Working Paper Series

"Involve me and I learn" – Mentoring as a strategy for development, satisfaction and coping with conflict: Executive Summary of Findings from a Survey of PCS officials

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"Involve me and I learn"
Mentoring as a strategy for development, satisfaction and coping with conflict:

Findings from a survey of PCS officials

Robert Perrett

Executive Summary Report

Centre for Research in Organisations and Work (CROW)

"Involve me and I learn". Mentoring as a strategy for development, satisfaction and coping with conflict: Findings from a survey of PCS officials is an Executive Summary Report prepared as a briefing document for PCS by Robert Perrett from the Centre for Research in Organisations and Work (CROW) at Bradford University School of Management.

The full, detailed, report is also available for free download online at:

http://www.brad.ac.uk/management/about-the-school/our-people/pubs/?author=rperrett

The title of the full report is:

Solidarity and Inclusion: Mentoring and Development as vehicles for enhancing representative structures and equality in PCS

If you have difficulties downloading the full report or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on the email address below.

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Foreword by Mark Serwotka – PCS General Secretary

I am really pleased to present the report findings from the Gender Proportionality Survey:

"Solidarity and Inclusion: Mentoring and Development as vehicles for enhancing representative structures and equality in PCS"

Given the impact of austerity upon employment in the public sector; the attacks on facilities time; the reprioritising of union activity to organising and a tighter financial situation it is essential for PCS to continue to develop new and innovative ways of offering support to our lay officials in respect of their existing roles as well as their potential development into decision making positions and onto committees.

Moreover, influence and representation within the workplace is achieved through an effective voice within the union and as such PCS must continue to promote gender proportionality throughout decision making structures and leadership roles at all levels.

The mentoring pilot is not exclusively for women as the findings and recommendations of the research highlighted the need for mentoring support for both male and female lay officials. A Mentoring pilot is being run in 4 regions; the North West, Wales, London & South East and Midlands.

The objectives of the mentoring pilot are therefore:

- ❖ To provide development support to PCS lay officials

- ❖ To provide a support mechanism that will encourage members to take on a PCS role

- ❖ To provide a structure for development training with minimal cost implication

I hope you find this report useful

Mark Serwotka – General Secretary

Introduction

This summary document presents the main areas of enquiry and summarises the key findings from the quantitative stage of this study; a survey of PCS lay officials undertaken in March 2013. It is presented here as a quick reference document to summarise, in bullet point form, the key findings from the full research report which presents detailed top level results, by gender, for the whole survey. The survey comprised eight key sections, each corresponding to a specific theme as detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Structure of survey by theme

Section Title	Summary of section
Section A ***Respondent characteristics***	Presents much of the biographical information about respondents. Essential for identifying independent variables for further analysis for publication.
Section B ***Leadership style and effectiveness***	Documents the 'attributes' respondents believed were required for PCS officials to be good leaders (characterised as Communal or Agentic). Also documents views in respect of female role models, gender proportionality and whether gender differences impact upon leadership effectiveness.
Section C ***Incumbent experience of informal mentoring in PCS***	Seeks to establish the extent to which informal mentoring was already taking place within PCS and derives a model based upon male and female officials' experiences.
Section D ***Support for developing as a PCS official***	Focuses upon the way officials perceived the level of support they received from PCS in respect of their ability to develop within the union. This includes support that relates to developing within PCS structures and committees; PCS training; work-life balance; and networks.
Section E ***PCS officials and intrinsic and extrinsic success***	Highlights the extent to which officials were satisfied with how they had developed within PCS (extrinsic satisfaction) as well as how they subjectively interpreted their satisfaction within their union roles and how they viewed PCS *per se* (intrinsic satisfaction).
Section F ***Conflicts and pressures of a PCS official***	Identifies the extent to which two key negative outcome indicators were experienced by respondents. 1) 'Varieties of conflict' (quantitative, role and qualitative) and 2) 'Symptoms of emotional exhaustion'.
Section G ***Future prospects for a PCS mentoring programme***	Identifies whether officials would welcome the establishment of a PCS mentoring scheme in the future; what activities officials would most like to see PCS mentors undertake; and other programme design issues such as sex of mentor and training requirements.
Section H ***PCS practical use of respondents' personal data***	Comments briefly on some additional practical information that was collected from respondents to be used by PCS.

The broad project title, and subject of investigation, was "Mentoring as a strategy to promote gender proportionality within a public sector union". This broad research objective was operationalized through the seven key research questions outlined below:

1. Do both male and female officials acknowledge the importance of gender proportionality throughout PCS structures, and within decision making and leadership roles? The extent of theoretical acceptance will allow inference to be made in respect of the potential to develop and implement programmes to encourage proportionality in the future.

2. What individual attributes do officials believe contribute to good leadership within PCS and do these differ by gender? Also, in what ways do gender differences impact upon leadership effectiveness and one's ability to develop in leadership roles?

3. To what extent would PCS officials welcome the establishment of a formal mentoring programme in the future and what functions would they like a potential mentor to perform?

4. To what extent does informal mentoring of lay officials already occurs within PCS and what benefits, if any, have these relationships generated in respect of; i) their perception of the union and the support it offers; ii) their level of satisfaction within their union role and with the union *per se*; and iii) the extent to which having a mentor might assist an official to deal with negative outcomes such as conflict or emotional exhaustion?

5. Have male and female officials had different experiences of being informally mentoring in the past and, if so, can this inform the design of a future mentoring programme?

6. Does the type, and level of satisfaction, of support received by PCS officials vary by gender?

7. Do male and female officials experience different levels of positive (intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction) and negative (conflict and emotional exhaustion) outcomes in their PCS role?

Through further operationalization, a range of questions for PCS officials were subsequently developed and incorporated into a large scale survey design to address these seven broad research questions. This document first provides a general summary conclusion from the wider findings and comments on the results in reference to the overarching seven research questions identified above. This document shall then present some of the actual key findings, in bullet point form, corresponding to each of the eight Sections chronologically within full research report. This document can then be used to make key recommendations.

Gender and leadership style and effectiveness

Whilst the survey highlighted a number of contrasting views held by male and female officials, as important were the similarities of opinion that existed between them; this was particularly the case in respect of perceptions of good leadership and role models within PCS. There was widespread acceptance (over three quarters of respondents) of the importance of senior female PCS role models by both male and female officials. However, this positive rhetoric with regards to the importance of women in senior positions, inspiring other by acting as role models, was very different to the actual reality. A considerably lower proportion of officials (just over half) claimed to be able to identify inspirational senior female role models; moreover, a minority (just over four out of ten) agreed that gender proportionality in decision making roles should be similar to membership. In other words, the theoretical acceptance of senior women within PCS structures outweighed the reality of their existence; and gender proportionality within decision making roles did not appear to be viewed as a primary concern by the majority of male or female officials. Overall then, there appears to a general acceptance of the importance of senior female role models within PCS but proportionality itself in respect of the gender of officials and those they represent is not seen as essential; in reality at a time of national campaigns, large scale redundancies and austerity cuts, which are having a devastating impact upon the public sector, officials may be more concerned about whether they can in fact recruit officials at all, as opposed to their gender and whether it is proportional to membership.

Important similarities were also identified in terms of how male and female officials perceived attributes which contributed to good leadership within PCS. Results support concepts of 'empowering' or 'post-heroic' leadership which emphasises a more democratic and interpersonal style (communal). The most important attributes included Good people skills, Good listener, Believes in the cause, Empathy and Empowers followers. These views varied little by gender indicating that, in contrast to much theory, male officials valued communal leadership to a similar extent to that of female officials. Furthermore, there was very little evidence to suggest that gender differences between leaders and followers/members reduced leadership effectiveness. Very few officials found it more difficult to lead when followers were of the opposite sex and similarly very few believed that members preferred officials of the same gender. The main significant difference of experience between male and female officials in respect leadership roles was that women were more likely to experience difficulties developing in their PCS roles as a result of domestic or childcare responsibilities.

To summarise, the overarching importance attached to gender proportionality throughout PCS structures is perhaps not as high on officials' agendas as might have been expected, however this may reflect the more adversarial environment the union is currently operating within. Despite this there is a universal acceptance of the importance of senior female officials acting as role models within the union. Furthermore, male and female officials highlighted very similar attributes as required to be a 'good leader' within PCS; these can be described as communal and democratic attributes. Whilst not subscribing to an essentialist perspective, some authors argue that many women share similarities in their life experiences, such as wider suppression through a patriarchal society, and motherhood and so often exhibit more communal and democratic attributes in their leadership style. Whilst the questionnaire did not ask respondents to identify 'their' leadership style, it did ask respondents to highlight what attributes they believed made a 'good leader' within PCS and both male and female respondents highlighted the same attributes, associated with communal and democratic styles. These findings are very positive in terms of the development of future PCS programmes to improve gender proportionality as they reflect a general acceptance of the importance of female officials in decision making roles and rules out any theoretical opposition to female officials in senior leadership positions on the

grounds of their leadership style being overly communal or democratic or not accepted by male officials.

Potential for the development of PCS mentoring

Perhaps the most important finding from this chapter was the extent to which respondents would welcome the future establishment of a more formal mentoring programme. The overwhelming majority of respondents (84.4 per cent) indicated that they would welcome a PCS mentoring programme; moreover there was universal acceptance irrespective of biographical characteristics such as gender, age, dependent child status, type of employment, industrial sector, position held by the official or their length of service, composition of work or union colleagues. These findings imply that mentoring as an approach to offering developmental support generates widespread acceptance, not limited to specific groups. These empirical findings demonstrate the importance people attach to mentoring as a means of providing contemporary developmental support and will be of fundamental importance to PCS in terms of providing empirical evidence to justify the implementation of a more widespread or national mentoring programme.

Findings from the survey also make it possible to comment on the type of support and relationships officials would ideally expect from a mentor and potentially inform the design and development of a future mentoring programme. It is apparent that, in general, officials want potential mentors to be 'jacks of all trades' in respect of the advice and support that they offer, providing psycho-social support as well as career development advice and guidance on specific cases. However, by far the most frequently mentioned desired function of a mentor was for them to offer psycho-social support, for example to just be there to listen, offer informal guidance, act as a sounding board or be there to bounce ideas off. So whilst offering case specific advice or union career development advice was viewed as relatively important they were seen almost as a secondary function of the mentor whose primary function was psycho-social. This has implications, not only in terms of the support mentors should seek to offer, but also in terms of the type of desirable skills a mentor should possess; furthermore it provides support for the notion that mentors do not have to be located within the same branch or be specifically involved with the same cases as their mentees.

Finally in respect of mentoring programme design, there was widespread acceptance of the value of having a mentor irrespective of their gender. Following individual qualitative case study research (see Chapter 5), the author perhaps expected a substantial proportion of respondents to indicate a preference for same sex mentors, however this was not the case. Whilst in no way undermining the value many (female) interviewees placed upon having a same sex mentor in Case study 1 (Chapter 5), almost all respondents to the survey indicated that they did not mind if their mentor was male or female. Furthermore, nine out of ten respondents, irrespective of gender, either already acted as a mentor informally, would be prepared to act as a mentor now if asked to do so, or would act as a mentor in the future when they had acquired greater experience. This therefore implies that not only is there a desire for the development of a mentoring programme within PCS, there is also a wide and sufficient supply of both male and female officials prepared to act as mentors to their colleagues – this supply more than caters for those who indicated a preference for a same sex mentor though the vast majority 'did not mind either way' and so it is unlikely that there will be supply side deficits in terms of gender when matching mentees with mentors.

Existing experiences and benefits of informal PCS mentoring

As highlighted above, respondents indicated an extremely high level of acceptance of any future mentoring programme established by PCS. There are a number of potential explanations for this; the first is that officials experienced a lack of support from PCS in terms of their roles and their development. However, there was NO evidence to support this – in fact the opposite was found to be the case and, overall, officials felt very well supported (this is discussed in more detail below). The second explanation is that officials already had positive experiences of being (informally) mentored, resulting in discernible benefits which, as a consequence, meant that officials were open to developing future mentoring relationships. Where officials did not have experience of being mentored they still witnessed the benefits reaped by others and felt that a similar relationship might benefit them. There is considerably evidence to support this explanation. Six out of ten respondents claimed that someone within PCS had acted as a mentor to them and had helped them to develop. This further illustrates the value officials place on being mentored as so many have developed their own informal mentoring relationships without formal intervention by PCS; in fact the informal and emergent nature of these relationships might be one of the reasons for their success – hence any formal programme implemented by PCS to encourage mentoring might benefit from emphasising the informality of the potential mentoring relationship. There was also considerable and significant evidence to suggest that respondents' experiences of being informally mentored were extremely positive and resulted in discernible benefits including; first, more positive views about the extent to which they felt adequately supported in their development as a PCS official; and second, higher levels of both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction in their union roles. These two outcomes are summarised in more detail here.

First, four categories of perceived support for developing as a PCS official were investigated; in three of these officials who had been informally mentored expressed significantly more positive views than those that had not. The first was development within PCS structures and committees and respondents who had been mentored informally by a fellow PCS official were significantly more likely to express satisfaction within this category. The second category was support for, and access to, networks and respondents with informal PCS mentors were significantly more likely to believe that they had access to 'senior officials', furthermore they were significantly more likely to have well established network of colleagues to go to for advice and support. Respondents with mentors were also significantly more likely to indicate that opportunities to go on PCS training courses were easy to identify and that other PCS officials encouraged them to go on training courses, the third support category. There was less difference between the views of respondents with and without mentors in respect of the fourth support category, work-life balance. Overall, positive views were expressed by all irrespective of having a mentor or not. The above suggests that either officials who had experience of being informally mentored were, overall, better supported than those that did not, or that just having an informal mentor created the impression of support through improved communication; either way, many positive outcomes are associated with feeling supported by ones organisation including satisfaction in ones role, better performance, confidence and increased tenure.

Second, respondents who had been informally mentored by a fellow PCS colleague were significantly more likely to agree that they possessed both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction in their PCS role. For example they were significantly more likely to be satisfied with the speed at which they had developed within the union; significantly more likely to agree that they were proud to be a PCS official; that they were happy, confident and prepared within their union roles and even significantly more likely to be happy with the direction of PCS' national agenda. Although significant differences were recorded between mentored and non-mentored respondents in respect of perceived support for development and positive outcome indicators (extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction), no significant difference was found in

respect of negative output indicators. This implies that, in this case, having an informal mentor did not result in lower levels of quantitative, qualitative or role conflict or symptoms of emotional exhaustion.

In summary, the evidence suggests that a PCS mentoring programme would be greatly welcomed by the vast majority of officials. One reason for this is that many officials already have experience of being informally mentored by colleagues within PCS and this has led to significant benefits in terms of perceptions of being supported and extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction. Whilst around 60 per cent of respondents indicated that they had an informal PCS mentor in the past, around 85 per cent of respondents would welcome the establishment of a PCS mentoring programme in the future implying that many of those with no experience of being mentored would also welcome a mentoring programme to help them develop. Indeed, the most frequently cited reason for not having an informal PCS mentor was simply that they had not made efforts to acquire one, as opposed to rejecting perceived benefits that mentors may generate.

Gender and experiences of an informal mentoring relationship

As highlighted above, the findings indicated that the vast majority of officials would welcome the establishment of a future PCS mentoring programme. One potential reason for this was that a large proportion of officials already had experience of being informally mentored by fellow PCS colleagues and this had generated tangible benefits in terms of perceptions of support and intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. However, findings clearly illustrated that male and female officials had completely different experiences of being mentored. As highlighted in Section C, Clutterbuck (2011) defines two key relationship variables (dimensions of helping) which derive the specific category of assistance offered to a mentee. The first is 'who is in charge of the relationship' and ranges from directive to non-directive, and the second is the 'individual's needs' and ranges from stretching to nurturing. Combinations of these two dimensions generate the four key 'helping to learn' styles' of:

- Guiding   - Directive and Nurturing
- Counselling   - Non Directive and Nurturing
- Coaching   - Directive and Stretching
- Networking   - Non Directive and Stretching

Clutterbuck (2011) argues that the extent to which there is an emphasis or a reliance upon each of the these styles dictates the form that mentoring takes, with 'developmental mentoring' incorporating a varied and equal reliance upon all four styles.

Survey findings clearly illustrate that different mentoring styles were experienced by male and female officials. Male officials, on average, were more likely to experience all four 'helping to learn' styles', although there was a slight concentration on a 'counselling style'. Male officials were also less likely to experience either very high or very low levels of directive or nurturing/stretching interactions with their mentors. However, female officials were less evenly distributed than men amongst the four learning styles and there was a large concentration of respondents experiencing the 'counselling style'. Moreover, female officials were more likely than male officials to experience extremely non-directive or extremely nurturing relationship combinations with their mentors. Overall therefore, female officials were likely to report more nurturing and non-directive relationships with their mentors; this corresponds to findings presented earlier which indicated that the preferred role of a mentor was to provide psycho-social support, such as being there to listen, offering informal guidance, acting as a sounding board or being there to bounce ideas off. Moreover, these views were echoed by female interviews in Case Study 1 (Chapter 5) who often

described their most productive interaction with their mentors as being 'a chat over coffee in Costas'.

Male and female officials' experiences of positive and negative outcome indicators

The survey sought to identify differences (and similarities) in the extent to which male and female officials perceived the support they received in their role from PCS. Overall, responses were positive and indicative of a high level of satisfaction with the support provided; within some areas of support similar levels of satisfaction were expressed by male and female officials alike; for example all respondents, irrespective of gender, reported high levels of perceived support in respect of work-life balance despite a greater proportion of female officials claiming that had experienced difficulties developing in their PCS roles as a result of domestic or childcare responsibilities. A similar proportion of male and female officials (two-thirds) agreed that opportunities to go on PCS training courses were easy to identify. However, this was not always the case. Questions implied a distinction between formal developmental support offered by PCS and informal support such as encouragement by colleagues, personal networks or informal mentoring. Overall, female official were less likely to indicate satisfaction with the level of formal support they received from the union in this sense. For example, female officials were more likely to indicate that the support they received in respect of progressing in PCS structures was inadequate and were considerably more likely to disagree that opportunities to progress into other PCS roles or committees were easy to identify. They were also more likely to disagree that they had easy access to senior officials if they wanted to discuss how to develop within the union

However, it appears that where female officials have identified a lack of formal support they compensate through a greater reliance upon informal means. Female officials were significantly more likely than men to report that they had already been informally mentored by colleagues within PCS to help in their development. The odds of women having an informal mentor were more than twice (2.130) as high as the odds of men having an informal mentor. Furthermore, female officials were most likely to claim that other PCS officials encouraged them to progress into new PCS roles or committees as well as encouraging them to go on PCS training courses. Finally female officials were most likely to indicate that they had well established network of colleagues to go to for advice and support; these networks predominantly incorporated a majority of male officials. This might indicate that where female officials found formal PCS support for development less adequate or less available they relied more heavily upon informal support, such as mentoring, networks and encouragement from colleagues.

Moreover, it is probable that the type of support received (formal and/or informal) by male and female officials effected their perception of the union and the extent to which they felt satisfied in their roles; such relationships shall be further developed for publication. However, in summary this chapter has illustrated that whilst female officials were least satisfied with the formal support they received they were significantly more likely to rely on other informal means of support which might be one of the reasons that they expressed comparable levels of satisfaction in their union roles to their male colleagues. Whilst a large majority of both male and female officials indicated (extrinsic) satisfaction at the speed at which they had developed within PCS, female officials were considerably more likely to express satisfaction than male officials; though it is acknowledged that this might also reflect different expectations by sex. Moreover, levels of intrinsic satisfaction varied little by gender; where they did; female officials were slightly more likely to feel proud to be a PCS official, to be happy in their PCS role and to be happy with the direction of PCS' national agenda. Men were most likely to feel confident and adequately prepared. Finally, exactly the same proportion of male and female officials (around a third) wanted to progress within the union,

taking on more responsibilities and senior positions or becoming more involved in decision making committees.

As highlighted above, having an informal PCS mentor did not significantly affect the extent to which conflict or emotional exhaustion was experienced by officials. Moreover, there were only small differences in how conflict and emotional exhaustion were experienced by gender. There was no evidence to suggest that overall male or female officials were more prone to conflict or emotional exhaustion, although there were some subtle differences. Out of the three varieties of conflict identified, quantitative (time/workload) was experienced most frequently by both male and female officials; this was followed by role conflict and the least frequently experienced was qualitative conflict. Where quantitative conflict was experienced it was most likely to be time conflict between the respondents' union role and their paid employment and it was most likely to be encountered by female officials. A third of respondents experienced quantitative conflict with their home lives, either as a result of 1) paid employment or 2) union roles, however, these forms of quantitative conflict were experienced less by women than by men possibly indicating that they were more aware of potential domestic time conflicts that could be encountered as a result of increased paid or union workload; resulting in them being better prepared to deal with this conflict when it emerged.

Whilst different symptoms of emotional exhaustion were experienced by a minority of male and female officials, it was still a sizable proportion ranging from 26 to 45 per cent suggesting that this is an issue that must not be ignored by the union. Future analysis of this data shall seek to identify which particular forms of conflict (if any) contributed the most to symptoms of emotional exhaustion or to an overarching 'emotional exhaustion score'. However, this Chapter illustrated that, overall, (although significance was not testing in this instance) male officials expressed the greatest level of agreement to all six symptoms of emotional exhaustion. Male officials were considerably more likely than female officials to regularly feel used up and to feel frustrated in their union work.

In summary, despite being less likely to feel that formal PCS support was adequate and being more likely to experience barriers to role development as a result of domestic or childcare responsibilities, female officials illustrated similar (and sometimes higher) levels of extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction to male officials. Furthermore, although female officials were more likely than their male counterparts to experience time conflict between their paid employment and union roles, they were considerably less likely to experience conflict with their home lives and exhibited fewer symptoms of emotional exhaustion. Though further analysis of the data is required to measure these relationships and strength of association it appears that one contributing factor could have been female officials' greater reliance upon an informal mentor and personal networks.

General summary overview

To conclude there is an overarching acceptance of the importance of senior female officials acting as role models within PCS though more needs to be done to encourage and support women into these positions. Gender had no affect on what attributes officials believed made a 'Good leader' in PCS and these were typically communal and democratic in orientation. The vast majority of both male and female officials would welcome the establishment of a formal PCS mentoring programme indicating a widespread acceptance of the potential benefits that can be generated. Overall there was very little support for a same sex mentoring scheme with most indicating that they had no preference as to the gender of their mentor. Officials predominantly wanted future mentors to offer general psycho-social support, although to a lesser degree they also demanded advice relating to their personal development within PCS as well as guidance on specific cases. A large number of officials (particularly female) indicated that a PCS colleague had already acted as an informal mentor to them and it was these particular individuals that indicated the most positive views in respect of feeling adequately supported in their development and had higher levels of both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction in their union roles. However, results did not indicate that having an informal mentor reduced conflict or symptoms of emotional exhaustion. Female officials were less likely to find formal PCS support adequate but this was compensated for by informal support, encouragement from colleagues, personal networks and informal mentoring relationships. Moreover, female officials were considerably more likely to have counselling style mentoring relationships with existing mentors; these were more informal, non-directive and nurturing. As such female officials demonstrated similar levels of extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction to male officials. Overall, female officials were more likely to experience time conflict between their paid employment and union roles, but considerably less likely to experience conflict with their home lives and exhibited fewer symptoms of emotional exhaustion.

The second half of this document (below) offers more specific findings from each of the eight sections of the survey. These are presented in bullet point form.

Section A – Respondent characteristics

1. A total of 466 PCS officials completed the survey (507 started but 41 did not complete). 49% were male, 51 % were female.

2. Very few respondents were below 35 years old (just 1.3% were below 25). Almost **nine out of ten** respondents were aged between 35 and 64. There was concentration of female officials in the 45 to 54 age category. Male officials were more widely distributed, though there was higher proportion of men aged 55 to 64 than women.

3. Respondents were located within all of PCS' nine employment sectors, though most respondents were located either in 'Revenue' (22%) or 'Welfare' (30%).

4. 93% of respondents categorised themselves as 'White'. Ethnicity varied little by gender.

5. There were only small differences between the proportion of male and female respondents in all PCS positions, even at Branch executive committee level, a key gate keeper position. Almost two thirds of respondents held more than one PCS position. Where respondents reported being at 'branch executive committee' level, it was likely to be the male officials' most senior position whereas it is less likely to be the female officials' most senior position. There was a slight concentration of women at both the most junior and the most senior levels.

6. Respondents had been union members for an average of 16 years and PCS official 9 years, though there was a concentration of officials who had been officials for less than five years. On average, men had been both union members and officials slightly longer than women.

7. The vast majority of respondents were employed full time, though women were more likely than men to be in part time employment.

8. Whilst six out of ten respondents indicated that the composition of their work colleagues was majority female, the same proportion indicated that the person in the next PCS position above theirs was male. This could imply that male officials, particularly at Branch executive committee level, were responsible for a larger number of more junior officials than their female equivalents.

9. Seven out of ten respondents lived with a partner. Just over a third of respondents claimed to have dependent children and this varied only slightly by gender.

10. The likelihood of an official's parents having been involved with a union varied little between male and female respondents. Approximately six out of ten male and female officials indicated that their parents had been either union members or union officials.

Section B – Leadership style and effectiveness

1. Respondents were considerably more likely to rate 'communal attributes' as required to be a good PCS leader. The most important attributes included Good people skills, Good listener, Believes in the cause, Empathy and Empowers followers. These views varied little by gender indicating that, in contrast to much theory, male officials valued communal leadership to a similar extent to that of female officials.

2. There was widespread acceptance (76 per cent) of the importance of senior female role models by both male and female officials though this acceptance did not directly translate into officials experiencing or being able to identify inspirational senior female role models (56 per cent). Theoretical acceptance outweighed reality of their existence.

3. Whilst the importance of senior female role models was accepted, a considerably smaller proportion of officials agreed that gender proportionality in decision making roles should be similar to membership (44 per cent).

4. There was very little evidence to suggest that gender differences between leaders and followers/members reduced leadership effectiveness. Very few officials found it more difficult to lead when followers were of the opposite sex and similarly very few believed that members preferred officials of the same gender.

5. A considerable number felt that domestic or childcare responsibilities had made it more difficult for them to develop in their PCS role; and this was experienced significantly more by female officials than male (a quarter of all female officials overall).

Summary of section

This section has identified important similarities in terms of how male and female officials view good leadership styles and provides evidence to support concepts of 'empowering' or 'post-heroic' leadership which emphasises a more democratic and interpersonal style (communal). It also throws into doubt assumptions often made about the degraded effectiveness of leaders when followers are of the opposite sex; though does confirm that women are disproportionally affected by domestic or childcare responsibilities which makes development with PCS more difficult.

Section C – Incumbent experience of informal mentoring in PCS

1. Women were significantly more likely than men to report that they had already been mentored by colleagues within PCS to help in their development (such that x^2 (1) = 15.025, $\rho < 0.001$). Furthermore, , **the odds of women having a mentor were more than twice** (2.130) as high as men having a mentor.

    Not only were women more likely to have had an informal PCS mentor, but the style of mentoring that they experienced was significantly different to their male counterparts ...

2. **Male officials** were less likely to experience either very high or very low levels of directive or nurturing/stretching interactions with their mentors. Furthermore, there was a more even distribution of male officials adopting the different styles of helping including coaching and networking (more closely associated with 'developmental mentoring). However the overall trend for mentoring relationships for male officials was non-directive and slightly more nurturing, i.e. a slight concentration on a 'counselling style'.

3. **Female officials** were less evenly distributed than men amongst the four learning styles and there was a large concentration of respondents experiencing the 'counselling style'. Moreover, female officials were more likely to experience extremely non-directive or extremely nurturing relationship combinations with their mentors.

4. The most frequently cited reasons for not having an informal PCS mentor were simply the result of '*not asking for one*' or having '*never really thought about it*' rather than doubting the actual benefits a mentor could generate. A third of respondent indicated that there was little opportunity for them to develop relations with more senior officials but this varied little by gender.

5. Women were significantly more likely than men to indicate that the reason for not having an informal PCS mentor was because they received "*support from a number of people as opposed to anyone in particular*".

Section D – Support for developing as a PCS official

D1 – Developing within PCS structures and committees

1. Women were more likely to indicate that the support they received in respect of progressing in PCS structures was inadequate.

2. Women were even more likely to disagree that opportunities to progress into other PCS roles or committees were easy to identify. This may imply that female officials received less support for progressing onto committees, or that they had a greater desire to move onto committees, as opposed to 'more senior union roles' and so the lack of support was more apparent.

3. Despite the above, female respondents were most likely to express agreement that other PCS officials encouraged them to progress into new PCS roles or committees. The reason might be that they found formal PCS support for development less adequate or less available and so rely more heavily upon informal support and encouragement from colleagues. Alternatively, greater satisfaction might reflect lower developmental expectations as a result of wider societal or workplace/ paid career experiences.

D2 – Access to and encouragement of PCS training

1. Two thirds of all respondents agreed that opportunities to go on PCS training courses were easy to identify, this differed little by gender.

2. Whilst the majority of all respondents agreed that other PCS officials encouraged them to go on PCS training courses, female officials were considerably more likely to agree or strongly agree.

D3 – PCS support for your work-life balance

1. Overall responses were very positive in respect of the location and timing of PCS meetings, female officials exhibited even more positive attitudes on these subjects than their male counterparts.

2. Despite this just four out of ten respondents agreed that PCS cared about their ability to balance their union roles and family/home demands; the largest proportion neither agreed nor disagreed. This could simply imply that it had not been an issue that a large proportion of respondents had encountered or that officials were unaware of what PCS was doing in this regard.

3. Of respondents with dependent children, 20 per cent either disagreed or strongly disagreed that PCS provide provisions for childcare arrangements when they needed them to undertake their PCS roles, a similar proportion (17 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed. Most neither agreed nor disagreed, perhaps indicating that it had not been an issue or that they did not consider this to be the responsibility of PCS.

4. Around a quarter of respondents indicated that they would be more likely to pursue a more senior PCS post if they could 'job share' it with another PCS official. However, those with dependent children were considerably more likely to express agreement; 32 per cent in comparison to just 17 per cent of respondents without dependent children.

1. Just under half of all officials expressed agreement that they had easy access to senior officials if they wanted to discuss how to develop within the union; however female officials expressed a slightly higher level of disagreement than male.

2. Despite this female officials were considerably more likely than male officials to agree that they have a "*well established network of colleagues [to] go to for advice and support*".

3. Most respondents indicated that the largest proportion their network was either 'More male than female' or 'nearly all male'. This was the case for both male and female officials despite the majority of PCS officials overall being female.

Summary of section by gender

Summarising the four 'perceptions of support' categories; female officials are more likely to feel unsupported by PCS in their development, however they are more likely to indicate that PCS colleagues encourage them in their development and are more likely to have 'well established networks' (usually with male colleagues). This apparent inconsistency might be explained by female officials feeling less formally supported by PCS and thus turning to informal support networks through personal relationships with colleagues.

Support for developing as a PCS official by experience of informal PCS mentoring

In summary, officials who have, or have had, an informal PCS mentor were significantly more likely to express agreement to all statements related to their development within PCS **structures and committees**; this included feeling adequately supported, ease of identifying opportunities to progress and receiving encouragement to progress into new roles and committees. Similarly, those with informal PCS mentors expressed (highly) significantly more positive views in respect of their access to **networks**; including access to senior PCS officials and possessing a well established network of colleagues to go to for advice and support. Furthermore, in respect of **training** those with mentors were significantly more likely to indicate that opportunities to go on PCS training courses were easy to identify and other PCS officials encouraged them to go on PCS training courses. Finally, there was **less difference** between the views of respondents with and without mentors in respect of work-life balance. Overall, positive views were **expressed by all** irrespective of having a mentor or not. However, out of the five statements within this category, two generated significantly difference responses; first, that PCS meetings were held at convenient times and second that they were held at convenient locations; this was more likely to be case when an officials had had an informal PCS mentor.

Section E – PCS officials and intrinsic and extrinsic success

E1 – Extrinsic/objective success within PCS structures

1. A large majority of officials indicated satisfaction at the speed at which they had developed within PCS, although a considerably higher proportion of women than men expressed satisfaction. This might be indicative of the successful use by female officials of informal support and networks as outlined in Section D, or lower developmental expectation as a result of past experiences and wider societal norms.

E2 – Intrinsic/subjective success within PCS structures

1. Overall there was considerable evidence that officials held extremely positive views of PCS and their roles within it (intrinsic success/outcomes).

2. Almost nine out of ten officials expressed agreement that they felt 'proud to be a PCS official'. Eight out of ten indicated that they felt confident in their union role(s) and just eight per cent did not. Eight out of ten respondents indicated that they were happy in their union role. Seven out of ten officials felt adequately prepared for their union role. Two thirds of respondents claimed that they were 'happy with the direction of PCS' national agenda'.

3. Overall levels of satisfaction varied little by gender; where they did vary; female officials were slightly more likely to feel proud to be a PCS official, to be happy in their PCS role and to be happy with the direction of PCS' national agenda. Men were most likely to feel confident and adequately prepared.

E3 – Desire to progress within PCS structures

1. Approximately a third of officials want to progress within the union, taking on more responsibilities and senior positions or becoming more involved in decision making committees. This was the case for both male and female officials, indicating that the union does not have a 'supply side' deficit when it comes to individuals wishing to progress their union careers.

Summary of section by gender

Respondents were more likely to experience subjective union career outcomes, intrinsic satisfaction, than objective union career outcomes, extrinsic satisfaction irrespective of gender. Where slight differences in intrinsic satisfaction were reported, female officials were more likely to feel proud to be a PCS official, to be happy in their PCS role and to be happy with the direction of PCS' national agenda. Men were most likely to feel confident and adequately prepared. Extrinsic satisfaction was also high (though lower than intrinsic satisfaction), with very few officials indicating that they were not satisfied with the speed they had developed (male or female). Female officials were more likely to indicate satisfaction at the speed at which they had developed. Finally, around a third of both male and female officials expressed a desire to progress within PCS (either within the structures or decision making committees) indicating the presence of a substantial supply of experienced officials willing to take on greater responsibilities within the union and develop into more senior posts.

Positive outcome indicators by experience of informal PCS mentoring

To summarise, officials who indicated that they had been informally mentored by another PCS colleague were significantly more likely to agree that they possessed both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction in their PCS role. The largest effect size related to the satisfaction with the speed in which officials had developed within PCS structures (extrinsic). Responses linked to intrinsic satisfaction also differed significantly between non-mentored and mentored officials; mentored official were significantly more likely to indicate that they felt proud to be a PCS official; felt confident in their PCS role(s); were happy in their PCS role(s); felt adequately prepared; and were happy with the direction of PCS' national agenda. Despite this there was NOT a significant difference between in responses between non-mentored and mentored officials in respect of a dire to progress within PCS. In other words mentored and non-mentored officials equally wanted to progress and develop within PCS. This is an interesting finding as it implies that even though non-mentored officials were less likely to feel adequately supported by PCS (Section D), and were less likely to experience extrinsic or intrinsic satisfaction within their PCS role (Section E), they were still as likely to want to progress within the union as those with mentors.

Section F – Conflict and symptoms of emotional exhaustion

F1 – Varieties of conflict

1. Out of the three varieties of conflict, quantitative (time/workload) was experienced most frequently by both male and female officials; this was followed by role conflict and the least frequently experienced was qualitative conflict.

2. Where quantitative conflict was experienced it was most likely to be time conflict between the respondents' union role and their paid employment. Around four out of ten officials experienced such conflict and it was most likely to be encountered by women.

3. Around three out of ten respondents experienced some quantitative conflict with their home lives, either as a result to the time they devoted to their paid employment or their union roles. However, both these forms of quantitative conflict were experienced less by women than by men.

4. About three in ten officials experienced role conflict; this incorporated a slightly higher proportion of women than men. Qualitative conflict was experienced least by officials implying that the vast majority did not feel unconfident or poorly prepared in their roles. Where this was the case, this had little to do with gender or age and was instead related specifically to the level of experience possessed by officials which has implications for where the union should target its training and support efforts.

F2 – Symptoms of emotional exhaustion

1. Male officials expressed the greatest level of agreement to all six symptoms of emotional exhaustion; however, female officials were more likely to 'Strongly agree' that they regularly encounter such symptoms.

2. Three emotional exhaustion indicators were experienced consistently more than the rest; these were feeling used up, feeling emotionally drained and feeling that they were working too hard. Four out ten respondents were in agreement that they regularly felt used up and a similar proportion felt emotionally drained. Men were considerably more likely to feel used up than women. Around a third of all respondents felt that they often worked too hard, felt fatigued when getting up in the morning or felt frustrated with their union work as a result of undertaking union work on top of managing their work life and home life.

3. Men were considerably more likely than women to indicate that they felt frustrated in their union work. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents claimed to actually feel burned out, less than half disagreed with this statement (46 per cent).

4. These findings indicate that negative outcome indicators are experienced by a considerable proportion of PCS officials and that emotional exhaustion is something that must be addressed.

Summary of section – Varieties of conflict

Out of the three varieties of conflict, **quantitative (time/workload) was experienced most frequently** by both male and female officials; this was followed by role conflict and the least frequently experienced was qualitative conflict. Where quantitative conflict was experienced it was most likely to be time conflict between the respondents' union role and their paid

employment. Around four out of ten officials experienced such conflict and it was **most likely to be encountered by women**. Around three out of ten respondents experienced some quantitative conflict with their **home lives**, either as a result to the time they devoted to their **paid employment or their union roles**. However, both these forms of quantitative conflict were experienced **less by women** than by men. This is not to imply an absence of such time conflict, rather that female respondents might be less likely to define it as conflict or be better able to deal with it. For example, societal construction of gendered roles and patriarchal norms often results in women's concentration within domestic work. As such;

> a) These experiences might mean that they were better able to deal with domestic and family related matters and so experience LESS conflict.

> b) These experiences might have better familiarised them with the potential time conflicts that they would be likely to face prior to taking on a union role and so were **better prepared** to deal with it when it emerged, resulting in them not defining it as conflict.

About three in ten officials experienced role conflict; this incorporated a slightly higher proportion of women than men. Qualitative conflict was experienced least by officials implying that the vast majority did not feel unconfident or poorly prepared in their roles. Where this was the case, this had little to do with gender or age and was instead related specifically to the level of experience possessed by officials which has implications for where the union should target its training and support efforts.

Summary of section – Symptoms of emotional exhaustion

In summary, overall, **male officials expressed the greatest level** of agreement to all six symptoms of emotional exhaustion; however, female officials were more likely to 'Strongly agree' that they regularly encounter such symptoms. Three emotional exhaustion indicators were experienced consistently more than the rest; these were feeling used up, feeling emotionally drained and feeling that they were working too hard. Four out ten respondents were in agreement that they regularly felt used up and a similar proportion felt emotionally drained. Men were considerably more likely to feel used up than women. Around a third of all respondents felt that they often worked too hard, felt fatigued when getting up in the morning or felt frustrated with their union work as a result of undertaking union work on top of managing their work life and home life. Men were considerably more likely than women to indicate that they felt frustrated in their union work. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents claimed to actually feel burned out, less than half disagreed with this statement (46 per cent). These findings indicate that negative outcome indicators are experienced by a considerable proportion of PCS officials and that **emotional exhaustion is something that must be addressed**.

Negative outcome indicators by experience of informal PCS mentoring

In summary, there was little significant difference between the extent to which mentored and non-mentored officials experienced conflict as a result of their union activities, this included quantitative conflict between union roles, work life and home life; physical or psychological role conflict between union roles and paid employment; or qualitative conflict by feeling un-prepared or not confident to undertaking ones union role. Furthermore, on average, mentored officials appeared to experience symptoms of emotional exhaustion more than non-mentored officials, although the difference was not significant and effect sizes were small. However, this was likely to be the result of mentored officials being more aware of emotional exhaustion as an issue as a result of discussion and counselling with their mentor

as opposed to actually being more emotionally exhausted. These findings do not provide support to findings presented by van Emmerik (2004a) which indicate that having a mentor makes experiencing conflict and emotional exhaustion less likely.

Section G – Future prospects for a PCS mentoring programme

1. The overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they would welcome the establishment of a PCS mentoring programme in the future. Overall, respondents were most likely to indicate that they wanted a future mentor to provide a mainly psycho-social function, however they also indicated the importance of a future mentor giving advice and guidance on cases and helping the mentee to develop and progress.

2. Almost all respondents indicated that they didn't mind if their mentor was male or female. Of the small number that indicated that they did want a same sex mentor, women were more prevalent and described their chose as the result of benefits they could gain from shared experiences and shared difficulties. However, all but one stated that they would accept a mentor of the opposite sex if a same sex mentor could not be found.

3. The most popular types of training to accompany a mentoring program were 'how to mentor' training and dealing with 'difficult cases'. Other frequently mentioned training included 'Information about union structures and procedures', 'Communication/influencing people', and 'Shadowing cases with senior officials'. A tiny minority indicated that they would prefer same sex training courses.

4. Benefits generated for mentors were widely acknowledged and included keeping them abreast of shop-floor issues and the development of useful alliances.

5. Less than one in ten respondents, irrespective of gender, stated that they would not be prepared to act as a mentor if a PCS program was established in the future. Nine out of ten, either already acted as a mentor, would do so now, or in the future when they had accumulated more experience.

So, it would appear that the conditions are right for the establishment of a widespread mixed sex mentoring programme, accompanied by (mixed sex) training on how to be a good mentor, with an emphasis upon psycho-social functions, as well as both soft skills and training on how to better deal with cases.

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