, - maintenance, - replacement.</p> <p>Appoint local staff, all: staff meetings, complete forms, manage personal and discipline problems.</p> <p>Respond daily as appropriate.</p> <p>Monitor.</p> <p>Attend heads' meetings, separate meetings with colleagues.</p> <p>Letters, phone calls.</p>		

Role three: expert and technical adviser in one of UNESCO's fields of work (education, natural sciences, social sciences, culture or communication)

Task	Y/N	Process	Y/N	Comment
Regular programme development		Consult National Commissions and other appropriate groups. Draft cluster contributions for C/4, C/5 and all other planning.		
Regular programme implementation		Select consultants Prepare contracts Monitor progress Evaluate Receive report.		
Regular programme budget		Monitor payments.		
Extrabudgetary Programmes		Identify, develop, find donor, Implement.		
SISTER		Enter all projects if possible.		
Technical advice to governments and other bodies for their programmes		Meetings, mail, telephone.		
Contribute to DG reports to Exec. Board		Complete forms, write reports.		

SECTION B: General

1. The role that takes the most time is -----
because -----

2. The role that should take the most time is -----
because -----

3. The most important work I do is -----

because -----

4. My most successful work so far is -----

because -----

5. My most difficult work so far is -----

because -----

SYNTHESIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ONE

Purpose, practice and power; an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Synthesis of Responses to Questionnaire One, Section A

Heads of offices were almost in total agreement about the particular tasks of the three roles they perform. The responses to each role are as follows.

Role A: diplomatic representative of the Director General and UNESCO

For all heads the focus of this work is other UN agencies, IGOs, NGOs, host and cluster government ministers and officials and the diplomatic corps. They all also maintain contacts with the media. The process involves attending meetings and ceremonies, writing and giving speeches, communication by writing and telephone. The development of UNESCO's image is an underlying task in this role. The frequency of Role A activities varies considerably from weekly to monthly and, for cluster visits, twice a year.

Role B: head of office

The tasks for this role are the management of funds, physical resources, staff, communication, office systems, general conferences and national commissions. The process requires monitoring the work of the Administration Officer who is generally responsible for the initial work with funds, physical resources and systems. Process also requires the daily handling of mail, especially requests from headquarters, communication with national commissions and attending general and other required conferences in headquarters. Frequency of activities is almost daily and reports for headquarters and working with national commissions are the most time-consuming tasks. For one head visitors are also time-consuming.

Role C: expert and technical adviser in one of UNESCO's fields of work (education, natural sciences, social sciences, culture or communication)

The tasks performed in this role are the development of regular and extra-budgetary programmes, providing technical advice to cluster government officials and to other bodies. Reporting programme activities and results to headquarters is also one of the tasks in this role. Two tasks not carried out by heads are preparation of contracts and entering programme actions into SISTER. The process includes consultations, drafting and monitoring the work of programme specialists and the AO. For one head, with few professional staff, most of the tasks and the work processes are the head's work alone. This role is carried out daily.

An analysis of the responses to Part A indicates that the dominant activity in all roles is communication. In Role A talking and listening predominate but in roles B and C writing and reading become slightly more important. The most time-consuming tasks generally reported are working with national commissions, cooperating in the UN system and communications to and from headquarters.

Synthesis of Questionnaire One, Section B

(Five sentence-completion questions)

The responses of the four heads of field offices varied but all gave very interesting perspectives on the work of heads of field offices.

Specific responses to each question are as follows with words likely to identify the respondent omitted:

- 1 The role that takes the most time is:
 - a) the review and correction of documents because of the relative inexperience of interns, volunteers and young consultants;
 - b) representation because it involves attending lengthy openings/closures of ceremonies, dinners and the possible preparation of speeches;
 - c) liaising at all levels, "massaging contacts"; this includes staying on top of correspondence and giving guidance to staff because this is the core of the work
 - d) management of office because of the dramatic shortage of staff.

- 2 The role that should take the most time is:
 - a) developing strong partnerships and relations with outside partners because this can lead to resource mobilization and greater scope for UNESCO action;
 - b) all should take equal time because, for our impact, a good balance is necessary between external and internal work;
 - c) as for c above;
 - d) programme implementation because I have to monitor implementation of outposted colleagues.

3 The most important work is:

- a) try to enhance the visibility of the Organization and develop partnerships because this approach helps greatly in strengthening the credibility of UNESCO and securing extra budgetary funds;
- b) head of office because it involves delegating some representation tasks to staff and supervising their technical work. The role of head of office has a multiplier effect with delegation. This is why the role of head of office must be done every day, although

representation and technical work can be concentrated in some specific days in the week;

- c) building the team between the office and the cluster countries and within the office (and donors) because this work will empower us to address the mandate;
- d) devise a sector strategy for the area served by the office because it is the core of all activities the office will implement.

4 The most successful work so far is:

- a) reorganization of the office and the development of a strategic vision in collaboration with National Commissions because this has created the beginning of a team spirit on which to build our work and attain our objectives;
- b) head of office because the team of professional staff has the critical mass that allows response to a large number of requests and needs from the authorities, headquarters and partners;
- c) building bridges with the UN, strengthening the office team, building relationships within host country and wider region and beginning to win support for our work;
- d) launching and consolidating a forum of sector Ministers in the region because it gives political and technical back up needed for an increased presence of UNESCO in the region.

5 The most difficult work so far is:

- a) dealing with too many "partners": National Commissions, host government, headquarters, regional bureaux and civil society because in this complex environment it is very difficult to coordinate efforts effectively;
- b) representation because we have no training in diplomatic etiquette, no budget to entertain authorities and donors at the level they entertain us and because representation at ceremonies is generally foreseen at the last minute, upsetting all careful planning of the programme;
- c) staying on top of email! And other correspondence ie staying on top of things. Receptions and social events are also a drain; because with a number of countries, something important one should not miss is always happening in one country when I'm in another!

d) bureaucratic relations with headquarters because it takes a lot of time for very meager results.

An overview of each question reveals a high degree of general agreement.

Question 1: three of the four responses make explicit reference to staff and the fourth response implies staff, as is evident in 3b from the same respondent. Three respondents refer explicitly to writing (documents, speeches, correspondence) and it is implied in the response of 1d. The overview suggested is *people and paper*.

Question 2: programme implementation is suggested both directly (2d) and indirectly (2a, 2b) while liaising and partnerships are suggested directly (2a, 2c) and indirectly (2b, 2d). The overview suggested is *people and programme*.

Question 3: some key words emerged including visibility and credibility of UNESCO, multiplier effect, mandate and strategy. Together these words might summarize heads' work. The dominant picture is of partnership development, whether strengthening, supervising and delegating, building or devising and so the overview suggested is *promoting partnerships*.

Question 4: two responses indicate specific accomplishments (4a, 4d) but all four suggest that strategies are important whether as a shared vision, a shared office response to requests for assistance or to win support for work. All of the responses seem to focus on the wider UN and political context. The overview suggested is *strategic planning with partners*.

Question 5: responses could almost be a summary of the core challenges in the work: too many partners, too many representational tasks, too much correspondence and too much organizational bureaucracy. Each challenge affects planning, coordination and "the ability to stay on top of things". The overview here seems to be *complexity of work context*.

Summary

The general picture that emerges from this analysis is of heads of offices busy with strategic planning and the production of appropriate infrastructure, developing partnerships in and out of the office, to promote the achievement of programme objectives. Much time is spent with people and with correspondence in a work context where external responsibilities are difficult and internal and headquarters organizational imperatives take "a lot of time for very meager results".

A vertical analysis through all questions suggests a similar picture.

Time emerges as a significant factor in heads' work. It can be planned but upset by unexpected as well as expected representational duties. Considerable amounts are needed to stay on top of things such as email and following bureaucratic rules and requirements. Time is needed for working with documents, managing the office, guiding staff and "massaging contacts". Larger duties such as developing partnerships and over-viewing staff work are also time consuming. One-off activities such as reorganizing an office, developing a strategic vision with National Commissions, devising a sector strategy or consolidating a Ministers Forum require time. The most continuous use of time is the role of management of the office and "must be done every day".

A second factor that emerges is working with people. This has two parts to it and the first is the professional staff. Inexperienced interns, volunteers and young consultants produce extra work for heads and so does "a dramatic shortage" of staff. Work with out-posted staff requires different but equally necessary monitoring support and colleagues in headquarters produce other work requirements. In contrast, a good "critical mass" in the office helps heads to meet requests from countries and headquarters. In all responses building "team spirit" is seen as very important. In a different way, people outside of the office are equally important. Establishing good relationships, building strategic frameworks for action, responding to requests and generally being a participant in

ceremonial and other important events are all aspects of heads working with people. The reasons given for the need for external partnerships are "visibility ... for ... resource mobilization", "increased presence of UNESCO in the region" and to "empower us to address the mandate".

It is too soon for conclusions to be drawn about the work but the role that is dominant in this analysis is that of Role B, head of office or manager of time and people.

RESPONSE SHEET FOR SYNTHESIS COMMENTS

Purpose, practice and power; an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Response sheet for the synthesis of question one, section A

Role A: diplomatic representation	Comment
<p>Key task is cooperation with: UN agencies IGOs CSOs diplomatic corps host government cluster governments media other?</p> <p>Key processes are: listening talking other?</p>	
<p>Role B: head of office</p> <p>Key tasks are monitoring: funds physical resources systems other?</p> <p>communication: headquarters</p>	

national commissions
staff
other?

Key processes are:
reading
writing
other?

Role C: expert and technical adviser

Key tasks are:
monitoring: regular programme
extra-budgetary programme
other?

communication: cluster governments
other organizations
other?

Key processes are:
reading
writing

QUESTIONNAIRE TWO

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Questionnaire Two

Explanation

The aim of this questionnaire is to confirm or adjust the list of key tasks and processes of heads of field offices. The questions in the first section reflect the responses to the first questionnaire and are again arranged according to the three roles of heads of offices. The questions in the second section have a more general coverage, arising from your comments in the first questionnaire.

Instructions for completion

1. Please add to or delete the items listed in the first section and indicate a priority order. Comments for your responses will be appreciated.
2. Please complete the sentences and circle in the spaces provided in the second section.

Please return the completed questionnaire to me by the end of July if possible to:

ednatait@samoa.ws or by diplomatic pouch to Edna Tait, Director, UNESCO, Apia, Samoa.

Please note: completion of this questionnaire implies that you consent to answer the questions. Thank you for your participation.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. PN Protocol 02/137. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this project, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Chair, Massey University Regional Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, New Zealand; telephone (646) 350 5249 or email S.V.Rumball@massey.ac.nz

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Response sheet for the synthesis of question Two, section *2.1*

Question one: the role (work) that takes the most time is:

people
paper

Question two: the role (work) that should take the most time is:

people
programme

Question three: the most important work is:

partnership/ team building

Question four: the most successful work is:

planning with partners

Question five: the most difficult work is:

the complexity of the work context

Comment

General comments

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS to develop a stronger picture of what heads do and how.

1 Kindly supply examples to match the spaces in the chart below

	What I do (tasks)	How I do it (processes)
Challenges to meet		
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">- most important - most useful		
Contradictions		

General comments

2 I have most freedom for decision-making as diplomatic representative, head of office, technical expert (delete as appropriate).

3 I have least freedom for decision-making as diplomatic representative, head of the office, technical expert (delete as appropriate).

4 If I had to select two words to generalize what I do and how I do it, the words would be _____
(eg figurehead, mentor, disseminator, implementer, entrepreneur, negotiator, spokesperson, conduit, manager, networker, delegator, influencer or ?).

5 The work that I do that contributes most to UNESCO's vision and mandate is -----

because-----

6 To meet UNESCO's mandate better, what do you need more of:-----

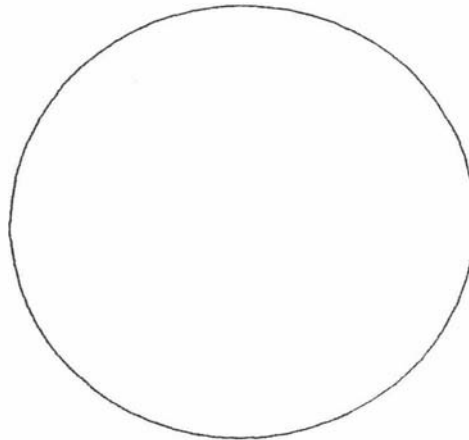
less of-----

6 How does distance from headquarters affect your work (tasks and processes)?-----

7 How does proximity to your cluster countries and other bodies affect your work?-----

8 How would you describe the bureaucracy in which you work: hierarchical? mechanistic? rational? efficient? complex? self-preserving? an instrument of control? enlightened? flexible? empowering? or? Please provide as many descriptions as you think appropriate.

9 Please guess at the amount of time you give to each of your three roles in a week and draw into the circle below.



SYNTHESIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE TWO

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Questionnaire Two: synthesis and follow up questions

Explanation

This document contains a synthesis of responses to Questionnaire Two. The aim of this follow up is to confirm or adjust the list of key tasks and processes of heads of field offices (first part of document) and to offer opportunity to adjust responses to the general comments (second part of the document).

Instructions for completion

1. Please add or delete the items listed in the first section and indicate a priority order. Comments for your responses will be appreciated.
2. Please consider the synthesis of responses to the general part of Questionnaire Two and again add, delete or send further comment as desired.

Please return the completed questionnaire to me by the end of September if possible to:

ednatatit@samoa.ws or by diplomatic pouch to Edna Tait, Director, UNESCO, Apia, Samoa.

Please note: completion of this questionnaire implies that you consent to answer the questions. Thank you for your participation.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 02/137. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this project, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Chair, Massey University Regional Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, New Zealand; telephone (646) 350 5249 or email [S.V. Rumball@massey.ac.nz](mailto:S.V.Rumball@massey.ac.nz)

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Response sheet for the synthesis of question one, section two

	Comment
Question one: the role (work) that takes the most time is: people paper	2 1
Question two: the role (work) that should take the most time is: people programme	1
Question three: the most important work is: partnership/ team building	AGREED
Question four: the most successful work is: planning with partners	AGREED
Question five: the most difficult work is: the complexity of the work context	AGREED

General comments The term paper excludes paper to do with programme work

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS to develop a stronger picture of what heads do and how.

I Kindly supply examples to match the spaces in the chart below

	What I do (tasks)	How I do it (processes)
Challenges to meet		
Managing workload	Work weekends and evenings (up to 80% of weekends)	
Balancing intellectual and management tasks		
Ethical mission is lost in admin work		
Un agency participation sometimes I don't	I keep a low profile; occasional presence; sometimes I go,	
How to beat the World Bank		
Implement programme with too few staff		
Comply with externals of the mandate		
Managing time and the office: try to avoid the petty things		
Convince governments to take policy decisions re human rights: advocacy, trust build	Get best minds; profit from UNESCO's image; visibility	
Interpret UNESCO's mandate to enhance visibility and credibility: speeches, publicatio		
Resources		
- most important staff, contacts, teams, net works	try to empower motivate, sell a sense of the mission	give time (staff) give ideas, involve, give responsibility listen, coach, coax admonish, encourage Give information
- most useful		
As above as they are the same		
Contacts		
Funds also important but these are managed through AO and programme specialists		
"I have no money but I'm nice"		
Impact isn't nec the most funded prog: advocacy can be significant		
Contradictions		
Lemon syndrome: squeezed by Natcoms, Hqrs, etc protect self		document and try to
Grand vision vs small tasks	focus on mission	

General comments

2 I have most freedom for decision-making as diplomatic representative, head of office, technical expert (delete as appropriate). All chosen: head of office is twice

3 I have least freedom for decision-making as diplomatic representative, head of the office, technical expert (delete as appropriate). Head of office because of hqrs rules; diplomatic rep

4 If I had to select two words to generalize what I do and how I do it, the words would be ~~Manager-leader; Mentor-manager, negotiator, mentor; manager-figurehead~~ -----

(eg figurehead, mentor, disseminator, implementer, entrepreneur, negotiator, spokesperson, conduit, manager, networker, delegator, influencer or ?).

5 The work that I do that contributes most to UNESCO's vision and mandate is -----

---Advocate for UNESCO to enhance people and credibility ----- *+1*

---The outreach, the partnering and eventually the implementation and impact of programmes and projects because those are the things that "touch", "reach" the Member States ----- *+1*

---Influence national authorities in policy-making in ed, culture and com because UNESCO is very much respected in ~~the~~ and national authorities are building their capacities -----

---responding to ongoing demands from govts and civil society orgs because it has immediate impact ----- *+1*

6 To meet UNESCO's mandate better, what do you need

more of: ---staff, funds and credible qhrs ----- *+2*

---more money to implement activities defined in the cluster strategy ----- *+1*

---Flexibility in using resources; encouragement from the hierarchy ----- *+1*

---personnel -----

---less of ---arrogance and pomp ----- *+2*

---small tasks - need to find a way to free myself to deal with the bigger things -----

---Implementation of fictitious tasks at hqrs on prog implementation

????? -----

---permanent reporting and obsessive control procedures ----- *+1*

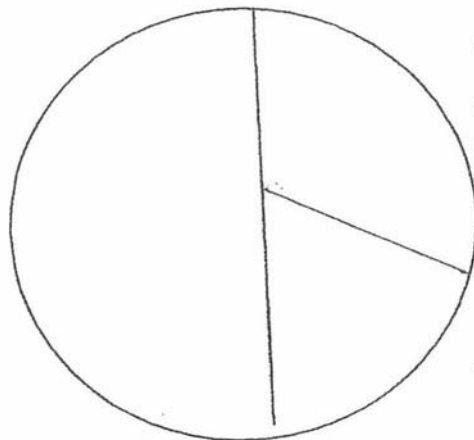
7 How does distance from headquarters affect your work (tasks and processes)? -----

- Positively when they leave us alone and negatively when they interfere-----
- Perhaps makes it easier: less hampered by hierarchical structure (getting things visad, eg) and networking with HQ colleagues smooths potential distance difficulties----- + 2
- It affects in the way that I have so little feedback from HQrs on initiatives, on the projects that I initiate in the field-----
- It increases autonomy and becomes a dual management hassle-----

- 8 How does proximity to your cluster countries and other bodies affect your work?-----
- Positively----- + 3
 - Improves it because of easy access to partners as well as being able to be in touch with the context-----
 - Anything I do, right or wrong, is commented on in country where UNESCO is very visible.-----
 - Very weak relations with cluster affects very little day to day work-----

- 9 How would you describe the bureaucracy in which you work: hierarchical? mechanistic? rational? efficient? complex? self-preserving? an instrument of control? enlightened? flexible? empowering? or? Please provide as many descriptions as you think appropriate.-----
- Hierarchical; mechanistic; complex; an instrument of control; is certainly not empowering and is ungrateful.----- + 1
 - Complex; Flexible and therefore unequal you get what you negotiate not necessarily a distribution of resources on rational bases; amenable to negotiation therefore easy for networks to manipulate; often not transparent.-----
 - Complex; empowering; indifferent----- + 1
 - hierarchical; instrument of control----- + 1

10 Please guess at the amount of time you give to each of your three roles in a week and draw into the circle below.



As close to a synthesis as I could manage comments?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Outline for a semi-structured interview of heads of UNESCO field offices

- 1 Reconsider the agreed tasks and processes:
 - why do you do this and this way?
 - what does it achieve?
 - how does it help your work?
 - what are the chief difficulties in these tasks and processes?
 - challenges or non compliance?
 - (Check views on administration load and time problems)
- 2 Are there other tasks and processes that might promote UNESCO's mandate more effectively?
- 3 Reconsider or go over organizational assumptions:
 - what are they?
 - how do they work?
 - operational or core?
- 4 Ask about physical and human resources in the office
- 5 Ask about time allocation use (and measure)
- 6 Ask about working in the field:
 - challenges, complications, positive and negative aspects
 - ethical problems
 - most important work
 - most successful work
7. Working relationships with national commissions and governments, donors, all other partners in their part of the world?
- 8 What would help you with your work?
- 9 What power(s) do you think you have for your work?
- 10 Is there anything I have missed?

(Collect information on qualifications and previous work history if not already held)

OBSERVATION GUIDELINES

At some point:

1. Tour office and note resources, physical and human
2. Meet staff separately or together and explain the study; this is not a HQ check on them or the head
3. Tape interview
4. Time a day or a series of activities sequentially if possible
5. Observe all activities unless sensitive or too political
6. Observe out-of-office activities if possible
7. Ask about usual activities not happening during the observation eg visits to another country in cluster
8. Identify anything unusual that happens during observation

ASSUMPTIONS ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTIONS

	Source	Operational	Core	Provides or limits power
We make a difference	FO	6	1	7 *
We do valuable work	FO		7	7 *
HQ cares about its staff	HQ	7		7 *
Permanent delegates are important	Structur	3		3
HQ is more imp't than FOs	HQ	3	2	5
Govts will keep to their decisions	Const		7	7 *
All major decisions must be made in Paris	HQ	4	3	7 *
Numerous reports are needed in a large org	HQ	4	1	5
Nations are knowledgeable and useful partners	HQ	3		3
We do ethical work because we work for peace	FO	5	2	7 *
HQ is never wrong	HQ	4	3	7 *
Knowledge will bring peace	Const	6	1	7 *
The world needs UNESCO	Const	5	2	7 *
UNESCO follows its own rules	HQ	5		5
Decentralization is working	HQ	7		7 *
We know all on appointment	HQ	5	2	7 *
We do know our part of the world best	FO	5	2	7 *
Our work matters in the field	FO		7	7 *
X-Board knows what's what	HQ	4	1	5
Govts understand UNESCO's work	HQ	4	3	7 *
We can serve govts and also be their conscience	Const/ HQ/FO	6	1	7 *

- Constitution

HQ
 F.O

✓ SISTER is working	HQ	7		7
✓ SISTER will improve efficiency	HQ	7		7 ✗
✓ FABS will improve financial management	HQ	7		7
HQ assumes it must control us	HQ		7	7 ✗
↻ We get things done	FO	5	2	7 ✗
Gen conf is able to evaluate prog and budget well	HQ	4		4
Two year planning cycle is effective	HQ	3	2	5
↻ Staff will misbehave unless carefully controlled	HQ	7		7 ✗
FOs can meet high demands and still be a low cost budget item	HQ	1	2	3
Paris believes UNESCO's bureaucracy is imp	HQ	3	2	5
HQ understands FO work	HQ	4		4
HQ keeps its promises	HQ	3		3

- technology

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher information:

Researcher: Edna Tait, Dip Teaching, Dip Liberal Studies (Distinction, Liverpool University), B.A. (Victoria University), B.Ed, M. Ed Admin (Hons) (Massey University)

Director and Head of the UNESCO Office for the Pacific.

Postal address: Box 5766, Matautu-uta Post Office, Apia, Samoa

Telephone: (685) 24276 (work)
 (685) 22707 (home)

Email: edna.tait@unep.org (work)
edna.tait@massey.ac.nz (home)

Supervisors: Associate Professor Roy Nash (chief); Associate Professor Wayne Edwards; Associate Professor Pat Nolan, all at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand

Postal address: Graduate School of Education, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Telephone: (646) 351 3468

Email: roy.nash@massey.ac.nz
wayne.edwards@massey.ac.nz
pat.nolan@massey.ac.nz

Type and purpose of the project

This research will be an interpretive case study. It aims to examine the extent to which heads of field offices are able to meet the vision and responsibilities of UNESCO in the UN system. The results will be submitted as a thesis for the Doctor of Education degree. It is expected that the results will contribute to the literature on leadership of international organizations. They may also be useful for the training of future heads of field offices.

Employment status of the researcher

Edna Tait is Head of the UNESCO Office for the Pacific and Education Advisor for the 17 Pacific members of UNESCO. Her status is D (Director) 1.

Note: The work for this project is as a student for a Dr of Education degree not as a work colleague.

Participant Recruitment***Recruitment method***

Information about the project will be given to all UNESCO heads with three or more years of experience as a head of a field office. The first four affirmative responses from three or four of the UN geographical regions will be accepted.

Number of participants to be involved and the reason for this number

Four participants will be selected. This number is manageable. Any more might jeopardize the completion of the research.

Discomforts or risks to participants as a result of participation

Nil

Project procedures***Use of data***

The data collected from heads will be analyzed and synthesized to answer the research question.

What will happen to the data when they are obtained

Data will remain in the care of the researcher.

Storage and disposal of data

When not in use, data will be stored in a locked metal filing cabinet. All data will be burned after five years.

Method for accessing a summary of the project findings

All participants will be provided with a copy of the results of the research.

Method for preserving confidentiality and anonymity

Although promises of confidentiality and anonymity cannot be guaranteed because of, for example, self-identification to non-participants, every effort will be made to protect participants' responses.

Confidentiality

Only the researcher will have access to the written and spoken contributions from participants. The researcher will transcribe the tapes and keep the transcripts separate from the tapes. Responses will not be shared with anyone else.

Anonymity

Names and any other features that would identify the participant or the office will be removed, to provide anonymity. Quotations from each participant will be included in the final report only if the participant agrees.

Participant involvement

Procedures in which participants will be involved

Each participant will be invited to complete two questionnaires, agree to a tape-recorded semi-structured interview and permit a week's observation of his/her work. The purpose of the questionnaires and interview is to describe fully the work of Heads of field offices. The observation time will be used to note any tasks not already identified and to indicate time given to different tasks. As well, some follow-up contacts between each of these procedures may be requested. At the end of each procedure participants will be sent summaries of the results for their comments.

Time involved

Approximately one hour for each questionnaire; about two hours for an unstructured taped interview; about five-six hours of casual conversations during one week of observation in the office of each participant and short periods of time for the responses to the synthesis of each stage. The actual time will depend on the participant.

Participants' rights

You have the right to:

- decline to participate;
- decline to participate in the second or third stages of the research when separate consent forms will be provided*;
- decline to answer any question**;
- decline to be interviewed with or without the tape recorder***;
- decline the researcher observation time in the office;

- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation in the research;
- provide information on the understanding that names will not be used;
- receive summaries of each step in the procedures for comment; and
- receive a copy of the final report.

*The stages are: 1: questionnaires completion;
2: semi-structured interview; and
3: observation of work tasks in-office.

** Note that the completion and return of the questionnaires implies your consent to answer the questions.

*** You have the right to ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project contacts

If you have any questions about this research you are invited to contact the researcher or the supervisors for further information.

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 02/137. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone (646) 350 5249, email S.V.Rumball@massey.ac.nz

UNESCO APPROVAL



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

REF : /BFC/SA/

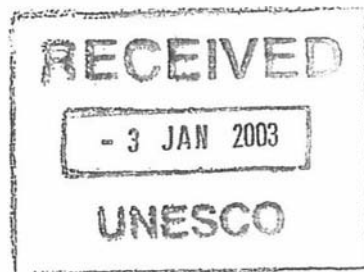
02/01/200

URGENT

A/To : Ms Edna TAIT Director UNESCO Office Apia	De/From: Ms Souad AMOUNANE UNESCO/BFC
<i>fax n° (685) 222 53</i>	<i>fax n° 33 (0)1 45 68 55 35</i>
Objet/Subject: LETTER OF CONSENT	

Please find herewith attached the letter of consent duly signed by ADG/ODG.

Thank you for your attention.





United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

7, place de Fontenoy
75732 Paris 07 SP

Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 08 12 05
Fax: +33 (0)1 45 08 55 35

Reference:

19 December 2002

LETTER OF CONSENT

**Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices
in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
(UNESCO).**

I have read the Information Sheet about the proposed research and had all my questions answered.

I consent to the research being undertaken by Ms Edna Tait and four volunteer Heads of UNESCO's Field Offices.

Graduate School of Education
Attn: Mr Roy Nash
Chief Supervisor, Associate Professor
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North
New Zealand

Jisa ODG

①
1

Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

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PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

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Purpose, practice and power: an examination of the work of heads of field offices in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Full Name - printed _____

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee PN Protocol 02/137. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone (646) 350 5249; email S.V. Rumball@massey.ac.nz

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