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Title	The ways in which new public management ideas impact upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy
Authors	Connelly, Julie Margaret
Publication date	2013
Original Citation	Connelly, J. 2013. The ways in which new public management ideas impact upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. PhD Thesis, University College Cork.
Type of publication	Doctoral thesis
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Download date	2026-11-06 15:44:41
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THE WAYS IN WHICH NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IDEAS IMPACT UPON THE ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE OF 'STREET-LEVEL' BUREAUCRATS AND PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITHIN IRISH SOCIAL POLICY

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This thesis is submitted to National University of Ireland, Cork for the degree of PhD in the Faculty of Commerce.

Submission: July 2013.

The research was conducted in the Department of Government.

It was funded by the Irish Research Council from 2010 to 2013.

Professor Neil Collins, Head of the Department of Government.

Supervisors of Research: Dr. Aodh Quinlivan and Dr. Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan.

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ABSTRACT

The study of administrative culture is particularly relevant to the Irish public sector because there have been significant efforts to restructure and reorganise it by successive governments over the years. The conventional meaning of culture is ‘widely shared and strongly held values’ of a particular group or society (Bradley and Parker, 2006: 89). Culture is not a rigid concept; it can be influenced or altered by new ideas or forces. This research examines the ways in which one set of ideas in particular, that is, those associated with New Public Management, have impacted upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within Irish social policy. Lipsky (1980: 3) defined 'street-level' bureaucrats as ‘public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work’. Utilising the Competing Values Framework (CVF) in the analysis of eighty three semi-structured interviews with 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, an evaluation is made as to the impact of NPM ideas on both visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture.

Overall, the influence of NPM is confined to superficial aspects of administrative culture such as; increased flexibility in working hours and to some degree job contracts; increased time commitment; and a customer service focus. However, the extent of these changes varies depending on policy sector and occupational group. Aspects of consensual and hierarchical cultures remain firmly in place. These coincide with features of developmental and market cultures. Contrary to the view that members of hierarchical and consensual culture would pose resistance to change, this research clearly illustrates that a very large appetite for change exists in the attitudes of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within Irish social policy, with many of them suggesting changes that correspond to NPM ideas. This study demonstrates the relevance of employing the CVF model as it is clear that administrative culture is very much a dynamic system of competing and co-existing cultures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing a PhD is a long and lonely road and at times it felt like the light at the end of the tunnel would never be in sight. However isolating the experience was there are a number of people without whom it would have not been possible.

My parents, Nora and Denis, for their continued love and support - emotional and financial - throughout the years of my (extended) education. This research is dedicated to you both.

My extended family and friends also offered vital love and support and many either were research participants or identified research participants for me through their own social circles. You know who you are (I can't name names for fear of breaking confidentiality). I would like to give special mention to Auntie K who inspired my interest in the public sector as a career option in the first place. Her moral support, career advice, proofreading, and many bottles of wine have not gone unnoticed. She is one of my harshest critics and at the same time one of my greatest champions.

To my supervisors, Aodh and Emmanuelle, I cannot thank you enough for your guidance, patience, strategising, help with job and funding applications, emphasis on linking paragraphs and always valuable feedback. I hope the relationship we have established over the last number of years continues throughout my academic career.

To those who volunteered to be my guinea pigs for my pilot interviews. The advice you offered and the patience you showed was invaluable.

The little PhD community in Bloomfield Terrace and other friends I've made in my four years in UCC have kept me going. Karl, Eluska, Marge, Laura, Gillian, Philip, Niall, Barry and Natasha have all at various times reassured me that my occasional meltdowns were perfectly normal. We have consumed extensive amounts of coffee and offered each other support and advice throughout. Some of you also proofread chapters for me. Thanks. However, Eileen gets special mention amongst this bunch. You took me under your wing when I first started this process and we ended up being housemates for over a year. I've yet to have a better housemate and wish you all the best in your own research.

To James, my love, for all your love, support, encouragement, and amazing cooking.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank all my interview participants without whom this thesis would not be possible.

DECLARATION

The thesis submitted is the candidate's own work and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere.

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Julie Connelly

July 2013.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASTI	Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland
BLG	Better Local Government: A Programme for Change
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CO	Clerical Officer
CPSU	Civil Public and Services Union
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CWO	Community Welfare Officer
CWS	Community Welfare Service
CVF	Competing Values Framework
DSP	Department of Social Protection
ECB	European Central Bank
EO	Executive Officer
EU	European Union
FF	Fianna Fáil
FG	Fine Gael
FOI	Freedom of Information
GP	General Practitioner
HEO	Higher Executive Officer
HIQA	Health Information and Quality Authority
HSE	Health Service Executive
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IASW	Irish Association of Social Workers
IFUT	Irish Federation of University Teachers
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	Irish Medical Organisation
IMPACT	Irish Municipal Public and Civil Trade Union
INTO	Irish National Teacher's Organisation

NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
PRSTV	Proportional Representation by Single Transferable Vote
PSEU	Public Service Executive Union
PSM	Public Service Motivation
SIPTU	Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
SO	Staff Officer
TLAC	Top Level Appointments Committee
TOIL	Time Off In Lieu
WSE	Whole School Evaluations
WTO	World Trade Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examines the ways in which New Public Management (NPM) ideas impact upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. 'Street-level' bureaucrats and professionals employed in the delivery of social policy are the subject of research in numerous contexts, for instance, the United Kingdom (Evans, 2011; Ellis, 2007), Sweden (Stensöta, 2012), Denmark (May and Winter, 2009) and the United States (Thomas and Johnson, 1991), but are largely neglected in the Irish context. Furthermore, research on 'street-level' bureaucrats which combines the literature on NPM and administrative culture is noticeably absent in the Irish context, therefore, this study fills a void in the existing literature.

'Street-level' bureaucrats are defined as 'public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work' (Lipsky, 1980: 3). Those working at the frontline or 'street-level' of the public policy process are of vital interest to research for four reasons. Firstly, the work they do is fundamentally political. Lipsky (2010: 4) points out that 'as providers of public benefits and keepers of public order, street-level bureaucrats are the focus of political controversy'. Additionally, Lipsky (2010) argues that public debates about the nature and extent of government services are essentially debates about the range of functions these important actors within the public policy process undertake. Intense and highly emotive debates about the role of the public sector have come to the forefront with the onset of the global economic crisis (Murphy, 2010). Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals are those whom the public interact with more than any other level of public administration. The decisions these actors make have significant bearing upon citizens' daily lives and hence they can be regarded as the gatekeepers of democracy. As Peters (1988: 112) argues, 'the citizen's impression of government may be significantly influenced by interaction with civil servants at the very lowest level in their organisation'. Thirdly, 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals constitute a large proportion of the public sector workforce, with their salaries translating into significant government expenditures. For example, of the 292, 373 employees in the Irish public sector in 2012, 59,460 (or twenty percent) were working as teachers or special needs assistants at primary and secondary school and 86,941(or twenty-nine percent) were employed in frontline positions in the health sector[1]. Fourthly, 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within social policy are an under-researched group in the

[1] As per email from A. O'Sullivan, Public Service Numbers Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 27th July 2012.

Irish context, particularly with reference to the impact of NPM ideas on their administrative culture.

NPM ideas have been applied, to greater or lesser degrees, in different contexts in a multitude of ways (Pollitt, 2000). An obvious explanation for this, especially for political scientists, is because of the different institutional features of the politico-administrative systems to which they have been applied. An alternative lens through which to examine the impact of NPM ideas is administrative culture (Hajnal, 2005). Henderson (2004: 236) defines administrative culture as 'that set of commonly-held values, attitudes, and beliefs to which public servants (appointed not elected "public officials," or "bureaucrats") subscribe and are expected to follow'. The study of administrative culture is particularly relevant to the Irish public sector because of the considerable efforts to restructure and reorganise it by successive governments over the years. Hall (1977) suggested the analogy of an iceberg to describe culture. In other words, there are some aspects of culture that are visible or above the water but there is a larger portion hidden beneath the surface, or invisible. Culture is a dynamic concept; it can be influenced or altered by new ideas or forces. Utilising the Competing Values Framework (CVF) in the analysis of eighty-three semi-structured interviews with 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, this study examines the impact of one set of ideas in particular, that is NPM ideas, on both the visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture. The visible aspects of administrative culture considered include work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures, while the invisible aspects investigated are values, work motivations and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

NPM ideas argue that the public sector should be modified to make it more business-like, by emphasising private sector ideals of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Christensen and Laegreid, 2011; Hajnal, 2005). As Chapter 4 demonstrates, successive Irish public sector reform programmes from the Strategic *Management Initiative* (SMI) in 1994 to the current *Public Service Reform Plan 2011* have emphasised NPM ideas. Colyer, Soutar and Ryder (2000: 85) argue that 'understanding the underlying organisational culture may be particularly useful when large scale change is proposed or imminent'. This point is particularly relevant to the Irish public sector, because, in the current context of economic crisis, doing more with less remains an extremely attractive idea for those holding the purse strings. However, as Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 11) point out 'the academic literature suggests that traditional organisational cultures in the public sector are likely to impede public service modernisation unless they themselves are changed to become aligned with the modern role of government as an engine of

economic growth'. Indeed, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin T.D. has outlined the importance of culture to successfully reforming the Irish public sector as follows;

> I believe we need to focus on cultural change, just as much as on organisational change. Culture is perhaps the most difficult thing to manage in any system, but it is also often the most important factor too. Changing attitudes - to embrace a more open, flexible and service-centred form of public service - is key to reform. (Howlin, 2012: 28)

Reform programmes within the Irish public sector have largely emanated from the top down, and advocate changing its culture to one that is more in line with NPM ideas. However, Colyer *et al.* (2000: 85) point out that 'such all-pervading change takes time to achieve and must involve *all* people in the organisation to change the way things are done in the organisation' [emphasis added]. With this in mind, Brown (1995: 28) reasons that 'organisations, like the societies in which they exist' tend to have 'an array of nested, overlapping and sometimes competing cultures'. Different pockets or segments of culture can exist within an organisation with their own norms, values and customs due to differences in departmental goals and functions, job requirements or location in the hierarchy. For example, Berg (2006: 556) points out that ‘a study of major government services in Norway (Berg *et al*. 2002), found that front-line personnel and top-level managers had different perceptions of organisational reforms’. Understanding the disconnect between the espoused culture of those at the top of the Irish public sector, as articulated in their reform programmes, and the culture in action at the 'street-level' may help explain why past reforms influenced by NPM ideas have not been overly successful in the Irish context.

While it would have been plausible to conduct this study on 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within any area of public policy, the emphasis of this study is confined to those working within Irish social policy for the following reasons. Social policy is an area of public policy in which the application of NPM type reforms may pose problems, as policy goals, means and results are often ambiguous and less tangible than in other policy areas (as is explained in detail in Section 2.3.1). Therefore, they are more difficult to measure and quantify. In addition, social policy is entwined in all aspects of Irish society and can be viewed as a major determinant of quality of life for citizens. As Curry (2011: 3) explains;

> Two-fifths of the population are in receipt of weekly income maintenance payments, and at some stage the members of practically every household will avail themselves of a scheme or schemes administered by the Department of Social Protection. Just over

> one-fifth of the population are engaged in full time education. Most of the housing stock has been either directly provided or subsidised by the state. In addition, about one third of the state are eligible for the full range of health services free of charge, and approximately one-fifth attend hospital emergency departments annually.

Moreover, social policy areas constitute huge government expenditures. Presently, the Irish public sector is operating in the context of severe fiscal crisis. According to Minister Howlin (2012: 16),

> The cost of jobseekers payments alone is now over three times the 2006 level. The number of medical card holders has increased by more than 400,000 since 2007. Demographic changes mean that the cost of providing state pensions is increasing (for example, from €3.75 billion in 2007 to almost €5 billion last year).

Furthermore, the bulk of public sector employees are located within the social services, with many of them at the 'street-level'. For instance, at the end of 2011, the health and education sectors constituted thirty-seven and thirty-two percent (approximately) respectively of all Irish public sector employees. Therefore, the impetus exists to target cuts to these areas.

By examining the ways in which NPM ideas impact upon the visible and invisible aspects of the administrative culture of this essential group of actors within the public policy process a number of important questions will be addressed. Issues concerning the development of appropriate and meaningful accountability and evaluation measures are linked to the work motivations of public sector employees. Furthermore, possible reasons for resistance to change/public sector reform are explored. In the context of the current global economic crisis, these are important issues that governments worldwide are attempting to address in order to curb expenditure while simultaneously obtaining value for money from their respective public sectors. Indeed, the findings of this research should interest politicians, public sector employees, trade unions and citizens alike. For these, and the other reasons outlined above, investigating the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy has never been more timely or relevant.

1.2 OUTLINE OF THESIS

Chapter 2 of this thesis reviews and merges the literature on administrative cultural change and NPM ideas. The literature review commences with an examination of the concept of administrative culture and explains how it will be operationalised for the purposes of this research. Next the literature review establishes the importance of limiting the scope of the

research to social policy and to 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in particular. Then a detailed explanation of the origins of NPM ideas and a review of the main criticisms as outlined by literature is presented. The following section questions whether a post-NPM era can be spoken of. After that, NPM ideas are related to social policy and organisational culture change respectively. The subsequent section assesses how, according to the literature, NPM ideas impact on the traditional administrative culture of the public sector. As a result, the two research hypotheses are developed. Finally, the research hypotheses are linked to the literature on organisational culture, through the research framework, that is, the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures.

Chapter 3 details the methodological procedures employed to investigate the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Initially, Chapter 3 presents the reasons which contributed to opting for a qualitative research design. Next the choice of research instrument is justified. The third section deals with the research sample, including the sample criteria, sampling method and sample description. Following that, the role of the researcher in this project is clarified. Finally, details of the data collection process and data analysis methods utilised are offered.

Chapter 4 sets out to examine the key contextual features of the Irish system that contribute to the formation of the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy. To this end, the chapter commences with an examination of the historical influences which shaped the formation of the Irish public sector. Then, the distinctive features of the political system in which the Irish public sector operates are described. The features of public sector employment are discussed, along with the trajectory and nature of public sector reform in Ireland. The ways in which NPM ideas have been applied in the Irish public sector are then discussed. Finally, economic and social influences past and present are discussed. It is the unique combination of all of these features that contributes to the formation of the dominant administrative culture of the Irish public sector, of which 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy are part.

For the purposes of this research, social policy is defined as relating to five distinct policy areas; education, health, housing, the personal social services and social welfare. Consequently, the findings of this research are presented in five distinct chapters, each relating to one of the aforementioned policy areas. Utilising the CVF, which is discussed in Chapter 2, these chapters

analyse the primary data obtained from participants in each of the policy sectors to test the research hypotheses developed in the course of the literature review. Considering that this research takes the symbolist perspective of organisational cultural change, the analysis remains aware of the contextual particularities of the Irish system detailed in Chapter 4. Therefore, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 present the findings from the education, health, housing, personal social services and social welfare sectors respectively.

The concluding chapter draws comparisons and distinctions between each of the policy areas to ascertain whether we can speak of a dominant administrative culture within Irish social policy. Specific practical recommendations in relation to aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals are also put forward. The ways in which this research lends itself to further research possibilities are also discussed.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW and RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The study of administrative culture is particularly relevant to the Irish public sector because of the considerable efforts to restructure and reorganise it by successive governments over the years. The conventional meaning of culture is the ‘widely shared and strongly held values’ of a particular group or society (Bradley and Parker, 2006: 89). Culture is not a rigid concept; it can be influenced or altered by new ideas or forces. This research will examine the ways in which one set of ideas in particular, that is, those associated with NPM, have impacted upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Du Gay (2000: 87) points out that 'administrative culture is simultaneously a malleable and yet fragile entity and is affected by many things: changes in institutions or structures, changes in personnel, changes in codes of behaviour and so forth'.

This literature review will demonstrate how, in essence, NPM advocates the introduction of changes to public sector organisations in order to develop a more business-like culture, mirrored on the principles of the private sector. This business-like culture is output focused in order to create public sector organisations that are more efficient, effective and economical. Christensen and Laegreid (2003: 306) explain that ‘the most important part of this state model is not concerned with democracy but with efficiency, quality and direct consumer influence on public services’.

This research concentrates on 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Measuring outputs (and ultimately outcomes) can prove difficult in social policy areas because of the ambiguous nature of policy goals and means. Also, social policy is a particular area of public policy with a set of values that are most directly in contrast to those of NPM ideas. 'Street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within social policy were chosen as the area for this study because of their economic and political significance and because of their under-researched status within the Irish context.

This literature review commences with an examination of the concept of administrative culture and justifies how it will be operationalised for the purposes of this research. Subsequently, the significance of limiting the scope of this research to social policy and to 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in particular is established. The third section explains in detail the origins of NPM ideas and reviews the main criticisms as outlined by literature. The fourth section questions if we are now in a post-NPM era. The following sections relate NPM ideas to

social policy and organisational change respectively. The following assesses how, according to the literature, NPM ideas impact on traditional administrative culture. As a result, two research hypotheses are developed and outlined. Finally, the research hypotheses are linked to the literature on organisational culture, through the identification of a research framework, that is, the CVF.

2.2 ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

As indicated in the introduction, this research will examine the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Peters (1988: 61) argues that the public administration of a state can be regarded as 'a collection of organisations'. Thus this research explores the concept of organisational culture to explain the impact of NPM ideas on administrative culture. Initially, a definition of organisational culture is presented, secondly, the justification for the use of the notion of administrative culture is explained and finally, the ways in which administrative/organisational culture can be operationalised for the purposes of this research are discussed.

2.2.1 Defining Administrative/Organisational Culture

As Hajnal (2005) concedes, administrative culture is a concept that is inherently difficult to define and operationalise. He conceptualises 'administrative-culture-as-organisational-culture' (Hajnal, 2005: 500). Indeed, as the public administration of a state can be regarded as a compilation of a number of organisations, this research also employs the concept of organisational culture to investigate the ways in which NPM ideas impact upon administrative culture. Many studies of organisations have focused exclusively on their structural aspects. However, as Meyer and Rowan (1977: 343) point out;

> ... structural elements are only loosely linked to each other and to activities, rules are often violated, decisions are often unimplemented, or if implemented have uncertain consequences, technologies are of problematic efficiency, and evaluation and inspection systems are subverted or rendered so vague as to provide little coordination.

Accordingly, in order to more fully understand what happens in organisations, one must examine more than just their formal structural elements. The idea that organisations have specific cultures came to the forefront in the early 1980s and is found most notably in business management and organisational theory literature (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 193). Organisational culture is a concept that can be defined in many different ways. For example, Bradley and Parker (2006: 89) define organisational culture as 'widely shared and strongly held values'. Henderson (2004: 236), on the other hand, defines administrative culture as 'that set of

commonly-held values, attitudes, and beliefs to which public servants (appointed not elected "public officials," or "bureaucrats") subscribe and are expected to follow'. Both definitions imply that culture is something which is shared by its members. Denhardt and Denhardt (2007: 161) offer a more nuanced definition by pointing out that;

> Rather than seeing an organisation as a static "structure", the organisational culture perspective, draws from the field of anthropology to understand how norms, beliefs, and values are shared by members of an organisation and in turn, define its boundaries. These shared norms and values are manifest in organisational member's language and behaviours, rituals, and symbols, and in the artefacts they produce. Culture expresses the ideas and overall values that define an organisation and has a significant and long-lasting influence on its members.

Martin (2002: 91) conducts a survey of definitions of organisational culture and concludes that 'many cultural researchers define culture in approximately the same way - in terms of cultural manifestations that are shared by most cultural members. Often they will define culture as that which is unique about a context'. Cultural manifestations include a wide variety of things such as observed behaviours; language; customs; rituals; group norms; espoused values; and also have material aspects such as formal organisational structures, career paths, pay systems, and even the physical layout of workplace. Implicit in Martin's (2002) summary of organisational culture definitions is the notion that cultural manifestations are not shared by *all* members of the organisation. Indeed, Boyle and O'Donnell (2008) and Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) acknowledge that organisational cultures will vary from country to country, organisation to organisation and even within organisations.

Schein (1992: 14) asks if it is possible to state that a large organisation - such as the public sector - can have one culture. He argues that any large organisation can be comprised of any number of distinct subcultures, and some of these subcultures - the example he uses are managers and unionised labour groups - may even be in conflict with each other. Similarly, Brown (1995: 28) reasons that 'organisations, like the societies in which they exist' tend to have 'an array of nested, overlapping and sometimes competing cultures'. Schein (2010: 55) characterises a subculture as sharing 'many of the assumptions of the total organisation but also hold assumptions beyond those of the total organisation, usually reflecting their functional tasks, the occupations of their members, or their unique experiences'. For example, doctors within the public healthcare system could be regarded as a sub-cultural group of public sector employees. Schein (1990: 15) points out that, individuals within organisations can be members of any number of subcultures at any one time. According to Kaarst-Brown, Nicholson, von Dran, and Stanton (2004: 36) this 'view of organisational culture as fragmented, reflects the

challenges of achieving cultural consensus and exhibits a high level of acknowledgement and acceptance of cultural ambiguity'. Despite this however, Schein (1992: 14) argues that when 'certain assumptions are shared across all the units of an organisation we can legitimately speak of an organisational culture'. Consequently, we can speak of a 'dominant administrative culture' (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 49) within the public sector of a state, where different pockets or segments of culture can exist with their own norms, values and customs due to differences in departmental goals and functions, job requirements or location in the hierarchy, while still exhibiting the main aspects of the dominant culture. Pollitt and Bouckaert, (2011: 49) describe what they term as the 'dominant administrative culture' of a state as;

> The expectations the staff of an organisation have about what is normal and acceptable in that organisation - "the way we do things around here". It therefore provides the context for ethical relations within the public sector. Such beliefs and attitudes manifest themselves in numerous ways, including symbols and rituals of the organisation, its stories, jokes, and myths.

Therefore, this research utilises the notion that the public sector of a state has a dominant administrative culture, and, henceforth, the terms organisational culture and administrative culture are taken interchangeably.

Martin (2002) points out that, like most other concepts within the social sciences, it is next to near impossible to get consensus on the definition of organisational culture. Therefore, it is easier to look at 'what cultural researchers actually study when they claim to be studying culture' (Martin, 2002: 91). In other words, which cultural manifestations are examined by researchers in order to operationalise the concept? Martin (2002: 65- 87) states that organisational culture researchers have examined everything from rituals engaged in the workplace; organisational stories; jargon utilised by employees; physical arrangements such as architecture, decor and dress; reward systems; humour used within the workplace; formal and informal work practices; and so on. Jingjit and Fotaki (2010: 65) examined seven manifestations of organisational culture for their study arguing that 'given the complexity of organisational culture it was simply impossible to cover all aspects in a single study'. The aspects Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) studied included dominant characteristic; leadership style; management style; organisational cohesion; strategic emphasis; evaluation criteria and career progression paths. In order to execute a viable research project, it is necessary to identify what aspects of administrative culture to examine.

Schein (1992, 2010) argues that in order to understand organisational culture more completely, one must be aware that it exists at different levels. Similarly, Hall (1977) suggested the analogy

of an iceberg to describe culture. In the 'cultural iceberg', there are some aspects of culture that are visible or above the water but there is a larger portion hidden beneath the surface or invisible. Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 5) draw on this analogy to explain that there are two aspects to organisational culture; 'the visible levels (surface manifestations) of the "cultural iceberg" incorporate observable symbols, ceremonies, stories, slogans, behaviours, dress and physical settings. The invisible levels of the "cultural iceberg" include the underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and feeling'. Thus, the difference between the visible and invisible aspects of organisational culture is the ease in which they can be deciphered; the former being tangible and straightforward to decipher, the latter being far more subtle and trickier to grasp. This research will utilise the cultural iceberg as a means of addressing the question of the ways in which NPM ideas have impacted on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Hence, the research will focus on both visible and invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy.

- The visible aspects considered will include work practices and accountability and evaluation measures
- The invisible aspects investigated will include values, work motivations and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

While this section identifies the means by which the concept of organisational culture can be operationalised for the purposes of practical research, the next section examines the two main theoretical approaches to organisational culture and change found in the literature, that is, the rationalist and symbolist approaches.

2.2.2 Organisational Culture and Change

It can be argued that NPM ideas advocate changing the organisational culture of the public sector (Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005) to one that broadly reflects the private sector. This section deals with organisational change and presents the two broad theoretical approaches - rationalist and symbolist - to how culture impacts on this process.

Rusaw (2007: 349) defines organisational change as follows; ‘a process in which people define a goal or direction that is more desirable than the present state of affairs; it also involves people creating conditions that will align assumptions, goals, and work’. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that organisations change due to different institutional or competitive pressures. They identify three institutional pressures: coercive, mimetic and normative. However, regardless of why organisations change, Jingjit and Fotaki (2010: 64) point out that since the 1980s

increasing attention has been focused on organisational culture as a crucial means to facilitate organisational change; 'Researchers have demonstrated that major organisational transformation is precarious unless accommodated by a change in the underlying values'. The implicit argument is that for NPM ideas to succeed in their goals of organisational change, it is not enough to just tackle the visible aspects of organisational culture; a corresponding change must transpire in its invisible aspects.

There are differing views within the literature as to the means by which organisational culture change occurs. The rationalist managerial approach (of which NPM is part) views culture as but one feature of an organisation that can be changed or used to predict outcomes such as efficiency or organisational commitment. Dingwall and Strangleman (2005: 474) note that this view of organisational culture maintains the underlying assumption that managers can somehow manipulate and create efficient corporate cultures. Grint (1998: 126) explains that proponents of this school of thought subscribe to the notion that,

> Organisations work best where members' and organisations' beliefs, actions, and goals are mutually compatible. [...] Typically the approach is interpretative to the extent that organisations are free to interpret and develop a specific form of culture, though it should be noted that many of the best seller approaches to the culture of success tend to assume that senior management's articulation of their company culture is identical with the actual culture itself - assuming that only one culture exists.

For example, Grint (1998) discusses the trend for the use of strategy statements by corporations (and indeed public sector organisations) as a means to formalise their cultures, on the assumption that by reading these documents employees will somehow assimilate the culture described therein. The implication being that appropriate organisational cultures can and should be created. Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 5) argue that 'often change strategies focus on the visible levels' of organisational culture. Brown (1995: 26) distinguishes between what he describes as the espoused culture (visible) of an organisation and an organisations culture-in-practice (invisible) as follows;

> ... espoused culture refers to a normative or desired state of vision of the organisation, that is, what the organisation should be. In contrast, an organisations culture-in-practice is its actual culture as experienced by employees. The difference between an organisations espoused culture and culture-in-practice can be dramatic. For example, some universities espouse concern for teaching quality ('we are a teaching oriented institution') while in practice they recruit and promote employees on the basis of their research endeavours.

Social scientists, such as Grint (1995), find the rational view of organisational culture alien and lacking any recognition of its complex nature. Dingwall and Strangleman (2005: 475) point out the social scientific criticisms of the rational notion of organisational culture,

> Culture expresses the interactions of groups among themselves and with their environment. This view of organisations is predicated on an understanding that social life is fundamentally reflexive and therefore subject to change and open to unintended consequences of action. Culture is not simply a variable that can be altered to achieve a specified outcome. However, while this is a powerful critique, it tends to lead into an argument that culture change is impossible. This seems a somewhat exaggerated conclusion although change is certainly not a simple or straightforward process.

An important point made here by Dingwall and Strangleman (2005) is that they acknowledge that organisational culture change, while being a complex process, is indeed possible. Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) take a view of organisational culture which they call the symbolist perspective. They argue that organisational culture is highly context specific and underpinned by the ethical norms within wider society. Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) acknowledge that organisational culture change is a far more complex process than the rational viewpoint would suggest and that long periods of time are required for this complex process to occur. The symbolist perspective is firmly based around the notion that reality is socially constructed. In effect, attempts at changing the organisational culture of the public sector as a consequence of NPM ideas have been ongoing since the 1980s, which is undeniably a substantial period of time. Whether the changes that have occurred are merely cosmetic or deeply rooted is the question that this research attempts to answer. Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 14) summarise the two views on organisational culture change expressed in the literature as follows,

> Some argue that culture can be directed and controlled, particularly by influential leaders. Others argue that directive, top down change is unlikely to be successful in the long run, and that managing culture is either not possible, or only possible if the complexity of reality is understood and change is progressed in a consensual and longer-term manner.

This section of the literature review contends that it is plausible to speak of a dominant organisational or administrative culture within the public sector, while, at the same time, acknowledging that subcultures exist. Even though organisational culture change is clearly a very complex and multifaceted concept, one must develop a definition that allows the concept to be practically operationalised in order to investigate it. With this in mind, the 'cultural iceberg' model is employed to examine both visible and invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Subsequently, it was noted that there are two main standpoints regarding the role of culture in organisational change; the rational view which regards culture as something easily changed within an

organisation, and the symbolist viewpoint which regards organisational culture change as a highly complex process. This research takes a more symbolist approach, regarding cultural change as a complex process which occurs over lengthy periods of time. Next, justification is provided as to why social policy and 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, in particular, were chosen as the focus for this research.

2.3 FOCUS OF THE RESEARCH

This section describes the rationale for confining the scope of this research to social policy and to 'street-level' bureaucrats. Social policy is first defined. Secondly, a detailed justification for selecting social policy as the area of study for this research - which includes a discussion of political, economic and social reasons - is offered. Thereafter, the emphasis is further narrowed to 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within social policy. A description of the key features of both groups is presented and an evaluation is made of the similarities and differences of both groups.

2.3.1 Social Policy

Social policy is a sub-category of public policy, thus, prior to offering a definition of social policy, it is useful to first briefly define what is meant by the term public policy. Dye (1972: 2) very simply defines public policy as 'anything a government chooses to do or not to do'. Hill (2006: 9) elaborates on Dye's definition of public policy by stating that 'policies may be identified as a purposive action, but such action is recognised as a particular characteristic of state action. … However, an acknowledgement of policy as a course of action must include the possibility that systematic inaction occurs'. Howlett, Ramesh and Perl (2009: 5) argue that public policy can be described as 'initiatives sanctioned by governments' that have the following characteristics: the initiatives must be deliberate; unintended consequences may exist; other actors try to influence content of policy but only government has the capacity to make decisions to implement policy; and, how policy is implemented or what decisions governments make are often constrained by politics or economics. The vital thing to note is that while many other actors may be involved in influencing the choices of government, it is only government that has the authority to make the final decision. Another crucial element to the definition of public policy is the notion of choice. Choice implies the freedom and power to make a decision. Thus a public policy can be a course of action a government actively chooses *not* to do, for example, a decision to not alter a tax rate.

Parsons (1995: 14) points out that the 'modern meaning of the English notion "policy" is that of a course of action or plan, a set of political purposes – as opposed to "administration"'. Birkland (2001: 21) defines public policy as consisting 'of political decisions for implementing programs to achieve societal goals'. These definitions emphasise the political nature of public policy. It is worth noting that a government's choice of policy can be affected by national conceptions of the state and its role; institutional and structural arrangements for the implementation of policy; the political, social, cultural or economic context; and, the policy instruments available to choose from. Hill (1997: 99) argues that 'whatever the relationship between state and society, policies may be interpreted as responses to perceived social needs. Government is concerned with "doing things to", "taking things from", or "providing things for" groups of people'. Due to time and financial constraints associated with doctoral research, it was deemed unfeasible to investigate the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of the entire Irish public sector. Consequently, a decision was taken to narrow the focus to a single policy area, that is, social policy.

It is possible to distinguish between policy types on a nominal basis, for example health, environment, justice, transport and so forth. However, to distinguish policy types on this basis does nothing to explain the types of political relationships involved or the characteristics of the policy itself. Policy names may also go in and out of fashion, or may vary according to context but content and relationships may stay the same. Spicker (2008: 76) indicates that 'the broad areas of policy are commonly divided into economic policy, foreign policy and domestic policy; in those terms social policy might be seen as a subcategory of domestic policy; along with law, and other issues like culture, environmental policy or the public services'. Spicker (2008: 76) goes on to argue that this 'conventional distinction does not work particularly well' as 'it seems clear that aspects of social policy cut across all these fields (including economic and foreign policy)'.

Lowi (1964) identifies three policy types based upon their impact or expected impact on society. Lowi (1964: 689) argues that 'when policies are defined in this way, there are only a limited number of functions that governments can perform'. The categories of policy Lowi (1964) identifies are distributive (individualised grants and programs), redistributive (strive for a more proportionate distribution of wealth in order to make the society more just) and regulatory (limit the discretion of individuals and agencies, or otherwise compel certain types of behaviour), which he argues are 'historically as well as functionally distinct'. Lowi (1964: 689) argues that 'these areas of policy or government activity constitute real arenas of power. Each arena tends

to develop its own characteristic political structure, political process, elites and groups relations'. John (1998: 7) argues that Lowi's typology is important because it promotes the 'idea that each policy sector should be studied in its own right and that it has a unique politics of its own'. However, this typology does not aid the argument that social policy is an area that merits distinct study. Different social policies can be identified as distributive (for example, government funded research scholarships), redistributive (for example, unemployment benefits) or regulatory (for example, limiting the number of hours a doctor can work in one day).

A more useful typology for this research is the one put forward by Rose (1976). He also classifies the activities of the modern state into three types. By examining the development of government activities in the modern state, Rose (1976) uses government departments as his indicator to compare states. Rose (1976) labels the first type as 'defining activities'. Without engaging in these activities, he argues, the state could not exist. Rose (1976: 255) argues that

> Every modern state is concerned with the defence of its territorial integrity (it has a department of foreign affairs and of defence); the maintenance of internal order (it has a department managing legal activities, and a ministry of the interior supervising the police); and securing resources (it has a ministry of finance concerned with taxes and the issuance of currency).

He points out that once the state has enough organisational and revenue resources it can commence engagement in other activities, and thus the second type of activity Rose (1976: 258) identifies is the 'mobilization of physical resources'. Rose (1976: 258) argues that the state is not the only actor that can engage in these types of activities, and that they are not necessary to the maintenance or definition of the state. However, the state is usually the actor with the greatest resources available to invest in these activities. These activities (for example, investment in roads, canals, railways etcetera) create extra wealth and power for the state. Any benefit to the individual as a result is incidental rather than being intentional. The final state activity that Rose (1976: 258) identifies is social policy. These activities intentionally benefit the individual citizens of the state. Again Rose (1976) emphasises that social benefits, like the mobilisation of physical resources, are optional activities of the state and can also be provided by the private or voluntary sector.

Rose (1976: 271) maintains that 'there are relatively clear performance criteria for monitoring and evaluating efforts to mobilise physical resources', and as such, the implementation of these activities does not attract much political controversy. Social policies however, Rose (1976: 272) argues, have very different consequences;

> When the state takes responsibility for health, welfare and education, it is no longer concerned with objectives that can be the reliable and measureable result of its own activities. Such outputs as hospitals, schools or social workers are but means to the end of better social conditions; they are not the ends themselves. There is no assurance that the intentions of government will be matched by social achievements.

According to Rose (1976) social policies are distinct from other policy areas for three important reasons. Firstly, the intention of social policies is to benefit the individual (even though unintended consequences may result in benefits for the entire state). Secondly, social policies have ambiguous goals and thus results are difficult to measure. Thirdly, social policies are subject to political controversy due to their highly contested nature (what one group in society defines as a collective good, another may define as a collective evil).

A common perception is that social policy is exclusively about welfare or relates to policies surrounding the welfare state. Indeed, Hill (1997: 1) relates the notion of social policy to welfare provision by stating that 'social policy may be defined as policy activities which influence welfare'. But then one must ask, as Hill (1997:1) does '1. Since the welfare of citizens is affected by their own actions and by the actions of others, what is it about the role of the state in relation to welfare that is different? 2. What are the kinds of actions which have an impact on welfare?' For example, Hill (1997) argues that government policy in relation to sports, culture and the arts impacts on citizen's welfare but we instinctively know that these are not to be regarded as social policies. Spicker (2008: 1) on the other hand argues that social policy relates to the 'social services and the welfare state'. Social welfare is traditionally associated with income supports in the form of unemployment and a variety of other benefits, such as illness or disability. Spicker (2008: 77) argues that 'social services are often thought of, however irrationally, as being for people who have some kind of dependency. Services for older people and children are generally, then, for "dependent" groups; services which are used by everyone are not'. However, education is not conventionally regarded as a policy of the welfare state, as state provision is normally universal, thus we cannot confine the definition of social policy to the welfare state or social services. While Hill (1997) discusses policies that impact on welfare, Spicker (2008) discusses the policies of the welfare state. Both definitions offer a limited view of social policy.

Becker and Bryman (2004: 4) offer a more elaborate definition of social policy by stating that it is 'the term used to refer to the practice of social intervention aimed at securing social change to promote the welfare and wellbeing of citizens'. This definition introduces the concept of

wellbeing in addition to welfare. Dean (2006) also uses the term 'wellbeing' rather than welfare but it can be argued that all public policy has an impact on the wellbeing (whether positive or negative) of citizens. Spicker (2008: 4) discusses the use of the term wellbeing in his definition as follows;

> It is probably truer to say that social policy is concerned with people who lack well-being – people with particular problems or needs – and the services which provide for them. The kinds of issue which social policy tends to be concerned with, then, include problems like poverty, poor housing, mental illness and disability.

Spicker's (2008) explanation directs us towards citizens' problems and needs. Considine and Dukelow's (2009: xxi) definition also points to the notion of need; 'At its core, social policy is the study of how human needs are met and how we respond to risks that human beings face'. However, it can at times be very difficult to distinguish between wants and needs.

Regardless of which definition one chooses to apply to social policy, it is vitally important that 'we must not … automatically react by investing it with a halo of altruism' (Titmuss, 1974: 27). While many definitions of social policy assert that it is about wellbeing, welfare or needs, these are loaded terms implying that social policy will have some positive influence. Titmuss (1974) contends that social policies may in fact reinforce inequalities within society. Furthermore, when discussing the development of social policies, Rose (1976: 261) argues that the first social policies had collective as well as individual benefits, using education as the case in point ('insofar as education made subjects more useful to the state as workers or soldiers'). Thus, social policies may not benefit every citizen equally, and can be used as much for social control (Hill, 1997: 2) as benevolent reasons.

Spicker (2008: 10) argues that 'there are very few issues which social policy might not have something to do with'. One can make the argument to include or not, any number of public policies in the definition of social policy. Indeed, nearly all public policies have some "social" dimensions to them, but, for the purposes of this research, a more limited view will be taken. When discussing the difficulties of defining social policy and its intended or unintended consequences, Hill (2006: 8) takes the approach of confining his attention to a limited number of policy areas, conventionally defined as "social policy", recognising that their particular hallmark seems to have been efforts to advance human welfare. He argues that this is a pragmatic approach to the definition of social policy.

Indeed, the approach taken by many authors (for example, Hill, 1997; Lavalette and Pratt, 2006; Dean, 2006; Considine and Dukelow, 2009) is to argue that a definition of social policy should be concerned with the five giants – Want, Disease, Squalor, Ignorance and Idleness – identified in the Beveridge Report (1942). It appears that there is little consensus as to which policy areas the five giants relate to. Let us take each in turn. The term Want means an absence or lack of necessaries; destitution; poverty; penury; indigence; or, need. Government policies used to tackle this giant are those relating to social security benefits (social welfare). Health policy relates to Disease but so could environmental policy (for example, clean water or air). Squalor can be resolved by housing policy, but again environmental or sustainability policies might just have as much an impact. There is little debate at to the fact that education solves Ignorance; while education and employment policies relate to Idleness. The personal social services were not identified in the Beveridge Report (1942) because, according to Dean (2006: 54) 'they are concerned not with the needs that everyone inevitably has, but with the special needs of vulnerable people'. Dean (2006) goes on to argue that everyone is technically vulnerable but that people who avail of these services do not have anyone else to protect or care for them. However, the personal social services tend to be included in any definition of social policy. This research will take Hill's (2006) pragmatic approach and limit its scope to those involved in the implementation of the following public policy areas; social security; health; education; housing; and, the personal social services.

The emphasis of this research was narrowed to the study of social policy for three important interrelated reasons, each of which is addressed in detail. The foremost justification for opting to investigate social policy is because, similar to all public policy, social policy is inherently political. As MacCarthaigh (2012: 44) argues 'public administration cannot be understood independently of shared understandings of the appropriate scope, role and reach of the state, and these are inherently political decisions'. Indeed, social policies are subject to more political controversy than other public policy fields. Rose (1976) made the point that social services do not have to be provided by the state. Social policy can and is, implemented by public, private and voluntary sectors and ones views as to who should implement social policy are a political or ideological issue. Therefore, social policies are widely contested due to disagreements about the nature and scope of social service provision. As Lavalette and Pratt (2006: 4) assert, social policy 'is in fact an intensely political – and contested – activity. It encapsulates an important arena of modern social life in which competing ideologies clash'. Dean (2006: 47-48) explains that there are different mechanisms for the provision of social welfare, 'Liberal regimes favour selective or means-tested safety nets. Conservative regimes favour social insurance or contribution-based benefits and pensions. Social Democratic regimes favour universal

provision. All developed countries, in practice, combine these three principles to produce their own unique system of social security'. Lavalette and Pratt (2006: 4) point out that 'social policies are intimately bound to the societies in which they develop and reflect the priorities of these systems. … For Marxists social policies exist within capitalist socio-economic systems and for neo-liberals within free market economies'. Considine and Dukelow argue (2009: 119) that it is possible to distinguish between the politics of the left and right by explaining what their focus for social services is; 'For the right, the individual is the primary focus; for the left, society, and the way it is organised and structured, needs to be examined in order to fully understand include and respond to all individuals'. Thus, arguments about the provision of social services are one of the defining facets of ideology and as will be explained further in section 2.4.1 below, ideology was one of the driving forces behind the growing prominence of NPM ideas.

The second reason for choosing to narrow the emphasis of this study to social policy is economic. Spending on social policy constitutes one of the largest proportions of government expenditure in many countries. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004: 29) argue that 'In most modern states social security (pensions, unemployment benefits, and other benefits in cash and kind) is the largest item in the state budget, and healthcare is frequently the second largest'. Dean (2006: 11) concurs by stating that 'spending on social policies is absolutely massive and generally accounts for a major slice of national income'. More recently, Peters (2010: 8) points out that 'entitlement programs constitute a major portion of the expenditures of government – approximately 50 percent in the United States, 55 percent in the United Kingdom, and over 60 percent in Sweden'. Peters (2010) also points to demographic shifts such as the aging of populations requiring more public spending on pensions and healthcare. After the Middle East oil crisis of 1973, Rose (1976) raised questions regarding which government activities could be reduced. Rose (1976: 275) argued that 'On the grounds of effectiveness and efficiency, social concerns that involve the state providing significant resources as inputs to a social process where government action can only, at best, influence conditions a small amount, are *prima facie* vulnerable'. He argued, that while social services have what he terms 'humanitarian appeal', they often relate to a small dependent portion of society, who are often not powerful enough have their concerns met. At their core, NPM ideas advocate doing more with less in order to increase efficiency, economy and effectiveness. With social policy constituting the larger part of government expenditure in a number of the countries implementing change, these were an obvious target. Indeed, recent expenditure cuts made by the Irish government have focused extensively on the areas of health, education and social protection (see Chapter 4).

The final reason is that social policy is entwined in all aspects of social life and has a substantial impact on citizens' life chances. Social policy is conventionally associated with the most vulnerable or at risk in society; however, this is not actually the case. From the moment of our birth, to our first day of school, to the time we receive our retirement benefits, we are the beneficiaries of the social services. Dean (2006) puts forward the argument that the five giants - Want, Disease, Squalor, Ignorance and Idleness - still remain to be tackled in modern western society. Initially Dean (2006: 42) points out that 'disease and ignorance continue to stalk even the richest nations of the world'. Richer nations now have more health problems due to aging populations, hazards due to industrialisation (for example, pollution and toxins) and consumerism (for example, smoking and obesity). Additionally, every member of society will require healthcare or education services at some stage of their lives. As regards want and idleness, Dean (2006: 47) points out that 'there is a broad distinction to be drawn between "absolute" poverty (as as condition in which people cannot achieve physical subsistence) and "relative" poverty (as a condition in which they cannot cope or take part in the society in which they live)'. In relation to squalor, Dean (2006: 50) highlights that in urban areas, in particular, there are issues of mass unemployment, lack of services and urban decay and argues that sustainable development is required. Thus, social policy areas are those that the public interacts with on a far more regular basis than other government services. It can also be argued that inefficiencies in these services receive the bulk of media attention and few would argue with changes that would result in these services being delivered more efficiently.

2.3.2 'Street-level' Bureaucrats and Professionals

The preceding section provides a definition of social policy and the reasons which contributed to limiting the scope of the research to this field. However, for practical purposes, the brief of the research had to be further narrowed. Therefore, the research was confined to 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within social policy. Lipsky (1980: 3) defined 'street-level' bureaucrats as 'public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work'. Lipsky (1980: 3-4) argues that 'people who work in these jobs tend to have much in common because they experience analytically similar work conditions'. Lipsky (1980: 8-9) specifies four characteristics of 'street-level' employment which cause it to be analytically similar. He argues that the work done by 'street-level' bureaucrats is 'most often immediate and personal'; their decisions 'tend to be redistributive as well as allocative'; their on-the-spot decisions can affect citizens life chances; and 'street-level' bureaucrats 'must deal with clients personal reactions to their decisions'. Therefore, 'street-level' employees can be described as a group or subculture within social policy.

The administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats is worthy of investigation for numerous reasons. Lipsky (1980: 8) points out that 'street-level' bureaucrats are frequently at the centre of political controversy for two reasons. Firstly, he argues that 'debates about the proper scope and focus of government services are essentially debates over the scope and function of these public employees'. Secondly, he contends that 'street-level' bureaucrats have 'considerable impact on people's lives', even going so far as to state that 'they hold the keys to a dimension of citizenship'. By this Lipsky (1980) means that 'street-level' bureaucrats play a part in social control and socialising citizens to expected behaviours. 'Street-level' bureaucrats constitute a huge portion of the public sector workforce, and, because the work they do is so labour intensive, their salaries represent huge government expenditures. As a result, 'street-level' bureaucracies are under constant calls from the media, public and politicians to improve efficiency and responsiveness. This is particularly relevant when discussing NPM ideas with their emphasis on curbing government spending. Brodkin (2008: 321) states that 'lower-level bureaucrats effectively "make" policy when formal statutes are ambiguous or internally contradictory, policy implementation requires discretionary decision-making at the point of delivery, and the routine activities of front-line workers can be neither fully monitored nor controlled'. Brodkin (2006: 1) argues that 'bureaucratic discretion is a fundamental feature of social provision, one that presents enduring difficulties for management'. Indeed, one of the glaring paradoxes of NPM is that it aims to limit the levels of discretion and increase accountability amongst public sector professionals (Hill, 2005), while at the same time giving managers the freedom to manage. Furthermore, a review of the literature on both administrative culture and NPM ideas reveals that those at the frontline or 'street-level' within social policy are a group that has not been previously researched in the context of the Republic of Ireland, thus a gap in the research exists.

Departing from Lipsky (1980), this research distinguishes between bureaucrats and professionals. Bureaucrats are those who work in a bureaucracy. Peters (2010: 16) points out that bureaucracy has been presented in the literature on the one hand as 'a Leviathan seeking to increase its powers' and on the other as 'a court jester – a fumbling, bumbling collection of uncoordinated agencies that, at best, muddle through and at worst, make absolute fools of themselves'. Weber defined bureaucracy as,

> Official business [is] conducted on a continuous basis in accordance with stipulated rules by an administrative agency in which personnel have defined duties, authority to carry them out, strictly defined powers, and appropriate supervision. They have no property rights in the resources at their disposal or in their offices. Official business is conducted in writing (cited in Lynn 1998a: 113).

While also existing in the private sector, bureaucracy is the organisational form that characterises traditional public administration and the terms are often used interchangeably. Hughes (1998: 5) defines public administration as 'an activity serving the public, and public servants carry out policies derived from others. It is concerned with procedures, with translating policies into action and with office management'. Collins and Cradden (2007: 12) summarise the features of a bureaucratic organisation as defined by Weber as follows,

- bureaucratic officials are appointed to specific roles on the grounds of ability and technical qualification, and gain advancement solely on the basis of conduct and performance;
- Bureaucratic work is a full-time occupation, rewarded by a regular salary, prospects of promotion and a permanent career;
- The work performed by each official is specified in non-personal terms, which means jobs are not the property of their incumbents and thus cannot be sold, bequeathed or inherited;
- Nor do officials own the resources needed to perform their jobs, but are nonetheless fully accountable for the use and deployment of these resources;
- Each official is located in a vertical hierarchy, with clearly defined lines of authority, spans of supervision and rights of appeal, and the official is given the authority required to carry out his/her functions;
- The sanctions available to an official in order to gain the conformity of others are strictly limited and the conditions under which they may be applied are defined carefully;
- Procedures for the conduct of work are standardised and all official business is documented in written form;
- Officials' main responsibility lies in the impartial execution of their allocated tasks, and they will sacrifice their personal judgement should it run contrary to that of those set above them in the hierarchy.

Collins and Cradden (2007: 12-13) do acknowledge that the model of bureaucracy espoused by Weber is an ideal type, however they also concede that 'in Europe and in the English-speaking world it was a specifically Weberian model that emerged as the standard against the organisation of work in the public sector, especially in the civil service, was to be tested'. Thus, under traditional public administration, public sector employment could be;

> Characterised as an administration under the formal control of political leadership, based on a strictly hierarchical model of bureaucracy, staffed by permanent, neutral and anonymous officials, motivated only by public interest, serving any government party equally, and not contributing to a policy but merely administering those policies decided by politicians (Hughes 1998: 22).

Under this model, promotions are awarded according to length of service rather than merit, and maintaining rules and processes retains the utmost importance. Accountability is achieved

through the doctrine of ministerial responsibility. Du Gay (2000: 89) explains that 'this doctrine means that it is the minister and the minister alone who is responsible to Parliament for everything that takes place in her department and for everything that her officials either do or fail to do'. He argues that this doctrine allows civil servants to be anonymous and impartial, permitting civil servants to give honest advice to ministers regardless of their political orientation. In addition, the notion of permanency effectively means that it is practically impossible to dismiss someone, further allowing civil servants to be politically impartial. While bureaucrats constitute a major portion of 'street-level' staff within the Irish public sector, it is important to also consider 'street-level' professionals who operate within the same context of traditional public administration. However, as the following paragraphs will emphasise, there are differences between these two groups, which are relevant to note when investigating aspects of their administrative culture.

'Street-level' professionals often work alongside bureaucratic or administrative staff. There is a predominance of professional groups (such as doctors, nurses, teachers, and social workers) at the 'street-level' of social policy in particular. When discussing social policy, Spicker (2008: 155) points out that 'the different professions involved have different methods of work, language and standards of professional practice'. However, as Gray and Jenkins (2003: 248) argue, 'in the delivery of a service the legitimacy for actions lies in their consistency with the protocols and guiding values of the groups shared frame of reference'. Noordegraaf (2007: 768) identifies what he considers to be ten features of professionalism as follows;

1. Knowledge – usually white collar or even white coat, applied to specific cases.
2. Skills – they have acquired knowledge, expertise, or technical bases that enable them to know how to treat cases and have standardized skills that enable them to apply knowledge and treat cases.
3. Experience – during intense schooling they learn how to treat cases, and will become experienced. During actual practice they will gain more experience and may eventually become experts.
4. Ethics – they act according to a shared ethic.
5. Appearance – they know how to behave and also appear professionally. They know how to act, speak, and dress.
6. Association – professional associations control and regulate them.
7. Jurisdiction – law and licensing, which they use for standardising knowledge and skills, training and selecting members, and establishing and enforcing codes of conduct.
8. Knowledge transfer – institutionalised through research programs, conferences, courses, journals, magazines.

9. Codes – codes of conduct prescribe the rules of the game, codes of ethics prescribe appropriate behaviour.
10. Supervision – they are self-supervising and regulating.

Noordegraaf (2007: 768) argues that "pure" professionalism 'is about content or substance (knowledge, skills, experiences, ethics, and acts) invoked to treat cases, and it is about institutional control and discipline (associations, jurisdictions, knowledge transfer, codes of conduct, and supervision) used to shield occupational practice'. It is worth noting that the concept of semi-profession (Etzioni 1969), as well as pure profession, exists. This concept typically refers to professions with lower occupational status and shorter training periods than the pure professions. Many of the professions conventionally considered to be semi-professions (nurses, teachers and social workers) are those most usually dominated by women, and are often conferred with less social status or prestige. This point is worth mentioning because a number of these semi-professions are under investigation as part of this research. However, Noordegraaf (2007: 773) does note that the definition of profession is relative to time and space and that its meaning is not fixed. Thus occupations can become professionalised or de-professionalised. For example, Dominelli (1996: 155), when discussing social work in the British context, points out that;

> Social workers intensified their efforts to professionalise their ranks through training; raise their salaries; enhance their professional status; integrate the philosophical base of the profession; and organise themselves to pursue their interests through collective associations such as trade unions (NALGO, NUPE, COHSE); professional associations (BASW,APBO for black probation officers, ABSWAP for black social workers); and standing conferences.

Dominelli (1996: 155) goes on to argue that 'social work has had a difficult time becoming "an accepted profession". Unlike the highly regarded male dominated professions of law and medicine, social work is staffed primarily by women, has had a variable status'. Indeed, section 2.8.1 below discusses efforts made by managers to professionalise (Noordegraaf, 2007).

A defining characteristic of professionalism is discretion. Jorgensen and Bozeman (2007: 365) argue that 'professionalism often implies dealing with a group of clients whose problems must be interpreted within the context of a professional code'. Professions have specialist knowledge which allows them to exercise their discretion, and this poses issues surrounding accountability and evaluation. Most professions are self-supervising and regulating. Professional associations deal with complaints and are responsible for licensing and enforcing codes of conduct. In addition, professional associations impose training, educational and experience requirements on their members.

Having defined the two groups of public sector employees which exist at the 'street-level' of Irish social policy, it is important to compare and contrast their roles in the delivery of social policy.

Similarities (adapted from Lipsky (1980: 3-12)

- The way they deliver benefits and sanctions, structure and delimit people's lives and opportunities.
- They are often the focus of political controversy due to the immediacy of their interactions with citizens.
- Because the work they do is so labour intensive, their salaries constitute huge government expenditures.
- Under constant calls from the media, public and politicians to improve efficiency and responsiveness.
- The poorer people are, the greater influence 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals have on them.
- Their on-the-spot decisions can affect citizens' life chances.
- Strong coalition strength: unions and professional organisations attempt to influence government policy.
- As both groups are employed in the public sector, they have similar working terms and conditions (and benefits).
- Grey and Jenkins (2003: 248) argue that the weakness of bureaucracy is 'in rigidity and conservatism in the face of changing environments'. The same could be said of professional groups.
- Both bureaucrats and professionals are thought to conform to the altruistic notion of public service.

Differences

- Professionals have more discretion than bureaucrats. According to Spicker (2008: 159), the distinction between bureaucrats and professionals is as follows; 'Bureaucrats are functionaries. They are able to exercise judgement – because someone has to decide whether a case fits the rules – but they are not allowed discretion, in the sense of a free decision in those cases where the rules do not seem to apply'.
- The professions have specialised training. Bureaucrats are generalists.
- The professions have more social status (however the status of the professions has been slowly but steadily declining due to erosion of overall deferential culture, perhaps

linked with better education, higher living standards, access to information and public scandals).

It can be argued that 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals may be described as belonging to a sub-cultural group (Schein, 2010), albeit a very large one, within the overall administrative culture of Irish social policy. Additionally, due to the similarities outlined above, this subculture should display elements of the dominant administrative culture, thus allowing generalisations to be made regarding the ways in which NPM ideas impact on the administrative culture of Irish social policy.

Overall then, section 2.3 has described the political and economic significance of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within social policy. It was also noted that social policy areas are those the public interact with on a more frequent basis throughout their lives than perhaps any other area of the public service. It is no surprise then that inadequacies in these services receive the lion's share of media attention and few would argue against a set of ideas that proposes to increase efficiencies in these areas. Section 2.4 deals with this set of ideas in detail, namely New Public Management.

2.4 NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

This section outlines how NPM ideas advocate altering the culture of public sector organisations to a more business-like one in order to encourage increased efficiency, effectiveness and economy. In order to set the scene for the rest of the chapter, the reasons which contributed to NPM ideas coming to prominence are first evaluated, along with the criticisms of these ideas most usually depicted in the literature.

Dingwall and Strangleman (2005: 478) note that the reforms associated with NPM ideas have been described as 'a relentless kulturkampf designed to root out the culture of service and citizenship' which characterised the public sector. Hood (1991:3) is credited with coining the term ‘New Public Management’. As with virtually all terms in political science, there is a lack of consensus as to its meaning. MacCarthaigh (2012) goes as far as stating the ‘NPM has … remained resistant to definition’. A review of the literature demonstrates that NPM has been described as everything from; ‘an umbrella term’ (Christensen and Laegreid 2007: 1060); ‘a cluster of ideas and practices’ (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000: 550); ‘a diffuse ideology’ (Flynn, 1999: 27);‘a series of innovations’ (Kaboolian, 1998: 189); ‘trends’ (Pollitt, 2001: 474); ‘a

convenient acronym' (Quinlivan, 2000: 64); 'a paradigm' (Stoker, 2006: 42); to, a 'doctrine in public administration' (Vigoda-Gadot and Meiri, 2008: 111). Barzelay (2002: 15) explains that NPM 'began life as a conceptual device invented for purposes of structuring scholarly discussion of contemporary changes in the organisation and management of executive government'. Indeed, Hood (1995: 94) explains his reasoning for the invention of the term as thus: 'because some generic label seemed to be needed for a general, though certainly not universal, shift in public management styles … the analogy is with terms like new politics, new right, and new industrial state, which were invented for a similar reason'. Bearing the explanation offered by Hood (1995) in mind, the following definition by Diefenbach (2009: 893) is most appropriate in the context of this study,

> NPM is a set of assumptions and value statements about how public sector organisations should be designed, organised, managed and how, in a quasi-business manner, they should function. The basic idea of NPM is to make public sector organisations – and the people working in them! – much more "business-like" and "market-orientated", that is, performance-, cost-, efficiency- and audit-oriented.

Thus from the literature above, one can argue that NPM is a set of ideas with normative prescriptions about how public sector organisations and the people working in them should be changed to become more like the private sector. As Jenssen (2003: 295) argues 'NPM is called different things in different countries, but the basic philosophy is still the same – namely, that private-sector principles should be applied much more comprehensively and rigorously to the public sector'.

Just as the term NPM defies definition, there is little consensus in the literature as to its keys features. Broadly speaking NPM focuses on improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector. NPM ideas advocate various measures to achieve this. Hood (1995: 96) outlines what he describes as the seven 'doctrinal components of new public management' as follows:

1. Unbundling of the public sector into corporatised units organised by product
2. More contract based competitive provision, with internal markets and term contracts
3. Stress on private sector styles of management practice
4. More stress on discipline and frugality in resource use
5. More emphasis on visible hands-on top management
6. Explicit formal measurable standards and measures of performance success
7. Greater emphasis on output controls.

John (2001: 99) asserts that NPM is characterised by awarding power to managers; reducing red tape; limiting hierarchy; and strategic planning. Added to this are market mechanisms such as the introduction of competition; privatisation; contracting out; an emphasis on customer choice; and decentralisation of services. These elements, coupled with giving prominence to the individual and a focus on results and performance-related pay for public servants are, according to John (2001), the features of NPM. Jenssen (2003: 296) offers a much more limited definition of the characteristics of NPM. According to him, market reforms are most significant.

> The main purpose of the modernisation of government so far has been to enable it to regulate conflicting interests more efficiently and keep public spending under control. This has been done by reducing the number of internal monopolies and encouraging strategies, such as contracting out and emphasising market incentives in order to improve bureaucratic performance (Jenssen, 2003: 296).

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1995), the key reforms that have taken place in government are a greater focus on results and increased value for money, devolution of authority and enhanced flexibility, strengthened accountability and control, a client and service orientation, strategic planning of policy, introduction of competition and other market elements, and changed relationships with other levels of government.

Lane (2000: 305) argues that 'contractualism' (or contracting out) is the key component of NPM. Conservative controlled local authorities in the UK first embarked upon this policy in the 1980's. John (2001: 100) gives an excellent explanation of contracting out as 'a mechanism to transfer services from direct state provisions to another organisation. The contractee need not be a private company, as it can be a management group or even another public organisation, such as another local authority'. This increased competition is supposed to have the effect of greater value for money. However, Ferris and Graddy (1998: 231) argue that 'contracts must be monitored and enforced … it must be technically possible to measure outputs, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and at a reasonable cost'.

From the above, it becomes evident that the distinctions between the public sector and the private sector are becoming blurred as a result of NPM. Indeed Jenssen (2003: 292) describes the model of the state as 'a supermarket driven by the sovereign consumer. The government becomes a by-product of the consumers' preferences and their demands for service. The political leadership becomes shopkeepers'. Christensen and Laegreid (2011: 3) surmise that 'even if NPM fundamentally espouses economic values and objectives, as a concept it is loose and multi-faceted and encompasses a range of different administrative doctrines'. Christensen

and Laegreid (2011) go on to identify a number of reform elements introduced as a result of NPM ideas which they group under five headings. Firstly, they identify a trend towards increased structural devolution (the creation of state agencies). Secondly, Christensen and Laegreid (2011) point to managerialism and the management model. Thirdly, they associated NPM with performance management, cost-cutting and budgetary discipline. Fourthly, they discuss how public service provision has been changed to private sector models through the use of marketization, competition and privatisation. Finally, Christensen and Laegreid (2011) argue that the utilisation of customer service principles is also a key element of NPM.

2.4.1 From Public Administration to Public Management

While the previous section introduced NPM ideas and their main features, the current section identifies and evaluates the reasons for NPM ideas coming to prominence. According to Flynn (2002: 74);

> Reform proposals normally arise from some specific event or problem. A scandal exposes weakness; a deterioration in service reaches the point of intolerance by the public; an economic crisis exposes a country to outside influences; a party sees electoral advantage in improving public services … the politicians and senior civil servants, often advised or informed by colleagues in other countries, and other outside agents, such as consultants, look for solutions to problems.

In truth, there are multiple combinations of factors to explain the impetus to introduce NPM type reform measures to the public sector over the past three decades or more. These factors vary across countries and even sectors, but some generalisations can and have been made in the literature. As a result of an extensive review of the literature on NPM, six reasons for the move away from traditional public administration have been identified as follows;

- the perceived failings of bureaucracy;
- the influence of public choice theory;
- the influence of New Right ideology;
- the need for fiscal restraint due to recession;
- growing citizen expectations; and
- the role of international organisations such as the OECD and the EU.

NPM ideas first emerged as a response to the perceived failings of the culture of traditional public administration. As explained in section 2.3.2 traditional public administration is based on bureaucratic organisation which consists of steep hierarchical structures; ministerial responsibility; permanent employment; promotion based on seniority; work practices based on strict adherence to rules and procedures; and emphasis on values such as public service, justice,

equity and probity. The perception existed that government had become too costly and could not be sustained in the economic hardship that existed in the 1980s. Added to this, public enterprises were seen as ineffective, antiquated and inefficient. Beetham (1996: 25) explains the argument against bureaucracy as follows;

> If the bureaucracy is one whose purpose is to serve the public directly, there will be no market pressure to ensure customer satisfaction; its customers or clients cannot vote with their feet and take their custom elsewhere. In the absence of any such external sanctions or incentives, the tendency will be for a bureaucracy to serve the convenience of those who work within it, rather than the customers for whose benefit it supposedly exists.

NPM ideas offered solutions to radically overhaul this system and all its apparent inefficiencies. Brodkin (2006: 3) argues that social welfare policies in particular were highly criticised and this 'disappointment with bureaucratic practices contributes to a general lack of faith in government and what it can do, hastening demands for reform, retrenchment, devolution, and privatisation'. The professions involved in the administration of public policy were also at the receiving end of such criticism. Exworthy and Halford (1999: 4-5) point out that;

> Both central government and service users have often criticized public services as unresponsive, inflexible and run principally for the benefit of those who work for them (Farnham and Horton 1996). This criticism has been levelled not only at managers but at professionals too; whose claim to always know what was best for users (who should be deferential to those professionals) has been increasingly disputed (Farnham and Horton 1996). The redefinition of users to "customers" promised to enhance their status, offer greater choice and ensure responsiveness to individual needs.

Flynn (1999: 19) agrees with the above by stating that as far as the New Right were concerned, 'Professional groups were seen as self-serving producer monopolies whose influence on the economy and society was negative'. Brodkin (2008: 4) describes the measures used to limit the discretion of social workers in the US as follows: 'administrators spelled out more detailed rules for awarding aid and developed quality control and quality assurance systems to closely monitor street-level compliance with procedures and paperwork'. NPM ideas aimed to introduce reform mechanisms that would reduce red tape and make bureaucrats and professionals more accountable, while at the same time, encouraging innovation by giving managers more freedom to manage (Grey and Jenkins, 2003). Essentially, 'NPM offered the promise of improvements in administrative efficiency and performance through the introduction of market-type conditions and ideas' (MacCarthaigh, 2012: 26).

Secondly, the emergence of public choice theory was hugely influential in the growing popularity of NPM ideas amongst governments of the era. Gruening (2001: 5) notes that public choice theorists 'were interested in a society based on individual freedom … This approach is

based on the assumption that individuals pursue their own aims and act according to their preferences'. Public choice theory espoused a view of human behaviour which argued that both politicians and public officials were guilty of acting in a self-interested manner. "Budget maximising", as developed by Niskanen (1971) refers to a practice whereby public officials will always aspire to increase their budgets as this will lead to an increase in size and status for their department and a corresponding increase in power for themselves. This inclination is compounded by politicians who collaborate with budget maximisation strategies in the belief that voters respond positively to public spending on vital services. In this situation, there is very little incentive to reduce spending.

John (2001: 98) points out that it was the 'growth of public choice ideas in academia that gradually affected the think tanks and then the views of politicians, particularly those of a right-wing persuasion'. Lane (2000a: 306) explains that the popularity of these ideas lay in the fact that 'Public Choice analysis showed that bureaux had a tendency to grow much faster or cost much more than government wanted. It also showed that public enterprises were not efficient. Often they were as inefficient as private monopolies and this inefficiency worked in favour of the employees'. John (2001: 98) also underlines the important influence of private sector managerial practices. He reasons that 'these changes were fed into the public sector by consultants'. Notoriously, Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) *Reinventing Government*, which advocated government 'steering, rather than rowing', became a seminal text of public sector management. The argument put forth was that government should make policy decisions (steering) but not be directly involved in its implementation (rowing). During this period, a new vocabulary (which advocated the use of the marketplace to solve problems) began to be used by politicians and higher-level public servants alike. 'Public administration' was now called 'public management'. Corporate planning, programme budgeting and performance indicators all became the buzzwords of the era and are arguably now phrases embedded within the culture and language of the public sector.

Another significant reason for the growing prominence of NPM ideas can be seen in the influence of New Right ideology on politics (Taylor, 2001: 176). Considine and Dukelow (2009: 105) note that 'the New Right is an all-encompassing title for the right-wing values that gained prominence during the 1980s. Various strands of thinking have been influential, including neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism'. Flynn (2002:65) explains the New Right ideology as the belief that 'markets were more efficient than any other method of allocation and what could be left to the market should be'. Ashburner, Fitzgerald, Ferlie and Pettigrew (1996:

228) state that ‘sustained commitment from the very top (in this case political leadership) has long been seen as an important factor’ in public sector reform. Hood (1995:100) pointed to the particular influence of New Right governments such as those of Ronald Regan and Margaret Thatcher, ‘who aimed to roll back big government and state led egalitarianism and welfarism and to remould what was left of the public sector in the image of private business’. One could argue that it was this combination of factors - theory and economic crisis intermingled with receptive political parties in power - that were behind the growing acceptance of NPM ideas.

Fourthly, the growing popularity of public choice theory and private sector management ideas coincided with a global recession, which apparently proved the failures of post-war Keynesian economic policies. Thus, financial hardship was a significant motivating factor in the uptake of NPM ideas to reform and modernise government. In the post-war era, expenditure on social services had dramatically increased. Kramer (1983: 100) points out that ‘political support for adopting modern management techniques has been most clearly seen in the budgeting practices of those jurisdictions facing fiscal stress. Fiscal stress is the condition in which pressure for expenditures exceeds the revenue-generating capacity for a particular jurisdiction’. The 1970s had witnessed a severe economic recession caused mainly by the oil crisis of 1973. The demands of the welfare state had grown and the costs of maintaining it had dramatically spiralled. Put simply, many governments could no longer afford to provide such extensive and expensive social services. It was due to this economic situation, Taylor (2001: 175-176) argues that there was ‘a desire to move away from the discredited apparatus of Keynesian economic management, national planning and a tripartite collective bargaining approach to the problem of labour’. Thus, the ethos of achieving more while spending less appeared extremely attractive to governments in the midst of economic recession. It is highly plausible that economic necessity proved to be far more significant than political or ideological concerns in many contexts. Indeed, Kettl (1997: 452) argues that ‘although the rhetoric of improved performance – making government work better – lay behind reforms everywhere, the “cost less” component provided the political driving force’. And with social policies forming the bulk of public expenditure, these areas often experienced the most severe cuts.

Fifthly, it can be argued that growing citizen expectations during this period regarding public services’ effectiveness and responsiveness (Flynn, 2002) also played a significant role. As Flynn and Strehl (1996: 3) point out,

> In the early 1980s, service industries in Europe became more competitive. Relaxation of restrictive practices in industries such as banking and airlines forced companies to

> compete for customers, not just through price but also through customer service. This had two impacts on the public sector. First, it started to raise the expectation of citizens about how well services could be provided …secondly, it showed that there were better ways of providing services than simply having bureaucracies working for their own convenience.

Media also had a role in informing citizens of public sector inadequacies. Scandals within the public sector were reported widely by newspapers and television programmes such as 'Yes Minister' which satirised the public sector were also influential. Education standards were also growing during this period. Ironically, extensive free education provided by the welfare state coupled with seemingly improved customer service standards in the private sector meant that citizens had growing expectations about the levels of service that should be provided by the public sector.

Finally, international organisations such as the OECD, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have had a strong socialising effect on government activities (Pal and Ireland 2009). The European Union (EU) has also done much to press the ideals of liberal democracy and free markets on its members and trading partners (Hardiman and McCarthaigh, 2009). The EU drove increased competition by extending the process of tenders for public contracts as part of the programme for the development of the free market from 1992 onwards. Christensen and Laegreid (201: 7) discuss how international organisations 'such as the OECD, the IMF, the World Bank and the EU' have a role in spreading and evolving which 'ideas, organisational structures, procedures and cultures are appropriate'. According to Hardiman (2010: 2), 'during the 1980s, monetarist ideas gained the status of a new economic orthodoxy, aided in part by the OECD'. Additionally, Lynch (2006: 302) argues that 'the pressure to move education from a public service to a tradable service is very much part of the ideology of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), the purpose of which is to liberalise all services in all sectors of the economy globally'. Therefore, according to the literature, international organisations have a continued role in the diffusion of NPM ideas across and within countries.

As argued at the outset of this section, none of the above mentioned factors can be taken in isolation as a reason to explain the rise of NPM ideas. Indeed, numerous and varied reasons exist for the growth in prominence of NPM ideas depending on the context in which they arose. Context refers to differing administrative, political, economic, social and cultural circumstances that exist between countries. Much of the literature agrees that the public sector has undergone a

sustained period of change since the 1980s; however, this has been unevenly diffused and varies greatly according to setting (Ashburner, *et al.* 1996; Flynn, 2002; John, 2001; Pollitt, 2000; and Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Hood (1995) argues that because traditional systems of public administration are varied to begin with, public sector management practice remains varied. Additionally, Pollitt (2000: 184) contends that 'although the broad aims of producing more efficient, effective and responsive public services may have been widely shared, the mixtures of strategies, priorities, styles and methods adopted by different governments have varied very widely indeed'. More recently however, Diefenbach (2009: 892) reiterates the argument that NPM ideas have had universal influence by making the following points; 'It has been introduced to all public service sectors; ... it is an increasingly global phenomenon; ... it has been supported by all major political parties.' What one can deduce from the above is that while there is consensus within the literature that reforms influenced by NPM ideas have been introduced in some form or another by all countries, there is little to suggest that there is convergence on the extent of their implementation.

2.4.2 Criticisms of NPM

From a review of the literature, it is possible to discern the criticisms most frequently heaped upon NPM ideas that relate to both visible and invisible features of administrative culture. The first criticism of NPM discussed here relates to a visible aspect of the administrative culture of the public sector, that is, accountability and evaluation measures. According to Newman (2008: 257) 'Accountability is a relational concept: it rests on a range of assumptions about the relationship between the state and the public at large, between service providers and service users, between professionals and clients and between central government and local managers'. Under the traditional model of public administration 'ministers were politically accountable for the activities of the organisations under their control' (Peters, 2004: 133). Under the market or NPM model, accountability is achieved through the creation of performance targets (Peters, 2010: 318); and 'the extension of audit and inspection, the focus on performance management and measurement, the separation between "principles" and "agents" in the delivery of public services … and increased emphasis on personal responsibility and accountability' (Newman, 2008: 251). Thus, NPM attempts to introduce evaluation systems based on performance appraisal as an alternative to political accountability.

The literature on NPM provides ample criticism of the appropriateness of applying performance appraisal measures to the public sector, and social policy areas in particular. Ferris and Graddy (1998: 231) explain as follows,

> The feasibility of measuring performance is critical. It must be technically possible to measure outputs, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and at a reasonable cost. This

> condition is more likely to be met when services are tangible or "hard", (e.g., garbage collection or road repair), as opposed to "soft", (e.g. mental health and child care services).

Accordingly, measuring outputs (and ultimately outcomes) may potentially be far more difficult in social policy areas as policy goals and means can often be ambiguous and less tangible than in other fields. Lane (2000a: 317) contends that 'when certain services have this soft aspect, meaning that they are difficult to measure in terms of output and difficult to certify in terms of quality, then new public management should be applied with care'. Brodkin (2008: 323) argues that performance measures may concentrate on indicators of organisational efficiency to the detriment of the needs of clients of the service. Clarke (2008: 247) outlines three concerns with performance regulation/audit as follows; the first is that non-measured goals may end up being neglected as "what gets measured is what gets done", which may lead to reduced resources for non-measured goals. The second concern is that audits and evaluations are not without costs i.e. time, finance and effort, that could otherwise be spent on delivering services. The final concern outlined by Clarke (2008: 247) is that organisations may be guilty of '"games playing" as organisations try to manage their performance in ways that make them look successful'. Furthermore, it can be argued that the focus on outputs and results is too narrow for government activities. Kettl (1997: 450) points out that 'performance measures of any kind are extremely difficult to produce'. As the OECD (2004: 1) suggests, 'there is much in government which cannot be measured – public employees will continue to be mostly influenced by values and culture'. Thus, the suitability of performance evaluation measures as a means of accountability in public sector organisations is an issue raised repeatedly throughout the literature on NPM ideas.

The following section discusses the three main critiques of NPM ideas presented in the literature which relate to invisible aspects of administrative culture. The first relates to the fundamental difference between the public and private sectors. Terry (1998: 195-6) points out that,

> The perceived superiority of private-sector practices and technologies has led advocates of the market-driven approach to the inescapable conclusion that the distinction between public and private management is an illusion. According to this argument, "management is management" (B. Guy Peters, 1996, 28). This is held to be true whether one speaks of the management of public, private, or non-profit organisations.

However, there are strong arguments in the literature that public and private sectors are not one and the same. The first conventional distinction between the public and private sectors, according to Boyne (2002: 98), is their ownership. He points out that, while private firms are

owned by entrepreneurs or shareholders, public organisations are owned collectively by the citizenry of the state, funded by largely by taxation (rather than by profits or private investment) and are subject to control by political forces. There is also a clear difference between the motivations of the public sector and private sector. Ashburner *et al*. (1996: 226) describe the features that make the public sector distinct as;

> The primary or core purpose of public service organisations is to provide a service, not to make a profit. Furthermore, the definition and boundaries of this service are set by government, through a democratic process. … nor can they select their market and only deliver their services to some users or consumers.

Moreover, the public sector carries out different tasks to the private sector and is not analogous to a market situation. Lane (2000b: 9) argues that 'Governments typically take on three kinds of task; allocation of goods and services, income maintenance and the regulation of markets and the private sector'. For a market to succeed Le Grand, Propper and Robinson (1992: 229) contend that three conditions must be met;

1. That individuals in their roles as consumers are well informed: that they are able to judge the quality of the commodities they consume and are able to act on those judgements,
2. That individuals are rational and the best judges of their own wants, and
3. That the marginal private benefit equals the marginal social benefit.

On the first condition, Le Grand *et al.* (1992) point out that when it comes to markets in policy areas such as education, housing and healthcare; there exists 'imperfect information'. Individuals may be illiterate or unable to access information, for example, the elderly may not have the ability to access forms/information online. Issues of power and status come into play here as well, for example, healthcare professionals possess specialist knowledge to counsel patients on a particular course of action. On the second condition, certain members of the public who avail of social services may be irrational (in the case of mental illness for instance) or incapable of judging what is best for them. Therefore, in certain circumstances the customer is not always right. The final condition requires that 'the commodity concerned has no external benefits associated with it; that individuals' consumption of the commodity benefits only themselves. But we have seen that health care, social care, education and housing all generate external benefits' (Le Grand *et al.* 1992: 231). So, while education may benefit the individual, it also benefits society as a whole, in terms of socialising citizens to societal norms and increasing the available trained workforce. Thus, it is possible to state that the public sector does not meet the conditions required for a market to succeed. In sum, the literature argues that the public sector is distinct from the private sector in its ownership, motivations and functions and, as such, the application of private sector models to it is questionable.

A core component of NPM ideas is that they encourage the introduction of a customer orientation to public services. This particular feature of NPM ideas has resulted in ardent criticism and debate in the literature and is worth exploring in detail. Whilst it is possible to argue that there are formidable differences between the public and private sectors, the argument also exists that there are important distinctions to be made between citizens and customers. Alford (2002: 339) defines citizenship as conferring 'membership in a national community, which carries with it certain rights and responsibilities'. On the other hand, Kaboolian (1998: 191) argues that the customer is 'a commercial role, assumes an individualist orientation and fixed preferences'. Lynch (2006: 299) points out that under the NPM model

> The citizen is defined as an economic maximiser, governed by self-interest. There is a glorification of the consumer citizen constructed as willing, resourced and capable of making market-led choices. In this new market state, the individual is held entirely responsible for their own well being. The state's role is one of facilitator and enabler of the consumer and market led citizen.

However, the notion of consumer choice is something of a myth where countless public services are concerned. Lynch (2006: 300) declares that 'the evidence is overwhelming that in economically unequal societies only those with sufficient resources can make choices and those who are poor have no choices at all'. More often than not, the most disadvantaged in society have choices made for them by the 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals employed in the social services (Fountain, 2001: 65). Moreover, as Butler and Collins (2003: 56) point out, 'even if called customers, those who pay for, receive, support, oppose or remain ignorant of public services are still citizens'.

Homburg (2008: 754) draws attention to the fact that a citizen can be a customer of public services, but he observes three striking differences between a customer in the public sector and a customer in the market sector. To begin with, many customers of public services are involuntary customers (for example, prison services, tax payments, specific obligations, *et cetera*); secondly, in the public sector customers cannot negotiate the price or quality when applying for services; and thirdly, 'unlike private enterprises, government agencies can seldom refuse delivery of the services and goods they have to offer in individual cases'. Buckley (2004: 90) (speaking about the Irish healthcare system) makes a similar argument by pointing out that 'users and potential users are not customers in the true sense of the word, since in many cases they have no alternative option but to access the service provided, and in some cases may even be unwilling recipients of the service in question'. Peters (2010: 318) contends that 'thus, any simple idea about serving the customer may not take into account the range of customers that must be served, and the possibly competing nature of the services that need to be provided'.

While Denhardt and Denhardt (2007: xi) observe that 'public servants do not deliver customer service; they deliver democracy'. Overall, there appears to be a great deal of consensus within the literature that it may be detrimental to unquestioningly treat citizens as if they were informed customers.

Thirdly, the literature maintains that the validity of using efficiency and effectiveness as the determining values of government is exceedingly problematic (Moore, 1995; Denhardt and Denhardt, 2007; Terry, 1998; Lane, 2000b). Propper (2008: 47) points out that 'an efficient outcome is not necessarily a fair or equitable one'. For example, it may not be efficient to provide public transport to remote rural areas but it is equitable. Kettl (1997: 459) is adamant that;

> government is not and never will be a business. In a democracy, its fundamental job is pursuing the public interest. It promotes critical values of fairness, justice, equity and due process. Government exists, and has always existed, precisely because the private market, and market-style management, does a terrible job in pursuing goals such as these that go beyond efficiency.

Just as traditional public administration was admonished for not focusing on values such as efficiency and effectiveness, NPM ideas have received a slap on the wrist for putting far too much emphasis on these values to the neglect of more traditional values such as justice and equity. Taken as a whole, the criticisms levelled at NPM ideas in the literature which are associated the invisible aspects of administrative culture are directly related to a wider ongoing debate about what the role of the public sector should be.

From the review of the literature above, one can state that a fundamental feature of NPM ideas is that they advocate altering the traditional administrative culture of the public sector to make it more business-like by the introduction of market mechanisms. It is also clear that the literature cannot ascribe one clear overriding reason for NPM ideas coming to such widespread prominence. Finally, the main criticisms of NPM ideas as they relate to both the visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture are discussed. This provides an essential backdrop to the next section which outlines some alternative models of the public sector to those offered by NPM ideas and questions whether we can confidently speak of a post-NPM era.

2.5 A POST NPM-ERA?

So after three decades what is 'new' about 'new public management'? Have NPM ideas evolved or as Christensen and Laegreid (2007: 1059) ask are we at the point of the 'aftermath of NPM?'. Indeed, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 122) point out that 'there is a widespread and somewhat chaotic theoretical debate about what (if anything) has "succeeded" NPM as a dominant model for the immediate future'. There is a growing recognition in the literature that market models may not provide all the answers and this has been exacerbated by the recent global economic crisis. The following section examines three alternative models to NPM - Public Value Management, the Neo-Weberian State and New Public Governance - which are all cautiously grouped under the heading post-NPM.

2.5.1 Public Value Management (PVM)

The PVM model arose directly as a critique of the appropriateness of NPM values for the public sector. Moore (1995) put forward the argument that public sector managers should be concerned with 'creating public value'. Talbot (2005: 501) explains this concept as follows,

> ... public services are not merely about addressing "market-failure" but have a more positive role in creating value which could not be made in the private sector ... public services are seen as adding value through issues like equity, equality, probity and building social capital – which the private sector not only does not but cannot provide.

O'Flynn (2007: 360) argues that,

> In the public value paradigm, public managers have multiple goals which, in addition to the achievement of performance targets, are more broadly concerned with aspects such as steering networks of providers in the quest for public value creation, creating and maintaining trust, and responding to the collective preferences of the citizenry in addition to those of clients.

Indeed, Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) propose something similar. They argue that the role of the civil servant should be to help citizens articulate and achieve their shared interests rather than attempt to 'steer' society, in a model they call 'New Public Service'. Denhardt and Denhardt (2000: 557) argue that 'values such as efficiency and productivity should not be lost, but should be placed in the larger context of democracy, community and the public interest'. The ideas presented in their article are more fully explored in their book which was published in 2007. This model is put under the PVM heading as it has an expressed focus on what it considers to be the appropriate values of government.

However, Talbot (2009: 168) notes that the public value concept has been about for a lengthy period and like NPM, there are differences in the way it is defined and put into practice. While

Savio and Nikolopoulous (2010: 90) argue that, 'PVM can be seen to be NPM with an added importance on feasibility and value creation with one's actions'. Therefore, if PVM is just NPM combined with more appropriate values, it is questionable if it can be regarded as a separate model in itself.

2.5.2 Neo-Weberian State (NWS)

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) undertook a comparative analysis of the trajectories of public sector reforms in twelve countries and the European Commission. They distinguish between what they called the core NPM group and the continental European modernisers (while also acknowledging that one or two hybrid or difficult to classify cases exist that do not fit neatly into either category). The former group of countries (including Australia, New Zealand and the UK) 'see a large role for private sector reforms and techniques in the process of restructuring the public sector' (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 117). The latter group of countries (Belgium, Finland France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Sweden) 'continue to place a greater emphasis on the state as the irreplaceable integrative force in society, with a legal personality and operative value system that cannot be reduced to the private sector discourse of efficiency, competitiveness and consumer satisfaction' (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 117). They argue that the second group have often been described as NPM laggards, who have been merely slower to implement NPM reform ideas (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 118). However, they argue that this group of countries constitute a *distinctive* reform model which they have named the Neo-Weberian State (NWS).

The NWS model retains 'Weberian elements' such as a reiteration of the role of the state in problem solving, the role of representative democracy and the role of administrative law, while also retaining the status and culture of a distinctive public service (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 118). The 'Neo elements' identified by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 118-119) include;

- Reorientation towards an external focus on citizens' needs (as opposed to an internal focus on bureaucratic rules and procedures);
- Enhancement of representative democracy with the introduction of mechanisms for citizen consultation and direct participation;
- Modernisation of resource management procedures without abandoning bureaucratic control procedures (this may include some measure of performance management);
- 'Professionalisation of the public service' so that the bureaucrat also becomes a professional manager, and not merely an expert in relevant law.

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) argue that the NWS model began life as a summary description of the reforms taking place in the six continental European states covered in their research, as compared to the core NPM states. They also point out that NWS is 'not a theory, and not a normative vision or goal either' and that it does not simply represent 'Weber plus NPM' (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 119). Thus, the NWS model is tentatively placed in this section, with the acknowledgement that it represents a distinctive rather than a post-NPM model as such.

2.5.3 New Public Governance (NPG)

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 122) identify the Governance model (which they name New Public Governance) as the 'leading candidate' to succeed NPM as the dominant model for the public sector. They explain this model as being 'rooted within network theory' and the emphasis is on the inclusion of multiple interdependent actors contributing to policymaking and its delivery. Frederickson (2005: 289) argues that, while the concept of governance is 'imprecise', the word itself can be used to describe 'patterns of inter-jurisdictional and inter-organisational relations'. The NPG model also has more of an external focus - on a multitude of non-governmental social actors - than traditional public administration. However, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 123) argue that 'NPG is an extremely broad and abstract model' which is 'largely descriptive and lacking any theoretical "motor"'.

Christensen and Laegreid (2007: 1062) summarise that ‘compared with the NPM movement, the post-NPM reforms focus more on building a strong and unified sense of values, trust, value-based management, and collaboration; team building; involving participating organisations; and improving the training and self-development of public servants’. Thus, it would seem that within the post-NPM model, the accountability measures of NPM are blended with the values of traditional public administration and more inclusive networked governance. What the three models outlined above have in common is that they each have a more external focus than traditional public administration but this external focus is on citizens and other external social actors as opposed to the focus on customers and markets within the NPM model. It is also unclear as to whether the post-NPM model is just NPM with the 'best bits' of other models added on; or a distinctive model in itself.

2.6 NPM IDEAS AND SOCIAL POLICY

The analysis of the general literature on NPM ideas has highlighted the key features and criticisms of this paradigm as well as describing alternative models for the public sector that have been developed of late. It is now crucial to examine the relationship and dynamic between NPM ideas and social policies in order to set the scene for the research framework. With its emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness and economy, NPM ideas initially came to prominence due to the perceived failures of traditional public administration, and, in particular, a need to reduce expenditure in the face of economic crisis. Social policy areas constitute substantial government expenditures (with the salaries of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals accounting for the bulk of this expenditure). Hence, in order to lower costs, NPM type reforms have often specifically targeted social policy areas such as health and education. However, social policy areas may prove to be particularly resistant to organisational culture changes associated with NPM ideas for four reasons.

Firstly, NPM is concerned with setting clear strategic goals which can be easily quantified and measured. Alternatively, social policy is characterised as having extremely ambiguous means and goals (Rose, 1976; Brodkin, 2008). Therefore, social policy is an area in which the application of NPM type reforms may pose problems, as policy goals, means and results may not be easily identified or quantified due to their 'soft' (Ferris and Graddy, 1998; Lane, 2000a) and politically contested (Brodkin, 2008) nature. Secondly, NPM is associated with the values of efficiency, cost effectiveness and satisfying consumer needs, values which are very difficult to apply to social policies. For example, Dominelli (1996: 168) argues 'that "market forces" have no morality, no concern for the underdog, and no real regard for social justice. Such feelings are a drain on profits'. Thirdly, NPM sought to limit the discretion of professional groups by introducing accountability measures and standardising practice (Flynn, 1999). Social policy areas are dominated by professional and semi-professional groups such as nurses, doctors, teachers and social workers. Professional groups have their own codes of conduct and ethics; and are identified by strong levels of association, thus changing the underlying assumptions and values surrounding their behaviour may be difficult, particularly if these assumptions and values are in direct conflict with those of NPM ideas. Fourthly, there is also the very real possibility of resistance to NPM values and work practices due to the coalition strength (professional organisations and unions) of public service bureaucrats and professionals (Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd, 2003). Thus, the nature of social policy and the prevalence of professional groups within social policy areas indicate that it is an area of public policy which merits study in relation to NPM.

2.7 NPM IDEAS AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE CHANGE

In order to further lay the foundations for the research framework, this portion of the literature review explores how NPM ideas interrelate with organisational culture change in the public sector. Changes to public sector organisations influenced by NPM ideas have been in existence for approximately three decades thus far. Lapsley and Pallot (2000: 213) characterise NPM as 'changes to both structure and management practice', whilst Lawton (2005:231) describes NPM as 'profound changes in the roles, management, staffing and delivery of public services'. Bradley and Parker (2006); Dingwall and Strangleman (2005); and Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) all characterise NPM ideas as a clear attempt to alter the administrative culture of the public sector to a more business-like one. However, as Halford and Leonard (1999: 107) argue 'the accomplishment of change in the public sector (or in any organisation for that matter) depends, in part, on the identification of staff with the new values and priorities'. Indeed, this research aims to investigate the impact of NPM ideas on the values and priorities of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, through the lens of administrative culture.

According to the literature, the organisational structure of the public sector has been extensively altered due to the introduction of NPM type reforms such as privatisation, outsourcing and downsizing of services. Organisational improvement measures such as, customer focus; quality initiatives, TQM; business process reengineering, just-in-time production; human resources management; and benchmarking have also been introduced to varying degrees depending on the context. According to the OECD (2004d: 1); 'One of the biggest influences on structures of government in recent years has been the privatisation of state assets ... Other structural changes of a lesser scale have involved creating new ministries or sub-ministries, merging ministries or departments, or disbanding them'. These structural changes can be regarded as changes to the visible manifestations of the administrative culture of the public sector. Vigoda-Gadot and Meiri (2008: 117) also depict extensive changes as a result of NPM, and point in particular to one visible aspect of administrative culture, which is accountability and evaluation structures;

> Public personnel, senior public officials, and human resource managers are expected to comply more closely with the standards and norms that are acceptable in private sector organisations ... NPM calls for greater flexibility in organisational structures, a better flow of information, improvement in the connectedness with the public, higher standards of service quality, the development of specific performance strategies, a culture of "measuring up" of systems and processes, and increased accountability.

The OECD (2004d: 7) underlines the negative effects of structural changes to public sector organisations as follows; 'Re-organisations distract staff attention, increase staff insecurity, and distract management attention from immediate challenges. If major staff changes occur, there

can be major costs due to the time necessary to make new appointments, and there are also risks associated with the loss of institutional memory, networks, and values'.

There is debate within the literature as to whether considerable structural change results in corresponding substantial changes to the invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of the public sector. While authors, such as Kettl (1997), argue that NPM has changed the underlying values of public sector organisations, questions arise as to whether organisational culture change has actually occurred, and has permeated to all occupational groups, subcultures or individual employees. For example, Ashburner *et al*. (1996: 250) found that 'after fifteen years of sustained top-down new public management-style reform effort, while there had clearly been movement on structural, system, and role indicators, our assessment was that the degree of cultural change evident was still mixed and equivocal'. Indeed, Bradley and Parker (2006: 96) argue that 'a change in managerial ideology is not sufficient for a change in organisational culture to be achieved'.

The literature points to a variety reasons why public sector organisations may not be overly receptive to change. As Rusaw (2007: 347) argues; 'in the public sector frequent political agenda changes, legislative rather than market driven goals, and insufficient allocations of financial and human resources often hinder change'. Berg (2006: 557) also puts forward multiple reasons why resistance to organisational change may occur;

> Lack of enthusiasm or resistance to changes may be attributed to the reforms colliding with institutional norms and rules (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). It may be attributed to bureaucratic incompetence, deficiencies in bureaucratic control, conflicts of interests between policy makers and bureaucratic control, conflicts of interests between policy makers and bureaucratic agents, or ambiguities in the policy making process (Baier *et al*. 1994). Resistance to organisational change may also be explained as ambiguities in cultures (Meyerson, 1991). Changes may also meet resistance if they threaten established identities of the members of the organisation (Halford and Leonard, 1999).

Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd (2003) discuss the process of management restructuring of public services in Britain, with specific reference to social services, and argue that the strength of professional groups may limit the success of an infiltration of NPM ideas. However, Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd (2003: 521) did point to an increased 'attachment to management goals' among senior professionals (but not 'street-level' ones). Overall, Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd (2003: 526) conclude that in the UK social services, a hybrid form of organising exists, which is characterised by a continued commitment to traditional values and practices regardless of changes to formal structures and procedures. They argue that this is due to the characteristics of

professional organisation within the social services which led staff to be hostile to any changes they felt would reduce professional control and quality of service. They argue that other parts of the public sector (due to differing institutional conditions) may however, be more receptive to NPM. Certainly, it will be interesting to assess if there are differences in attitudes to change between professional and bureaucratic groups within this research.

It should also be noted that NPM implicitly assumes that public servants are a homogenous group and that changes to work practices will affect all employees in a uniform way. Needless to say, public sector employees are not a homogenous group and will be affected by these reforms in differing ways depending on such variables as class, race or indeed, gender (see for example, Connelly (2011) for a study on the impact of NPM reforms on gender equality). Public sector employees may also be more or less receptive to organisational change depending on occupation or position in the hierarchy. For example, Berg (2006: 556) points out that 'a study of major government services in Norway (Berg *et al*. 2002), found that front-line personnel and top-level managers had different perceptions of organisational reforms'. Berg (2006: 565) also states that 'one consistent finding … was that apart from top-management, the large majority of employees, and particularly front-line staff, were critical of the reforms'. Managers may have self interested reasons for identifying with NPM type reforms. Diefenbach (2009: 903) argues that 'there is empirical evidence to suggest that strategic change initiatives are being used by many managers primarily for their individual ambitions and tactical advantages within organisational politics, for the advancement of their own interests and career prospects, as well as in higher salaries or increases in their market value'.

Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen (1997) differentiate between public sector organisations as having either a high degree of publicness (HPs) or a low degree of publicness (LPs). This depends on organisational attachment to public sector values such as due process and accountability. They look at organisations from a contingency theory and new institutionalism perspective and found that organisations with a higher degree of publicness tended to be more rigid and less open to change. Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen (1997: 346) argue that organisational change in HPs will be characterised by 'uncertainty, instability and conflicting claims. There will be fewer, more hesitant changes, even stalemate'. According to Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen (1997: 337) organisations with a high degree of publicness can be characterised as having 'complex tasks, a professional orientation, many external stakeholders, conflicting environmental demands and low managerial autonomy'. Organisations involved in the delivery of social policies would appear to fit these characteristics. For example, Antonsen and Beck

Jorgensen (1997: 343) argue that ‘there is great scope for professional discretion in the HPs, but there is much retrospective scrutiny’ and that HPs are more bureaucratic in nature (1997: 346). Thus, one can argue that organisations involved in the delivery of social policy, may be more resistant to organisational change. This is due to the ambiguous nature of social policy itself, the prevalence of professionals groups and issues regarding conflicting norms and values.

This section has discussed the ways in which NPM type reforms have resulted in structural changes to public sector organisations, which are regarded as visible aspects of administrative culture. Questions were then posed as to whether or not these structural changes have led to a corresponding change to the underlying values of all occupational groups, subcultures and individuals within the traditional model of public administration. Finally, reasons as to why administrative culture change might be an uneven process in public sector organisations - dominated as they are by 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals with traditional values and ways of working - are mooted, particularly within social policy areas. With the prior discussion in mind, the following section goes on to examine the ways in which NPM ideas have impacted (according to the literature) upon the traditional administrative culture of the public sector.

2.8 THE WAYS IN WHICH NPM IDEAS IMPACT UPON THE TRADITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Bearing in mind the 'cultural iceberg' concept that an understanding of organisational culture requires examining both its visible and invisible manifestations, the following paragraphs will identify the ways in which the literature argues that NPM ideas have impacted on the administrative culture of the public sector. From this discussion, two research hypotheses are developed. Once more, note is made of any specific references to social policy or 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals. As Jingjit and Fotaki (2010: 65) argue 'given the complexity of organisational culture it was simply impossible to cover all aspects of organisational culture in a single study'. Therefore, this study limits itself to five key elements of administrative culture in order to obtain an overview of administrative culture within Irish social policy. The five components examined in this research are as follows;

1. Work practices;
2. Accountability and evaluation measures;
3. Values;
4. Work motivations; and,
5. Attitudes to change and public sector reform.

An explanation for choosing to examine each of these five components is offered in Sections 2.8.1, 2.8.2 and 2.9 respectively. Section 2.8.1 addresses the literature on the impact of NPM ideas on work practices and accountability and evaluation measures (visible aspects of administrative culture), while 2.8.2 pertains to the literature on values and work motivations (invisible aspects of administrative culture). Attitudes to change and public sector reform are considered to be invisible aspects of administrative culture because like values and work motivations, as they are intangible and difficult to decipher. The literature on public sector employees' attitudes to change was briefly touched upon in the previous section and will be discussed again and related to the overall research framework in section 2.9.

2.8.1 H1: Visible Manifestations of Administrative Culture

Work practices are the first component of administrative culture addressed as part of this study. Work practices were chosen because the literature suggests that the organisational changes instituted due to the introduction reform measures influenced by NPM ideas have been immense for public sector employment. Considine and Lewis (1999: 457) found that 'recent reform strategies developed by governments and their advisors do actually imply different methods of work for officials at the local, or "ground level" of major programs'. A review of the literature reveals many changes to public sector employment and this section deals with work practices and accountability and evaluation measures, that is, the visible aspects of administrative culture.

Work Practices

The first notable change to public sector employment is increased flexibility. Considine and Dukelow (2009: 159) observe that 'the idea of jobs for life and the security attached to them has been replaced by calls for flexibility and the need for constant innovation'. While Hughes (1998:52) states that there has been a 'move away from classic bureaucracy to make organisations, personnel, and employment terms and conditions more flexible'. Taylor (2001: 174) argues that 'employees … are facing intensifying pressures to abandon old attitudes and work practices in favour of flexibility, pay for performance, reduced job security and the increasing individualisation of the employment relationship at the expense of collective bargaining and consensus'. In other words, public sector employees are no longer guaranteed jobs for life. Instead, they are expected to work on a short-term contract basis, moving freely from the public sector to the private sector and back again. 'The personnel changes increase flexibility so that the most able are rewarded and the inadequate can be removed' (Lynn 1998a: 114). However, as noted above, there can be disadvantages to increased flexibility characterised by shorter term job contracts. Issues such as loss of institutional memory and collective values,

as well as lack of continuity of service may arise. Increased job uncertainly may result in decreased morale (Kettl, 1997; Flynn, 1997; Le Grand 2003; Buckley, 2004; Noblet, Rodwell and McWilliams 2006; Newman, 2008; and Diefenbach, 2009).

Secondly, employees are expected to give more time commitment to the organisations they are employed by. Lane (2000a: 314) observes that 'people are working harder'. While Lynch (2010: 57) points out that 'the idealised worker is one that is available 24/7 without ties or responsibilities that will hinder his or her productive capacities'. Due to decreased budgets and ever-increased focus on cost cutting, there are less public sector employees to carry out the work, and a culture of 'presenteeism' (Davies and Thomas 2002) has developed. This may contribute to issues of burn out, especially in the social services where employees are dealing with emotionally draining issues, such as child protection or mental healthcare.

A third change identified by the literature, has been the growth in the primacy of management practice. Dean (2006: 116) argues that 'street-level' systems of public service provision based on bureaucracy and professionalism have been transformed to systems with managers now taking charge. However, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004: 14) point out that 'management is not some neutral, technical process, but rather an activity which is intimately and indissolubly enmeshed with politics, law and the wider civil society (Bouckaert 2002). It is suffused with value-laden choices and influenced by broader ideologies' (indeed the same could be said for bureaucracy and professionalism). Bovaird and Löffler (2009: 20) note that under NPM 'managers were given a much greater role in policy making than before'. Taylor (2001: 178) states that 'for the public sector the notion of managing for results was something of an innovation and the criticism was that many did not actually know what they were trying to achieve'. As regards human resource management, Taylor (2001: 175) notes that 'public sector organisations were generally expected to emulate their private sector counterparts in managing resources, including people, in an efficient, goal-orientated and flexible way'. The reasoning was that management was management regardless of the sector and the same skills should be applied across the board. Public sector employees were no longer expected to be specialised professionals; rather, they are expected to be managers. Minogue (1998: 23) points out that under NPM, '"improving the civil service" is overwhelmingly translated into "making civil servants into enterprising managers"'. Noordegraaf (2007: 776) concurs by stating that 'professionals at working floors and street levels (e.g. doctors, social workers, teachers, professors and police officials) are forced to take on managerial responsibilities and market-orientated roles'. Gray and Jenkins (2003: 235) use the imagery of the 'white coats are losing

out to the grey suits'. It should be noted that an inherent contradiction of NPM is that it professes to give managers the freedom to manage, while at the same time limiting the discretion of professionals (Grey and Jenkins, 2003: 250).

According to the literature, the application of NPM has been problematic in areas of social policy and in particular, because of the professionals involved in its delivery. This is often portrayed as a conflict between 'managers' and management practice and the professions. Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd (2003: 526) found 'a very strong tendency to defend the *status quo* among professional staffs and resistance to many of the core tenets of new managerialism. What emerged in this context was a hybrid form of organising, characterised by a "persistence of values, ideas and practices even when the formal structures and processes seem to change" (Cooper *et al*. 1996: 642)'. However, this portrayal of professional resistance to NPM principles does not provide a complete picture. Rather than focus on the distinctions between managers and professionals, Exworthy and Halford (1999: 1) point out that 'evidence has also suggested that the roles are rather more blurred than the stereotypes suggest'. Causer and Exworthy (1999: 101) point to the blurring of boundaries between the professional and managerial work in the public sector by stating that 'managerial assets are becoming of increasing importance for career advancement within the professions. To some extent, such assets have always been important for most professions, but their significance is intensifying'. On the flipside of this, Noordegraaf (2007: 776) argues that, while professionals maybe increasingly performing managerial skills and duties, the phenomenon of public managers trying to become professionals is becoming more and more apparent. He argues that they are 'imitating classic professions' by, 'forming associations, they develop training programs, they identify competencies, they publish codes of conduct and codes of ethics, and they publish magazines like *The Public Manager* (www.thepublicmanager.org)'.

Accountability and Evaluation Measures

Accountability and evaluation measures are the second component of administrative culture examined as part of this research. The literature also attributes an increased focus on accountability and evaluation measures in the public sector to the implementation of NPM ideas. As previously stated NPM ideas advocate managing for clearly identifiable, tangible results. Thus, the introduction of performance measurement and evaluation systems has been an integral part of NPM (Hood, 1995; John, 2001), whether this is at organisation, programme or individual level. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a perception amongst public sector employees that they are spending as much time filling out evaluations, measuring performance

or ‘ticking the boxes’ as they are delivering services and the literature appears to verify this. For instance, Taylor and Kelly (2006: 639) state that ‘new management systems have created more bureaucracy that requires professionals to demonstrate that they have achieved particular targets. … Additional systems of accountability (“paperwork”) required from some professionals have added considerably to their workload’. Section 2.4.2 outlined the discussion within the literature as to whether performance measurement is a suitable form of accountability. For the purpose of this section, it is significant to mention that evaluation and paperwork have become everyday features of public sector employment. Whether this form of evaluation has merely become a ticking the boxes exercise or something more meaningful remains to be seen. With regard to social policy, because goals are often ambiguous and results unclear, increased focus on evaluation of this sort may not be meaningful. As Alcock (2003: 156) argues ‘when welfare professionals are engaged in accountancy, they are not engaged in service provision’.

Hypothesis 1:

Therefore, from the above literature it can be argued that a hypothesis can be inferred regarding the ways in which NPM ideas impact upon the visible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in the specific domain of Irish social policy. Accordingly, H1 can be stated as follows:

H1: The introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

2.8.2 H2: Invisible Manifestations of Administrative Culture

According to the literature, the reforms introduced to public sector organisations as a result of NPM ideas have also impacted upon the invisible aspects of traditional administrative culture. The invisible manifestations of administrative culture discussed in this section are values and work motivations.

Values

Values are the third component of administrative culture examined as part of this research. Schein (2010) identifies the espoused values of an organisation as a level of organisational culture. Espoused values relate to how the organisation represents itself to the outside, and find expression in things like strategy statements. As a result, espoused values are visible and easily

identified. However, the espoused values of an organisation may not necessarily correspond to the underlying (invisible) individual values of all members of its subcultures or occupational groups. For this reason the researcher chose to investigate this component of administrative culture.

Dingwall and Strangleman (2005: 479) point out that, as a result of NPM, 'public sector workers were expected to adopt the beliefs, values and ideals of the private sector, either through the direct pressures of the market or through a process of re-education'. Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen (1997); Dingwall and Strangleman (2005); and Gray and Jenkins (2003) all agree that NPM has altered the values of those employed in the public sector. Diefenbach (2009: 895) makes the argument that NPM;

> while creating new value along the lines of abstract quantification and monetarisation at the same time, it ignores, reduces, damages or even destroys many other values; the traditional public service ethos and its commitment to impartiality, social equality, integrity, equity and communitarian values, a care for the qualitative dimensions and the uniqueness of each individual and individual case, the socio-philosophical ideas of citizenship, representation, neutrality, welfare and social justice.

According to Jorgensen and Bozeman (2007: 367) the typical values associated with NPM are 'productivity, effectiveness, parsimony, a business-like approach, and timeliness. These values are also associated with economic thinking, cost consciousness, downsizing, and contracting out'. On the other hand Jorgensen and Bozeman (2007: 368) identify the following values as being associated with the behaviour of public sector employees; accountability and professionalism, which implies that the employee works in a 'serious, reflective, and competent manner'; honesty, moral standards, ethical consciousness, objectivity, impartiality, openness, integrity, and accountability.

There is evidence in the literature to suggest that regardless of the espoused values of an administration corresponding to NPM ideas, public sector employees have retained the underlying values of traditional public administration. For example, Taylor and Kelly (2006: 640) examined the application of public sector reform in two sectors – social work and education – in the UK and argue that 'there is no evidence to suggest that public service professionals are less concerned about questions relating to social justice than under the traditional welfare state'. Ashburner *et al*. (1996: 245) found that there remained a distinction between public and private sector managers; 'the value systems of public sector managers may well continue to differ in important ways from those of private sector managers. Non-market-

based values, in particular, may be expected to be more prominent amongst groups of public sector managers'. Horton (2006a: 537) states that 'what appears to be the case is that in spite of all the changes much of the traditional public administration cultures remain'. Vrangbaek (2009: 529) concludes that; 'generally speaking it seems reassuring that traditional public sector values have survived in spite of many changes and the focus on renewal and innovation in recent decades'. Therefore, from the literature it would seem that the values of traditional public administration remain prominent amongst public sector employees regardless of the rhetoric of reform espoused at more senior levels.

Work Motivations

Work motivations are the fourth component of administrative culture examined as part of this research. The work motivations of public sector employees are an important invisible feature of administrative culture to investigate, because if the visible manifestations of organisational culture such as reward and promotion structures are completely juxtaposed to the underlying values and motivations of staff, interaction with these systems will never be meaningful. In contrast to the view espoused by NPM ideas that public sector employees are motivated by self interest, is the idea of public service motivation (PSM). Perry and Wise (1990: 368) define PSM as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organisations'. Perry (1996) identifies the four underlying dimensions of PSM: attraction to public policy making; commitment to public interest; compassion; and self-sacrifice. Lyons, Duxbury and Higgins (2006: 605) describe this as the idea;

> That individuals are drawn to careers in public service primarily by a unique set of altruistic motives such as wanting to serve the public interest, effect social change, and shape the policies that affect society. This perspective views public service as a distinct profession or calling to which certain types of people are morally compelled. … An individual who is drawn to a career in public service would choose a public sector job even if the economic rewards were not competitive with comparable jobs in the private sector.

Indeed, Peters (2010: 97) discusses the disincentives of working in the public sector as follows;

> Some people may be attracted to the salaries of government jobs, but in most countries the top jobs in government are paid substantially less than jobs with similar responsibilities in the private sector (Brans and Peters forthcoming). Likewise, many people are attracted by the opportunity to achieve policy goals through working in government, but others are frustrated by the slowness with which government often appears to move and the barriers to action. Finally, public employees have become the targets of increasingly adverse publicity and attacks on their skills and integrity – often from their own political masters – that have deterred more people from joining the government service.

Peters (2010: 97) maintains that, despite these disincentives, individuals continue to choose to work in the public sector. He declares that the reason for this is public service motivation (as espoused by authors such as Perry, 2000).

Studies have been conducted which show support for PSM. For instance, Houston (2005) examined donations of blood, money and time by public, non-profit and private workers as a measure of commitment to the public interest, service to others and self-sacrifice (which he identifies as components of PSM). Houston (2005: 81) found that 'public sector employees are more likely to volunteer for charity and donate blood' (but found no difference between public and private employees in terms of individual philanthropy). Houston (2005) argues that these findings support the idea of PSM. Additionally, Frank and Lewis (2004: 46) found that;

> Despite the strong cultural stereotype that government workers are lazier than those in the private sector, nearly two thirds of the public servants in the GSS reported doing the best work they could, even if it sometimes interfered with the rest of their lives. They were more likely than those in the private sector to report working this hard despite having lower pay, fewer advancement opportunities, and greater job security.

The results presented in the Frank and Lewis (2004) study should be tempered with the qualification that work rates were self-reported. Nevertheless, Buelens and Van den Broeck (2007: 69) collected data from a survey of public sector and private employees in Belgium and found that 'public sector employees are less motivated by money and work challenge and less committed to long working hours than their private sector counterparts, for the simple reason that they are motivated by leading a balanced life'. Studies have also found that levels of PSM may vary depending on gender, position within the hierarchy or level of education (Bright, 2005); or employee perceptions regarding levels of red tape (Scott and Pandey, 2005). Moreover, Moynihan and Pandey (2007) conducted research on public sector managers in the US and found that PSM is not only dependent on the individual socio-historical background of employees but also on the organisational environment in which employees find themselves. They found that PSM decreases over time. The explanation offered for this is that 'workers in the provision of health and social services may be particularly likely to grow discouraged over time if they see limited progress toward solving the problems of poverty, inadequate health services and other social issues'. However, this study only concerned managers and Moynihan and Pandey (2007: 48) specifically recommend that any future studies of PSM should include frontline staff.

Fountain (2001:65) maintains that public sector managers might have different motivations because they 'act for others' and states that "People do behave differently, reach decisions differently, when they are acting on behalf of others. And we have certain expectations of someone who acts for us that we would not have if he were entirely on his own" (Pitkin, 118)'. Horton (2008: 21) elaborates this point by stating that 'although bureaucrats are motivated by self-interest, they may also have broader motivations such as pride in performance; loyalty to a program, department, or government; and a wish to serve their fellow citizens'. Undoubtedly, the public sector does provide very attractive working conditions including flexible working conditions; job security; generous maternity leave and allowances; and defined benefit pensions. One cannot assume with certainty that these rewards are any less important to employees than the opportunity to serve the public. Hence, it is just as dubious to argue that all public sector employees are morally superior in their service of the public, as it is to argue that they are all self-serving and self-interested, as proponents of NPM do.

Hypothesis 2:

While it is assumed that NPM ideas have impacted upon the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy, one could argue that from the review of the literature above, it is possible to assert that the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a complete transformation of the invisible aspects of traditional administrative culture. Consequently, H2 is as follows:

H2: The introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

Figure 2.1 below represents a summary of the literature reviewed in this chapter on the administrative cultures within the public sector, namely, traditional public administration (for example, Collins and Cradden, 2007; Dominelli, 1996; Gray and Jenkins, 2003; Hughes, 1998; Noordegraaf, 2007; Peters, 2010); new public management (for instance Barzelay, 2002; Christensen and Laegreid, 2007; Diefenbach, 2009; Hood, 1991; Pollit, 2001 ; and post-new public management (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000; Moore, 1995; O'Flynn, 2007; Pollit and Bouckaert, 2011; Talbot, 2005). These categories are divided into five sub-sections, which relate to the visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture under investigation in this research. Some important explanatory points should be noted about this table. The first noteworthy point is that traditional public administration is divided into two categories, that is, bureaucrats and professionals, and represents the distinctions and similarities of these two

groups identified by the researcher from an analysis of the literature. It is also worth mentioning that, the third column has been designated the title post-new public management followed by a question mark. This column represents the researcher's own summary of the models discussed in section 2.5 and is tentative at best, questioning as it does whether a post-new public management era indeed exists. Thus, while column three is speculative, columns one and two are far more definitive in nature. Figure 2.1 was developed to be utilised in conjunction with the research framework below as a tool to develop the research instrument and for analysis of the data. Consequently, Figure 2.1 is employed in order to explain whether the hypotheses developed as a result of this literature review are validated or not.

Figure 2.1 Administrative Cultures within the Public Sector

	Traditional Public Administration		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy (Hierarchical Culture)	**Professionals (Consensual Culture)**	**(Market & Developmental Culture)**	**(Aspects of all Four?)**
1. Work Practices (Visible)	Following rules and procedures Recording everything Clear levels of responsibility and rigidity Little to no discretion serving any government party equally Generalist training - Learning on the job - No specific educational requirements	Each profession has its own specific method of work, language and standards of practice/ethical code High levels of discretion Specific professional training Highly experienced (semi-professions: shorter training periods and lower occupational status)	Business orientated language to describe work Changing work practices associated with NPM (as per lit review) - Increased flexibility - Increased time commitment - Primacy of management practice - Focus on evaluation Management, accountancy and business training required Extensive training opportunities provided Focus on innovation	Team building and trust Improving training and self development Value based management Networks Increased user participation in policy making Role of reflection, lesson drawing and continuous adaption Negotiation skills Training opportunities provided
2.Accountability and Evaluation Measures (Visible)	Ministers are politically accountable for the organisations under their control. Bureaucrats are neutral and anonymous	Most professions are self supervising and regulating. Professional organisations deal with complaints and are responsible for licensing and enforcing codes of conduct	Politicians set public goals and set targets and then hold managers to account for their delivery through the use of performance measures	By negotiated goal setting and oversight
	Evaluation not clear Promotion through steep hierarchical structures Rewards/career progression based on seniority	Evaluated by their peers	Performance measures and targets: quantitative measures Rewards/career progression based on merit	Qualitative measures that are meaningful and express both outputs and outcomes. Rewards/career progression based on merit

3. Values (Invisible)	Political loyalty Transparency Neutrality Fairness Openness Justice Integrity Honesty and probity Objectivity and impartiality Respect for the rule of law and due process	Independent professional standards Continuity and robustness Due process Strong personal integrity Selflessness Respect for human dignity	Business and related values Satisfying customers needs Productivity Efficiency Effectiveness Economy Value for money Innovation Entrepreneurialism Accountability	Balancing different interests Developing networks Openness and responsiveness Facilitating citizens in the articulation of their interests Collaboration Democracy Community Equity Effectiveness Without loss of efficiency and productivity
4. Work Motivations (Invisible)	Career opportunities within the public hierarchy Commitment to the role/mission of organisation Attraction to politics and public policy making Commitment to public service Compassion Self-sacrifice	Recognition from peers Learning and development on the job Career opportunities (professional) Helping people Status	Salary Career opportunities Recognition from management Good relations with customers Keeping within budget	Collaboration and networking Attraction to politics and public policy making Commitment to public service Compassion Self-sacrifice
5. Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform (Invisible)	Negative	Negative due to threat to coalition strength	Necessary	Positive

Thus, two research hypotheses have been formulated as a result of a review of the literature on the impact of NPM ideas on both the visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture which constitute the focus of this research. Importantly, the following section now links these hypotheses to the research framework which is then applied to the data collection and analysis phases of this project.

2.9 THE COMPETING VALUES FRAMEWORK (CVF) OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES

Proponents of NPM ideas and traditional models of public administration are in fact describing ideal types of organisational culture within the public sector. It is apparent that these typologies do not allow for the multifaceted reality of human behaviour. Indeed, sections above acknowledge that administrative culture is a dynamic system consisting of both visible (including observable symbols, ceremonies, stories, slogans, behaviours, dress and physical settings) and invisible levels (including the underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and feeling). As Peters (1988: 119) argues 'it may be that, for better or for worse, the actual behaviour of individuals in the public bureaucracy is much more complex than would be predicted by or permitted in most models of their behaviour'. What if in fact, NPM ideas have not so much become embedded within the administrative culture of Irish social policy, but have been layered upon traditional models? From the evidence above, one can argue that many aspects of the traditional model have not disappeared and the values associated with it are still vital for government. For example, Christensen, Knuth, Laegreid and Wiggan (2009: 1002) point out that;

> The result of these reform waves since the 1980s seems to be an increasing complexity in public organisations, not to mention increasing hybridization, where different organisational principles are used at the same time. Instead of one system of governance have replaced another, we see reforms that add new organisational forms and policy features built into and on top of existing ones, creating a layering process whereby multiple forms of governance may operate in a given policy sector.

Exworthy and Halford (1999: 7) argue that both the old and new 'forms of management paradigms are active within public sector today. Precisely how they interact ... should not be a foregone conclusion'. In other words, even though visible manifestations of NPM have been introduced into the public sector they may be layered on top of the old existing models of traditional public administration. It is worth restating the two research hypotheses here:

H1: The introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

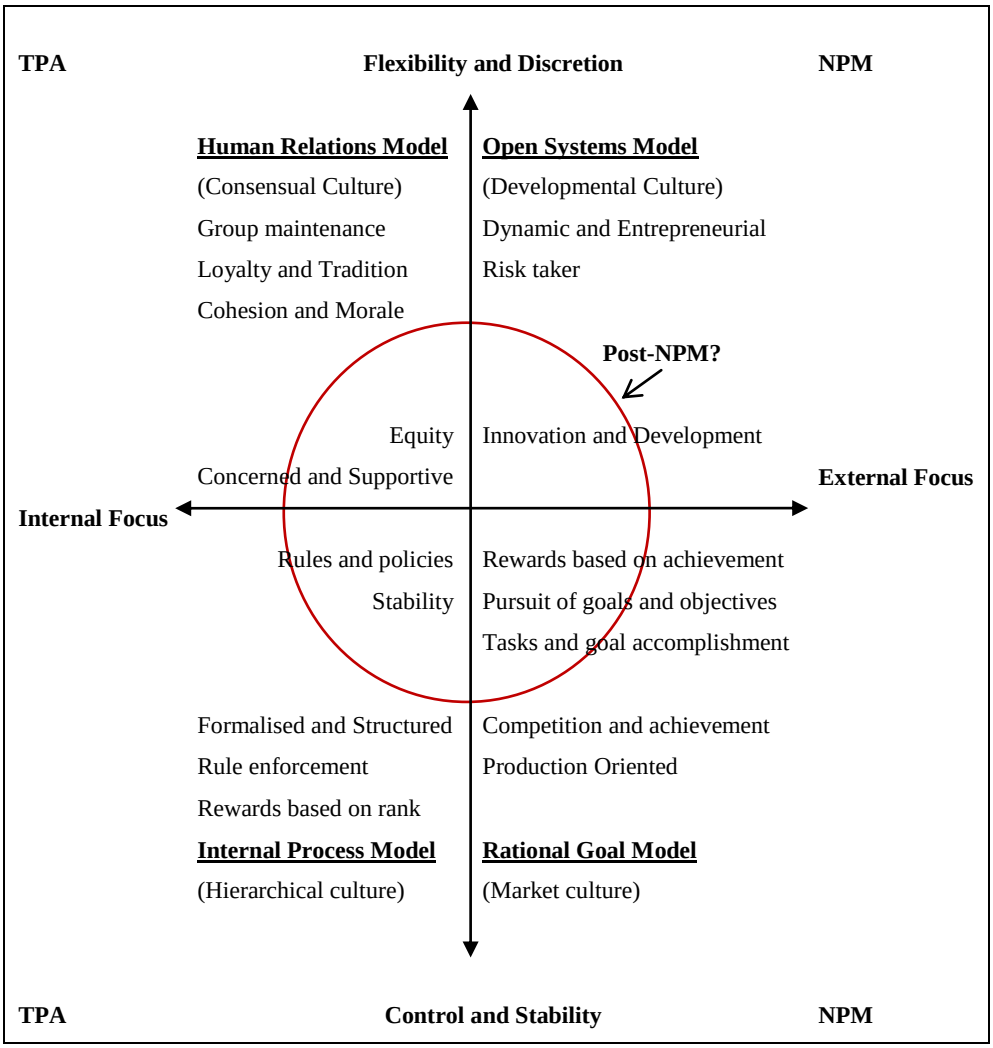
H2: The introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

Otherwise stated, the changes to the visible aspects of traditional administrative culture as a result of NPM ideas may not necessarily produce a corresponding change to its invisible aspects. It was noted earlier, that Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 6-7) and Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 49) acknowledge that organisational/administrative cultures will vary from state to state, organisation to organisation and even within organisations. Thus, a research framework is required that will satisfactorily explain the ways in which NPM ideas have impacted on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy.

Kaarst-Brown *et al.* (2004: 37) point out that 'to surface deep, underlying assumptions as proposed by Schein is an extensive, costly, and often time consuming process'. They argue that the Competing Values Framework (CVF) which was developed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) is a useful model for assessing organisational culture types as it 'has been applied and validated in both public and private organisations and in cross-cultural studies involving multiple countries' (Kaarst-Brown *et al.* 2004: 41). The CVF acknowledges that different types of organisational cultures may exist within an organisation at any one time. According to Colyer *et al.* (2000: 77) 'the competing values model explores culture at the organisational level (rather than at the societal or individual level), but acknowledges that organisations are not homogenous cultures, that different values exist and that organisational values reflect the values of the external social system'. This model has been used in numerous studies to identify organisational cultures within the public sector in contexts outside of Ireland. For example, Bradley and Parker (2006) examined Queensland while Colyer *et al.* (2000) looked at Western Australia. Hajnal (2005) employed the CVF to identify the administrative culture in ministries in Hungary. Jingjit and Fotaki (2011) investigated the organisational culture of Thai public sector employees and Van Beek and Gerritsen's (2010) research was based on nursing home staff in the Netherlands.

Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) developed the CVF framework by first ordering the criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of organisations within the literature. Then, two separate panels of independent theorists and researchers were asked to condense and order the criteria and what emerged was a model of organisational cultures which examines the rival demands within organisations along two axes (illustrated in figure 2.2 below).

Figure 2.2 Competing Values Framework of Organisational Cultures (adapted from Bradley and Parker, 2006)



The horizontal axis relates to the significance an organisation gives to its internal and external demands. Kaarst-Brown *et al.* (2004: 38) explain that this means 'some organisations are effective when they have a unified, congenial, internal culture, while others are perceived as effective when their culture emphasises competition with others'. The vertical axis corresponds to the levels of flexibility and control within that organisation. As Kaarst-Brown *et al.* (2004: 38) point out 'this means some organisations are effective when they are changing, adaptable, and organic, while others are effective when they are stable, predictable, and mechanistic'.

When these two axes intersect a model of four distinct organisational cultures emerges:

- The Internal Process Model or hierarchical culture best reflects bureaucrats under the traditional model of public administration. Hierarchical culture has an internal focus with high levels of control. Quinn and McGrath (1985: 325) describe this model of

organisational culture as follows; 'in the hierarchical culture, formal information processing (documentation, computation, and evaluation) is assumed to be a means to the end of continuity (stability, control, and coordination)'. As explained in Figure 2.1, the work practices of bureaucrats within the traditional public administration focus on following internal rules and procedures, there are very clear levels of responsibility and little to no discretion. Because of the emphasis on stability and rigidity within hierarchical culture, it is deduced that members will be opposed to change.

- Professional practice within traditional public administration best fits the Human Resources Model or consensual culture which has an internal flexibility focus. Quinn and McGrath (1985: 325) explain this model as follows; 'in the consensual culture, collective information processing (discussion, participation and consensus) are assumed to be means to the end of cohesion (climate, morale and teamwork)'. Professionals have very high levels of discretion within their practice. Figure 2.1 describes how professional associations formalise each professions specific method of work, language and even appearance. Most professions are self supervising and regulating and have their own internal codes of ethical practice. They engage in research and often have specific conferences and publications relating to their practice. As professional groups usually bear responsibility for licensing members they are concerned with group maintenance. Bradley and Parker (2006: 90) also point out that this model has a focus on 'training and broader development of human resources to enhance employee morale and cohesion', and professions often stress the importance of continuous professional development. Due to the emphasis on tradition and cohesion, it is assumed that members of consensual culture will be resistant to change.
- Managers within NPM are best represented by the Open Systems Model or developmental culture which has an external flexibility focus. Quinn and McGrath (1985: 319-320) explain this model as follows; 'in a developmental culture, intuitive information processing (insight, invention and innovation) is assumed to be a means to the end of revitalisation (external support, resources acquisition, and growth)'. NPM advocates an increase in managerial discretion that is, allowing managers the freedom to manage. The emphasis here is on innovation, entrepreneurship and dynamic leadership. NPM stresses the need to satisfy the demands of the customers who are external to the organisation. Because of the high degree of flexibility within developmental culture it is assumed that there will be little resistance to change from its members.
- The Rational Goal Model or market culture represents employees under NPM. Market culture has an external control focus. Quinn and McGrath (1985: 325) explain as follows; 'in rational cultures, individual information processing (goal clarification,

logical judgement, and direction setting) is assumed to be a means to the end of improved performance (efficiency, productivity, and profit or impact)'. Bradley and Parker (2006: 93) argue that 'the new public management ideals align most closely with a rational goal culture type on the CVF framework'. As discussed sections above, a distinct feature of NPM is a focus on accountability and evaluation, in order to achieve efficiency (including limiting professional discretion). NPM advocates competition as a means of achieving results. Within the NPM model of public sector organisational culture promotion and rewards are based on merit and achievement of targets. Due to the external focus of market culture it is deduced that change will be regarded as necessary by its members.

To summarise, the Internal Process Model or hierarchical culture mirrors bureaucrats within traditional public administration. The Human Resources Model or consensual culture best reflects professionals under traditional public administration. The Open Systems Model or developmental culture is epitomised by managers under NPM, while the Rational Goal Model or market culture represents employees under NPM.

Therefore, one can argue that traditional public administration and NPM, as organisational cultures of the public sector, can be fitted into this research framework in a reasonably uncomplicated way. However, Figure 2.1 identified a third potential organisational culture for the public sector, that is, post-NPM. With regards to situating post-NPM along the horizontal axis of internal or external focus, as was explained in section 2.5, a feature of post-NPM is its external focus on citizens and other social actors as opposed to the customer focus of NPM. However, this model still retains an internal focus on rules and procedures. So post-NPM could be placed somewhere in the middle of this axis. Secondly, with regard to the vertical axis of flexibility and discretion and stability and control, post-NPM appears to fit somewhere along the middle again. Discretion under this model is limited to a certain extent by accountability measures but without the extreme level of rules and procedures found in Internal Process Model or the Rational Goal Model. Therefore, the post-NPM model of organisational culture in the public sector presents problems when attempting to position it on the CVF because it contains elements of all four cultural types. Figure 2.2 above alters the original CVF model of organisational cultures by inserting the red line which illustrates how the post-NPM model could be described as a blending of 'the best' (sic) elements of the other two models. Therefore, the post-NPM model of organisational culture in the public sector presents problems when attempting to position it on the CVF because it contains elements of all four cultural types.

The importance of models and typologies of this nature is not that a singular culture exists within an organisation in an unpolluted form; but the recognition that different cultural forms can co-exist and even compete with each other within organisations. The addition that this research framework makes is an acknowledgement that organisational cultures may even co-exist or compete with each other at different levels (visible and invisible). As Quinn and McGrath (1985: 331) point out,

> real organisations ... are always characterised by descriptions from all four quadrants. The most buffered hierarchy has some aspects of the adhocracy, and the most existential clan has within it some aspects of the instrumental market. In reality, the four value systems seep into one another at all levels of analysis. Hence organisations are characterised by complexity, contradiction and paradox.

Consequently, the CVF will operate like a map that gives coherence to empirical inquiry undertaken in this research.

As has been argued throughout this literature review, the introduction of reforms associated with NPM ideas is an attempt to change the administrative culture of the public sector to one that is more business-like (Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005). Importantly, the CVF identifies how different models of organisational culture will react to change. Therefore, the final component of administrative culture examined as part of this research is attitudes to change/ public sector reform.

2.10 CONCLUSION

This literature review has served to make a number of important points. It commenced by developing a working definition of organisational culture. This definition employs the 'cultural iceberg' analogy, that is to say that organisational culture is made up of both visible and invisible aspects. Therefore, the points of analysis of this research are identified. Secondly, reasons for narrowing the focus of the research to social policy and 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in particular are established. Significantly, a gap in the literature is identified. The third part of the literature review discussed NPM ideas and related how these ideas have resulted in changes to both visible and invisible aspects of organisational culture. Two research hypotheses were developed as a result. Finally, the research framework section illustrates how these hypotheses will be applied and demonstrates the linkages between the literature on organisational cultural change and NPM ideas.

Thus, the significance of this research lies in the fact that it brings together two strands of the literature, namely the one on organisational culture and the one on the impact of NPM ideas on traditional public administration. Therefore, this research will examine the ways in which NPM ideas compete or co-exist inside the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy utilising the CVF model in the analysis. The CVF model will also be useful to assess whether a new alternative model of administrative culture - such as that identified as post-NPM - is in existence. The following chapter describes the methods used to operationalise the blending of both aspects of the literature in order to investigate the research question.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to add to the understanding of the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Chapter 2 served to marry the literature on administrative culture and NPM ideas while at the same time explaining the significance of limiting the scope of this research to 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within social policy. Accordingly, two research hypotheses were developed:

H1: The introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.
H2: The introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

Chapter 2 then cumulated in the identification of a research framework which would provide a means to connect all aspects of the inquiry. Therefore, the research involves an examination of the education, health, housing, personal social services and social welfare sectors utilising the CVF model of organisational cultures as a research framework.

This chapter details the methodological procedures employed to investigate the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Colyer *et al.* (2000:76) stress that 'investigating organisational culture ... is not an easy matter, as cultures within an organisation are complex, and may be competing and conflicting'. With this in mind, justifications for each step taken along the research process are provided throughout the chapter. Firstly, it is necessary to explore why qualitative methods chosen were considered to be the most appropriate for investigation of the research question. The second section discusses the use of semi-structured interviews as the research instrument. The third part of this chapter deals with the research sample, including the sample criteria, sampling method and sample description. An important consideration in any research is the researcher's personal bias and how this may impacts on the validity of the research design, implementation and analysis. With this in mind, the fourth section outlines the researcher's personal bias. The fifth section provides details of the data collection process, while the sixth section describes the data analysis methods utilised.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to answer the research question and test the legitimacy of the research hypotheses, it was decided to take a qualitative approach to the research design. This section outlines the

rationale for utilising a qualitative research design. Bryman (2008: 366) identifies the noteworthy features of qualitative research as, based on the assumption that reality is socially constructed; seeks to explore and explain social phenomenon through observation/direct contact with participants and by appreciating the subjective experience of social actors; and attempts to gain an understanding of the patterned behaviours, meanings, perceptions, beliefs and values of particular groups. Accordingly, this research employs the symbolist viewpoint of organisational culture. This viewpoint argues that administrative culture is a complex concept which is highly contextualised and is socially constructed. Therefore, the initial instinct was to engage in qualitative research methods in order to explore the research question.

From a review of the literature it is apparent that previous research which utilised the CVF has focused on quantitative methods and involved large samples when investigating the administrative culture of public sector employees. For example, Colyer *et al.* (2000) administered a survey to 460 recreation staff of local government authorities across Western Australia in order to create their organisational culture profiles. Bradley and Parker (2006) surveyed 925 Queensland public sector employees (189 of whom were categorised as being in managerial positions) on their preferred and perceived actual organisational culture. Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) conducted a large scale survey of 1,362 Thai civil servants across six public sector organisations. Van Beek and Gerritsen's (2010) data was collected from 248 staff members in nursing homes in the Netherlands as to the relationship between organisational culture and quality of care. While offering information about the prevalence of phenomena, these large scale quantitative studies do not adequately explain their nature. Rich data is not generated to explain the responses elicited. Qualitative research methods, on the other hand, will provide 'rich detail' (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 20) about 'street-level' participants. This research draws linkages with previous research in the area and attempts to offer explanations for the phenomena highlighted within them. The second reason for choosing a qualitative research design is that 'the qualitative researcher seeks an understanding of behaviour, values, beliefs and so on in terms of the context in which the research is conducted' (Bryman, 2008: 394). This is particularly relevant in relation to the invisible aspects of administrative culture outlined in the literature review.

One cannot ignore the common critiques of qualitative research. Bryman (2008: 391-392) outlines the most common criticisms levelled at qualitative research when compared to quantitative research. The first is that qualitative research is too subjective and overly reliant on the researcher's often unsystematic views of what is important or not. Section four of this

chapter outlines steps taken by the researcher to be aware of and strive to counter any bias. However, it is difficult to say it does not exist. With this in mind, it is important to take note of Brown's (1995:67) argument that 'any interpretation of an organisational culture or subculture is just that, an interpretation, and not an account founded on objective truth'. The second criticism that Bryman (2008: 391-392) outlines is that qualitative research is difficult to replicate. While it may be difficult, it is not impossible. To this end, every effort possible has been made within this chapter to describe the methods used in detail so that it becomes likely that other researchers could replicate it. The third is the problem of generalisation. Bryman (2008: 391-392) argues that 'the findings of qualitative research are to generalise to theory rather than to populations'. Indeed, this research will draw linkages to other research within the area to see if comparisons can be made. The fourth criticism is lack of transparency. However, Bryman (2008: 393) argues that the use of CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis) has led to 'greater transparency in the procedures used for analysing qualitative data'. Indeed, it is with this in mind that Nvivo software was employed as an analysis tool for this project.

3.3 INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

The following section describes and justifies the methodological techniques used to obtain the data. As outlined above, the overall methodological strategy for this research is qualitative in nature. Various methods were considered and it was decided that rich qualitative data would be best obtained through semi-structured interviews. This decision was made after discounting other qualitative research methods, such as focus groups. Accordingly, the use of focus groups is first discussed. The subsequent section outlines the rationale for the use of semi-structured interviews in this study. Finally, the procedures involved in the development of the topic guide are detailed.

3.3.1 Focus Groups

Dobson (2004: 284) defines focus groups as 'discussions that are organised to explore a specific set of issues and involve some kind of collective activity'. They are appropriate when the researcher wishes to explore participants' experience, opinions and concerns (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999: 4). According to Burnham, Gilland, Gant and Layton-Henry (2008: 134) focus groups;

> ... allow topics to be discussed in depth by carefully selected respondents with a stake in the topic. They allow respondents to stimulate one another and to provide information based on a range of personal experiences. They allow respondents to

> interact with the researcher and to modify the research agenda. Rich data can be generated in respondents' own words.

Focus groups initially appeared to be an appropriate qualitative method for this research as they would generate rich descriptive data on aspects of administrative culture such as work practices, values and motivations as a result of group discussion with 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals.

Criticisms levelled at focus groups as a research method are typical of those levelled at all qualitative research methods when compared to quantitative research methods. Dobson (2004: 285) outlines some of these criticisms. The first being that the data generated has limited generalisablility as the sample of participants used is not randomly selected. The second argument is that the views of those who volunteer to participate in focus groups may be different to those who would not consider doing so; and the final criticism is related to the potential for interviewer bias. Added to these, a very specific criticism of focus groups is the impact of group members on each other.

The main reasons for discounting focus groups as a method for this research were entirely practical in nature. Some of the topics to be discussed were of a personal and sensitive nature and it was felt that research participants would be more forthcoming in a one to one discussion. In order to run a focus group, it is recommended that two people are required to run them effectively i.e. a moderator and a note taker. For consistency, the note taker would need to be the same person for all of the focus groups conducted and it was felt that this may not be possible due to scheduling conflicts. Focus groups require significant planning to ensure participants attendance. As Barbour and Kitzinger (1999: 10) point out;

> There are also important practical differences between interviews and focus groups. Interviewers can go to a respondent's own home at a time of his or her choice. However, focus group work often relies on research participants travelling to a common venue and co-ordinating with others. This can make people less likely to co-operate.

Thus, it was this logistical problem that ensured that focus groups would not be the method used. The proposed sample for this research included professionals such as nurses, doctors and social workers who engage in long shifts at often unsociable times, with schedules that may change at very short notice due to medical emergencies, for example. It was decided that one to one interviews would be a far more flexible method to ensure ease of access to participants at

whatever time and location suited them best. Finally, relative to one to one interview, focus groups are an expensive research method (note taker, refreshments, room, and equipment).

Thus, to summarise, while focus groups would generate rich, in-depth qualitative data the method was discounted for three reasons; the practicality of getting certain professionals in the one place at the one time; some of the proposed questions would be better answered in one to one interviews; the need to get assistance running a group discussion; and the costs associated with running focus groups.

3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

As a consequence of the reasons outlined in the above sections, it was decided that conducting one-to-one interviews with participants would be the most appropriate method for this research. The format of the interviews conducted was semi-structured. Brown (1995: 66) specifically recommends using a semi-structured interview format with participants when investigating organisational culture as 'it is more likely to be successful in encouraging people to disclose information concerning their culture than a more tightly structured interview format'. He also argues that an unstructured interview format may yield 'a lot of disjointed items of information that may be difficult to fit together into a coherent picture of the culture' (Brown, 1995: 66). Furthermore, due to the current political and economic relative state of flux, it was deemed necessary to have some structure to the interviews, as public sector employees could potentially have been harbouring feelings of resentment or discontent, which may result in the interviews straying off course.

Sarantakos (2005: 269) defines semi-structured interviews as comprising of components of both structured (rigid, strict, adherence to questions, questionnaires read by interviewer) and unstructured (no strict procedure, act freely, flexible, restrictions minimal) interviews. Sarantakos (2005: 269) argues that interviews are generally closer to one style or the other and that ‘the degree to which interviews are structured depends on the research topic and purpose, resources, methodological standards and preferences, and the type of information sought, which of course is determined by the research objective’. The interviews conducted for the purpose of this research were closer to the elements of unstructured interview in that, while a topic guide was used, the questions asked were open-ended and a good deal of flexibility was employed. Arksey (2004: 268-269) points out that in a semi-structured interview;

> ... the interviewer uses an interview guide organised around a number of key areas of interest. However, there is freedom to make ongoing adjustments to the guide in response to the way the interview is progressing. This might mean the interviewer modifies the order in which the questions were asked; changes the wording of the questions; clarifies the meaning of questions; adds or omits questions according to their relevance to the particular interviewee; or extends or reduces the amount of time given to different topics. It is customary for interviewers to probe and/or prompt for more detailed responses, specific examples, clarification and so on.

The semi-structured interviews conducted for this research closely resemble the format outlined by Arksey (2004: 268). The order of the research questions was carefully considered. The first question in every interview invited the participant to describe their typical day at work. This was to get the participants to relax, get comfortable taking and open up to the interviewer, while at the same time describing their work practices and duties. After a certain rapport was established with participants, questions of a more personal nature were asked in the middle of the interview. However, if the participant brought up a topic in the natural course of conversation it was discussed there and then. The final set of questions related to the participant's views on change and public sector reform and asked them to propose possible changes to their service and the entire public sector. However, there was no strict adherence to the question order, in the sense that the interview style was very conversational. Some questions were asked in different ways throughout the interview in order to check reliability. Every effort was made to mirror the participant's language (for example the use of the terms patients, students, clients to describe the public that they deal with) throughout the interview depending on the context.

3.3.3 Topic Guide

In order to answer the research question and hypotheses around the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of street-level bureaucrats and professionals, the topic guide and interview questions were related to the content to Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 (see Appendix A2 for more details). As outlined in the previous chapter, Figure 2.1 is divided into five sub-sections, each relating to a distinct area of administrative culture. The topic guide was thus also divided into five overall corresponding areas. Questions asked of participants on the visible aspects of administrative culture related to everyday work practices and duties, and accountability and evaluation measures. Questions posed regarding the invisible aspects of administrative culture related to work motivations and values. Participants were also asked a series of questions relating to their attitudes to change and public sector reform.

In order to further refine and develop the research questions five pilot interviews were conducted with participants involved in the delivery of social policy. The pilot interview participants were all employed in the voluntary sector and engaged in similar work to the actual participants in the study. Pilot interviews proved useful to develop timings of the interviews. These interviews were recorded with a digital dictaphone but not transcribed. Written consent was obtained from all participants to be recorded and it was made clear that the data obtained would not be used in the actual study.

The above section outlined the instruments and procedures used in for the collection of data in this research. An explanation was given as to why focus groups were not an appropriate method for this research. Following this, a justification was given as to why a semi-structured interview format was used and details of the development of the topic guide were also given.

3.4 RESEARCH SAMPLE

This section begins by outlining the sample criteria. It describes the sampling methods used to obtain participants and finally, it describes the actual sample of participants used.

3.4.1 Sample Criteria

The literature review was used to identify potential interview participants. Lipsky (1980: 3) defined street-level bureaucrats as 'Public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work'. As this research deals with street-level bureaucrats and professionals involved in the delivery of Irish social policy the research participants had to meet the following three criteria. Firstly, participants had to be directly employed in the Irish public sector. According to the OECD (2008: 12) 'the Irish Public Service is composed of a Civil Service (staff working in departments and major agencies), commercial and non-commercial bodies that provide services on behalf of the State as agencies, public hospitals, schools, defence and security services, etc., and local government'; The second criterion was that participants had to deal with the public on a face to face basis almost daily; Finally, participants had to be employed in education, health, housing, personal social services or social welfare, that is, the five policy areas identified as constituting social policy for the purposes of this research. The sample was not intended to be statistically representative. Instead, the sample was based on the criteria of relevance to the research question.

3.4.2 Sampling Method

A convenience sampling method was used to identify initial participants. Accordingly, everyone within the researcher's immediate social circle were contacted and asked to identify individuals who met the sample criteria that would be interested in participating in the study. Participants were thus volunteers (or self-selecting) and the identification of interview participants was an ongoing process throughout the research. Snowball sampling was also used in that participants were asked to identify other potential participants at the end of each interview. Burnham *et al.* (2008: 107-108) explain;

> The weakness of snowball sampling is that the sample generated is very unlikely to be representative of the group under investigation. However, it may be the only way of generating a sample of members of particular groups … The information collected can be used to develop tentative generalisations that, again, would need to be confirmed by additional studies. On the whole, snowball sampling is more suited to in-depth interview research than to survey research, as conventionally understood.

Also, because new sample members are generated through existing ones, there is clearly a danger that the diversity of the sample frame is not optimal.

3.4.3 Sample description

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eighty-four participants from May to October 2011. The interviews ranged in time from forty minutes to an hour and a half. However, one participant (P47) was excluded from the study on the grounds that they did not meet the sample criteria of being directly employed by the HSE. This participant was employed as a nurse in a voluntary/third sector organisation funded through the HSE. Therefore, of the eighty-three interviews being utilised as part of the study;

- Twenty-two of the participants are from the education sector and include primary and secondary school teachers, lecturers and university administrative staff.
- Nineteen of the participants are from the health sector and consist of nurses, doctors, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, radiotherapists and administrative staff.
- Thirteen of the participants are frontline administrative staff working in Housing Directorates of local authorities.
- Fifteen of the participants are from the personal social services. These are social workers in the areas of childcare, housing, children and families (more commonly called child protection), medical, primary care and community social work.

- Fourteen of the participants are from the social welfare sector including frontline administrative staff from the Department of Social Protection and Community Welfare Officers.

Therefore, the sample consisted of an approximately equal spread of participants from each of the policy areas investigated as part of this study.

3.5 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

An essential consideration in any research is the researcher's personal bias and how this impacts on the validity of the research design, implementation and analysis. Lowes and Prowse (2001: 478) argue that 'it is an illusion that researchers, seeking objectivity to demonstrate rigour, can stand outside the interview process.' However, they go on to argue that 'rigour is demonstrated when the philosophy underpinning the research is elucidated, and congruent with the methods, use to collect, analyse and interpret the data' (Lowes and Prowse, 2001: 478). Bearing this in mind the following discussion evaluates the role of the researcher in planning and executing the study and examines any assumptions or bias the researcher has in relation to the research.

The researcher was an employee of the Irish public sector with over five years experience working at the 'street-level' immediately prior to commencing the study and can in many respects be regarded as a member of the dominant administrative culture of the Irish public sector. Kane (1991: 68) maintains that 'usually the principle is that the closer the interviewer is to the respondent in class, sex, age and interests, the greater chance the interviewer has of being successful'. Burnham *et al.* (2008: 124) also note that 'it is widely assumed that interviewers will be more successful in gaining full and honest answers when they have an understanding of and sympathy for the situation of the informants and their point of view'. To a certain extent the researcher was interviewing her peer group.

The researcher's status as an insider is particularly relevant in relation to cultural research, particularly in the public sector. Indeed, Peters (1988: 118) indicates that 'to understand the real meaning of occurrences in government may require almost an insider's understanding of the mores and "codes" of those involved'. Martin (2002: 45) points out that socio-cultural anthropologists promote the idea that in order to study culture effectively, the researcher should spend at least one to two years living and working with the group being studied. This is in order to become accepted as a cultural member, thereby enabling the researcher to see past the visible aspects of culture and gain deeper insight of the invisible aspects. Unfortunately, for pragmatic

reasons such as funding and time constraints, this is not always possible. However, the researcher can be described as a cultural member of the group under scrutiny in this research due to her employment experience within the Irish public sector.

Throughout the course of the research, there were benefits to being a former public sector employee. The first was the ability to utilise personal contacts to obtain participants for interview. Personal knowledge of the everyday language/jargon used within the Irish public sector and the organisational structures assisted with phrasing interview questions and meant that clarification was not required when reference was made to such. Less research was required on contextual issues as the researcher has personal experience of working in the civil and public service. Indeed, Kane (1991: 212) argues that 'it is more difficult to appreciate the finer concerns of people who you are very unlike and who perhaps have standards and viewpoints which you do not share'. The researcher was less of an outsider and some of the participants commented that they felt more comfortable imparting information to someone they considered as such. It was also a stated motivation to participate in the study for some.

While being a cultural member proved useful for the implementation of the study there were also some associated issues that might impact upon the integrity of the research. As stated, personal contacts were utilised to obtain interview participants, which may have affected how they answered some of the questions. This was countered for by constantly assuring participants of their anonymity and that information elicited in the interviews would remain in the strictest confidence. A second potential criticism that could be levelled is the potential for researcher bias. The potential for personal prejudices acquired from working in the public sector in Ireland may have unduly influenced the questions asked (or indeed not asked) by the researcher. However, the researcher attempted to maintain objectivity (in as much as is possible with any research) by relating all interview questions to the wider body of literature outlined in Chapter 2; testing the questions with pilot interviews; and, through consultations with supervisors regarding the development of the topic guide. The use of field notes and a research diary also aided in reflexive analysis of the data.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

This section describes the data collection process. This study adheres to the Code of Research Conduct (2010) outlined by University College Cork. In sum, the code maintains that the researcher should protect the interests of the research participants and recognise any conflicting

concerns; obtain informed consent from research participants; respect the anonymity and privacy of research participants and keep personal information confidential. The following section outlines the measures taken to ensure compliance with this code. Following that, a description is given regarding the particulars of executing the interviews. Thirdly, justification for concluding the interview process is outlined. Finally, details of other types of data collected during the interview process are given.

3.6.1 Ethical Considerations

Every effort was made to maintain research participants' anonymity and confidentiality throughout all stages of the research process. Information sheets stating the length of time of the interview would take; explaining how the data would be stored and used; and how confidentiality would be maintained, were given to all research participants in advance of the interviews. However, the information sheets did not explicitly state the nature of the research question. It mentioned that participants would be asked to discuss their everyday work practices and their views on the Irish public sector. This was so as not to unduly influence the nature of responses given by the participants which was also explained to each participant in advance. An option to discuss any of the questions asked and the research in general was given to each participant after the interview. Furthermore, participants were informed that they could choose to not answer any question they wished. Written consent was obtained from each research participant to record the interviews with a digital dictaphone. The option to receive a copy of the transcript appeared on the consent form. Consent forms are stored under lock and key and only the researcher has access to them. Additionally, participants contact details are recorded on a separate spread sheet to their biographical information. The audio files that resulted from the interviews were saved according to date and participant number only.

3.6.2 Executing the Interviews

All interviews were conducted at a time and place convenient to the participants. Many of the interviews occurred in the participants' workplace, others in participants' own homes, and more in public places such as cafés and pubs. Ten participants chose to conduct the interviews in the researcher's office/home. Kane (1991: 68) argues that ‘standard techniques of Western conversation’ such as ‘engaging in small talk to put the interviewee at ease; not leaping in immediately after a reply, thus encouraging the interviewee to comment at greater length; not showing shock or surprise at replies; looking for examples when replies are too vague or abstract;…’ should be employed when executing interviews. Indeed, all of these interview techniques were employed in the course of this research.

3.6.3 Concluding the Interview Process

One of the most difficult decisions which researchers must make during the interviewing process is to decide when to stop. In terms of concluding the primary research, time was the most important factor as it was necessary to ensure political and economic conditions remained constant throughout the interviewing process and it was thus agreed that interviews should end before the Budget process for the year 2011 began in earnest, as any significant pay cuts or reforms to the public sector could adversely affect morale and other issues discussed within the interviews. However, it was also necessary to obtain an even spread of participants from each of the five policy areas and to hit saturation point in each. Sarantakos (2005: 349) defines saturation as indicating 'the stage in the research process at which no new or relevant data emerge, the category is well developed, and the relationships among categories are well established and validated (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:212)'. Bearing all of those factors in mind it was decided to conclude the interview process in October 2011. At this stage an approximately balanced number of participants from each of the policy areas had been interviewed and it was felt that saturation point had been reached across all five policy areas.

3.6.4 Post-Interview Data

Arksey (2004: 273) recommends keeping field notes in order to contextualise the interview process. With this in mind a research diary was kept by the researcher which documented:

- the location of the interview;
- brief biographical details of the participants;
- interruptions or unforeseen circumstances during the interview;
- how contact was made with the participant;
- the tone of the interview;
- the three most important points from the interview;
- any questions that should be asked of future participants to verify information provided; and,
- if the researcher omitted to ask any questions or specific topics and why.

Indeed, Kane (1991: 69) notes that;

> ... many things – your tone of voice, manner, gestures, your personal characteristics and those of the interviewee, the presence of others, and interruptions – may influence the quality of the interview, so it is important to record as much as possible of the circumstance of the interview to get it in context. Later, when you read your notes and find that the whole tenor of the interview changed part of the way through, you may be able to discover whether is it possible to try to compare the information in this interview with that of another collected under very different circumstances.

These field notes were used extensively for the analysis. They were also used keep a record of what was said at the end of one interview in particular when data was not recorded due to technical difficulties with the dictaphone (lack of available storage space for the MP3 file).

A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used to record the participants biographical information (see Appendix A3), which was later integrated into the CAQDAS used. Details of the policy area the participant worked in, as well as whether the participant was a professional or bureaucrat was recorded on this spreadsheet. Logging these details onto a spreadsheet as the interview process advanced ensured an accurate record of the participants' details was kept. It also assisted in the sampling process as it allowed the researcher to ensure an even spread of participants across policy areas and occupations. The integration of the spreadsheet into CAQDAS was extremely time saving as it meant that source classifications did not have to be manually inputted for each of the eighty-three participants. Recording which policy area and whether participants were bureaucrats or professionals allowed the researcher to run queries of the data in the analysis stage by these variables (as well as the biographical details).

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

This section describes the processes involved with the analysis of the qualitative data generated as a result of the semi-structured interviews. The transcription process is outlined. The reasons for using CAQDAS for the analysis are explained. Finally, the analysis and coding process is described.

3.7.1 Transcription

Arksey (2004: 273) discusses transcription as follows;

> If the interview has been audiotaped, the commonest procedure is to produce a typed version of the words on the tape. ... transcription is desirable as it provides: a complete record of the interview; a springboard for analysis; and accurate, verbatim quotes that can be used to illustrate key points being made in the research report.

Moreover, transcription was necessary for this project as CAQDAS was used and text documents are the easiest format to deal with in this context. Due to the large amount of data generated, thirty-eight interviews were outsourced for transcription. A confidentiality agreement was signed by the transcriptionist and the identities of the participants were never related to her. The transcriptionist was given clear, written instructions to transcribe the content of the audio

files verbatim and content was then double checked by the researcher. The remaining audio files were transcribed by the researcher, using a free open source software programme named Express Scribe. In order to maintain the highest level of confidentiality, any mention of location, name or any other identifying factors were removed from the transcripts. Participants were given the option to view their completed transcripts and remove or edit any information they felt identified them. Of the eighty-three participants, thirty chose to view their transcripts, with only six of those making any significant changes to the content of their transcripts.

3.7.2 Use of CAQDAS

Due to the large volume of data generated, it was decided to make use of CAQDAS to assist in the management and analysis of data. CAQDAS is essentially an organisational tool to manage data/ideas. Fielding (2004: 304) argues that,

> Qualitative software must be able to store data in different formats, and enable researchers to annotate it and navigate the database. Code application and code revision, either globally or in application to particular segments, must be straightforward. When data are coded we need to retrieve them selectively and be able to write analytic memos.

The software package used for this research is Nvivo 9 and it meets all the requirements as outlined by Fielding (2004). Additionally, the researchers' institution provides the software and technical support for the duration of the project for free to all staff and students. Training was also provided by the University on the use of the software.

Fielding and Lee (1998) outline three possible advantages of using software to analyse qualitative data. Fielding and Lee (1998) argue that qualitative research produces huge volumes of unstructured data. In essence, using software to manage data makes the process far more efficient than shuffling huge volumes of paper around. This flexibility allows the researcher to spend more time on the analysis itself. The second advantage they discuss is that software allows the qualitative research process to become more transparent and more likely to be reproducible. The third advantage that they outline is that the use of software allows qualitative research to become more acceptable and credible in the eyes of researcher funders. CAQDAS software does not however, undertake any analytical functions like some statistical packages might. It cannot interpret the data for the researcher. Crowley, Harre and Tagg (2002: 193) argue that ‘a number of key concerns centre on the loss of data, at the extreme by turning words into numbers. These concerns are about both the losses involved in putting data into the

computer and about the abstraction that occurs once the data are in the computer'. However, one can argue that data loss and abstraction are also concerns for more manual methods, for example when audio is transcribed or when field notes are typed up. Nvivo also allows the researcher to easily manoeuvre between the node and the source, thus being able to quickly ascertain the context of any portion of text being examined. Therefore, it was decided by the researcher that the project management and transparency advantages of the use of CAQDAS software far outweigh any potential data loss or abstraction issues.

3.7.3 Coding and Data Analysis

Coding and analysis of the data was undertaken utilising Nvivo 9 software. This involved categorising and interpreting the raw data in accordance with the features of organisational cultures within the public sector outlined in Figure 2.1 and relating them to the corresponding culture on the CVF model (see Appendix A.7 for an outline of how the theoretical frameworks were related to the topic guide). This process also required filtering out irrelevant data. Thematic analysis was undertaken in each of the five (education, health, housing, personal social service and social welfare) areas of social policy identified for the purposes of this research. The themes analysed are work practices, accountability and evaluation measures (visible manifestations of administrative culture), values, work motivations and attitudes to change/public sector reform (invisible aspects of administrative culture). When analysing the data, it was necessary at all times to heed the fact that cultures can compete and co-exist within organisations, as is highlighted by the CVF. On occasion, it was possible to make an evaluation as to the most prominent organisational culture under a theme/policy area. On other occasions, it was evident to the researcher that differing organisational cultures were clearly competing and co-existing with each other, within and between themes and policy areas. It was also essential to bear in mind the symbolist perspective to organisational culture which argues that cultural change is a complicated process that is extremely context specific. Indeed, the details of the Irish context are sketched out in the next chapter.

3.7.4 Note on Presentation of the Findings

As discussed in Section 2.3.1, for the purposes of this research, social policy is defined as relating to five distinct policy areas; education, health, housing, the personal social services and social welfare. Consequently, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 present the findings from the education, health, housing, personal social services and social welfare sectors respectively. Each of these chapters commence with a description of how NPM imperatives have been differently applied across all five areas of Irish social policy under investigation. The analysis chapters are then

sub-divided into sections based on the five thematic areas – work practices, accountability and evaluation measures, value, work motivations and, attitudes to change/public sector reform - that form the basis of the research. Each section presents the analysis of a theme within a particular policy area. Within each section, the analysis is first discussed and then presented in tabular format. The narrative discussion is supported using evidence from the primary interview data, which is presented as direct quotes, or paraphrased, to explain themes.

The tables were constructed to mirror the format of Figure 2.1, with the columns representing the administrative cultures within the public sector as identified in the literature review chapter. Furthermore, these administrative cultures of the public sector are linked with their corresponding organisational culture on the CVF. Hierarchical culture is associated with bureaucrats under traditional public administration. Professionals under traditional public administration are equated with consensual culture. NPM ideas are equated with market and developmental culture. Post-NPM ideas then are thought to have aspects of all four cultures on the CVF related to them. The purpose of the tables is twofold. Firstly, due to the large and diverse nature of the interview sample, it was felt that a visual representation of the fieldwork findings would assist in their understanding. Secondly, the tables are intended to capture the diversity of opinions expressed by participants and illustrate the nuance that emerged throughout the fieldwork.

The data presented in tabular format illustrates features of the organisational cultures under investigation that are present within each of the policy areas. The tables also clearly indicate where features of the organisational cultures identified were absent in discussions with participants (either left completely blank or noted as absent). Majority opinions as well as significant minority opinions are represented within the tables. Therefore, the tabular data should *not* be interpreted as representing the dominant organisational culture in the policy area under analysis in that section. Rather it should be seen as a representation of the usefulness of the CVF as a theoretical framework in the analysis, in that aspects of all (or some) cultures were indeed competing and co-existing with each other, within and between policy sectors. Each chapter then concludes with a summary of the findings and some sector specific recommendations.

The findings chapters contribute to a final concluding chapter where an evaluation is made as to the ways in which NPM ideas have impacted upon the overall administrative culture of 'street-

level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Findings are presented in a similar tabular format in Chapter 10, in order to compare and contrast the five policy sectors. This again demonstrates the appropriateness of the CVF as a theoretical framework for this work.

3.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter 2 anchored the research within the existing literature on NPM ideas and organisational culture change, while at the same time explaining the research framework utilised. The purpose of the methodology chapter is to explain the processes behind the analysis and findings. It is to also give an experienced investigator enough information to replicate the study. Consequently, this chapter details how all of the major elements of the research project, including the theoretical framework, sample, research instrument, and analysis methods perform together to address the central research question in the study. The next chapter will examine the features of the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy in order to set the scene for the findings and analysis chapters which follow.

CHAPTER 4

THE DOMINANT ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE OF IRISH SOCIAL POLICY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Houtsonen, Czaplicka, Lindblad, Sohlberg and Sugrue (2010: 604) for a long time Ireland was 'a rather poor peripheral country in Europe, locked into religious traditionalism'. However, 'in the last 20 years or so Ireland has experienced an unparalleled economic boom and societal change' (Houtsonen *et al.* 2010: 604). Chapter 2 explained how the CVF model will be used to examine the ways in which NPM ideas have impacted upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy, while Chapter 3 detailed the processes behind the results and analysis. However, prior to the findings being presented in Chapters 5 to 9, the particularities of the cultural context must first be sketched out.

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) compare public sector reforms in twelve countries and the EU Commission over a thirty year period (1980-2010). Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 124) observe that there are significantly different 'trajectories and rhetorics of reform' between the different countries analysed for their research and that these differences could be explained by the differences in 'politico-administrative regimes'. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) identify five key features of 'politico-administrative regimes' which they argue are likely to impact upon the process of public management reform. The key features identified are the state structure; the nature of executive government at central level; the nature of relationships between political executives (ministers) and senior civil servants; the amount of diversity among the main channels through which ideas for reform emerge; and, the dominant administrative culture. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011:49) define dominant administrative culture as 'the expectations the staff of an organisation have about what is normal and acceptable in that organisation – "the way we do things around here"'. The 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals that are the subject of this research are employed in the Irish public sector. Thus, this chapter sets out to examine the key contextual features of the Irish system that contribute to the formation of the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy.

This chapter outlines and evaluates the key features which have had a substantial influence upon the construction and development of the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy. According to the OECD (2008: 75), 'the creation and evolution of the Irish Public Service has taken place within a specific historical context' and 'is a reflection of national political and administrative cultures, and of past economic and social priorities' (OECD, 2008: 12). Therefore, this chapter commences with an examination of the historical influences surrounding the formation of the Irish public sector. Next the distinctive features of the Irish political system are described. The key features of Irish public sector employment are discussed, along with the

trajectory and nature of public sector reform. The main dynamics at work in the Irish approach to NPM are also discussed. This section also evaluates the impact of social partnership, and the role of women within the Irish public sector on the development of the administrative culture of the Irish public sector. Finally, economic and social influences past and present are discussed. It is the unique combination of all of these features that have contributed to the formation and evolution of the dominant administrative culture of the Irish public sector, of which 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy are part. Therefore, this chapter is necessary to set the scene for the analysis chapters which follow.

4.2 HISTORICAL INFLUENCES

The first part of this chapter tackles the historical influences around the formation of the Irish public sector and social policy in particular. The influences discussed are Ireland's colonial legacy, and the combined forces of Catholicism and nationalism.

4.2.1 Ireland's Colonial Legacy

Ireland's colonial legacy has had a very significant influence over the formation of Irish political and administrative structures (Coakley, 2010; Collins and Cradden, 2007). Kirby and Murphy (2011: 47) state that Ireland 'inherited both the fundamental machinery of the British Westminster model of politics and the British Whitehall model of civil service and public administration. The nature of the modern Irish civil service is still, almost ninety years later, very much influenced by this colonial inheritance'. Horton (2008: 23) outlines the core features of the Whitehall model as 'a permanent career civil service loyal to the government of the day. Civil service recruitment is merit based … its core characteristics include partisan neutrality, anonymity, and accountability to and through ministers'. To the present day the Irish public sector can, for the most part, be characterised by the features outlined by Horton (2008). 'This idea of administrative impartiality remains central to the self-image of Irish civil servants' (Collins and Cradden, 2007: 15).

The transition from British rule to Free State in 1921-1922 was chiefly characterised by continuity. Over ninety-eight percent of those employed in the public sector of the Irish Free State had joined under the British regime. Komito (1985), as quoted by Collins and Cradden (2007: 16), argues that 'the new government could have purged the bureaucracy … and given jobs to their own supporters. Instead, most officials were retained, and so the administration of government remained separate from politics ... Irish politics remained conservative, stable, and

constitutional as a result'. Coakley (2010: 31) argues that 'at the level of local government, continuity was even more obvious. The old system continued after 1922, still governed by the principles of the 1898 Act, with only incremental change'.

> When Ireland became independent in 1922, the new Department of Finance borrowed a number of civil servants from the Treasury in London to help get the show on the road. While this was seen as temporarily expedient, some of the specialists went "native", remaining on in Dublin for the rest of their careers. This set the tone for the subsequent 50 years of public administration (Fitzgerald, 2009: 29).

When one examines more recent reforms of the Irish public sector, this trend is still evident. Certainly, the UK was one of the pioneers of NPM ideas and many of the reforms that have taken place within the Irish public sector have been strongly influenced by NPM ideas. Thus our colonial legacy can be described as having considerable influence over the formation and evolution of the administrative culture of the Irish public sector.

4.2.2 Catholicism and Nationalism

While Ireland's colonial masters gifted the structures of the public sector, it was the influence of the Catholic Church and nationalism that arguably intertwined to form the character of Irish social policy delivery for decades to come. McLoughlin (2001: 227) argues that the 'ideologies of Catholicism and nationalism fused to shape both the nature of the state and the relationship between the state and society'. Hardiman and Scott (2010: 184) explain that the dominance of the Catholic Church in the early years of the state was 'not because the government represented Catholic interests directly, nor because Catholic Church interests were directly represented on state bodies, but because in an almost wholly Catholic and conservative society, these values were in fact widely subscribed to'. At the time, the Catholic Church advocated the principle of subsidiarity in relation to social policy. McLoughlin (2001: 226) explains:

> ... the state should have a minimal role to play in the provision and delivery of welfare, there is not the liberal or neo-liberal obsession with strictly adhering to free market principles. Subsidiarity allows the state to intervene if the family's capacity to care for its members is exhausted and/or when it is socially necessary ... Although there is no commitment to redistributive or egalitarian social policies or full employment, the state should not preside over extreme inequalities or manifest social injustice.

Core social policy sectors of education and healthcare remained under the control of the Catholic Church and were imbued with Catholic social principles, with the state's role limited to one of funding. Fanning (2004: 44-5) argues:

> the principle of subsidiarity in Ireland came to be used to refer to opposition to encroachment by the state on Catholic voluntary provision. However, it was not just a question of maintaining a demarcation between the voluntary sector and the state in the provision of welfare. The principle of subsidiarity was concerned with the maintenance of a "traditional" Irish society.

The dominance of the Catholic Church in social policy provision also impacted on the overall conservative culture of public sector employment. Fahey (2007: 147) argues that 'the primary purpose of social service provision for the Catholic Church was to disseminate and safeguard the faith, not to combat social inequality or reform society'. Considine and Dukelow (2009: 174) point out that, 'as organisers of, and frontline workers in, the social services the religious within the Church were well-placed to promote the values of Catholicism', and this resulted in a blurring of lines between church and state.

Throughout the 1990s, the influence of the Catholic Church on social policy thinking and legislation began to diminish slightly. This was due in large part to the emergence of numerous scandals in the Irish media surrounding abuse by the clergy in the industrial school system and the failure of the Catholic Church to address the litany of child abuse cases that came to light. Moran (2010) points out that 'although the Catholic Church retained a predominant position into the boom years in the provision of education, health and to a lesser extent in welfare provision its direct influence on the population and policy making declined'. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest the persistent influence of traditional Catholic conservative values on wider Irish society. The traditional values associated with Catholic Church teachings find expression in Irish legislation on divorce (made legal in 1995), abortion[2], and contraception (condoms were made widely available in 1993). Therefore, while Irish society has modernised and secularised to a huge degree in the last two decades in particular, the influence of Catholic values is somewhat retained.

Nationalism is the second reason McLoughlin (2001) identifies as having a significant influence on the nature of social policy provision in Ireland at the formation of the state. Adshead and Millar (2003: 5) also argue that 'the Irish project of nation building' contributed greatly to formation of the Irish welfare state. Adshead and Millar (2003: 8) explain:

> In Ireland class distinctions are thought of as a typically English phenomenon. The popular impression is that rigid social class demarcation is left behind with the ending of landlordism and the demise of the Anglo Irish ascendancy. ... This has encouraged the notion ... that Ireland is a classless society.

Consequently, the divisions created by the civil war shaped the Irish political landscape for decades to come. The two main political parties that emerged as a result of these divisions -

[2] *Abortion* is *illegal* in *Ireland except* where there is a real and substantial risk to the life, (as distinct from the health) of the mother. The death of Indian national Savita Halappanavar in October 2012 resulted in nationwide protests calling for a review of abortion legislation and guidelines. As a result the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 was passed and continues to be the subject of highly emotive public debate.

Fianna Fáil (FF) and Fine Gael (FG) - were 'both essentially centre-right in the mould of European Christian Democratic parties' (McLoughlin, 2001: 227), with both presenting themselves as having a national rather than class representation. Thus the labour movement failed in the early years of the state, with the Labour party traditionally being relegated to third party status. Considine and Dukelow (2009: 171) explain the weakness of the Labour party position in Ireland compared to the wider European context:

> In short, however, the political developments of the first decade of the Irish Free State were largely defined by the politics of nationalism in the fledgling state. These historical events were formative in shaping the political landscape in Ireland in terms of "the national question", over and above traditional left/right distinctions or wider concern for "the social question".

It was because of this focus on nationalism that social issues were often neglected during the early years of independence. Indeed, McLoughlin (2001: 228) argues that 'the integrative ideologies of Catholicism and nationalism shaped the Irish state and the national identity into an exclusive, culturally homogeneous, conservative one', which had ramifications for the culture in which social policy was delivered for decades to come.

4.3 POLITICAL INFLUENCES

As was argued in the literature review chapter, social policy, like all public policy, is inherently political. Additionally, Henderson (2004: 236) argues that 'administrative culture is related to the broader political culture, from which it derives'. Therefore, it is necessary to describe the political landscape of Ireland and how that has impacted on the development and the nature of social policy and the welfare state within Ireland. The structure of the political system is first discussed followed by a description of the political parties involved. Finally, the key role of social partnership in the Irish political system is discussed.

4.3.1 Structure of the Political System

Ireland is a member state of the European Union since 1973 and can be characterised as a parliamentary democracy. The President is the head of state with the Taoiseach (prime minister) head of government. Within the Irish system, a written constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann sets out the powers and functions of the various institutions. Executive powers lie within a cabinet government of no more than fifteen ministers, inclusive of the Taoiseach and Tánaiste (deputy prime minister). Legislative power is retained in the houses of the Oireachtas, a bicameral parliamentary system consisting of the Dáil (lower chamber), the Seanad (upper chamber) and the President. An independent judiciary is presided over by the Chief Justice.

The Irish system is similar to the British model in that the executive is drawn from members of the Oireachtas (the parliament). Rhodes and Boyle (2012: 39-40) state that the Irish political system is a highly centralised, unitary system, with the Seanad and President having little influence and the Dáil being dominated by the cabinet. They evidence this point by declaring that 'reforms targeting local government have resulted in very little devolved authority or capacity in local government'. Unlike the UK, Ireland has a written constitution. Therefore, if the government requires legislation to be passed that requires any alteration to the constitution; it has to be put to the electorate. Topics of recent referendums have included treaties of the EU, children's rights and issues such as judges pay. This has also had a far reaching impact from a social policy perspective. The Irish constitution was written in 1937 and has a strongly Catholic conservative tone (reflective of the dominant national culture of the time), with, for example, abortion and divorce being explicitly illegal in the document. The electoral system has also had a strong influence on the politics of the Irish state. One of the features of PRSTV, is that it facilitates a multiparty system, in which, unlike the UK (apart from relatively recently), coalition governments are more likely (Sinnott, 2010). This results in a more consensus style of government, which may contribute to the slower pace of change in the Irish system.

4.3.2 Political Party System

The origins of the two largest political parties in Ireland (until relatively recently) came about due to different positions on the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 and the resulting civil war. FF was established by Eamonn de Valera in 1926 following a split with Sinn Féin over the oath of allegiance. FG was founded in 1933 when Cumann na nGaedheal, the National Centre Party and the National Guard (Blueshirts) merged (Weeks, 2010). Labour emerged out of the Irish Trade Union Congress in 1912 and was officially established as a political party in 1922. FF and FG are both broadly central parties, while Labour (the only substantial party of the left) has traditionally been regulated to third party status due to their historical failure to take a stance on the national question. Consequently, the Irish political party system, unlike most party systems in Europe (Weeks, 2010) lacks any real left-right divide and representation of class interests has historically been minimal. Weeks (2010: 143) notes that 'in no other European state do left-wing parties receive a lower electoral vote than in Ireland'. Other parties featuring on the Irish political spectrum are the Greens, Sinn Féin, the Socialist Party, and the People Before Profit Alliance on the left and the Progressive Democrats on the right. For a myriad of reasons, the Irish political landscape has also featured a number of influential non-party or independent TDs over the years.

One of the striking features of the Irish political system has been the almost absolute dominance of FF-led governments in Ireland since the formation of the state. 'After first coming to office in 1932, Fianna Fáil was in government for 58 of the next 77 years' (Weeks, 2010: 147). Therefore, FF as the party of power has had an extremely significant impact on shaping social policy in Ireland. In the early years, FF was said to represent small farmers and strong nationalists. However, in the modern era FF enjoyed cross-class support and, according to Considine and Dukelow (2009: 179), are very pragmatic in their approach to ideology.

> This pragmatism facilitates an ability to appeal to different constituencies as appropriate and it is also useful in the formation and delivery of coalition governance. It also makes characterisations of the overall position of the party notoriously difficult. However, the overall economic and social policy position of Fianna Fáil does appear to have moved to the right in the last 20 years or so (e.g. private and public mix in the provision of housing and healthcare) (Considine and Dukelow, 2009: 178).

This shift to the right may have had more to do with the influence of FF's coalition partners, the Progressive Democrats (PD) whose low-tax, pro-business ideology was definitely to the right. Considine and Dukelow (2009: 180) argue that 'the ideology of the PDs has been most evident in government policies in areas of personal taxation, in health policy and immigration policy'. The PDs were virtually wiped out in the 2007 election and disbanded in 2009. FF suffered its own crushing defeat in the general election of 2011 and for the first time in the history of the state was relegated to the third largest party in the state, retaining only 20 seats. Additionally, the Green Party, (FFs most recent coalition partners) were completely wiped out. The current Irish government is a coalition of FG and Labour. FG now replaces FF as the largest party in the Dáil for the first time since 1927.

4.3.3 Social Partnership

Rhodes and Boyle (2012: 40) argue that social partnership is a key aspect to the Irish political system, the purpose of which was 'to facilitate a process of policymaking in difficult times in which all parties needed to compromise to achieve shared objectives and to avoid turbulent periods of social and labour unrest that could derail economic recovery'. The parties that Rhodes and Boyle (2012) refer to are government, unions and business/employer representatives. Social partnership was established in the 1980s in the midst of a severe recession, with growing social welfare expenditure due to mass unemployment, high levels of emigration and a recruitment and promotion embargo within the public sector.

Public sector pay is negotiated under social partnership agreements. According to Hardiman (2010: 26), 'the public sector is highly unionised ... at about 80 percent (Central Statistics Office

2008). Within the trade union movement, about half of total membership consists of public sector employees'. Figure 4.2 demonstrates the extent of union membership within the Irish public sector. These figures are based on returns filed to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) by the individual unions and are approximate values only as unions may underestimate their membership to avoid paying fees to ICTU or overestimate their membership to increase bargaining power. It was mooted in Chapter 2 that 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy would be resistant to change due to the extent of their coalition strength associated with union membership. This coalition strength is of particular relevance when discussing the social partnership process in Ireland.

Figure 4.1 Membership of Public Sector Trade Unions[3]

Union	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
IMPACT	56,221	57,532	57,532	61,450	61,450	63,566	63,626	63,626
SIPTU[4]	71,294	71,294	72,294	72,294	68,960	68,960	68,960	68,960
IMMO	31,100	34,500	34,500	40,100	40,100	40,100	40,100	39,127
IMO	5,763	5,801	6,037	5,856	7,505	5,431	4,578	4,235
TUI	13,200	13,200	13,378	15,417	15,800	15,800	15,800	15,800
ASTI	16,850	17,154	17,031	18,064	18,273	17,915	17,313	16,815
IFUT	1,692	1,727	1,742	1,832	2,040	2,050	2,084	2,146
CPSU	13,605	13,775	13,775	13,775	13,775	13,775	13,775	13,775
PSEU	11,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Total	**220,725**	**226,983**	**228,289**	**240,788**	**239,903**	**239,597**	**238,236**	**236,484**

Social partnership operated in Ireland from 1987 to the end of 2009. According to MacCarthaigh and Boyle (2011: 215) 'social partnership provided a successful structure to simultaneously coordinate pay determination, diffuse industrial conflict, and take soundings about policy preferences from various organised interests' which reflected the overall consensus type of political culture of Ireland. The social partnership process is often credited with contributing to the ensuing economic boom which emerged in Ireland in the 1990s.

Wallis and McLoughlin (2010: 443) state that 'a corporatist approach to policy-making came to be institutionalised in Ireland through a series of formal social partnership agreements' describing the trade off's involved as follows:

[3] As per email from L. Berney, Industrial Officer, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, 21st February 2013.
[4] Figure for SIPTU is an estimate of public sector membership which is one third of overall membership.

> Business leaders were prepared to allow senior public servants to retain professional self-regulation and leadership of change in the Public Service if they were prepared to forgo their traditional conservatism and demonstrate tangible progress in terms of advancing agreed strategic modernisation themes. Moreover, public sector unions acquiesced to modernisation provided it resulted in no layoffs and they continued to have a voice in the centralised setting of public sector pay and conditions.

While acknowledging that social partnership was very important MacCarthaigh and Boyle (2011: 216) point to a number of criticisms of process as follows: 'it operated in the shadow of hierarchy in the form of the central Departments of the Taoiseach and Finance, without whose agreement policy was unlikely to be implemented'; the process operated at an arm's length from parliament, thus making it somewhat unaccountable; and while in theory pay increases for public servants were linked to increased efficiencies in work practices, in practice, pay was not linked to performance. However, the stability provided by social partnership quickly collapsed with the advent of the recession.

> In 2009, with the publication of the 'an Bord Snip Nua' report recommending sweeping cuts in expenditure, including public sector pay and employment (among other things), the partnership approach collapsed after IBEC (Irish Business and Economic Council) walked out and the government refused to accede to demands by labour unions in the face of economic and fiscal crisis (Rhodes and Boyle, 2012: 41).

As is demonstrated in Section 4.5 below, the social partnership process played a key role in the dynamics of the uptake of NPM ideas in the Irish context. After the social partnership process broke down, public service pay and reform was dealt with under the Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement 2010 – 2014. The emphasis was on making savings to the public sector pay and pensions bill by increasing efficiencies and flexibility across the board. Public service pay and reform is currently governed under the Public Services Stability (Haddington Road) Agreement 2013 - 2016. The aim of this agreement is to make savings of €1 billion on the cost of pay and pensions in the public sector over the coming years. This is to be done through public sector reform measures such as redeployment; performance management; flexible working arrangements; work-sharing arrangements; and, workforce restructuring.

4.4 IRISH PUBLIC SECTOR

The following section outlines the key features of public sector employment in Ireland. The role of women within the Irish public sector is also discussed in this section as women dominate ‘street-level’ occupations within Irish social policy.

4.4.1 Public Sector Employment

In 2008, public sector employment in Ireland peaked at 320,000 people (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2013). A review of the Irish public sector carried out by the OECD (2008: 63) noted that 'the public sector workforce, excluding commercial state-sponsored bodies, is relatively low compared with other OECD countries, and significantly less than the level of employment in Norway, Sweden, France, Finland and Belgium'. This has been significantly reduced in the intervening years, due to pressures to curb the public service pay bill as a result of fiscal crisis. By 2011, figures from the Department of Expenditure and Reform reveal that the Irish public sector consists of approximately 297, 303 employees (further reduced to 290,861 by end 2012). This figure includes the civil service, the education sector (mainly teaching professionals at primary, post-primary and third level), the Justice sector (predominantly An Garda Síochána, and staff of the Centres for Young Offenders and of the Legal Aid Board), the health sector (mostly staff employed by the HSE), the local authorities and the non-commercial state agencies. Reductions in public sector numbers have been achieved through measures such as incentivised career breaks and early retirement packages. Furthermore, there is currently a recruitment and promotion embargo in the Irish public sector. In February 2009 a pension levy was introduced on all public servants pay as a means to generate income. These reductions in public sector numbers have affected frontline services (Minihan, 2011). According to Kirby and Murphy (2011: 55)

> Most of the 50 percent increase in public service employment over the last decade has been in functional or front-line sectors, such as health and education; even in the context of significant public sector reform it is difficult to see how the numbers of public services can be reduced without impacting on the delivery of front-line services.

Public expenditure on staff employed in social policy areas is significant in Ireland. According to Boyle (2012), the health and education sectors contribute to the bulk of the Exchequer pay bill, constituting 41.6 and 33.6 percent respectively in 2012. Interestingly though, Boyle (2011) also notes that figures relating to public sector remuneration from the OECD in 2009 place senior and middle management of Irish central government at the top end of European norms, while remuneration for administrative or lower level staff is at the bottom end of European norms. Chapter 2 indicated that the social services are extremely labour intensive. Ireland is no exception as is illustrated by Figure 4.1. A number of points should be noted about these data in this table. The number for education includes civil servants employed in the Department of Education and Skills as well as teaching professionals but does not include academics funded through various publically funded programmes. The total for health includes the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The figure for Social Protection includes the transfer of Community Welfare Officers from the HSE. Exact numbers for those employed in Housing

Directorates of local Authorities could not be obtained so the figure provided is a total for local authorities. According to the figures illustrated by this table, those employed in social policy areas in the Irish context account for approximately 79.4 percent of the overall total public sector workforce.

Figure 4.2 Public Service Numbers 2011[5]

Sector	Employed	% Total
Education	94,557	31.8
Health	106,199	35.7
Local Authorities	29,506	9.9
Social Protection	6,162	2
Total Social Policy	236,424	79.4
Total Public Sector	**297,303**	**100**

Employment within the Irish public sector displays a number of features of the traditional public administration model outlined in Chapter 2. To begin with, the Irish public sector can be characterised by steep hierarchical structures. According to the OECD (2008: 65), the internal management structures of the civil and wider public services are quiet similar, noting that, while the 'grading structures have different names, the essential hierarchy is the same' (see Appendix A.4 for details of the specific grading structures of each occupation examined in this study). The Irish public sector hierarchy follows a pyramid structure, with the bulk of bureaucrats and professionals at junior level at the bottom of the pyramid. Employees may enter the civil and public service at different levels of the hierarchy, but the norm is to begin at the bottom. Promotion within the Irish public sector is achieved by moving up through these steep hierarchical structures, with employees rarely skipping a level.

Furthermore, Irish public servants are expected to be non-partisan. Legislation prohibits them from seeking nomination or election to the European Parliament or Oireachtas, and all, except the most junior levels, are prohibited from seeking election to local authorities or being members of political parties. There are also restrictions on senior civil servants participating in public debates by contributing to newspapers, radio or television outside of their normal duties. All civil servants, including those on career break or retirement, are subject to the Official Secrets Act 1963. Added to this, public sector employment in Ireland is most usually permanent and pensionable. An important characteristic of the Irish civil service, pointed to by Collins and Cradden (2007: 18) is the idea around the ‘cult of the amateur’ or the ‘generalist’, who is expected to be able to turn their hand to any task.

[5] source: databank.per.gov.ie accessed on 18/07/2012.

> Such an official was thought to be less hidebound by the perhaps narrower perspective of the expert, so could be moved between policy areas easily and without specific professional education or formal training. This image of the gifted all-rounder was an important influence and though declining in popularity and having less positive connotations in Britain, it remains a powerful influence in Ireland (Collins and Cradden, 2007: 18).

In sum, one can argue that public sector employment within the Irish public sector displays features of the traditional model of public administration including permanent pensionable employment within steep hierarchical structures; politically non-partisan; and generalist skills of the bureaucrat being valued. Hardiman and MacCarthaigh (2009: 3) characterise the core features of Irish public sector employment as being that of 'Whitehall - an apolitical and generalist administration, with permanent tenure for staff elected on merit through open competition, career progression based on hierarchical advancement'. Therefore, the evidence above confirms that the dominant administrative culture of the Irish public sector exhibits a number of components of hierarchical culture on the CVF. Moreover, it is noteworthy that bureaucrats and professionals within social policy areas constitute the bulk of public sector employees in Ireland which further demonstrates the merit of undertaking this study.

4.4.2 Women in the Irish Public Sector

Another noteworthy feature of the Irish public sector is the significant role of women within it. Today, the Irish public sector is crucial source of employment for women, employing forty-two percent of all female employees in Ireland. In addition, the public sector is an extremely feminised workplace with women making up seventy-two percent of all public sector employees in Ireland (ESPU, 2011: 4). This can in part be explained by the often better pay and working conditions provided by the public sector. Indeed, this research reflects the dominance of women in 'street-level' positions within Irish social policy as fifty-two of the eighty-three (or sixty-three percent) participants interviewed were female.

Historically however, women did not always dominate the Irish public sector workforce. The dominance of Catholic Church teaching manifestly expressed itself in the 1937 Irish constitution, particularly Article 41.2.1 which recognised the special role of women in the home. Kirby and Murphy (2011: 49) go as far as describing Ireland as 'a patriarchal state'. In the 1970s the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) released reports recommending that the workforce should be composed of seventy-five percent men. Within the public sector this found expression in the marriage bar, which forced female public sector employees to resign from their positions upon marriage, resulting in a predominantly male civil service. Furthermore, the

taxation system discriminated against working married women; there were lower pay rates; no childcare provision; and no maternity leave. The marriage bar was officially in force until 1972 and its repercussions can be still felt today. The lower levels of the Irish public sector continue to be dominated by women, with a notable absence of females at the higher levels[6]. As regards the civil service, Humphries, Drew and Murphy (1999) pointed out that in the late 1990s there was only one woman in charge of a government department, only ten percent of the assistant secretaries and twelve per cent of principal officers were female and that women dominated the clerical and typing grades of the civil service. Galligan (2010: 273) notes some improvements in the intervening years by pointing out that by 2009 four women held the position of secretary general of a government department and the percentage of assistant secretaries had risen to thirteen per cent. However, Galligan (2010: 273) argues that 'the civil service is still a heavily gender-segregated workplace, with the lower grades dominated by women'.

The culture of the public sector has been described as strongly masculine (Kirby and Murphy, 2011). However, areas of social policy in particular are extremely feminised professions. According to a CSO report in 2010, the education and health sectors employed the highest proportion of women in Ireland. In the health sector, eighty per cent of employees were women. In primary education, eighty-three per cent were women while in second-level education, sixty-four per cent were women. Despite the high levels of females employed in the wider Irish public sector women are under-represented at senior level positions: only thirty-four per cent of medical and dental consultants were women, fifty-four per cent of primary school managers, and thirty-nine per cent of second-level school managers. Grummell, Devine and Lynch (2009: 195) point to the low levels of women found in senior management positions in Irish universities, despite the growing number of female academics at the lower levels. Due to the predominance of women in the Irish public sector, the EPSU (2011) argues that recent cuts to numbers employed and pay levels have impacted most extensively upon women. The EPSU (2011: 4) also points out that 'these cuts have taken place within the context of wider government measures, some of which, such as cuts in child benefit and increases in the retirement age, have had a particular impact on women'. This has occurred in conjunction with 'funding programmes for women being sharply reduced in Ireland' (EPSU, 2011: 4), directly influencing equality structures.

[6] Paradoxically, female members of clergy, i.e. nuns, did achieve positions of power (running schools and hospitals) within the Irish social services. Religious orders such as the Presentation Sisters, Irish Sisters of Charity, the Loreto Sisters and Sisters of Mercy emphasised practical teaching, nursing and social work roles within the community rather than cloistered devotion (Fahey, 2007).

The under representation of women at senior levels in many key areas of the Irish public sector, is reflective of wider Irish society. Galligan (2010) notes that it was 1990 before Ireland had a female President; has never had a female Taoiseach, Minister for Finance, Minister for Foreign Affairs or Attorney General; and that of the 166 people who held Ministerial positions from 1922 to 2008 inclusive, only ten have been women. Additionally, Galligan (2010) points out that women only account for two percent of CEOs on the boards of private sector companies. Moreover, 2011 general election to the Dáil resulted in women accounting for fifteen percent of TDs. The social welfare model employed in Ireland has been described as a 'male breadwinner' model, with a focus on female labour in the home. Galligan (2010: 275) points out that 'social attitudes remain heavily influenced by traditionalist assumptions regarding women's place in society'. Thus, the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy (heavily influenced by the national culture) continues to be an extremely masculine one, despite the feminised nature of the workforce.

4.5 NPM IN IRELAND

While there is agreement in the literature that NPM style reforms have been introduced in some form or another by all countries (Ashburner *et al.,* 1996; Diefenbach, 2009; Flynn, 2002; John, 2001), there is little to suggest that there is convergence on the type or extent of implementation. Indeed, NPM ideas have been unevenly diffused and vary greatly across and within state settings (Christensen and Laegreid, 2003; Hood, 1995; Pollitt 2000). This section provides a brief overview of the implementation of NPM ideas in Ireland (for a detailed history of public sector reform in Ireland see for example: Collins, Cradden and Butler, 2007; Hardiman and MacCarthaigh, 2009; OECD, 2008; Rhodes and Boyle, 2012). The main dynamics at work in the Irish approach to NPM ideas are evaluated. Additionally, Irish specific obstacles to NPM ideas will be identified and discussed.

4.5.1 Overview of Public Sector Reform

Hardiman and MacCarthaigh (2009: 1) argue that the 'history of modern Irish public administration is conceptualised as one consisting of long periods of inertia punctuated by occasional bouts of reform, which achieve varying degrees of success'. Recommendations to reform the Irish public sector from the *Brennan Commission* 1932 and the *Devlin Report* 1969 remained ‘largely unimplemented’ (Kirby and Murphy, 2011: 51). Collins and Cradden (2007: 25) argue that ‘Devlin plainly lacked the political support needed to give effect to its recommendations, but the idea of public service reform did not go away and the primary

influence for change came, once again, from Britain' in the form of Margaret Thatcher and NPM.

Collins and Cradden (2007: 26) claim that 'while cynics might argue that spending money is the preferred option of most Irish politicians' there were many impetuses for cutting public expenditure in Ireland in the 1980s, most notably the fiscal crisis and ever increasing debt. In 1985 *Serving the Country Better: A White Paper on the Public Service* was launched in which emphasis was put on managing for results, developing training and encouraging initiative. The reforms recommended in this report were mostly of an NPM nature and some (largely in customer service) were implemented. Kirby and Murphy (2011: 53) state that 'in the 1980s many state functions were either privatised or devolved to new state agencies and a new type of largely unaccountable state agency became a new feature of the Irish state'. Kirby and Murphy (2011: 53) continue by commenting that 'growth in such agencies was consistent with the general trend towards NPM in western liberal economies, as was a focus on privatisation of state enterprises'. However, by the end of the 1980s Ireland's economic situation, rather than public sector reform, dominated the political agenda. Collins (2007: 36) notes that 'the very kind of fiscal crisis that triggered modern civil service reform in so many other administrations internationally brought about the demise of the first chapter in Irish reform.', with cost-containment and retrenchment the order of the day. MacCarthaigh (2012: 31) points out that 'the apparent rigidity of the civil service structure and practices resulted in criticism of the conservative culture and apparent imperviousness to change within the bureaucracy'.

Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 75) argue that the reforms of the 1980s were merely cosmetic and it was not until the mid-1990s with the launch of the *Strategic Management Initiative* (SMI) 1994 and *Delivering Better Government* (DBG) 1996 that the reform programme gained momentum within the Irish public sector. These were NPM inspired initiatives which aimed to introduce management practices to the Irish public sector for the first time. At local government level, *Better Local Government: A Programme for Change* (BLG) 1996 sought a more efficient use of resources and an emphasis on customer service. The OECD (2008: 23) remarked that 'while an important start, the reforms introduced to date under DBG/SMI have primarily focused on putting processes in place'. NPM type reforms introduced in this decade included government departments setting out strategy statements and business plans; the introduction of a Freedom of Information (FOI) Act; and customer service initiatives such at Customer Action Plans and Customer Charters. What is interesting about the emergence of SMI in the Irish context is that 'it was neither imposed nor forced. It emerged from the concerns of senior civil

servants about the current performance of the system over which they presided and its ability to meet the challenges of supporting an effective State for the twenty-first century' (Murray, 2001 quoted in Collins 2007: 36). Eventually though, public sector reform was to become part of the Department of the Taoiseach and rebranded the 'public service modernisation programme'. Furthermore, privatisation of state industries was encouraged by the neo-liberal free market agenda of the EU. 'It was not until the 1990s and early 2000s that Irish governments agreed to the sale of a number of large state enterprises, as part of the market liberalisation processes partially inspired by the EU' (Hardiman and MacCarthaigh, 2009: 14). This resulted in structural changes to the Irish public sector.

The 2000s saw further reforms such as the introduction of Performance Management Development Systems (PMDS) (the Irish version of performance evaluation within the public sector). Evaluation through PMDS involves a three stage process. Initially, employees draw up a role profile with their immediate supervisor which sets out their responsibilities and targets for the year ahead. At this point, the employee's training requirements are also set out. Half way through the year, an interim assessment takes place where both the employee and their immediate supervisor can address any issues (for example, time keeping, underperformance, training and so forth). Finally, at the end of the year the supervisor assesses the employee's overall performance for the year and grades him/her from one to five (five being the best). A minimum of grade three is required for increments and eligibility to apply for promotions. This type of evaluation system can be considered a feature of market culture.

Furthermore, internal audit and control measures to accounting practices were introduced in this decade, along with additional policy documents on public sector customers, both internal and external. The Public Appointments Service was established to modernise and streamline recruitment practices across the public sector. The Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) was also created, which led to more competitive appointments and promotions at senior levels of the public sector. The use of contracts has grown in Irish public administration as well. This is partly due to requirements of EU funding where every government contract must be put out to tender based on public procurement guidelines.

4.5.2 An Irish Version of NPM?

The previous section provides a broad overview of the type of reforms that were introduced to the Irish public sector since the inception of the state. It is a fair assessment that many of the

reforms introduced were influenced by NPM ideas. However, commentators are in agreement that impact of NPM type reforms has been relatively limited in the Irish context (Boyle 2009). Speaking specifically about work practices for example, Collins and Cradden (2007: 72) point out that civil servants in the Irish public sector continue to 'obey clear rules about how these activities must be conducted, will be answerable to their immediate supervisor in the first place for their conduct of them and subject to satisfactory performance, will generally enjoy more security of tenure than people employed in the private sector'. Indeed, an OECD evaluation of the Irish public sector surmised that:

> The focus of reform efforts in Ireland to date has tended, with some exceptions to be inward oriented, focusing on improving internal processes and structures. Initiatives, in line with those undertaken in many OECD countries, have focused on a broad range of internal processes to build capacity at individual and organisational levels, improve service delivery, develop organisational and individual performance management, establish governance procedures, create greater transparency, improve consultation and increase the use of evidence based policy making (OECD, 2008: 5).

As noted earlier in this chapter, Ireland can be described as a liberal market economy with legal and administrative structures similar to other English speaking countries. Hardiman (2010: 12) describes Ireland as ‘something of an outlier’ in its uptake of NPM ideas. Despite having similarly well-qualified public service employees, a relatively un-corrupt public administration and a tradition of political neutrality in the civil service, Ireland’s implementation of NPM ideas has lagged behind Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom (Hardiman, 2010).

The literature review identified the privatisation of public service provision as a key feature of NPM ideas (Gruening, 2001; Pallesen, 2011). Hardiman and Scott (2010: 181) contend that 'unless mandated by the EU competition policy, the Irish state proved a relatively unenthusiastic privatiser' (One can only assume that Hardiman and Scott (2010) are comparing Ireland to states that were very enthusiastic privatisers such as the UK and New Zealand). NPM ideas also advocate the separation of steering (policy-making) and rowing (policy implementation) functions of government (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992), as well as ‘the insulation of functions from political interference through their delegation to autonomous organisational forms (MacCarthaigh, 2012: 40). In Ireland there has been a strong penchant for the creation of new state agencies, most notably the Health Service Executive (HSE).

> Yet this was not accompanied by any corresponding decline in employment or scope or activity of core ministerial departments, nor of any build up of core policy capacity to counter-balance agencies as delivery systems ... So the agencification of the Irish public service was driven by motives that reflected, if anything, the very opposite of efficiency-seeking budget limiting rational management priorities (Hardiman, 2009: 13-14).

While the application of NPM ideas in the Irish context did not profoundly alter the character of the civil service as it did in the other liberal market English speaking states mentioned above, there was some impact. Kirby and Murphy (2011: 52) argue that 'the Irish bureaucracy has grown more fragmented, complex and multi-level, and this has had an impact on corporate governance, accountability and transparency as well as on the capacity for policy making and implementation'.

The introduction of performance measurement and evaluation systems has also been an integral part of NPM (Hood, 1995; John, 2001), whether this is at organisation, programme or individual level. As mentioned in the previous section individual performance evaluation (in the form of PMDS) was introduced to the Irish public sector in the early 2000s. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters the use of PMDS (or any other sort of individual performance evaluation) has been unevenly diffused across the Irish public sector. For example, PMDS is linked to increments in the Irish civil service but not in local authorities. Hardiman and Scott (2010: 181) argue that there is not 'much evidence of features such as target based control activities, performance related pay, or other forms of output controlled or market based disciplines used to alter public sector functioning' in the Irish public sector. Hardiman (2010) points out that in the 2000s senior civil servants received ample pay bonuses which in theory were linked with performance evaluation. However, bonuses were not explicitly linked with performance targets and practically everyone who was eligible for a bonus received it. Indeed, the OECD (2008: 31) review pointed to a 'need to develop a performance culture that is based on achieving outputs and outcomes rather than compliance with processes'.

A central component of NPM ideas is that they encourage the introduction of a customer orientation to public services (Lynch, 2006). This is an aspect of NPM that the Irish public sector has engaged with. Indeed, Hardiman (2010: 18) notes that Ireland was 'stronger on symbolic areas such as customer service statements than on real substantive change'. The habit of dealing with citizens as customers of government departments and consumers of public services was fostered initially through the Quality Customer Service Initiative which was launched in 1997. Customer Action Plans for each government department and agency were developed as a result and the Customer Charter Initiative was established in 2002. Customer Charters are brief, accessible documents outlining the type of service one can expect when dealing with a particular department or office. Customer Action Plans are essentially internal documents outlining how the commitments in the Charter will be achieved. Additionally, the Irish public sector has introduced Public Service excellence awards, and customer satisfaction

surveys (OECD, 2008). Irish public servants receive customer service training. Furthermore, improvements in information technology mean that public services in Ireland are now more accessible with forms and information being readily available online. Collins *et al.* (2007: 197) argue that 'today the public service retains the traditional beliefs in probity and efficiency of process, but … its image of the citizen is now much closer to that of the customer in the private sector'.

In short, the Irish version of NPM can be characterised by unenthusiastic privatisation of public services; a fondness for the creation of state agencies; not linking pay with performance; an emphasis on improving internal processes and structures; and, an emphasis on improved customer service.

4.5.3 Irish Specific Obstacles to NPM

The preceding section outlined the characteristic features of NPM in Ireland, which explains how Ireland has been described as a laggard in terms of NPM. This section outlines some of the Irish specific obstacles within the dominant administrative culture to the implementation of NPM ideas. The obstacles to NPM discussed in this section are social partnership, capacity for policy coordination and political drivers.

Many of the reforms of the Irish public sector took place within the framework of social partnership. MacCarthaigh and Boyle (2011) point out that while in theory pay increases for public servants were linked to increased efficiencies in work practices, in practice; pay was not linked to performance. Changes to public sector work practices were often traded off for wage increases. A major review of public sector pay was undertaken under the terms of *Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (2000-2002).* It was believed at the time that public sector pay rates had fallen behind those of the private sector. The Public Service Benchmarking Body recommended substantial pay increases for most public sector employees without clearly explaining the reasons behind its recommendations. 'The benchmarking process that was carried out has been the subject of much controversy and criticism, not least having regard to the transparency of the process' (McCarthy, 2005: 16). It was envisioned that benchmarking would achieve flexibility in work practices in both the core civil service and wider public sector but these flexibilities were never spelled out. In addition, 'while performance-based bonuses were indeed introduced for senior civil servants and public sector employees, these were not seriously conditional, and became an expected part of everyone's remuneration package' (Hardiman,

2010: 16). Additionally, Rhodes and Boyle (2012) contend that social partnership emphasised the sharing of wealth rather than ensuring competitiveness.

Hardiman (2010) and Rhodes and Boyle (2012) also point to a lack of capacity for policy coordination within the Irish public sector. Due to the conservative nature of the culture of the Irish public sector there was an inability within system to cope with new challenges. Policy responses to calls for change included the setting up of new agencies or an over-reliance on outside consultancy firms. The literature also notes that the reform programme in Ireland was driven by senior civil servants 'who did not go so far as to advocate disruption of some of the key elements of the Irish "public service bargain" which accorded many privileges to its senior cadres' (Hardiman, 2010: 18). A key element of this bargain, of course, was the performance bonuses awarded to senior civil servants mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Finally, the literature points to a lack of political drivers in the reform process. Christensen and Laegreid (2011: 5) argue that 'if reform ideas are driven by a strong leadership and prove to be compatible with the prevailing administrative culture they may be fully implemented'. MacCarthaigh (2012: 34) maintains that 'the SMI emerged from within the civil service itself, and despite initial political support was never fully embraced by successive governments, nor did it receive the necessary political drive to achieve reform targets'. Hardiman (2010: 17) argues 'the key to public sector modernisation ultimately lies in the strength and coherence of government's commitment to ensuring it happens. This is the key area of weakness in the Irish case' (Hardiman, 2010: 17). Ireland did not have a key iconic figure equivalent to Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Regan to drive public sector reform. Furthermore, Ireland does not have a political party system based on the traditional left-right divide (Weeks, 2010). Ideological choices tend to be blurred as a result and the literature review chapter noted the influence of new-Right ideology on the growth of NPM ideas. Irish politics tend towards consensus, particularly in labour market management. According the OECD (2008: 24) 'the incremental approach to reform, while achieving a certain degree of stability and consensus, has led to isolated reforms that evolve over time, rather than a coherent reform package'.

In addition to the issues outlined in this section, public sector reform in Ireland now has to be undertaken within the context of severe economic crisis. The next section deals with the current public sector reform programme.

4.5.4 Current Reform Programme

Due to the severe economic downturn and resulting bailout from the troika - the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Commission and European Central Bank (ECB) - severe cuts to public sector spending became a necessity. This was in part to meet bailout targets and to compensate for a severe drop in revenue coupled with ever increasing demands on the social welfare system. As a consequence the new FG/Labour government established the Department for Public Expenditure and Reform tasked with 'delivering well-managed and well-targeted public spending, delivered through modernised, effective and accountable public services'. Brendan Howlin, T.D. was appointed Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on 11th March 2011. The Ministers appointment and creation of the Department was 'to illustrate the importance of the reform agenda at a time when resources, both in terms of staff and finances, are limited and there are very clear goals for further reductions in public spending' (Howlin, 2012: 15). Minister Howlin (2012: 18) pursues a very strong use of NPM language and ideas, when discussing the need for public sector reform in Ireland as follows:

> challenge to provide services faster, better and more cost-effectively ... value for money ... quality public services ... flexibility, capacity and capability to respond to current and future challenges ... a public service that "does better for less" ... real value for money ... maximising efficiency ... eliminating waste ... innovative ... improving organisational and individual performance.

However, Minister Howlin (2012: 18) also speaks of 'core values of integrity, fairness, accountability and openness' and 'public servants motivated by a commitment to excellence in administration and service delivery, and with the citizen at the centre of service planning and delivery'. With the mention of values such as integrity and fairness and the use of the term citizen instead of customer it appears that the government is, in rhetoric at least, advocating aspects of a post-NPM model for the Irish public services.

In November 2011, the Government launched its *Public Service Reform Plan*, which outlined their forthcoming strategy for public sector reform. The reform agenda outlined in this document is centred on five major commitments to change:

> (i) Placing customer service at the core of everything we do;
> (ii) Maximising new and innovative service delivery channels;
> (iii) Radically reducing our costs to drive better value for money;
> (iv) Leading, organising and working in new ways; and
> (v) Strong focus on implementation and delivery (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2011: 3).

Note the emphasis on customer service, innovation and value for money, all of which are features of NPM. Moreover, the focus on implementation is a characteristic of NPM ideas. It is clear that the mindset Minister Howlin (2012) advocates remains tethered to NPM ideas when

he discusses reforming the 'way the public sector does business' by delivering 'quality services with significantly reduced resources and staff numbers' (Howlin, 2012: 29). Just as in the 1980s when NPM ideas first emerged, in the midst of a recession, the notion of 'doing more with less' continues to remain attractive. Whether the infiltration of NPM ideas has intensified as a result of the current economic crisis is unclear. Currently, there appears to be political will for change, however, it remains to be seen if the current uptake of NPM ideas is borne out of necessity or ideology. Furthermore, it is unclear whether consensus style policymaking in relation to the public sector will return if/when Ireland returns from recession.

This section has examined the application of NPM ideas in the Irish context. The question of whether NPM imperatives have been differently applied across all five areas of Irish social policy under evaluation will be tackled in each individual analysis chapter respectively.

4.6 SOCIAL POLICY AND THE WELFARE STATE

The literature review gave the reasons for limiting the scope of this research to the five social policy areas of education, health, housing, the personal social services and social welfare. Each of these policy areas will be dealt with in more depth in the analysis chapters. The purpose of this section is to characterise the overall features of the Irish welfare state and its associated policies. In addition, the evolution of social policies from the inception of the state to present is explored.

4.6.1 Classifying the Irish Welfare State

According to Kirby and Murphy (2011: 52) 'the Irish state has always been described as a mixed welfare state'. Esping-Andersen (1990) developed three welfare regime types: liberal, corporatist and social democratic. Considine and Dukelow (2009: 153) define welfare regime theory as

> attempts to classify or group welfare states in terms of common characteristics, taking a number of variables (such as political values and their influence, working class mobilisation, social spending and degrees of universality of certain social services) on the basis of which, welfare states may be understood to occupy a particular "family", "cluster" or "world of welfare".

The Irish welfare state can be defined in terms of residual provision of welfare services, which is a liberal characteristic. That is, few benefits are universal, most are means tested. However, one must also take note of the corporatist arrangements associated with social partnership which characterise Ireland. Fanning (2004: 20) states that 'Esping-Andersen argued that Ireland was

seen to exhibit a medium degree of conservative characteristics, a low degree of liberal characteristics and a low degree of socialist characteristics'. Thus, it would seem that the Irish welfare state defies categorisation. However, as has been outlined in earlier sections of this chapter, Irish social policy in general can be characterised by the influence of Catholicism in the early decades and the dominance of social partnership in later years. This has led some to characterise the Irish welfare state as 'Catholic Corporatist' (for example, McLoughlin, 1993; Adshead and Millar, 2003) and it is this stance that this research takes.

4.6.2 Development of the Welfare State

Timonen (2003: ix) argues that 'Ireland has traditionally had a relatively low level of social expenditure[7] as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP)'. According to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2013) public expenditure on social services (education, social protection, health services and children and youth affairs) accounted for 78.7 per cent of total government expenditure (pay, pension, non-pay and capital expenditure) in 2012. Understanding the economic context within which social policy operates is crucial as Hardiman and MacCarthaigh (2009: 13) explain that 'welfare spending may be likely to be vulnerable to fluctuations in fiscal fortunes'. Since the formation of the Irish state, there has been a history of economic underdevelopment, peppered with sparse instances of economic boom and this has directly impacted on the development of the welfare state. It could be argued that successive Irish governments did not adequately develop state funded social services, not for ideological reasons, but because they simply could not afford them.

'Until the 1960s Catholic teaching largely determined the nature of Irish social policies, and strict adherence to the subsidiarity principle ensured that the austere state had a limited welfare role' (McLoughlin, 2001: 255). The welfare state was slow to emerge in Ireland due to a combination of factors including: the influence of the Catholic Church; the principle of subsidiarity; and economics. Ireland witnessed a sustained period of economic underdevelopment after the state was formed. In the 1920s the Republic of Ireland was a largely agrarian rural society, with no industry to speak of. The economic underdevelopment of this period was exasperated by DeValera's policies of economic isolationism during the 1930s and throughout the Second World War (Hardiman and Scott, 2010: 180). Ireland missed out on the first period of economic prosperity experienced by Western societies in the 1950s and the early

[7] 'Social expenditure refers not just to social welfare payments or income support, but also to expenditure on other social areas such as health and education' (Timonen, 2003: vii)

1960s. As a result of high levels of emigration Ireland was one of the few Western European countries to experience a dramatic population decline.

From the late 1950s onwards the principles of free trade and economic expansionism were embraced. Through a generous corporate tax regime multinational companies were encouraged to invest in Ireland. The state through the IDA, announced its intentions to international capital by administering the world's first free trade zone in Shannon. The Irish welfare state has been expanding since the 1960s and 1970s. However, expansion has not been uniform and has been characterised as *ad hoc* provision. From the late 1960s on, the Irish state began to invest heavily in welfare, for example free secondary school education was introduced in 1967. This was an effort by the government to modernise the country. Hardiman and MacCarthaigh (2009: 13) attribute the growth in spending on welfare to a number of reasons including;

> the simple availability of resources as aggregate wealth expanded; policy learning from Britain, the role of the TV in raising expectations, and the liberalisation of social attitudes resulting in the emergence of new categories of social need such as "deserted wives" or "unmarried mothers". And social spending increased automatically with rising unemployment during the economic dislocations of the 1970s and the severe crisis of the 1980s.

While the Irish state's investment in welfare increased dramatically from this period the level of investment was by no means as extensive as in other countries. The principle of subsidiarity was retained with the state adopting the task of the traditional paymaster, and the voluntary sector (dominated by the Catholic Church) assuming the role of main provider. Hardiman and Scott (2010: 177) point out that 'the Irish welfare state is recognised as having developed relatively late and to a lower standard of service delivery than in most other OECD states. Most Irish welfare functions are delivered through core governmental departments and through contractual links with voluntary sector providers'.

The recession of the 1980s again saw cutbacks in social welfare spending. Between the mid-1980s and mid 1990s the social security/GDP ratio decreased. But the burgeoning boom of the 1990s witnessed increased government investment in social welfare. This was coupled with a low tax regime. From 1994 to 2006 GDP annual growth ranged from about four to eleven percent and GDP per capita rose dramatically to exceed that in all but one state in the EU (Luxembourg). Moran (2010) explains the mentality of successive FF governments during the boom years:

> The profligate comment, "if I have it I'll spend it", made famous by then Minister for Finance, Charlie McCreevy[8], summed up the period of the Celtic Tiger and the Irish government's approach to economic and social management under Taoiseach Bertie Ahern[9].

However, increased government spending did not necessarily coincide with better social services or a more equal society. Healthcare in particular came under constant criticism from the media and the public, with ever increasing hospital waiting lists a constant feature of the national news. This led commentators such as Murphy-Lawless and Quinn (2004: 128) to note that 'spending on health services is characterised as a "black hole". Timonen (2003: 50) characterises Ireland as a 'low-tax low-spending welfare state that is heavily focused on means tested benefits and primarily financed through taxation'.

Currently, the Irish public sector has to operate in the context of severe fiscal crisis. According to Minister Howlin (2012: 16) 'the cost of jobseekers payments alone is now over three times the 2006 level. The number of medical card holders has increased by more than 400,000 since 2007. Demographic changes mean that the cost of providing state pensions is increasing (for example, from €3.75 billion in 2007 to almost €5 billion last year)' added to which 'tax revenues fell by one-third between 2007 and 2010' (Howlin, 2012: 17). Due to the current economic recession, the social services have been particularly hit by cuts to government spending. Moran (2010) offers a detailed explanation of the sort of cuts that have taken place in recent years,

> There has been a blanket recruitment ban on public sector workers who provide education, health and welfare services, without any assessment of the social impact of these cuts. In the 2010 Budget, cuts were made to wages of lower paid civil and public servants, and in social welfare payments for those who are already recognised to be at risk of poverty. Cuts in funding for the community sector where marginalised groups are provided with a range of low cost supports, often lifelines to the world outside of their homes, show little concern for even the basic need of interpersonal contact let alone fairness for some of the most vulnerable people in Ireland.

Agencies which were established to support groups within Irish society experiencing disadvantage, inequality and discrimination have either been abolished or significantly weakened by the state. The Combat Poverty Agency has been subsumed into the Department of Social Protection. The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) has had all of its funding removed, and the Equality Authority and the Human Rights Commission have both had substantial funding cuts and are currently proposed to be merged. Other recent budget measures have seen increases in class sizes, closures of hospital beds, and cuts to services for children and adults with disabilities. The decision to make these extensive

[8] Minister for Finance 1997-2004.
[9] Leader of FF 1994-2008. Taoiseach 1997-2008.

cuts was taken outside of the social partnership process. Indeed, the 2010 Budget was the first time direct cuts had been made to nominal pay rates and social welfare transfers. These sorts continued in the 2011 and 2012 Budgets and look set to continue for the foreseeable future, with social services being the continued target for reductions (due to the vast amounts of expenditure they represent). According to O'Brien (2013) 'the gap between Ireland's rich and poor has widened dramatically since the economic crash'. What sort of welfare state will emerge from the economic crisis is difficult to say. One can argue that classification of the Irish welfare state is a moveable feast due to continuously changing economic and social circumstances, coupled with impact of administrative reform and collapse of social partnership.

4.7 CONCLUSION

As Chapter 4 clearly demonstrates, the formation and development of the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy is influenced by many contextual factors. Historically, our colonial past combined with nationalism and Catholicism to form highly conservative, male dominated public sector which combined with a political system devoid of a left-right divide and an emphasis on consensus style policy making, particularly in the field of labour relations. In addition, Ireland was relatively economically underdeveloped until the 1990s. The interplay of these features has resulted in a distinctly Irish form of NPM emerging.

Certainly, as Christensen and Laegreid (2011: 5-6) point out 'different countries have different historical-cultural traditions and their reforms are "path dependent" meaning that national reforms have unique features'. The Irish version of NPM can be characterised by reluctant privatisation of public services; a keenness for the creation of state agencies; pay increases for public sector employees that were not connected to performance; a stress on improving internal processes and structures; and, an emphasis on improved customer service. The Irish specific obstacles to NPM are identified as social partnership; incapacity for policy coordination; and, lack of political drivers. Furthermore, the Irish public sector reform programme is currently being implemented in the context of severe economic recession. The literature on the implementation of NPM (or lack thereof) in Ireland is sparse to say the least. It is hoped that this research can go some way to further explaining the main dynamics at work in the Irish approach to NPM ideas, particularly at the 'street-level' of Irish social policy. The forthcoming chapters (5, 6, 7, 8 and 9) present the analysis of primary data obtained from participants in the education, health, housing, personal social services and social welfare policy sectors, while the concluding chapter compares and contrasts the views of participants from all five policy sectors in order to draw some overall conclusions regarding the two hypotheses and research framework

CHAPTER 5

EDUCATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 demonstrated the ways in which NPM ideas impact upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within social policy according to the literature. Utilising the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures this chapter analyses the primary data obtained from participants in the education sector to investigate the hypotheses developed in Chapter 2. Keeping in mind that this research takes the symbolist perspective of organisational cultural change, the following analysis remains cognisant of the contextual particularities of the Irish system discussed in Chapter 4.

Aside from health, education is one of the biggest sources of employment within the Irish public sector (see Figure 4.1), contributing to approximately one third of the entire Exchequer pay bill (Boyle, 2012). Unlike the other four policy sectors which constitute this research, education is a social policy area that represents universal provision, in that state funded provision is available at primary and secondary levels unless a parent or guardian chooses to send a child to a private institution. Education is compulsory for children in Ireland from the ages of six to sixteen or until three years of secondary education have been completed. Most[10] undergraduate students attending publicly funded third-level courses do not have to pay tuition fees. However, a separate annual charge (student contribution) is payable to colleges for the costs of student services and examinations. The amount of this contribution varies from one institution to another. Fees apply for post-graduate courses. Grants and income supports are available at third level and these are strictly means tested.

The Department of Education was established in 1924. It was renamed the Department of Education and Science in 1997 and is known as the Department of Education and Skills since 2010. According to Curry (2011: 91), 'the Department sets the general regulations for the recognition of schools; prescribes curricula; establishes regulations for the management, resourcing and staffing of schools; and centrally negotiates teachers' salary scales. It has an oversight and policymaking role in relation to all aspects of education'. The Irish system of education provision is traditionally broken down into three levels; primary, secondary and third level. The Irish primary education sector consists of state-funded primary schools, special

[10] In order to qualify for free fees students must have been living in an EEA member state or Switzerland for at least three of the five years before starting your course. Students must also fulfil citizenship and rights of residence in Ireland criteria. In addition, they must be undertaking a full time course of at least two years duration; students must be first time undergraduates; and, students must not be repeating the year.

schools and private primary schools. State funded schools include religious schools, non-denominational schools, multi-denominational schools and Gaelscoileanna [Irish language]. Secondary level consists of secondary, vocational, community and comprehensive schools. The third level system in Ireland includes universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and private independent colleges.

Under the NPM model the student is re-defined as the customer and education becomes another good to be consumed or bought in the market. Bleiklie, Enders, Lepori and Musselin (2011: 161) argue that the dissemination of NPM 'rhetoric and narratives' in education 'were accelerated by the central role knowledge and innovation were expected to play for economic development in contemporary societies'. NPM ideas manifest themselves in the Irish education sector in the following ways. The *Education White Paper* 1995 sought the introduction of performance indicators. According to Lynch (2012: 94),'the Department of Education and Science began to use the language of the market from that time in its key strategy documents beginning with *Implementing the Agenda for Change* in 1996'. Furthermore, Gleeson and O'Donnabháin (2009) note the introduction of the market language terms customers and clients instead of students to Department of Education and Science strategy statements. Indeed, the use of strategy statements themselves is evidence of NPM ideas being introduced. Lynch (2012) also comments on the renaming of the Department of Education and Science to the Department of Education and Skills to reflect the NPM idea of the role of education within the employment market. Private sector management principles also began to be introduced in the Irish education sector in this period. As was outlined in the literature review chapter, NPM ideas advocate giving managers the freedom to manage while simultaneously limiting the discretion of professional groups (Gray and Jenkins, 2003) and we see evidence of both here. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s the notion of re-defining the school principal as a chief executive officer (CEO) gained ground. Lynch (2012) discusses the growing casualisation of employment in the Irish education sector as a means to 'weaken the power of the teaching profession … to push down costs'. Conway (2013) points to the 'intention to require ongoing professional course work as a condition for continued registration of teachers' as a means to increase accountability. Teacher training has also seen the introduction of NPM principles of competition with the establishment of a private provider (Hibernia) in the market.

Higher education in Ireland has not been exempt from NPM ideas. The University Act 1997 and the Institutions of Technology Act 2006 give executive powers to college presidents. Grummell *et al,* (2009: 194) argue that higher education has increasingly shifted from having a public

ethos to focusing on creating workers for a capitalist knowledge economy'. Lynch (2010) discusses the growth of performance measurement, auditing and evaluation in the university sector and 'how they refocus research and teaching efforts'. Indeed, she goes as far as noting that 'everything one does must be counted, and only the measurable matters' (Lynch, 2010: 55). Grummell, *et al.,* (2009) argue that unlike the university sector, the primary and second-level sectors within Irish education have been far more successful at inhibiting the implementation of NPM ideas (such as the introduction of league tables for schools) than their UK counterparts. They point to the comparatively high levels of union membership at primary and second-level and their associated coalition strength within the partnership process.

Of the total research sample of eighty-three participants, twenty-two are from the education sector. Eleven of these participants are primary school teachers, six are secondary school teachers, four are lecturers at third level and one participant works in university administration. In other words, twenty-one professionals and one bureaucrat at the 'street-level' of education participated in the study. Eighteen of the participants were female, four were male and their length of experience at the frontline varies from one to forty years.

The first section of this chapter examines whether NPM ideas have impacted upon visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish education policy, in order to determine if H1 is justifiable. Subsequently, this chapter evaluates whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish education policy, so as to assess if H2 can be confirmed or not. The concluding section assesses how these hypotheses can be related to the overall research framework, that is, the CVF of organisational cultures.

5.2 H1: VISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H1 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The visible aspects of administrative culture examined as part of this research are work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures.

5.2.1 Work Practices

The initial interview question asked of participants was to describe their typical day at work and the type of duties they undertake. Participants were then requested to describe any changes to

work practices that they have noticed since commencing their careers. Specific questions were posed about budgetary and accountancy responsibilities as well as innovation, discretion and work life balance issues.

The preliminary analysis undertaken was to assess to what extent participants within the education sector conform to the identity of professional group. In order to investigate this, a text search query within Nvivo 9 was undertaken of all transcripts using the words professional and professionalism to create a new node. The content of the node was then validated to ensure that the subject matter of the node related only to:

- participants identifying as being professionals, or
- participants describing aspects of their work practices as being professional.

The results were thirty separate references by fifteen of the participants to the terms professional and profession (in contrast to only three references to the terms bureaucracy or bureaucratic by two participants, both of whom are employed in third level education). Chapter 2 argues that professionals under traditional public administration best fit the consensual culture described on Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) CVF, as they have an internal flexibility focus.

The work practices described by participants from the education sector conform to a wide variety of the features of professionals under the traditional model of public administration (consensual culture) in Figure 2.1. For instance, knowledge and skills acquired by teachers is through specific training. While lecturers are not obliged to obtain specific knowledge and skills related to education, they are regarded as experts in their respective fields and this expertise is gained through research and publication. More recently, there have been moves to encourage the development of specific education skills for those employed in third level education. This is reflected in the development of teaching and learning courses at third level and a more specific focus on teaching skills in the recruitment process. Noordegraaf (2007) emphasises that professionals know how to behave and appear professional. They know how to act, speak, and dress. As one primary school teacher puts it:

> I suppose every morning when you leave, when I leave my home, I leave the home as a teacher. The way I dress, I presume, would be as a teacher. What does a teacher dress like? Well you have to be comfortable for the day, but at the same time you have to be smart enough. Ready to take on anything from the floor, crawling on the floor, to reaching heights to put up a picture (P46, 25th July 2011).

Noordegraaf (2007) also argues that association, jurisdiction, codes, and supervision are defining features of professionalism. Indeed, the Teaching Council promotes and develops teaching as a profession at primary and post-primary levels in Ireland. It provides a forum for

presenting the views of teachers on all aspects of their career from initial recruitment to in-career professional development. As the regulatory body for teachers in Ireland the Teaching Council produces a code of professional conduct, which comprises standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence. It also maintains a register of all teachers who teach in recognised schools in Ireland. Knowledge transfer is a feature of professionalism which those within the education sector conform to, particularly participants from the university sector where this is institutionalised through research programs, conferences, courses, journals, and magazines. These features of professionalism displayed by 'street-level' participants from the education sector are evidence of an internal focus and can be related to the consensual culture described on the CVF.

Education participants testify to high levels of flexibility and discretion within their occupations, which is a key feature of consensual culture. Teachers, both primary and secondary, recount being obliged to follow the curriculum but the manner in which they teach it is entirely up to them. Secondary school teachers are a little more constrained as to the content of what is taught in class, due to pressure to teach for state exams. In contrast, lectures report having a great deal of discretion in decisions surrounding the organisation their working day and prioritising what they want to teach and research. However, lectures are timetabled, as are committee meetings, office hours and planning meetings. Participants were also asked directly if they felt they got a chance to be innovative at work, as innovation is regarded as an outward focus and corresponds to developmental culture on the CVF. Participants in general related innovation back to the idea of having discretion in performing their duties at work. Thus, the vast majority of participants said that they could be innovative or 'creative' with their teaching practices as long as they were within the constraints of the curriculum which can be regarded as having an internal focus. This evidence suggests that participants from the education sector identify as being professionals with high levels of discretion and an inward focus, which places them within the consensual culture on the CVF. However, while participants may identify as professionals H1 argues that the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to their work practices and the following paragraphs analyse if this is indeed the case.

According to Figure 2.1 each profession has its own specific method of work and language. Alternatively, NPM ideas would result in the use of business language to describe participants work practices. A text search query was performed of transcripts using the terms, citizen, customer, client, student or pupil to ascertain how participants describe their work and those whom they work with on a daily basis. The results of this query were validated to ensure that

the references related directly to those whom participants deal with. It is possible to contend that if participants were particularly business-oriented they would use the term customer most extensively to describe whom they deal with. However, not one participant from the education sector used either the terms customer or citizen (associated with bureaucrats under the traditional model of public administration) to describe those whom they deal with. Furthermore, despite their strong identification with professionalism, participants from the education sector did not once use the term client to describe whom they deal with. However, each and every participant from the education sector used either the terms student or pupil to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis, which is arguably use of their own specific language. Thus, in this sense at least, participants from the education sector are not influenced by NPM ideas.

Figure 2.1 pointed to other changes to the traditional administrative culture of the public sector as a result of NPM ideas. Increased flexibility is the first change examined here. It is evident that within the Irish education sector, the notion of a permanent pensionable position for life is being eroded in favour of shorter term, more flexible working contracts. Participants noted the difficulty involved in gaining permanency over recent years. Six of the participants from the education sector in this research who are qualified teachers did not hold permanent positions. Rather, they have to re-apply for different jobs every year and do not get paid during the summer holidays. One participant describes her situation as thus:

> My contract for this year would be RPT, which is regular part-time. It will end on the thirty-first of August again next year and then if I do a good job this year, like say last year they took me back again this year. So I suppose there is that for schools, that if they just give you a year's contract, if they're not happy with you or, not even if they're not happy with you, if student numbers go down or student choices change, if situations change, they can just not renew your contract. And I suppose again if students complain and you're only there for the year, they can just let you go and bring somebody else in the following year (P56, 24th August 2011).

Indeed, eleven of the participants describe themselves are being very lucky to have obtained permanency and/or a teaching position in the first place. Thus, the phenomenon of increased flexibility as pointed to in the literature (Hughes, 1998; Taylor 2001) is indeed a change to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within education.

Furthermore, the literature argues that increased time commitment is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the administrative culture of the public sector (Lane, 2000; Davies and Thomas, 2002). Under the Croke Park Agreement (2010: 9) teachers and lecturers are obliged 'to provide and additional hour per week to facilitate at the discretion of management, school planning, continuous professional development, induction, substitution and supervision

(including supervision immediately before and after school times)' and 'teaching and learning in the university/institute' with effect from the 2010/2011 academic year. Participants in general speak of the requirement to perform extra hours under the Croke Park Agreement very negatively, as they argue that a culture of presenteeism is already evident within the education sector. As one primary teacher points out:

> ... under Croke Park we gave an extra, we have committed to giving thirty six hours in the school year for administrative work outside of the classroom when we are probably doing hundreds as it is. I mean the amount of time that teachers give up on matches, concerts, sacraments, is a huge one. It takes an awful lot of time. Communion is a Saturday. The ceremonies of light, enrolment ceremonies, they are evening things. Confession, and all of that (P16, 28th June 2011).

The younger or more recently qualified teachers speak of the pressure to participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports or drama, outside of normal work hours, none of which teachers are remunerated for. Teachers mentioned that they feel the need to do this in order to be seen as committed to the job by senior management in order to gain permanent employment. Nowhere is the culture of presenteeism more evident than at third level. For example one lecturer identifies himself as 'a workaholic. It's just that I am so committed and so involved in what I'm doing I don't know any other, I don't know what else I would be doing' (P30, 8th July 2011), while another argues that:

> In this job you don't have set annual leave days and you work weekends, you work late at night and there's no time off in lieu because you must get the work done. That's a disadvantage because I found, particularly in my first year and even still, I'm working way more than I ever worked before in terms of hours stacked up (P69, 28th September 2011).

Lecturers also noted that they are required to make themselves available to teach on evening courses and on some weekends. On occasion, lecturers also have to be available to meet students for supervision meetings outside of normal office hours due to the work commitments of their students. Therefore, one can argue that increased time commitment is a change to work practices that is evident in the education sector.

Thirdly, the literature review argues that employees will be increasingly encouraged to become enterprising managers (Minogue, 1998). When asked if they have any role supervising other members of staff, education participants replied negatively on the whole. However, when questioned about their experiences working with Special Needs Assistants within the classroom the following represents a typical response:

> Oh, I would have Special Needs Assistants, yeah, but I wouldn't consider that supervising another member of staff. We would work together, you know, or they would work with the student in class and then we would liaise on the student. That wouldn't be supervising them (P57, 25th August 2011).

The few participants that did regard themselves as having a supervisory role related this to providing advice and guidance to either younger colleagues or trainee teachers. None mentioned having any responsibility for evaluating the work of subordinates or having any other managerial responsibilities such as sanctioning annual leave. It should be noted that no principal teacher was interviewed as part of this research, and only one participant from academia had experience of being head of department. The exception was the one bureaucrat interviewed who is employed within the University sector. While dealing with students on face-to-face basis almost daily, this participant also has responsibility for a number of staff within her unit, but again she very much used the language of teamwork to describe her role. Another measure of enterprising managers is that they would have discretion and control over their own budgets. One lecturer stated that they had control over a research budget. However, the remainder of the participants from the education sector mentioned taking money for school tours or arts supplies from students or stated that they had no responsibility at all for budgets or accounts. While Causer and Exworthy (1999: 101) pointed to the blurring of lines between professional and managerial work, this does not appear to be the case for 'street-level' professionals within the education sector. This may also be directly related to the relatively flat career progression structures associated with both teaching and lecturing in Ireland.

Three participants mentioned the necessity for team building or trust which is specific to a post-NPM model of administrative culture. For example, P50 (28th July 2011) and P56 (24th August 2011) spoke of the importance of working with other members of staff within the school, whether this be to discuss problems and gain advice about particular students, or to share teaching ideas. Teamwork relates to consensual culture on the CVF (group maintenance). Developing networks is another specifically post-NPM feature of public sector organisational culture and would relate to the external focus end of the axis on the CVF. Lecturers interviewed speak of having to develop networks with the community as part of their job requirements but there was scant mention of networking as a work practice by the teachers who participated in this research. Therefore, evidence of post-NPM work practices is minimal in this sector.

As is demonstrated by the above analysis, it appears that NPM ideas have resulted in some changes to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in the Irish education sector. The literature also pointed to an increasing focus on accountability and evaluation measures as a result of NPM ideas. This change is analysed in detail in the next section.

Figure 5.1 below details the work practices of education participants as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 5.1 Education: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Practices

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Practices		Strong identification with professionalism and professional work practices. Teachers: constrained by the curriculum (but flexibility within this) Lecturers: Huge discretion on how to organise their day Student or Pupil used by all participants (specific language)	No evidence of business oriented language Increased Flexibility? YES Casualisation of Labour Increased Time commitment? YES Extra Hours required under Croke Park Agreement Culture of presenteeism very evident at third-level. Little evidence of enterprising managers	Need for team building and trust. Lecturers discuss requirement to develop networks.

5.2.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures

The literature suggests that an increasing focus on evaluation is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted upon the work practices of the public sector (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Alcock, 2003). When questioned about changes to work practices a third of participants identified an increased emphasis on evaluation and assessment. As one lecturer puts it; 'more of a kind of an increased squeezing and control of aspects of the public sector perhaps, which we are not used to in academia' (P23, 6th July 2011). Evaluation within the Irish school system takes the form of Whole School Evaluations (WSE) for primary and post primary schools and subject inspections in post primary schools (introduced in the Education Act 1998). The inspectorate is the division of the Department of Education and Skills responsible for the evaluation of primary and post-primary schools and centres for education. One primary school teacher describes the process as follows:

> They come in, he came in first for a day, and just told us what he wanted or for a half day I suppose, told us what he wanted, what he expected from us, collected all our policies, took them away to go over them, and then came back in a week or two later and spent a half day in each class, so you had to teach I think four or five subjects for him in that (P31, 8th July 2011).

WSE's are supposed to occur at regular intervals. However, the school receives advance notice of inspections and participants also report that some schools slip through the net completely. The Department of Education and Skills had increased incidental (or unannounced) inspections of schools in the years immediately preceding the interview process. Teachers are expected to furnish completed paperwork during all inspections:

> The inspector can come in and pick three teachers, just say *Can I see your planning?* See what's being done in the school. And I do think that does keep you on your toes a bit more. You know, I wouldn't now let that build up. Before you might skip every now and again. You might miss a fortnight or whatever. But now I'll be very much on the ball (P44, 21st July 2011).

Within the university sector, individual lecturers can invite students to give them feedback[11]. Workload reviews have also been introduced to third level. Lecturers report a lack of knowledge as to how these workload reviews are related to individual performance, if at all. The university administrator indicated that employees engaged with PMDS within her institution but because of union concerns, the emphasis was on training needs rather than evaluation. Her office/division did however, have overall targets to meet which relate to the amount of students seen, but again no mention was made of sanctions or rewards related to achievement of targets.

One method of assessing teachers' performance in secondary schools referenced by several participants is the results achieved by students in state exams, and two of the six secondary school teachers interviewed report that the content of what they teach specifically relates to the exams. However, some secondary school teachers expressed concerns over this as a measure of their performance. 'I mean you can go on exam results but that's not right either because between one school and another, your exams results are clearly going to be very different' (P36, 13th July 2011).

Chapter 2 noted that one of the inherent contradictions of NPM is that it professes to give managers the freedom to manage, while at the same time endeavouring to limit the discretion of professionals. This appears to be the case within the Irish education sector. For example, several participants mention the introduction of increased protocols and policies regarding their behaviour in certain cases such as:

> Policies for that and policies for that and policies for the other thing. I don't, well maybe, maybe then again, for example, if there's an accident in the yard. What

[11] When the interviews were conducted, this was entirely optional, although a number of universities in Ireland have more recently made changes to this by introducing measures such as online anonymous feedback from students.

> happens? You have to have steps. Or if a parent comes in and issues a complaint. You have to have steps that have to be gone through, for example who we take into the school. There has to be a policy on admission. And if there's an accident in the school, if there's a, you know, report of abuse or anything like that, of course you have to have policy (P49, 27th July 2011).

This increase in rules and procedures for the behaviour of employees moves the organisational culture closer to the control and stability end of the axis on the CVF.

According to participants from the education sector, evaluation systems are an everyday feature of their work. Primary school teachers in particular discuss the large amounts of paperwork that are required.

> But there's so much work to do, but like our notes, every teacher will say, go on about the notes like, termly plans, weekly plans, fortnightly plans, daily plans, now you're daily plans I have in my diary but the rest are all typed up, and you have to do them for every term, for every week, for every day (P21, 4th July 2011).

Planning must be completed for each of the eleven subjects taught at primary level. In addition, primary teachers are required to produce reports on what has been taught. Lecturers speak of being constantly asked by management to engage in written exercises illustrating the amount research they have produced and how their time is used. The following is a typical description offered by a lecturer:

> Yeah we are being scrutinised and squeezed an awful lot more now, it's like you are answerable for everything, we spend more time trying to justify our existence, than we are given time to do our jobs. If we were just let alone to get on with things and not having to spend half the time to go to meetings to do reviews, to fill in papers to say what we are doing and why, we could actually get on with what we are being paid to do. That's part of the problem, is the increasing bureaucratisation of the system (P23, 6th July 2011).

Garvin (2012) concurs with this assessment of the Irish university system and goes as far as describing it as moving 'towards a more commercialised, bureaucratic, almost Orwellian vision'. Secondary school teachers do not express the same levels of scrutiny or onus to record everything. A defining feature of the traditional model of public administration is that bureaucrats and professionals record everything. It could be argued that a perverse outcome of increased accountability and evaluation associated with NPM ideas is an increase in bureaucratic work practices. Coupled with increased rules and procedures, increased paperwork moves the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals even further towards the control axis of the CVF.

However, the increased levels of evaluation and associated paperwork do not necessarily correspond with increased accountability within the sector. From discussions with participants, evaluation within the education sector is often regarded as merely a 'box-ticking' (P30, 8th July 2011) exercise, 'because I think an awful lot of teachers just scribble down anything and I think it's really bad. You'll have a teacher as well who'll have the same class year in, year out. So they just change the dates, you know (P28, 7th July 2011). An explanation offered for this attitude was that increased evaluation and paperwork does not translate directly into rewards or sanctions associated with performance that is, meaningful accountability. A primary school teacher with seven years experience notes:

> Because I think and I suppose in my relatively short career I have come across people who are cynical about the profession and don't do the level of work and it is upsetting that you are busting a hump to do better for your kids and there are people who do a tenth of the work you do and get away with it (P16, 28th June 2011).

The market culture on the CVF bases rewards on achievement while in the hierarchical culture rewards are based on rank. There is little evidence of market culture present in the education sector.

One of the striking things to emerge from these interviews is the culture of fear within the Irish education sector. This fear is related to the perceived litigious nature of Irish society by participants. Outside of evaluation and assessment, paperwork is completed to ensure participants are legally 'covered' just in case. Participants speak about keeping files on children and noting every incident, even down to a child's grazed knee for fear of future litigation. Participants show an awareness of legal liability with the use of phrases such as 'legally I suppose you have to, not defend yourself but support yourself. Kind of you are wide open' (P55, 23rd August 2011), while a lecturer describes the situation as follows:

> Having to stand up for everything, everything has to be documented and then people are afraid to put things on paper - freedom of information - and yeah there is a lot of worry about, and this again wasn't there in the past but it's there much more now about being sued for something. You have to be so careful about stuff, and we are careful anyway, we always have the students' best interests at heart. But there is an increasing awareness of the need to be self-protective, you know and to document stuff but things take so long, oh my God (P23, 6th July 2011).

Furthermore, participants are aware that their paperwork can be examined under FOI legislation and this affects its content. The dual pressures to record everything coming from increased evaluation and fear of litigation, represents increased bureaucracy in the work practices of participants, which is ironically, the very thing that NPM ideas profess to dispel. Therefore, the analysis above indicates continued adherence to hierarchical culture within the education sector. Figure 5.2 below represents a summary of the types of responses given by education

participants in relation to accountability and evaluation measures (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted) as they correspond to the theoretical framework.

Figure 5.2 Education: A CVF Analysis of Reported Accountability and Evaluation Measures

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Accountability and Evaluation	Increased control mechanisms: rules, policies and procedures – particularly at Primary and Secondary Level. Increased Bureaucratisation: Paperwork completed to ensure one is legally covered. Rewards/Sanctions not related to evaluation Culture of Fear Cover Your Ass: related to perceived litigious nature of Irish society.		Increased Evaluation: Incidental Inspections and Whole School Evaluations at Primary and Secondary level Workload reviews at Third Level Increased Planning and Reporting	

Chapter 2 argued that the complex process of organisational culture change will not occur by merely making changes to its visible manifestations. Accordingly, the next section analyses the values, work motivations and attitudes to change/public sector reform of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the education sector in order to ascertain whether the introduction of NPM ideas has led to a transformation of the invisible aspects of their administrative culture.

5.3 H2: INVISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H2 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The invisible aspects of administrative culture analysed as part of this research are values, work motivations, and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

5.3.1 Values

Values are the first invisible aspect of administrative culture to be dealt with in this chapter. As was argued in Chapter 2, invisible aspects of administrative culture are far less straightforward to decipher than the visible aspects. Chapter 2 also discussed how NPM ideas may have altered the values of the public sector (see for example, Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen, 1997; Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005; and Gray and Jenkins, 2003). According to Figure 2.1 values associated with the traditional model of public administration are transparency, neutrality, fairness, due process, integrity, honesty and probity. The typical values associated with NPM are customer service, productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money. The distinctive values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture include balancing different interests, developing networks, openness and responsiveness.

Schein (2010) states that the espoused values of an organisation relate to how the organisation represents itself to the outside. Chapter 4 concluded that the espoused values of Irish public sector reform programmes continue to reflect NPM ideas. However, the espoused values of an organisation may not necessarily correspond to those of all its subcultures or occupational groups. There is evidence in the literature (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Ashburner *et al.* 1996; Vrangbaek, 2009) to suggest that regardless of the espoused values of an administration, public sector employees have retained the underlying values of traditional public administration.

In order to investigate participants' values a wide variety of questions were posed, including those relating to what participants regarded as ethical behaviour and what skills or attributes they consider necessary to perform their jobs. The former part of this chapter noted that participants from the education sector strongly identify as being a professional group and correspond to the consensual culture on the CVF. This is also the case concerning participants' responses to questions on ethical behaviour when dealing with students, pupils or children. For example, when questioned on ethical behaviour five of the participants speak about dressing appropriately, which is linked with professional practice. Noordgeraaf (2007) outlines how professional groups know how to act, speak, and dress according to their group. 'Just being professional inside the place as well. I mean, go in and be dressed nice, you know. You can't go in scruffy looking, I suppose' (P50, 28th July 2011). Indeed, on the whole within the education sector, there appeared to be some confusion amongst participants regarding rules, guidelines, procedures, codes of behaviour and ethics.

Other than appropriate appearance, participants also mentioned that they had a duty of care to their students and that they were under an obligation to set a good example with their own behaviour. A participant from the university sector specified that it was his duty not to offend any student's religious views. The Teaching Council was also mentioned as being important for setting out ethics and codes of behaviour. Participants frequently mention the need to have appropriate rules and procedures in place for issues such as bullying, incidents with children and guidelines for general behaviour, which is connected to the traditional model of public administration. The necessity for rules and procedures to be adhered to is repeatedly referred to by participants in the context of the need to be 'covered' just in case of legal issues. A number mention being wary of the legalities of being left alone with a child and or the onus on them to report any information a child gives them to the relevant authorities. 'I suppose it's doing, you know, it's doing your business in a fair, legal and honest manner (P53, 11th August 2011)'. This culture of 'fear of litigation' or 'cover your ass' culture not only relates to visible work practices but also seems to correspond to the underlying values of participants. This again equates to the more rigid control aspects of hierarchical culture.

Two participants also mentioned that they were obliged to facilitate students learning and this could be regarded as fitting into the post-NPM model of administrative culture with its emphasis on facilitating citizens' needs. As one secondary school teacher explains:

> The first thing is that the needs of the student are first. That you are there to teach them and more than that you are there to create this environment where they can learn so their needs and their rights come first. The flip side of that then is that you also can't put the needs of one student above the needs of all the students. So if a student is acting up or if a student is, misbehaving completely there needs to be measures in place to ensure that's not to the detriment of everybody else (P36, 13th July 2011).

While participants did demonstrate an awareness of costs (of art materials in primary schools, for example), no mention was made of business-like values such as efficient use of resources, which correlates with H2, that is, the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy. Thus, on this invisible aspect of organisational culture, participants from the education sector conform to consensual and hierarchical culture. Figure 5.3 indicates the variety of work values discussed by participants from the education sector and relates them with the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 5.3 Education: A CVF Analysis of Reported Values

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Values	The need to follow rules and procedures	Strong personal integrity: obligation to set a good example for students Ethics related to codes of behaviour and practice e.g. dressing and behaving properly	Displayed some awareness of costs No mention of business values such as efficiency and effectiveness.	Duty of Care to Students Equality

5.3.2 Work Motivations

Chapter 2 also presented differing ideas regarding the nature of human behaviour. NPM ideas argue that public sector employees are motivated by self-interest. Conversely, there exists the idea of PSM described by Perry and Wise (1990: 368), as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organisations'. In order to assess the work motivations of participants, they were asked questions relating to how they arrived in their current state of employment and the reasons behind their choices. Questions were also posed regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their current positions to assess whether they were in fact motivated by self-interest or public service. The work motivations of public sector employees are an important invisible feature of administrative culture to investigate, because if the visible manifestations of organisational culture such as reward and promotion structures are completely juxtaposed to the underlying values and motivations of staff, interaction with these systems will never be meaningful.

Extrinsic work motivations such as 'great security' (P21, 4th July 2011), 'reasonable, comfortable pay' (P46, 25th July 2011), and opportunities for 'progress' by completing further education (P56, 24th August 2011) were pointed to as advantages of their jobs by participants. A number of participants describe themselves as being 'lucky' when discussing their terms and conditions (P16, 28th June 2011; P53, 11th August 2011) or their salary (P28, 7th July 2011; P31, 8th July 201; P69, 28th September 2011). Another benefit discussed by participants, and teachers in particular, was:

> Obviously the holidays, like literally, you cannot go more than seven to eight weeks and you have either a week or two weeks off, and then you have Christmas and Easter, you have the summer which is three months off for the summer is phenomenal if you think about it (P22, 5th July 2011).

Chapter 4 noted that education is a highly feminised profession, and many participants stated that the family-friendly hours associated with teaching was an advantage for them. As one primary school teacher puts it 'when I'm out at work, the kids are out at work, when the kids are back home, I'm home so it, from the point of view of family, it is absolutely excellent' (P17, 29th June 2011). Furthermore, while thankful that they are paid well, money in itself does not appear to be a massively motivating factor for participants, as one lecturer puts it 'of course money is an issue but it's not a big issue. And please don't quote me eh, I would do this job for much less money, and most people would as well [laughter]. Well you can quote [laughter]' (P7, 27th May 2011). Therefore, if 'street-level' bureaucrats are not particularly motivated by self-interest as is argued by NPM ideas, what does indeed motivate them?

While participants do indeed exhibit extrinsic motives regarding work, they also display a several other types of motivations. Many participants reveal altruistic motives. One secondary school teacher describes her motivation for becoming a teacher as 'actually kind of some cliché, making a difference in someone's life' (P15, 24th June 2011), while another argues that 'you should be able to look at yourself in the mirror at the end of the day and think I did more good today than bad at least, and more than that, hopefully I actually really helped a lot of people' (P36, 13th July 2011). Autonomy also appeared to be a strong motivational factor for participants within the education sector, 'I go in in the morning and I've no one telling me what to do from nine until three really' (P22, 5th July 2011) and 'you have freedom in the design of programmes, em, and the design of research and so on, you know' (P23, 6th July 2011), 'you've great independence and like great creativity' (P49, 27th July 2011). Furthermore, intrinsic work motivational factors were spoken of by participants. As one lecturer explains; 'It just allows me to literally romp around in the realm of ideas, both within my discipline and well outside it. It's an extraordinary privilege. It's been an extraordinarily privileged kind of life, yeah. No more, no less. And they pay you' (P30, 8th July 2011). Social motivational factors were also important to participants 'I'm lucky that the school I work in is a great working environment, we all get on really well and there is a nice young dynamic so we interact well' (P22, 5th July 2011) and 'I feel it's relatively social. You're interacting with people every day. I don't think I'd like to be in front of a computer at all or in solitary confinement' (P44, 21st July 2011). Another significant motivational factor expressed by participants in the education sector in choosing to undertake their profession is a strong socialisation influence, that is, the influence or example of family members already in the profession. As one primary school teacher states; 'my father's a teacher, my sister's a teacher, my uncle was a teacher, two of them were, actually' (P16, 28th June 2011). While a lecturer points out that 'all my family were public servants. All of them, you know. There's no business relations. There's no nothing. They were all, you know, literally public servants and all my sisters are teachers' (P30, 8th July 2011). One participant puts it very simply

'it was kind of like “I’m going to be like Aunty Betty” and that was it' (P60, 2nd September 2011). Therefore, participants display very multifaceted work motivational factors overall.

As regards PSM being an explicit motivational factor for participants, a few participants did specifically mention the idea of public service, for example 'what I did always want to do was get out of private sector work and work in the public service. Work where the issue was not around profit' (P64, 13th September 2011), while another specifically mentioned an interest in influencing policy-making (P7, 27th May 2011). PSM also relates to service to the community. Accordingly, participants were asked if they donated their blood, money or time (Houston, 2005). According to Taylor (2011) 'the World Giving Index, compiled by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), showed seventy-five percent of Irish people donated money to charity while thirty-eight percent volunteered their time each month'. Although the results from the education sector regarding donations of money (seventy-seven percent) are comparable to the rest of the Irish population, sixty-four percent of participants from the education sector reported volunteering their time. Forty-one percent of participants reported donating blood, which is also well above the national average (according to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service, only three percent of Irish people donate blood). As an indication of an interest in politics and public policy making participants were asked whether they voted and over ninety-five percent of them replied positively. Again, this is greater than the national average (for example turnout for the Fiscal Treaty Referendum was approximately fifty percent, and the 2011 General Election was seventy percent)[12].

The higher levels of time donation reported by participants may be explained by the fact that teachers in particular participate in extra-curricular activities with students as part of their jobs and would tie in with the high levels of time commitment discussed in earlier sections. Also, lecturers have a service component to their jobs. However, a number of participants described activities that could be considered well outside of their normal duties and do not relate in any way to their employers. For example, the one bureaucrat participated in 'adult literacy work on a voluntary basis' (P64, 13th September, 2011), a teacher travels to Africa to participate in voluntary work on a yearly basis and another teacher works with a special needs group that has nothing to do with her school. One explanation for the high reported levels of time donations by participants from the education sector is simply because they have more free time than the general population due to shorter working hours and longer holidays. Additionally, one could

[12] The statistics presented here are relatively crude as the sample is not large enough to be considered representative of the entire Irish education sector.

argue that the type of individual who would volunteer their time for an interview may also be the type of individual who would volunteer their time to charity (participants in the research were self selecting). However, the results regarding blood donation and voting are not so easily explained and require further investigation. Alternatively, of course, participants could simply have greater levels of PSM than the general population.

Thus, the analysis above evokes a far less straightforward scenario regarding the motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals than either NPM ideas or the concept of PSM can hope to describe. The picture painted by participants in the education sector as regards their work motivations is a very complex one and while extrinsic motivations are somewhat important, they do not appear to be the sole motivational force. This finding concurs with evidence from other jurisdictions as Morgan, Ludlow, Kitching, O'Leary and Clarke (2010: 192) note 'a review of studies carried out in the UK (Spear *et al.*, 2006) found that job satisfaction and working with children were among the most important reasons for entering teaching while the least important were holidays, working hours, salaries and security'. Therefore, in the case of work motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the educational sector one can argue that H2 holds true. Figure 5.4 tabulates the findings regarding work motivations of participants employed in the education sector (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 5.4 Education: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Motivations

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Motivations	Making a difference An extraordinary privilege Specific mention of wanting to work in the public service	Independence Interesting work	Security, pay, holidays all of benefit but most participants argues that they would do their jobs for much less Family friendly hours important	Collaboration: importance of colleagues Specific mention of wanting to work in the public service Service to the community: high levels of blood, money and time donation Interest in politics and policymaking: evidenced by high levels of voting.

5.3.3 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

The interviews concluded with a series of questions regarding participant's attitudes to change and public sector reform. They were invited to suggest possible reforms or changes to their own sector as well as to the entire Irish public sector. As was outlined in Figure 2.1, members of both consensual and hierarchical culture would be resistant to change/public sector reform or at the very least have a negative attitude towards it. Whereas under the NPM model (market and developmental culture), change is seen as necessary and under the post-NPM model, participants would have a positive attitude to change.

When given the opportunity to suggest changes to their own service, participants from the education sector, overwhelmingly made suggestions that involved putting increased resources into their own sector. These proposals included decreased class sizes and increased investment in information technology and other types of equipment. Participants also suggested physical improvements to facilities such as buildings and lecture halls. These suggestions were more often than not framed in terms of facilitating students learning, rather than making their jobs easier.

> You want a child to hold a pencil properly and get a good start to school. You need a low number. That would be the one and only thing: reduce class size. Definitely. And that will improve behaviour. You have time to chat to each child, to reason with them as to why they can, they can't do this, that and the other (P44, 21st July 2011).

A lecturer argues that 'this is not about protecting my job, this is about protecting people's right to education' (P7, 27th May 2011). These suggestions for more staff and resources should be viewed in the context of the economic crisis and concurrent budget cuts associated with it.

Outside of increased government investment in their sector, some participants suggested that evaluation and assessment should correspond to sanctions for non-performance, 'I think if you were working in a shop and you put twenty Euros in your pocket you'd be out on your ear. I don't think it's right. I think it's far too important a job' (P49, 27th July 2011) and 'start to be a bit ruthless, if people weren't performing, wages would decrease for example, or if people weren't necessary, if some people weren't necessary in a department, people would have to start losing their jobs' (P36, 13th July 2011). Four of the seventeen teachers interviewed suggested the need to reform the system of allocating special posts according to seniority rather than merit. The idea that rewards should be based on achievement correlates to market culture and NPM ideas.

When asked to suggest changes to their service, participants almost without fail argued for increased staff and resources. However, when asked about what changes they would make to the entire public sector, an alternative view emerged. Participants suggested 'get rid of the administrators' (P17, 29th June 2011) and 'cut the layers and layers of managers' (P21, 5th July 2011). More participants remarked on the 'wastage' (P23, 6th July 2011) of the public sector in general. One lecturer argues for 'more accountability... [and] a review of salaries' (P69, 28th September 2011). This is interesting to note because participants from the education sector generally did not see themselves are being part of the wider public sector. 'I would imagine there has to be places there are people sitting in chairs that have nothing to do except push a piece of paper from A to B, do you know. Classrooms are not those type of places' (P49, 27th July 2011). The types of reforms suggested for the rest of the public sector were often framed in terms of money saving measures or increasing efficiency which also links to NPM ideas.

In general participants from the education sector viewed reform of both their sector and the wider public sector as completely necessary and offered suggestions as to how this could take place, 'I would definitely look at other countries and see what works and what doesn't work and take bits from all of them and try and put it together' (P55, 25th August 2011). The attitude that reform and change are necessary is not what one would expect from participants who display consensual and hierarchical organisational culture. Indeed, this sort of attitude has more of an external focus and relates to developmental or market culture on the CVF.

Aside from being invited to suggest changes to their own service and to the wider public sector, participants were asked what came to mind when they heard the phrase public sector reform. In response the language used by participants was in general rather negative. Phrases such as 'paperwork' (P17, 29th June 2011), 'job losses' and 'pay cuts' (P56, 24th August 2011; P23, 6th July 2011), 'grim' (P57, 25th August 2011) 'fearful' (P22, 5th July 2011), 'cutbacks' (P15, 24th June 2011), 'negative' (P28, 7th July 2011), 'pain' (P60, 2nd September 2011) were used by participants. This reactions relate to reforms that have already taken place within the sector. So while participants are unenthusiastic about current reforms, most of them feel that the public sector should indeed be reformed, but in a more meaningful manner that demonstrates insight into what their daily work relates to. This view is encapsulated by the following statement:

> They want one thing but they won't give you the money to do it. Or they'll give you the money but not what you need, or they won't let you do it the way that you know it should be done or will work in your school (P56, 24th August 2011).

A possible explanation offered for the generally negative connotations associated with public sector reform is as follows:

> Public sector reform should be something very positive. But because it has been something ideologically driven, so basically, and has resulted in these stereotypes of the public sector as inefficient and wasteful, and people working in it as lazy and it just contradicts everything I think of. The public sector I don't think. Who would in their right mind go and become a nurse if they were lazy, or a teacher? (P7, 27th May 2011).

The CVF model assumes that members of consensual and hierarchical culture have an aversion to change due to their inward focus and coalition strength associated with professional associations and public sector unions. Indeed, Grummell *et al*., (2009) pointed to the power of primary and secondary school teachers unions in resisting change associated with NPM ideas. This research also demonstrates that there may be something to this. Fifteen (including one bureaucrat and two lecturers) of the twenty-two participants interviewed from the education sector discussed the role of their unions. Two mentioned that they were the current union representatives within their schools (P16, 28th June 2011; P31 8th July 2011). Issues discussed included the formal supports (P28, 7th July 2011) and services (P21, 4th July 2011) provided by the unions. P22 (5th July 2011) discusses the power of the unions to threaten strike measures. P64 (13th September 2011) and P23 (6th July 2011) discuss how the unions have resisted PMDS and workload reviews respectively. However, not all participants agreed that the unions have power for example, 'Like there was marches, there was protests. Did it make any difference? I don't think so' (P44, 21st July 2011). Indeed, the teachers unions have had little power recently to resist pay cuts and increasing class sizes.

Therefore, one can argue that the evidence presented above relates to very mixed attitudes to change and public sector reform by participants from the education sector, in contrast to an assumed negative view associated with those from consensual and hierarchical cultures. Figure 5.5 below presents an overview of the range of education participants' attitudes to change/public sector reform (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 5.5 Education: A CVF Analysis of Reported Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform	Negative attitudes to exiting reforms	Many did not identify themselves as being part of the wider public sector.	Accountability and Evaluation should correspond to sanctions for non-performance Reduce the amount of managers and administrators Reform as a necessity.	Increase resources in their sector: in order to facilitate students learning, rather than to make their jobs easier.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter 5 outlines some important points regarding the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within the Irish education sector. The first research hypothesis, H1, states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The analysis above confirms H1 as there is evidence of changes to visible aspects of participants' administrative culture. The first change identified is the growing casualisation of job contracts throughout the sector. Secondly, the analysis indicates that increased time commitment is an unmistakable change to the visible work practices of education sector participants. Increased time commitment manifests itself unofficially as perceived pressure to participate in extra-curricular activities at both primary and secondary school levels and a culture of presenteeism at third level driven by ever increasing workloads. Officially, participants are required to work extra hours under the Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements. Thirdly, increased evaluation takes the form of growing numbers of incidental school inspections at primary and post-primary levels and growing numbers of workload reviews at third level.

Despite the changes outlined above, there is substantial evidence of both hierarchical and consensual cultures lingering, within the education sector. Participants from the education sector retain a strong professional identity. While levels of discretion are constrained for teachers because of curriculum requirements, they have great deal of flexibility regarding teaching methods, styles and how to organise their day. Lecturers, on the other hand, have substantial

discretion regarding the content of lecture material and how to organise tasks within their day. Participants tended to discuss the ability to develop creative teaching methods in the sphere in their own classrooms when asked about innovation, emphasising their inward focus. The unanimous use of the terms pupil or student to describe those whom they deal with on a daily basis is also an overt visible indication of education participants continued identification with professionalism (consensual culture). Evidence of the emergence of enterprising managers within the sector is also scant, as indicated by participants' lack of supervisory duties or control of resource allocation. In terms of accountability and evaluation, education sector participants are required to complete vast tracts of planning and reporting paperwork. Additionally, increased control through mechanisms such as policies, rules and procedures combine to indicate a growth in bureaucratic work practices, rather than an introduction of market culture. Houtsonen *et al* (2010) also found ‘a degree of tightening control and accountability’ in the Irish education sector as a result of NPM ideas. The corresponding lack of sanctions or rewards based on merit, leads many participants to merely go through the motions when interacting with evaluation processes. The analysis also unearths a culture of fear within the sector with paperwork completed largely in order to avoid litigation. The biggest losers in all these changes to work practices are, of course, the students. Teachers and lectures that are spending ever increasing amounts of time on planning, reporting and other administrative and paperwork duties have less and less time to actually prepare classes and lectures and deal with students on a face to face basis. This is even more pervasive in the university sector where research (not teaching) is what is measured and therefore 'gets done' (Clarke, 2008).

The second portion of Chapter 5 analyses invisible aspects of administrative culture. H2 asserts that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. Transformation implies a thorough or dramatic change, which is not apparent regarding the invisible aspects of administrative culture within the education sector. Therefore, H2 is justifiable. Evidence of values associated with the traditional model of public administration competing and co-existing with those of NPM is noticeable. Participants discuss values associated with the traditional model of public administration such as equal treatment and duty of care to students while at the same time showing an awareness of the costs associated with delivering their service. The picture painted as regards work motivations is equally complex. Contrary to both NPM ideas and theories of PSM extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, social and freedom work motivations are all distinguishable. 'Street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the education sector report donating more blood, money and time than the national average which is indicative of service to the community. Furthermore, a higher than average level of voting, signals an interest in politics

and policy making. The significant levels of time donation by participants within education may be explained by school holidays and the obligation to participate in extra-curricular activities as part of work. However, plausible explanations, aside from evidence for PSM as suggested by Houston (2005), for levels of voting and contributions of money and blood are not as obvious.

Attitudes to change and public sector reform are also complicated. On the one hand, participants from the education sector argue for increased resources within their own sector, and on the other, they make the case for cuts across the wider public sector in the form of reducing the numbers of managers and administrators. The influence of NPM ideas is also clear in terms of participants' calls for merits and sanctions to be linked with performance through appropriate evaluation measures. The CVF model assumes that members of consensual and hierarchical culture have an aversion to change due to their inward focus and coalition strength associated with professional associations and public sector unions. This may have been the case in the past but the teachers unions have had little success recently at curbing cuts to their salaries; funding cuts for special needs; reduced capital expenditure on school refurbishment; increases in class sizes; and, loss of supervision and substitution allowances (under Haddington Road).

The language used by participants in relation to the phrase public sector reform is negative on the whole. However, participants within this study argue that reform of the wider Irish public sector is extremely necessary. The conflicting attitudes presented further justify the value of using the CVF as a theoretical framework in this analysis. While NPM ideas have not led to a complete transformation of the invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within the Irish education sector, there is evidence of them having some appeal, particularly in terms of accountability and evaluation measures.

In conclusion, the analysis in Chapter 5 enhances the argument that administrative culture is a dynamic system consisting of both visible and invisible levels. The analysis suggests that NPM ideas have not so much become embedded within the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within the Irish education sector, but have been layered upon traditional models. In other words, while many aspects of consensual and hierarchical culture have not disappeared, aspects of both market and developmental cultures are also evident. The following chapter analyses if this is also the case in the Irish health sector.

CHAPTER 6

HEALTH

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter analyses the impact of NPM ideas on visible and invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within the Irish health sector, employing the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures throughout. Healthcare is the largest source of employment within the Irish public sector (see Figure 4.1) accounting for 42.2 percent of the Exchequer pay bill in 2011 (Boyle, 2011). In Ireland, healthcare is provided through a mixture of public, private and voluntary sources. Public healthcare is funded by general taxation. Private healthcare is integral to the system. According to the Health Insurance Authority (HIA) (2013), the proportion of the Irish population covered by a private health insurance policy in 2012 is less than forty-six percent of the entire population – down from the peak of 50.9 percent, recorded in 2008.

The role of the Department of Health, which was first created in 1947,[13] is to advise the government on health policy and legislation, to evaluate the performance of the health and social services and to work with other sectors to improve the health and wellbeing of the general public. According to Minister Howlin (2012: 16) the provision of public healthcare is currently one of the biggest pressures on public spending, with the number of medical card holders increasing by more than 400,000 since 2007. McGovern (2009: 64) outlines some of the changes to Irish society which have impacted on the delivery of health services. An aging population puts more strain on the health services with less of the population of working age to pay taxes to fund it. Medical advances mean that people are now surviving diseases that were previously fatal. Increased numbers of women in the workforce means that they are less likely to be available to provide care in the home for the elderly or those with disabilities. An influx of immigrants has meant an increasing birth rate. Additionally, Ireland is a very well educated society that demands very high standards and outcomes in healthcare. These increased demands are now coupled with huge fiscal pressures associated with the recent economic downturn.

Buckley (2004: 82) argues that 'the Irish public health service operates on the basis that all services are available to all citizens, irrespective of wealth, and that the health service is a basic entitlement'. However, health is understood to a consumer good under NPM ideas. Byrkjeflot (2011: 148 - 152) identifies key changes to healthcare associated with NPM ideas as follow; the introduction of professional management in public hospitals (while at the same time curbing the

[13] Prior to this the Department of Local Government and Public Health had responsibility for healthcare issues.

power of professional groups); the creation of internal markets or quasi-markets; changes in payment systems; growth in emphasis of patient rights and free choice of hospitals; and, increased evaluation (and sometimes ranking) of hospitals. Robbins (2007: 60) argues that the first real attempt to introduce NPM ideas into the Irish health sector came in the form of the Health Act 1996 which 'introduced service planning, monitoring of performance, service review and the use of performance indicators'. The Health Strategy (*Quality and fairness - A Health System for You)* 2001 set out specific targets and dates and responsibilities for achieving its objectives. Indeed, the use of strategy statements are a feature of NPM ideas (stemming from SMI). In addition, the Health Strategy 2001 re-conceptualised health service users as customers (Buckley, 2004). O'Sullivan and Butler (2002: 7) argue that the introduction of market approaches are evidenced by 'increased use of contracting and service agreement terminology in the health services and the distinction drawn between the commissioning and providing of services'. Robbins (2007) conducted a case study into the implementation of NPM ideas in an Irish hospital and found that 'management is using rhetoric of NPM but failing to support new institutional structures. There has been limited adoption of NPM techniques such as service planning'. From the evidence above, it appears that the adoption of NPM ideas within the Irish healthcare sector has been inconsistent.

Furthermore, the management of the Irish health system has undergone a series of rationalisations since the inception of the state. In 1947 thirty-one health authorities were established (corresponding with the city and borough councils). This number was reduced to twenty-seven in 1960. Eight regional Health Boards were then established under the Health Act 1970, each covering a number of counties. Each board consisted of representatives from; the county and borough councils; professionals from the medical, dental, nursing and pharmaceutical industries; and, nominees of the Minister of Health. The system of health boards remained relatively constant until two reports emerged in 2003. The *Audit of Structures and Functions in the Health System* (Prospectus Report) noted the uneven rate at which the health boards implemented national policy and the *Commission on Financial Management and Control Systems in the Health Services* (Brennan Commission) recommended the establishment of an executive at national level to manage health services while at the same time retaining the health board structure in order to maintain local representation. Both of these reports essentially called for a centralised agency which coincided with the government policy of the day. As a result, the Health Service Executive (HSE) was established in 2005 under the Health Act 2004. According to the OECD (2008: 283) the creation of the HSE 'is the most significant and recent reform of the Irish health system'. The HSE has responsibility for the provision and

management of healthcare and personal social services for everyone in Ireland and its services include cancer, addiction, disability, family and children including child protection, mental health, services for older people, sexual health, benefits and schemes such as the medical card and drugs payments scheme, primary care and public health services. The establishment of the HSE follows the trend of structural devolution outlined by Christensen and Laegreid (2011) as a key feature of NPM ideas. In other words we see the Department of Health taking responsibility for policy decisions (steering) and the HSE being involved in implementation (rowing).

Everyone who is resident in Ireland is entitled to healthcare through the public system. However, one may be required to pay a subsidised fee for healthcare received depending on income, age, illness or disability. Maternity services and medical care services for babies up to the age of six weeks are provided free of charge. All residents (and visitors to Ireland who hold a European Health Insurance Card) are entitled to free maintenance and treatment in public beds in HSE and voluntary hospitals. Medical card holders are entitled to free hospital care and free GP visits, amongst other services. The medical card is means tested and is available to those receiving social welfare benefits, low earners and those with certain long term or severe illnesses. Those on slightly higher incomes are eligible for the GP Visit Card which entitles the holder to free GP visits. It is worth noting that approximately two-thirds of the Irish population are not entitled to the medical card and must pay for GP services privately (Curry, 2011: 143). They must also pay charges for attendance at Accident and Emergency and certain hospital charges.

Nineteen of the eighty-three interviews conducted are with 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the health sector. The sample comprises eleven nurses, four doctors, one speech and language therapist, one occupational therapist, one radiation therapist[14] and one health promotion officer. In other words, the sample consists of eighteen healthcare professionals and one bureaucrat.

The first portion of this chapter examines whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish health policy, in order to determine if H1 is valid. The second section assesses whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the invisible

[14] A radiation therapist administers radiation treatment to cancer patients while radiographers operate X-ray machines.

aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish health policy, so as to evaluate if H2 holds true. How these hypotheses can be related to the overall research framework, that is, the CVF of organisational cultures, is addressed in the conclusion.

6.2 H1: VISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H1 maintains that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The visible aspects of administrative culture examined as part of this research are work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures.

6.2.1 Work Practices

Participants were initially asked to give details of their typical day at work and the nature of the duties they engaged in. Following that, they were asked to discuss any changes to work practices that they have noticed since they commenced their careers. Specific questions were also posed regarding budgetary and supervisory responsibilities as well as innovation, discretion and work life balance issues.

The preliminary analysis undertaken was to gauge to what extent participants within the health sector conform to a professional identity. In order to examine this, a text search query was undertaken using the words professional or professionalism to create a new node. This was then validated to ensure that the subject matter of the node related only to;

- participants identifying as being professionals, or
- participants describing aspects of their work practices as being professional.

This resulted in forty-seven distinct references by sixteen of the participants from the health sector to the terms professional and profession. In contrast, only one participant made a reference to the term bureaucracy. As argued in Chapter 2, professionals under traditional public administration best fit the consensual culture described on Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) CVF.

The work practices described by participants from the health sector correspond to all of those identified as relating to professionalism in Figure 2.1. Participants from each of the professions interviewed are regulated and controlled by their individual professional associations. Professional associations are also responsible for licensing and enforcing codes of conduct. For

instance, an Bord Altranais maintains a register of nurses and can inquire into the conduct of a registered nurse on the grounds of alleged professional misconduct or alleged unfitness to practice. As P29 (8th July 2011) notes, 'it just outlines professional practice and the dress code and behaviour and what is involved in being an OT'. When describing their work practices each participant discusses the specialist knowledge and skills required to perform their duties. Furthermore, they all use their own specific language and jargon to describe their work. Additionally, participants describe what they consider to be professional appearance and behaviour. These features of professionalism displayed by 'street-level' participants from the health sector are evidence of an internal focus and can be related to the consensual culture described on the CVF.

As observed in Chapter 2, the concept of semi-profession (Etzioni 1969) generally denotes professions with lower occupational status and shorter training periods than the traditional professions, such as social workers and nurses. Dominelli (1996: 155) argues that occupational groups such as social workers have made efforts to become more professionalised in order to increase their status. This phenomenon is particularly evident within nursing in Ireland. In 1994 nurse training changed from a certificate/apprenticeship programme to a three year registration/diploma programme. Then in 2002 a four year registration/degree programme was introduced. As one nurse points out 'I know people were saying that the reason they were changing from a diploma to a degree was that it gives you more, like you can be more on par with the other professionals' (P52, 10th August 2011). These attempts at professionalisation by nurses within the health sector can be regarded as correlating to consensual culture.

High levels of flexibility and discretion within ones occupation is a distinctive feature of consensual culture. Participants from the health sector report varying degrees of flexibility and discretion within their daily work practices. All of the nurses interviewed revealed that their days followed very strict routines which limited their discretion. For instance, medications have to be given within certain timeframes. Furthermore, in a hospital setting, patients are all dressed, washed and fed at allocated times. As P8 (30th May 2011) argues 'if you didn't have the routine, like it would just be chaos like'. However, within their daily routine all bar two of the nurses maintain that they have the discretion to prioritise the care they give according to decisions they make about patients needs. In contrast, all the doctors interviewed reported high levels of discretion in both how they organise their day and in their decision making. For example, P6 (26th May 2011) states that 'you're under no obligation to run everything past the consultant you're working with and unless there is something I'm very worried about I don't. I make most

of the decisions myself'. Of the other health professionals interviewed both the speech and language and the occupational therapists reported high levels of discretion in their work, as did the bureaucrat. While the radiation therapist argued that her day followed strict routines and the treatments given follow strict guidelines. Therefore, flexibility and discretion is dependent on occupational group.

Innovation is regarded as an outward focus and corresponds to developmental culture on the CVF. Overall, a large number of participants from the health sector reported that they were encouraged to be innovative and develop new work practices. However, as one nurse describes it:

> But I suppose we always have to stick within the guidelines of what is best practice and the policies and protocols because if we go outside them we won't be covered for what you do. So you are restricted in a way as to how creative you can be (P61, 5th September 2011).

P29 (8th July 2011) argues that she needs to be innovative in her treatment of patients due to a lack of resources. Examples of innovation that participants gave included quicker ways of applying wound dressings (P8, 30th May 2011) and methods of assessing patients more effectively (P19, 2nd July 2011). This can be regarded as having an internal focus which again confirms that those in the health sector can be placed within the consensual culture on the CVF. Doctors interviewed were the exception in the sense that they are encouraged to develop new work practices through research as part of their career development, thus displaying features of developmental culture. Consequently, one could argue that within the health sector, levels of innovation are also dependent on which profession one works in.

The above analysis indicates that participants from the health sector identify as being professionals with varied levels of discretion and an inward focus. This places them somewhere in between the consensual and hierarchical cultures on the CVF. However, while participants may identify as professionals, H1 argues that the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to their work practices and the following paragraphs analyse if this is indeed the case.

According to Figure 2.1 each profession has its own specific language and method of work while the implementation of NPM ideas would correlate with the use of business language to describe daily work practices. A text search query was performed of transcripts using the terms, citizen, customer, client and patient to ascertain how participants describe their work and those

whom they deal with on a daily basis. The results of this query were validated to ensure that the references related directly to those whom participants deal with. Accordingly, if participants are particularly business oriented they should employ the term customer to describe whom they deal with. A single participant from the health sector used the term customer to describe those whom she deals with, 'basically the customer is always right and to work with the customer as opposed to pissing the customer off' (P43, 20th July 2011). It is interesting to note that this participant is the lone 'street-level' bureaucrat interviewed from the health sector. Not one participant from the health sector utilised the term citizen (associated with bureaucrats under the traditional model of public administration) to describe those whom they deal with on a daily basis. Despite their strong identification with professionalism, participants from the health sector did not extensively utilise the term client. The three participants who did mention the term client - P26, a speech and language therapist; and P42 and P48, both of whom are nurses - used the terms client and patient interchangeably. Aside from P43, every participant from the health sector used the term patient to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis, which is arguably the use of their own specific language. It is also noteworthy that P43, while employed by the HSE does not work in a hospital or medical centre setting and that could also explain why she does not use the term patient. Thus, participants from the health sector do not use business language to describe their work.

Figure 2.1 pointed to changes to the traditional administrative culture of the public sector as a result of NPM ideas. It is evident that within the Irish health sector, the notion of a permanent pensionable position for life is being eroded in favour of shorter term, flexible working contracts. As one participant points out: 'in the past there would have been no issue; it would have been just a matter of formality in terms of someone becoming permanent' (P43, 20th July 2011). Due to the recruitment and promotion embargo, the HSE has tended to hire staff through outside agencies. According to the HSE (2012: 4) spending on agency staff exceeded €200m in 2011[15]. Four participants interviewed were agency staff working in public hospitals and therefore they do not enjoy the same benefits or security as permanent staff. As P58 (31st August 2011) explains: 'No holiday pay or, like, sick pay. There's no sick pay either. So I was out for seven weeks 'cos I broke my finger. So in those seven weeks I wasn't paid anything'. Lack of continuity in terms of patient care was one of the disadvantages mentioned by participants with permanent positions when discussing this trend. Moreover, participants explained that working alongside agency staff resulted in increased workloads for them:

> You're the one that saying *No, this is how we do it here.* Like the standard stuff is always gonna get done. Whereas just picking up on the little things and then they can't,

[15] The HSE (2012) announced plans to cut this spending by half in 2012.

> they don't go into any of the pre-treatment area so they couldn't be rostered. They don't work late, 'cos they're not entitled to that. They don't go to CT. They don't do the chart and checks. So a lot of that falls on the other members of staff, you know. So generally, at the moment our treatment units are more or less half staffed by agency members and then the permanent members of staff take on the other roles (P54, 22nd August 2011).

A frequently cited example was that agency nurses are not covered to administer IV antibiotics to patients regardless of training, again increasing the workload of permanent nurses. Other participants pointed to the lack of accountability regarding agency staff. Thus, the phenomenon of increased flexibility as pointed to in the literature (see for example, Hughes, 1998; Taylor 2001) is indeed a change to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within the health sector.

The literature also argued that increased time commitment is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the administrative culture of the public sector (Lane, 2000; Davies and Thomas, 2002). The general consensus amongst doctors and nurses in particular, is that they are increasingly expected to work longer hours. This is in direct contrast with the Croke Park Agreement (2010: 2) which states that it will comply with the European Working Time Directive. This EU Directive (2003/88/EC), which was transposed into Irish law in 2004, provides for: a minimum number of holidays each year; paid breaks; rest of at least eleven hours in any twenty-four hours; restricts excessive night work; and makes a default right to work no more than forty-eight hours per week. However, compliance with this Directive is patchy at best in the Irish health sector. As one doctor explains 'I'd be on seventy-six hours this week, that's just since Monday and that's in five days. Last week from Saturday till Friday I did, I had done ninety-four hours' (P19, 2nd July 2011). All the doctors interviewed described similar situations in Irish hospitals, with two of the participants citing the long hours as their reason for quitting hospital medicine. There is also evidence of the existence of a long-hours culture in nursing:

> I think it's probably the culture of nursing in general really, ... you just can't say well I'll do it next week because you know this involves a human being and it involves their health so you have to have it sorted and you have to deal with it, you can't delay an oncology patient, saying well I'm going off now at two o'clock, I'll see you next week (P20, 2nd July 2011).

One nurse explains that part of this pressure or expectation to work longer hours comes from:

> Management and the structure does take advantage of the kind of moral obligation you have to do the job you know that kind of way. You don't go in and work with people and for people and try and better their lives and whatever if you're not a caring person, so they do exploit that aspect of your, I suppose commitment to the job (P1, 18th May 2011).

Nurses reported that it is commonplace to not get paid for the extra hours worked: 'It's often happened where I've stayed an hour or two extra and that will never get recognised' (P61, 5th September 2011). Indeed, participants reasoned that the advantage of working for agencies was the freedom to choose better working hours. The vast majority of participants argued that lack of time to complete their tasks is the biggest constraint in their respective jobs. Participants expressed fears that the long hours they were expected to work was affecting their care of patients. The exchange below is representative:

> P6: almost every day you're working longer than you're comfortable with if you like
> JC: ok and why would you be uncomfortable with
> P6: well because, like that if you're at the end of em, if you've had a busy night and you haven't got any sleep or whatever and you're expected to be caring for people or to be focused and concentrating on what you're doing then, I don't think its physically possible (P6, 26th May 2011).

Therefore, the analysis above demonstrates that increased time commitment is a change to work practices that is evident in the health sector.

Thirdly, the literature review argues that employees will be increasingly encouraged to take on managerial responsibilities (Noordegraaf, 2007). When asked if they have any role supervising other members of staff, health participants replied on the whole that part of their role and duties is to supervise students or interns, particularly in a hospital setting. Of those who stated they (P6, P52, P59) do not have any current supervisory responsibilities, all have done so in the past (including P52 who is re-training in another speciality). Participants describe these duties in differing ways, for instance: 'directly supervise their learning practice and you kind of assess their competency and how they are progressing in their learning in the environment' (P1, 18th May 2011); 'so you'd be kind of looking after them, and then you'd be reporting everything to your registrar' (P19, 2nd July 2011); 'I was their mentor and they had to, you know, shadow me as I went about my business' (P58, 31st August 2011); 'we would assess them, write whether they are competent or not in different skills' (P61, 5th September 2011); and 'we're kind of making sure they know what they're doing and where to find things and how to do things' (P67, 21st September 2011). Discretion to allocate resources and the freedom to manage their own budgets is also regarded as a responsibility of a manager. Only two (P43 and P48) of the participants from the health sector stated that they have any budgetary responsibilities. However, participants from the heath sector did show an acute awareness of costs associated with healthcare provision. Typical examples of this include 'I always prescribe generically which is cheaper for the state' (P18, 30th June 2011); 'we would be watching what is used the whole time anyway and would be pointing fingers if things were being wasted and stuff like that' (P42, 20th July 2011); and 'you'd be conscious that like certain things are more, drugs as

well like, that certain things are more expensive than others' (P52, 10th August 2011). This culture of awareness of costs appears to pervade the entire health sector and comes from management level. As one nurse describes it 'waste, we'll say, would not be hugely acceptable' (P59, 1st September 2011), while the exchange with a doctor below is representative:

> P67: So it's kind of, it's never open but it's always there in the background.
> JC: And when you say 'they', who…?
> P67: Oh, just in general. Absolutely. Everyone – consultants mention it, admin staff when you try and book someone into clinic they're like *No, we have, you know, we're trying to book people in for*, the whole hospital basically is aware of the budget without being certain of the actual figures.

Whether this acute awareness of costs in the health sector is directly related to NPM ideas or to the extensive cuts in the sector due to the current economic crisis is difficult to say.

Figure 6.1 below presents the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals employed in the Irish healthcare sector as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted)

Figure 6.1 Health: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Practices

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Practices	Innovation curtailed by obligation to work within context of existing rules and procedures.	Strong professional identity across all groups. Nurses in particular seek to further professionalise Varying degrees of discretion. Client and patient used to describe whom they deal with. Supervision and evaluation of students accepted part of their professional duties.	Innovation: Doctors encouraged to develop new work practices through obligation to do research as part of their career progression. Business language used by the one bureaucrat interviewed. Increased flexibility? YES use of agency staff Increased time commitment? YES long hours culture evident for nurses and doctors. Acute awareness of financial costs associated with healthcare provision.	

Based on the evidence outlined above, it does appear that NPM ideas have resulted in some changes having been made to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in the Irish health sector. The fourth change to work practices pointed to in the literature is an

increasing focus on accountability and evaluation. This change is discussed in detail in the next section.

6.2.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures

Furthermore, the literature suggests that an increasing focus on evaluation is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the work practices of the public sector (see for example, Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Alcock, 2003). However, participants from the health sector did not report increased levels of evaluation. In fact, evaluation appears to be non-existent or patchy at best, and varies greatly depending on the profession or the local context. Several participants stated that their duties were not assessed at all. Descriptions of evaluation exercises that do occur include 'literally a tick-the-box exercise' (P67, 21st September 2011) and 'a paper exercise' (P26, 7th July 2011). Participants from all of the professions interviewed emphasised that their individual professional associations are responsible for ensuring they were fit to practice and for handling complaints. Nevertheless, participants in general welcomed the idea of more evaluation, for example:

> I think maybe like the French system: it should be a real honour and privilege to serve in the public service. We should be highly paid, highly rewarded, but also if you don't meet the standards, the country should be able to get shot of you. I mean, I do find it ridiculous that people who are failing to do jobs stay in them (P48, 26th July 2011).

One participant described the lack of evaluation and assessment as 'disappointing' (P54, 22nd August 2011) as she felt she had no opportunity to find out how she was performing in her job, while another argued 'that's a pity ... for those who want to work and want to do well ... they never tell you if, yeah you are doing a good job' (P63, 7th September 2011).

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), established under the Health Act 2007, is an independent authority with responsibility for quality, safety and accountability in residential services for children, older people and people with disabilities; and quality and safety of healthcare on behalf of patients. It is also responsible for developing standards and monitoring compliance in hospitals and clinics; carrying out investigations where there are reasonable grounds to do so; carrying out national Health Technology Assessments (HTA); and evaluating and publishing information about the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services. However, none of the participants from the healthcare sector mentioned HIQA in relation to accountability or evaluation.

Chapter 2 pointed out that one of the inherent contradictions of NPM is that it professes to give managers the freedom to manage, while at the same time endeavouring to limit the discretion of professional groups. Participants repeatedly mentioned that they are obligated to follow rules and protocols. In discussions around accountability the following is a representative response:

> I suppose we always have to stick within the guidelines of what is best practice and the policies and protocols because if we go outside them we won't be covered for what you do (P61, 5th September 2011).

Another participant argues that, 'It just seems no matter what you do you're, there's a policy about it, and it can be very frustrating and very stifling' (P43, 20th July 2011). This emphasis on rules and procedures for the activities of employees moves the organisational culture closer to the control and stability end of the axis on the CVF.

While healthcare participants did not note an increase in evaluation or assessment as part of their work practices, a substantial number did argue that recent times have witnessed enormous increases in the levels of paperwork they are obligated to complete. This increased paperwork is very much tied into accountability. A phrase (or a version thereof) that frequently cropped up when discussing paperwork with nurses was: 'your care, unless you document it, it's not proven to be given and done' (P1, 18th May 2011). Numerous descriptions were given by participants of the levels of duplication involved in this paperwork, for instance: 'sometimes you have to double, triple your notes just to make sure that all areas are covered' (P26, 7th July 2011). The extent of the paperwork required shows no evidence of lessening, as one nurse explains:

> In my first year they just had different types of care plans. So I suppose that's the major, like before you used to just write down on one page exactly everything that happened with patients that day. Whereas now you have separate care plans for each issue like if they have pain or if they have a wound which do you know, which is a bit more writing but its clearer to read (P8, 30th May 2011).

Participants described themselves are being 'a bit disillusioned' (P41, 19th July 2011) and 'saddened' (P48, 26th July 2011) by the levels of paperwork required. The most commonplace reason for this reaction to the volumes of paperwork being along the following lines: 'There's nearly more time spent on documentation than caring for the patient themselves' (P58, 31st August 2011). Therefore, it can be argued that a perverse outcome of increased accountability and evaluation associated with NPM ideas is an increase in bureaucratic work practices. Coupled with increased rules and procedures, increased paperwork moves the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals even further towards the control end of the axis of the CVF.

One of the striking details to emerge from the interviews with healthcare professionals is the pervasive culture of fear within the sector as a whole. This fear is directly related to the perceived litigious nature of Irish society by participants. The detailed documentation of care given to patients is to ensure that they are legally 'covered' just in case, with numerous participants pointing out that they can be prosecuted under criminal law in cases of negligence. Participants demonstrated an awareness of this legal liability with statements such as: 'if you were ever brought up over something you have to have it written down' (P58, 31st August 2011); and 'I write essays in work because I just cover my bum really' (P61, 5th September 2011). It seems that this increased level of paperwork is very much tied to a 'cover your ass' culture within the sector. Moreover, participants expressed awareness that their paperwork can be examined by others under FOI legislation and in the event of legal proceedings, directly affecting the content. As one doctor points out this relates to a 'fear of writing something that someone will have a problem with down the line' (P6, 26th May 2011). As well as discussing a fear of litigation, some participants expressed a very real fear that they would be held responsible for the death of a patient due to staff shortages. Overall, the language used by participants as regards accountability is very legalistic. The practice of recording everything is a feature of traditional public administration. The pressures to record everything as a means of accountability, together with the fear of litigation, represents increased bureaucracy in the work practices of participants, which is ironically, the very thing that NPM ideas profess to dispel. Figure 6.2 tabulates the types of responses gained from participants working within the Irish healthcare sector in relation to accountability and evaluation measures and relates them to the corresponding organisational culture on the theoretical framework (for a note on how tabular information should be interpreted, see Section 3.7.4).

Figure 6.2 Health: A CVF Analysis of Reported Accountability and Evaluation Measures

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Accountability and Evaluation	Increased control measures: policies, procedures and rules. Increased paperwork: high levels of duplication. - 'Care not written, is care not given' - Pervasive culture of fear – linked to criminal responsibility. Time imbalance between paperwork and care giving.	Prominent role of professional associations in licencing and regulation. Evaluation by peers rather than employer.	Increased Evaluation? : NO Patchy or non-existent at best. No mention of HIQA.	Disappointment at lack of recognition for job well done.

The visible aspects of administrative culture should not be analysed in isolation. Accordingly, the next portion of this chapter analyses the invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the health sector in order to evaluate the impact of NPM ideas on them.

6.3 H2: INVISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H2 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The invisible aspects of administrative culture analysed as part of this research are values, work motivations, and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

6.3.1 Values

Values are preliminary invisible aspect of administrative culture analysed in this chapter. Chapter 2 put forward the argument that invisible aspects of administrative culture are far more complex to decipher than the visible aspects. Additionally, Chapter 2 discussed how NPM ideas may have altered the values of the public sector (see for example, Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen, 1997; Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005; and Gray and Jenkins, 2003). According to Figure 2.1, values associated with the traditional model of public administration include neutrality, fairness, due process, integrity, honesty and probity. The typical values associated with NPM ideas are customer service, productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and value for

money. The distinctive values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture include balancing different interests, developing networks, openness and responsiveness.

Schein (2010) asserts that the espoused values of an organisation communicate how the organisation represents itself to the outside. As was observed in Chapter 4 the espoused values of Irish public sector reform programmes continue to reflect NPM ideas. However, section 2.2.2 also noted that the espoused values of an organisation may not necessarily correspond to those of all its subcultures or occupational groups. There is evidence in the literature (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Ashburner *et al.* 1996; Vrangbaek, 2009) to suggest that regardless of the espoused values of an administration, public sector employees have retained the underlying values of traditional public administration.

In order to investigate participants' values a wide variety of questions were posed, including those relating to what participants regarded as ethical behaviour and what skills or attributes they consider crucial to perform their jobs. As outlined earlier, participants from the health sector strongly identify as a professional group and correspond to the consensual culture on the CVF. On the whole, the values expressed by participants from the health sector firmly relate to those of the traditional model of public administration. Values that were repeatedly mentioned in terms of ethical behaviour were honesty; integrity; dignity and respect for patients; and confidentiality. Lack of freedom to be autonomous in their decision making and practice was something mentioned frequently by participants. As one nurse argues 'you have a set of duties and you don't work beyond those duties' (P1, 18th May 2011); while another participant explains that 'it's protocol, procedure and sometimes having too much of an opinion [laughter] isn't wanted too much unless your opinion is to change the protocol' (P54, 22nd August 2011). Participants displayed awareness of the importance of following these rules and procedures:

> I suppose we have like guidelines and protocols yeah. I mean we have a lot of them and I suppose we have the nursing code of practice but where I am at the moment there is a lot, there is a guideline for every single thing we do (P61, 5th September 2011).

This awareness of the need to follow protocols was often couched in terms of being aware of the legalities involved when medical professionals do not work in an ethical manner. Participants presented very clear examples of the types of ethical dilemmas they confront daily such as choices regarding patients with dementia or other mental illnesses; minors; or, accepting that some procedures will be painful for patients in the short term but long term benefits outweigh this. There is no confusion from participants in the health sector as to the meaning of ethical

behaviour. At all times this means 'we have to act in the patient's best interests' (P48, 26th July 2011).

There was very little evidence of NPM ideas influencing the values of participants from the health sector with only one participant mentioning the need for customer service (P43) and no participant mentioning business-like values such as efficient use of resources. Thus while participants did show a keen awareness of costs as regards their work practices this did not necessarily filter down their work values. P43 (20th July 2011) was also the sole participant to mention values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture, arguing that 'Networking skills are paramount to the job'. Yet again, it is worth acknowledging that P43 is the only participant from the health sector who is not a professional working in a hospital setting and this might explain the discrepancy.

Therefore, one can argue that H2, which maintains that the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of the work values of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within the health sector, holds true. Thus, on this invisible aspect of administrative culture, participants from the health sector coincide with consensual and hierarchical culture. Figure 6.3 below tabulates the information gained from participants working within Irish health policy in relation to their work values (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 6.3 Health: A CVF Analysis of Reported Values

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Values	Honesty Integrity Dignity Respect for patients Confidentiality		Only one participant mentions the need for customer service No mention of business values such as efficiency and effectiveness.	

6.3.2 Work Motivations

Additionally, Chapter 2 portrayed contrasting ideas regarding the nature of human behaviour. NPM ideas argue that public sector employees are motivated by self-interest, as opposed to the

idea of PSM described by Perry and Wise (1990: 368), which proposes that 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organisations'. In order to assess the work motivations of participants, they were asked questions relating to how they arrived in their current state of employment and why they made those choices. Furthermore, questions were posed regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their current positions to assess whether they were in fact motivated by self-interest or public service. Work motivations are an important invisible feature of administrative culture to investigate because, in order for interaction with reward and promotion structures (visible) to be meaningful and effective for public sector employees, these systems need to be cognisant of the underlying values and motivations of staff.

Extrinsic work motivations such as 'good career prospects' (P18, 30th June 2011); 'the hours' (P19, 2nd July 2011); 'permanency and good holidays [laughter] and better salary [laughter]' (P43, 20th July 2011); 'it's secure' (P54, 22nd August 2011); 'great travel opportunities' (P61, 5th September 2011); and 'our pension is very good' (P8, 30th May 2011) were presented as advantages of their jobs by participants. Chapter 4 discussed how certain healthcare professions are vastly feminised, and two participants specifically stated that the family friendly working arrangements offered by the HSE are an attraction for them. For example:

> I just need to think of my family. It's permanent. I've got a mortgage to pay. There's very few, you know, there's usually, there's a lack of alternatives out there in terms of other jobs. And like the fact that I get my, you know, I take Fridays as parental leave. I like the fact that I get paid maternity leave (P43, 20th July 2011).

Benefits provided to HSE staff include a wide variety of leave and family friendly working arrangements. Conversely, the increased levels of time commitment required as part of the job are pointed to by fifteen of the nineteen participants interviewed as being non-family friendly: 'I definitely would like to spend more time with my son' (P20, 2nd July 2011); 'it is difficult to see your family and friends when you're working a long week' (P19, 2nd July 2011); and 'very unsociable ... you just exist really' (P59, 1st September 2011). Overall, money does not appear to be the main motivating factor amongst participants from the health sector. In fact, eight healthcare participants describe themselves as being lucky to have jobs or to get paid at all. Nonetheless, a large minority argue that they are not *well* paid for what they do. As one participant explains:

> It is hard sometimes if you've got patient after patient after patient that's dying and literally falling apart and they're vomiting and like it's just some gross stuff as well. I definitely don't think it's well paid for what you might have to, and the responsibility that you take on as well (P54, 22nd August 2011).

Despite the attempts to professionalise the occupation, nurses argue that they do not retain comparable levels of status or prestige to other healthcare professionals and this is evidenced by relatively poor levels of pay. For instance:

> I don't think it is that well paid compared to other professions with the same now that we've, like nurses weren't, were different before because they weren't college graduates, they are now and I don't think that ever was brought up to the level of the other graduates (P63, 7th September 2011).

Therefore, if 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals are not entirely motivated by self interest as is argued by NPM ideas, what does indeed motivate them? More importantly, what would the appropriate evaluation and accountability systems be in this case? This is an issue that will be addressed in more detail in the concluding chapter.

Multiple work motivations were displayed by healthcare participants. For instance, altruistic motives featured prominently: 'you are actually hands on, really, really, helping' (P29, 8th July 2011); one nurse argued that working in palliative care would be 'a privilege' (P41, 19th July 2011); while a doctor also used the word 'privilege' to describe his work (P18, 30th June 2011); 'I can advise and I can help anybody' (P1, 18th May 2011); and 'you feel like you are making someone's life better' (P61, 5th September 2011). Additionally, intrinsic motivational factors were spoken of by participants. Overwhelmingly, participants described their jobs as 'interesting' (P1, 18th May 2011; P6, 26th May 2011; P18, 30th June 2011; P54, 22nd August 2011; and P61 5th September 2011), with one nurse going as far to say that 'it fascinates me actually' (P41, 19th July 2011). Sixteen healthcare participants also point to the diversity involved in their work in that no day is the same and that there are plenty of opportunities for specialisation. Social motivational factors such as dealing with people and working with colleagues were also essential to participants: 'I think the people you come across are the best things' (P20, 2nd July 2011); and 'there's great camaraderie with the nurses ...we kind of club together like. You know you have to have a laugh, even after such tragic circumstances at times' (P42, 20th July 2011). Another motivational factor for those in the health sector choosing their profession is the apparent influence of socialisation factors. Indeed, numerous participants cited the example of a family member in the profession, for example, 'my aunt' (P19, 2nd July 2011; P58, 31st August 2011); 'my cousin' (P20, 2nd July 2011; P58, 31st August 2011); 'my mother' (P48, 26th July 2011) or, the encouragement of their parents as one of the motivational factors involved in their career path decisions.

As regards PSM being a specific motivational factor, not one participant from the health sector mentioned an explicit interest in public service or politics and policy making in the course of their interviews. However, PSM also relates to service to the community. Houston (2005) conducted a study into levels of blood, money and time donation public, private and para-public employees. Houston (2005) argued that his findings offered support for the notion of PSM because he found that 'public sector employees are more likely to volunteer for charity and donate blood' (but found no difference between public and private employees in terms of individual philanthropy). In order to investigate this, participants were asked whether they donate blood, money or time. According to Taylor (2011) 'the World Giving Index, compiled by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), showed seventy-five percent of Irish people donated money to charity while thirty-eight percent volunteered their time each month'. The results from the health sector regarding donations of money (seventy-two percent) and time (forty-four percent) are comparable to the rest of the Irish population. In the health sector, forty-four percent of participants reported donating blood, which is also well above the national average (according to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service, only three percent of Irish people donate blood).

As an indication of an interest in politics and public policy making, participants were asked whether they voted and over eighty-nine percent of them replied positively. Again, this exceeds the national average (for example, turnout for the Fiscal Treaty Referendum was fifty percent, and the 2011 General Election was seventy percent)[16]. The slightly higher than the national average donations of time is interesting due to the labour and time intensive nature of many of the healthcare occupations. Participants donated their time to organisations such as Age Action and local sports groups (P29, 8th July 2011), the Irish Heart Foundation and Cancer Society (P42, 20th July 2011), Mental Health Association (P48, 26th July 2011), the Order of Malta (P52, 10th August 2011), the Irish Red Cross (P58, 31st August 2011), and the Irish Cancer Society (P51, 1st September 2011, P8, 30th May 2011). Two doctors also mentioned that they did part of their medical training in a third world country, which is entirely optional. Indeed, only one participant from the healthcare sector specifically mentioned donating time to an organisation that did not relate to a health issue or utilise their medical expertise. Service to the community is not really of any advantage to participants careers within this sector. However, one could argue that the type of individual who would volunteer their time for an interview may also be the type of individual who would volunteer their time to charity (participants in the research were self selecting). The results regarding blood donation in the health sector could possibly be explained

[16] The statistics presented here are relatively crude as the sample is not large enough to be considered representative of the entire Irish health sector.

by its direct relevance to participants' daily work, with a large proportion of those who did not donate blood citing medical reasons for not doing so. However, the high levels of voting reported by participants are not so easily explained and would require further investigation. Alternatively, of course, participants could simply have higher levels of PSM than the general population. Figure 6.4 below represents the range of work motivations described by health sector participants as they relate to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 6.4 Health: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Motivations

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Motivations	Money not a main motivator: Participants describing themselves as being lucky to have jobs or to be paid at all.	Learning and development on the job: overwhelmingly describe their jobs as interesting. Helping people. Nurses do not retain comparable levels of status or prestige to other healthcare professionals and this is evidenced by relatively poor levels of pay (results in efforts to professionalise).		No specific mention of public service or an interest in politics or policy making. However, report higher than national average on voting Service to the community evidenced by high levels of blood, money and time donation.

Hence, the paragraphs above evoke a far more complex scenario regarding the motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals than either NPM ideas or the concept of PSM can hope to describe. Indeed, the picture painted by participants in the health sector as regards their work motivations is a very multifaceted one and while extrinsic motivations feature, they do not appear to be the sole motivational force. Therefore, in the case of work motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the health sector one can also argue that H2 holds true.

6.3.3 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

The concluding part of the interview consisted of a series of questions regarding participant's attitudes to change and public sector reform. They were asked to suggest possible reforms or changes to their own sector as well as to the entire Irish public sector. As was outlined in Figure 2.1, members of both consensual culture (professionals) and hierarchical culture (bureaucrats) would be resistant to change and/or public sector reform or at the very least have a negative

attitude towards it. Whereas under the NPM model (market and developmental culture), change is seen as necessary and under the post-NPM model, participants would have a positive attitude to change.

When given the opportunity to suggest changes to their own service, the overwhelming response from participants from the health sector was to increase staffing levels. Participants also argued for increased resources in the sector, for example, 'more hospital beds' (P1, 18th May 2011); 'build new facilities' (P52, 10th August 2011); 'I would never have anyone on a waiting list' (P54, 22nd August 2011). Participants also suggested better and more access to training. The arguments for increased resources were more often than not framed in terms of making things easier for patients: 'because at the end of the day the healthcare system is about the patients and if we can't look after them properly' (P61, 5th September 2011). These proposals for more staff and resources should be seen in the context of the economic crisis and the concurrent budget cuts associated with it.

Nonetheless, not all changes proposed by participants involved increasing spending in the sector. Tactics for improving services and saving money were mooted, for example: 'improve the referral to specialities in different hospitals, make it easier' (P42, 20th July 2011). Various participants also suggested that evaluation and assessment should be related to performance. One nurse recommends that 'a culture of hiring and firing' (P48, 26th July 2011) should be introduced, while another argued that 'evaluation and progress, and implementation of good standards' was an issue (P59, 1st September 2011). Indeed, rewards based on achievement is a feature of market culture.

Moreover, participants demonstrated an awareness of the larger context with ideas about how the entire healthcare system should be altered: 'Free healthcare at the point of delivery' (P20, 2nd July 2011); 'I would completely re-structure it' (P48, 26th July 2011); 'improve access, make it a more equitable system' (7th July 2011); introduce 'universal health insurance' (P48, 26th July 2011). Indeed, some of the ideas surrounding changing how the entire sector is run have a very distinct NPM bent, for example: 'I feel there should be a charge at some level on healthcare' (P18, 30th June 2011); and 'We should be located centrally' (P43, 20th July 2011); 'streamlining, joining the dots' (P29, 8th July 2011). Another doctor discussed how she would change her service as follows: 'I'd change it so that it was out-patient based' (P67, 21st September 2011). She argued that this would make life easier for patients and save the hospital money. Another

participant asks 'why are we supporting a private healthcare system in the public hospital?' and 'why aren't we changing them for stuff, for the disposables? Just like the gauze, the bins, the towels, you know all those kind of things. Its just ridiculous' (P54, 22nd August 2011). These proposals can be related back to the pervading culture of cost awareness identified in section 6.1.1 of this chapter, and can be seen as displaying features of market culture.

As mentioned above, when invited to suggest changes to their service participants without fail argued for increased staffing levels and resources. However, when asked to propose changes to the entire public sector, a different stance emerged. Certainly, four participants argued that one way to save money across their sector and the entire public sector was to reduce the level of managers within the system, as one nurse explains:

> I'd have less of a divide between the management and the foot soldiers. That's something, both financially and in reality as well. The pen-pushers or, you know. And there's a huge divide there and it's, there's a lot of people there that aren't necessarily necessary, as in management. I don't know how they justify some of their jobs (P41, 19th July 2011).

Education was an area of the public sector mentioned frequently by healthcare participants. For example, 'decreasing class sizes and increasing primary school teachers' (P19, 2nd July 2011); and 'recently we hear about SNA's being pulled from schools. I mean, that's certainly something I wouldn't support' (P43, 20th July 2011) with many of the proposals around increasing funding for this sector. Not all participants who suggested increasing funding in education had children currently in the system. Again, language influenced by NPM ideas was employed by participants, for example: 'I think the concept of a safe job because you are in the state and all this, should be completely done away with, I think there should be flexibility' (P18, 30th June 2011) and 'I'd rationalise it' (P67, 21st September 2011). These proposals are interesting to note because participants from the health sector did not always see themselves as being part of the wider public sector:

> Public sector seems to be administration or people working in things like the Revenue and different Government Departments, the local councils. It seems to be very much office-based and I don't know why. It just doesn't seem to, when I think about it I don't think of myself as being in the public service and I don't know why. I just always have. Public sector workers are people in offices somewhere, normally in Dublin (P67, 21st September 2011).

Due to their emphasis on tradition and cohesion, professional groups (members of consensual culture) are assumed to be resistant to change, as are bureaucrats (members of hierarchical culture) due to their emphasis on stability and rigidity. In contrast, it was assumed that participants displaying an openness or positive attitude towards reform would be associated

more with development or market culture. Aside from being asked to make suggestions regarding changes to their own service and the wider public sector participants were asked what came to mind when they heard the phrase public sector reform. The reactions were mixed. While many participants argued that public sector reform was necessary, others had more negative associations with the term, utilising language such as: 'a bit allergic ... reform means less services, less availability, less money' (P26, 7th July 2011); 'a complete mess' (P26, 7th July 2011); 'I just get bored ... we need to wipe out so many thousand workers' (P43, 20th July 2011); 'oh dear, we're going around in another circle' (P48, 26th July 2011); 'cuts [laughter] in salary [laughter]' (P52, 10th August 2011); and 'my skin crawls' (P67, 21st September 2011). Others still argued that public sector reform needs to address the levels of waste in the public sector (for example, P42, 20th July 2011; P52, 10th August 2011). It was also assumed in Figure 2.1 that both of these groups would have a negative attitude to public sector reform due to the threat to their coalition strength and power. Indeed, two participants specifically pointed to this as a reason why change in the sector has been slow: 'the problem is that the HSE consists of strong groups of vested interests, many for whom the status quo is how it suits them best and change is difficult' (P48, 20th July 2011). One doctor discusses the role of unions: 'appearing on TV and debating about why this can't be done, it's the wrong attitude' (P18, 30th June 2011). P43 (20th July 2011) argued that the levels of sick leave within the sector should be tackled but that 'you'd have IMPACT and every union going on your back'. The very mixed attitudes regarding public sector reform by participants from the health sector illustrates a very different picture to the assumed negative view associated with those from consensual and hierarchical cultures. Figure 6.5 below relates the variety of attitudes to change/public sector reform expressed by healthcare participants and relates them to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 6.5 Health: A CVF Analysis of Reported Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform	Mixed attitudes regarding existing reforms Point out the need to address vested interests such as unions		Introduce a culture of hiring and firing Cost-saving measures suggested. Reduce numbers of managers and administrators Reform as a necessity	Increase staffing levels in order to provide proper patient care

6.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 analyses the ways in which NPM ideas impact upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals employed within the Irish health sector. In the first part of the chapter work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures are analysed by applying the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures. This is done in order to test the feasibility of H1 which states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'.

Analysis of the Irish health sector confirms H1, as changes to work practices are identified that can be attributed to NPM ideas. Increasingly, the use of short-term flexible job contracts indicate that the notion of a permanent pensionable position is being fast eroded. Participants identify a number of issues in relation to the employment of agency staff within the HSE. Lack of continuity of care for patients is one issue discussed by participants. In addition, agency staff do not enjoy the same security or benefits as permanent staff. As a measure of managerial duties, participants were questioned about the extent of their supervisory and budgetary duties. While only a small number of healthcare participants report having budgetary responsibilities, most of them testify that supervising and evaluating students is an accepted part of their professional duties. The acute awareness shown by participants of the financial costs associated with healthcare provision is particularly noteworthy as value for money is a central tenet of NPM ideas.

Under the Croke Park Agreement the HSE agreed to comply with the EU Working Time Directive. However, it is plain that a long hours culture is the norm for doctors and nurses within the Irish public healthcare system. Indeed, increased time commitment looks set to continue for the foreseeable future because of ongoing difficulties addressing staff shortages due to continued budget cuts. The long-term consequences of increased time commitment are extensive and worrying to say the least. 'Street-level' bureaucrats' and professionals' long-term physical and mental health may be adversely affected. The potential individual costs for staff are increased risk of depression, stress and suicide (Fogarty, 2013; Lynch, 2013). Working long hours also presents a risk to physical health (Harma, 2003). The costs to the HSE are also potentially extensive. A vicious circle emerges where long hours result in absenteeism. This in turn results in increased pressure on other staff members to work hard and for longer, which may in turn result in their absenteeism due to illness. Staff may decide to move to private practice, leave the profession completely or immigrate to countries/systems where working conditions are perceived to be better (Gittens, 2011). Loss of experienced staff results in loss of

institutional memory and this can adversely impact upon service provision. The Irish Medical Organisation (IMO) supported a strike action by junior doctors on 8th October 2013 demanding an end to shifts of more than 24 hours and a guarantee that the 48-hour week will be in place at the end of next year. As a result, a deal was reached at the Labour Relations Commission that financial sanctions would be incurred by hospitals that are in breach of the EU Working Time Directive. Aside from the obvious impact on healthcare staff, it stands to reason that patients will also be affected. Nurses and doctors that are overworked have the potential to make mistakes in life and death situations. The HSE has a duty of care to both its staff and its patients. It is a recommendation of this research that time commitment issues urgently need to be addressed within the HSE and that these sanctions must be strictly enforced.

Notwithstanding the changes identified above, aspects of hierarchical and consensual cultures resiliently remain part of the work practices of health sector 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals. Participants continue to maintain a strong identification with professionalism and professional work practices. Furthermore, occupations such as nursing, often regarded as semi-professions, make continued efforts to professionalise. Flexibility and discretion varies greatly depending on the profession, with doctors, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists reporting the highest levels of discretion in the sector. Aside from doctors, who are encouraged to develop new work practices through an obligation to do research as part of their career progression, innovation is curtailed by the necessity to strictly follow rules and procedures. Thus, evidence of developmental culture is limited. With the exception of the lone bureaucrat, customer service language has not pervaded to professionals within the health sector, with participants continuing to use terms such as client and patient to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis. This further demonstrates a continued identification with professionalism (consensual culture) by participants.

The literature review also pointed to increased evaluation as a change to visible manifestations of administrative culture. However, this is not the case in the Irish health sector. Participants note that evaluation is non-existent or patchy at best and varies greatly depending on the profession and local context. Participants expressed disappointment at the lack of meaningful evaluation in their sector because, in addition to ignoring incompetence, it results in lack of recognition for a job well done. Furthermore, when discussing accountability and evaluation, not one mention was made of HIQA by healthcare participants. This speaks volumes about participants' views on the significance of the agency with responsibility for quality, safety and accountability standards in the health and social services. Control mechanisms such as policies,

rules and procedures are on the increase. It is also apparent that participants are obliged to complete ever growing mountains of paperwork. Participants, understandably, worry about the imbalance between time spent on paperwork and patient care. In the healthcare sector accountability is intrinsically aligned with a pervasive culture of fear of litigation. Healthcare professionals can be held criminally responsible for their actions and poor notes will not stand up in court. Thus, paperwork is completed solely to ensure one is legally covered just in case. The stock standard phrase 'care not written, is care not given' is both alarming and astonishing. Levels of duplication in paperwork should be addressed so that the existing time imbalance between patient care and administrative duties is reversed. Increased control mechanisms, combined with vast amounts of paperwork, places the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals in the Irish health sector firmly in the hierarchical culture on the CVF.

The latter half of Chapter 6 deals with the invisible aspects of administrative culture. H2 maintains that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. Transformation denotes a marked or dramatic change. This is not the case in the health sector, therefore, H2 holds true. Values such as honesty, integrity, dignity and respect, that are associated with the traditional model of public administration, are prominent amongst healthcare participants. Proponents of NPM ideas assume that all public sector employees are motivated by self-interest. Alternatively Perry and Wise (1990) put forward the notion of public service motivation. The reality, however, is somewhere in between, with healthcare participants expressing a comprehensive range of competing and co-existing work motivations. As Peters (1988: 119) argues ‘it may be that, for better or for worse, the actual behaviour of individuals in the public bureaucracy is much more complex than would be predicted by or permitted in most models of their behaviour’. Almost mirroring Houston's (2005) results, healthcare participants report donating more blood and time than the national average, along with comparable amounts of money. The significantly high levels of blood donation could possibly be explained by its direct relevance to participants' daily work. However, the high levels of time donation by participants are in spite of the time intensive nature of many of their occupations. Additionally, participants report higher than average levels of voting, which, when combined with the other indicators offer reasonable support for the idea of PSM.

The picture painted regarding participants' attitudes to change/public sector reform is not straightforward either. According to participants, staff shortages are the most immediate issue

regarding healthcare provision. When asked to suggest changes to the wider public sector, the influence of NPM ideas becomes clear. One participant advocated introducing a culture of hiring and firing to the Irish public sector. Other notably NPM type suggestions include the introduction of charges for public healthcare provision and centralisation of services. In the context of staff shortages, bed closures and a pervasive awareness of costs across the sector, it is no wonder that participants make these sorts of suggestions. Healthcare participants argue that reform of the Irish public sector is completely necessary and openness to change is a feature of market and developmental cultures. However, the language used in relation to public sector reform was very mixed, with two participants in particular pointing out that vested interests such as the unions should be addressed if meaningful reform is to occur. Therefore, while NPM ideas have not led to a complete transformation of the invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals within the Irish health sector, there is evidence of them having some influence.

In sum, the above analysis clearly demonstrates that administrative culture is a highly complex issue. NPM ideas have not so much become entrenched within the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working in the Irish healthcare sector, but have been layered upon traditional models. The perverse outcomes of this layering process have not resulted in increased accountability as intended, but rather an increasingly bureaucratised administrative culture. Chapter 7 will now evaluate if this is also the case in the Irish housing sector.

CHAPTER 7

HOUSING

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Employing the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures described in Chapter 2, this chapter analyses the primary data obtained from participants in the housing sector, to test the hypotheses developed in Chapter 2. Being mindful that this research takes the symbolist perspective of organisational cultural change, the analysis remains aware of the contextual particularities of the Irish system discussed in Chapter 4.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has primary responsibility for the formulation and implementation of housing policy and legislation. The vast majority of housing services for which the Department is responsible are delivered through the local authorities. The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government also oversees the operation of the local government system and implements policy in relation to local government structures, functions, human resources and financing. In Ireland the local government system currently consists of 29 County Councils[17], 5 City Councils, 5 Borough Councils and 75 Town Councils[18]. Eight Regional Authorities co-ordinate certain city/county council activities and play a role in monitoring the use of EU structural funds. Two Regional Assemblies were established in 1999 to promote co-ordination of the provision of public services in their areas; manage new regional operational programmes; and monitor the general impact of all EU programmes of assistance under the CSF. As detailed in Figure 4.1, local authorities account for just under one tenth of public sector employment in Ireland[19].

According to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (2011: 1) approximately 98,000 households in Ireland needed housing support as of the end of March 2011. One is defined as being in receipt of housing support when residing in local authority, voluntary co-operative or Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS) accommodation. Local authorities undertake a range functions in relation to housing support including:

- Provision, management, maintenance and improvement of local authority housing including halting sites.
- Grants, loans, subsidies and provision of private sites to persons housing themselves or improving their houses.
- Securing accommodation for homeless persons.

[17] At the time of writing, proposals are well underway for the amalgamation of a number of County Councils.
[18] Currently, government proposals exist to abolish town councils and replace them with municipal district councils in 2014.
[19] Exact figures could not be obtained for the number of employees in Housing Directorates nationally.

- Implementing the Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS).
- Promoting and assisting the provision of housing by approved housing bodies.
- Improvement to private houses as an alternative to re-housing by the local authority.
- Operation and administration of annuity loans under the home choice loan scheme.
- Enforcement of certain housing standards and control.
- Assessment of housing need.
- Grants for the provision or alteration of accommodation to satisfy the needs of disabled persons.
- Extensions, alterations to local authority houses for needs of disabled persons.
- Extensions, alterations to local authority houses to relieve overcrowding.

The Irish local government system has undergone a selection of reforms influenced by NPM ideas. *Better Local Government* (BLG) 1996 set out four core principles as follows;

1. Enhancing local democracy;
2. Serving the customer better;
3. Improving efficiency; and
4. Providing better resources.

BLG also included for the modernisation of human resources. The document highlighted the need for a new management tier with clear responsibility for individual programmes and a leading role in servicing the Strategic Policy Committees i.e. Directors of Service, the creation of the Local Government Management Services Board (LGMSB) to support human-resource management in local authorities, more investment in training and development and so on. At senior level, the "dual structure" or the difference between technical and administrative staff has been removed. Considerable investment has taken place in I.T, new financial procedures have been introduced and professional staff have been recruited in the financial area. PMDS was launched in 2000 but never linked with increments in the local authority sector. Under the Local Government Act 2001, 5 year Corporate Plans had to be produced which set out long-term goals for local authorities. At the heart of all these changes has been the need to cut public spending and to make local government more economically efficient i.e. more like the private sector, as influenced by NPM ideas. The current local government reform strategy entitled *Putting People First – Action Programme for Effective Local Government Change* also bears hallmarks of NPM ideas with one of its four main themes being around delivering services efficiently. Quinlivan, Callanan and Murphy (2012: 13) predict that what they describe as the 'efficiency agenda' will emphasise 'structural reforms [which] are taking place in tandem with a

concerted effort to consolidate or share back-office services, to streamline business processes and to achieve savings in areas like procurement, ICT, and overheads'.

Of the eighty-three interviews conducted as part of this study, thirteen of the participants are local authority employees from Housing Directorates. Participants are from the clerical officer, assistant staff officer, staff officer and senior staff officer grades. Three of the participants are female and ten male. All of these participants can be categorised as 'street-level' bureaucrats.

Initially, this chapter examines whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish housing policy, in order to determine if H1 has validity. Subsequently, this chapter assesses whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish housing policy, so as to ascertain if H2 holds true. The concluding section considers how these hypotheses can be related to the overall research framework, that is, the CVF.

7.2 H1: VISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H1 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The visible aspects of administrative culture investigated in this research are work practices; and accountability and evaluation measures.

7.2.1 Work Practices

The interview commenced by inviting participants to describe their typical day at work and the type of duties they undertake. Participants were then asked to describe any changes to work practices that they have noticed since commencing their careers. Specific questions were posed regarding budgetary and accountancy responsibilities as well as innovation, discretion and work life balance issues.

The initial analysis was to learn to what extent participants from the housing sector conform to the identity of bureaucrat. A text search query within Nvivo 9 was undertaken of all transcripts from the sector using the words bureaucracy and bureaucratic to create a new node. The content of the node was then validated to ensure that the subject matter of the node related only to:

- Participants identifying as bureaucrats, or

- Participants describing aspects of their work practices as being bureaucratic.

Just one individual from the housing sector makes direct reference to the term bureaucracy. He describes the nature of working in a bureaucracy as follows:

> It's a bureaucracy and bureaucracy is about doing the same thing every day, and that's how people's wages get paid ... As long as you're accurate, that's all people want. They don't want anything fancy or new and that's, you know, that's the way it should be. ... In a bureaucracy it's far more important; the paper goes to the right people at the right time, and the system works (P13, 13th June 2011).

Chapter 2 described how bureaucrats under the traditional model of public administration best fit the hierarchical culture described on Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) CVF. While participants made scant reference to the specific terms bureaucracy or bureaucratic to describe their work practices; features of bureaucratic work practices as described by Collins and Cradden (2007: 12) are discussed by participants. For instance, one assistant staff officer describes the hierarchical nature of the organisation as follows; 'the one thing we're full of around here is structure and grading' (P78 10th October 2011). Participants also speak about the standardised nature of procedures at work: 'I suppose very black and white you know, we'd have set rules on doing stuff' (P14, 14th June 2011); and 'everyone kind of follows the same process, d'you know, and makes it easier for everybody' (P72, 4th October 2011). Therefore, one can argue that features of hierarchical culture such as following rules and procedures and rigid structures are present in the work practices of participants within the housing sector. A text search query was also performed for the terms professional and professionalism within the housing transcripts and the results were six separate references by three of the participants. These references related to behaving in a professional manner towards local councillors (P13, 13th June 2011); behaving in a professional manner when serving customers at the public counter (P72, 4th October 2011); and the lack of professional management in local government (P77, 10th October 2011). However, none of the participants speak of professional work practices to any huge extent as described by Noordegraaf (2001: 768). Therefore, support for participants' identification with a professional work identity is marginal.

Levels of flexibility and discretion are constrained within hierarchical culture as the focus is on rules and procedures and high levels of control and structure. As one clerical officer contends 'they [the public] can't expect us to do everything because we are hemmed in by legislation, by council policy' (P14, 14th June 2011). However, when explicitly asked, each and every participant interviewed from the housing sector argues that they have discretion on how to organise their day and how to prioritise the completion of their tasks. Participants were also directly asked if they felt they got a chance to be innovative at work, as innovation is regarded

as an outward focus and corresponds to developmental culture on the CVF. Levels of innovation were quite limited amongst participants. A clerical officer explains that 'it's not the most creative or innovative of jobs' (P5, 25th May 2011). Another participant argues that the lack of innovation is due to the very clear levels of responsibility and rigidity within the organisation, explaining that if he tried to do something new or different,

> I very quickly would be told, well first of all that's not your area of responsibility, you are creating expenses for other departments, your supervisor would have to sign off on it, if not him, other senior management would have to sign off on certain things. So we've, it's very much a hierarchical organisation, and the level of control that you have can be fairly circumscribed by higher powers within your own department or with other departments or with the elected members so this sheen of autonomy, that you can actually be innovative is, it can be quiet limited (P13, 13th June 2011).

When the responses regarding discretion and innovation are taken together, a very mixed picture emerges. While on the one hand participants argue that they have discretion to prioritise their tasks within their working day, on the other hand they argue that they are limited in their levels of innovation due to high levels of control and very clear levels of responsibility and rigidity. Thus, one could argue that the CVF is a valid tool here in that there are competing and co-existing interests and cultures within the organisation.

According to Figure 2.1 the application of NPM ideas would result in the use of business language by participants to describe their work practices. A text search query was performed of transcripts using the terms, citizen, customer, client, to ascertain how participants describe their work and those with whom they work on a daily basis. The results of this query were validated to ensure the references related directly to those whom participants deal with. One can argue that if participants were particularly business oriented they would employ the term customer most extensively to describe whom they deal with.

As all participants from the housing sector are categorised as bureaucrats it was expected that they would utilise the term citizen most extensively (linked with the traditional model of public administration). Just two participants from the housing sector used the term citizen with a further two employing the term client (associated with professionals under the traditional model of public administration). However, almost half of the participants from the housing sector utilised the term customer to describe whom they deal with daily. As one assistant staff officer states: 'I would consider myself more customer-orientated' (P78, 10th October 2011) while a clerical officer argues: 'If you have all the information, that's fine at least then you've the confidence to deal with the customer' (P76, 10th October 2011). Yet another clerical officer

reasons that one needs to 'be as businesslike as possible' (P72, 4th October 2011) when describing the skills necessary to perform his job. Other terms used by participants from this sector to describe who they deal with are; 'members of the public' (P5, 25th May 2011); 'the public' (P74, 7th October 2011): and 'our tenants' (P77, 10th October 2011). The second pillar of BLG is serving the customer better and in this, at least, Irish local authorities have made great progress (Keogan, 2003: 91). Employees have undergone customer service training; public areas have been made more accessible; customer service action plans and customer charters have been introduced; and online services have been improved. Therefore, it is plausible to state that the evidence supports the view that participants from the housing sector display a business or market orientation, particularly in relation to identifying who they deal with as customers.

Moreover, Figure 2.1 identified other changes to visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of the public sector as a consequence of NPM, increased flexibility being the first. It is evident that within the Irish housing sector, the notion of a permanent pensionable position for life is far from being eroded. None of the participants interviewed were on temporary work contracts, so increased flexibility is not evident here. However, participants speak about increased flexibility in terms of working arrangements. An example frequently cited by participants in this sector is the introduction of the flexi-clock system. One senior staff officer describes this system as follows:

> Our core hours are between ten and four and the working hours that you can work are between eight and six. So if you're feeling bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, great, in at eight, leave at six. Work up, a couple of hours either side. But similarly I suppose, if, I don't know, your bus is running late or you're stuck in traffic of whatever you can come in at half nine instead of half eight or whatever. There's flexibility there (P66, 14th December 2011).

Thus, the phenomenon of increased flexibility pointed to in the literature (Hughes, 1998; Taylor 2001) is indeed a change to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats within housing, albeit not to a great extent.

The literature also argues that increased time commitment is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the administrative culture of the public sector (Lane, 2000; Davies and Thomas, 2002). When questioned if they are expected to work long hours or if they find it difficult to achieve a work life balance the answer was a resounding no by the vast majority of participants. Those who were required to work late on occasion pointed to the fact that they were able to claim back the time worked up at a later date due to the flexi-clock system. For instance, 'I'm on the clock here. So you can work up a certain amount of time and you basically have to take time

off' (P79, 11th October 2011). Therefore, one can argue that increased commitment is not a marked change to work practices within the housing sector.

Thirdly, the literature contends that employees will be increasingly encouraged undertake managerial responsibilities (Taylor, 2001). When asked if they have any role supervising other members of staff, approximately half of the respondents replied positively. The type of duties involved in supervising staff mentioned by participants included authorising annual leave; signing off on PMDS; and signing off on increments. One senior staff officer describes his supervisory duties as follows; 'I would have responsibility for them and the work that they do and you know, how it's carried out' (P66, 14th September 2011). Praise for their staff was not uncommon, for example, 'But there is nothing to manage; I mean the staff are good so they look after it' (P76, 10th October 2011). Another measure of enterprising managers (Minogue, 1998) is that they have control and discretion over their own budgets. Of the participants in the housing sector only four of them mentioned having any budgetary responsibilities, all of whom were above clerical officer grade. Four participants also mentioned that processing payments was part of their duties but that the next person up on the ladder had to approve all payments. An awareness of costs was not mentioned by participants. It is very clear that the level and extent of management duties in the housing sector are directly related to the employees' location in the hierarchy and this remains quite rigid.

Participants from this sector did refer to collaboration and teamwork when discussing their work practices which is specific to a post-NPM model of administrative culture. For example, when asked about his supervisory duties, one assistant staff officer describes them as follows:

> From my point of view I don't refer to them as my staff or think of them that way; I think of them as just people that work with me and that help me get to where I need to get and likewise that I should be able to help them to get to where they need to get each day (P78, 10th October 2011).

From the evidence above, it is apparent that NPM ideas have resulted in some changes to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats in the Irish housing sector. However, these changes have not been as extensive as outlined in the literature. Indeed, four participants note that very little change has occurred to their work practices over the last number of years. As one clerical officer argues:

> I think it's pretty similar to what it was years ago. I don't think there is that much difference, it's as it was in the last maybe ten years around that, there doesn't seem to be much in the difference, not unless there would be very small differences now or something like that (P14, 14th June 2011).

While another states that, 'if I was here twenty years ago I think it would be running fairly similarly to now' (P72, 4th October 2011). Certainly, there is little evidence of increased time commitment. Increased flexibility takes the form of the introduction of a flexi-clock system as opposed to flexible work contracts and the role of a manager is firmly rooted to one's position in the hierarchy. Thus, apart from participants use of customer service language there appears to be very little change at all. Undoubtedly, it seems that the deduction in Chapter 2 that hierarchical culture would prove to be resistant to change holds true in the case of work practices. The fourth change to work practices outlined in the literature is an increasing focus on accountability and evaluation which is examined in detail in the next section. Figure 7.1 below details the work practices of housing participants as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 7.1 Housing: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Practices

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Practices	Descriptions of bureaucratic work practices such as; Following rules and procedures. Clear levels of responsibility. Rigid structures. Discretion: constrained by the need to remain within the confines of legislation. Innovation: limited. Permanent pensionable employment remains the norm.		Almost half of the participants use the term customer. Increased flexibility of job contracts? NO Introduction of flexi-clock system Increased time commitment? NO Level and extent of managerial duties directly related to position within the hierarchy.	Teamwork and collaboration mentioned as important skills.

7.2.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures

The literature suggests that an increasing focus on accountability and evaluation measures is another visible way in which NPM has impacted on the traditional administrative culture of the public sector (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Alcock, 2003). It was assumed that bureaucrats would be resistant to change and this appears to be the case in relation to evaluation within the housing sector. When asked how their duties were evaluated, five housing participants cited PMDS.

However, it seems that this process is not being engaged with in the local authority sector. One senior staff officer claims that 'I can't see it's made a huge difference, it's not being applied. It's never been applied' (P13, 13th June 2011); while a staff officer states that 'we go through the exercise of doing it' (P80, 11th October 2011); and a clerical officer mentions that 'people kind of paid lip service' (P72, 4th October 2011). Indeed, PMDS appears to be so underused within the sector that some participants made statements such as 'there is some sort of performance review, I can't really remember what it's called' (P5, 25th May 2011); and 'where by you'd have to fill up this kind of a sheet, it was, what was it again, personal development assessment kind of thing' (P74, 7th October 2011). Other forms of evaluation discussed by participants include increasing levels and types of audit for example, 'the biggest one [change] that I've seen is probably the audit side of things, you know; that not alone do we have an internal audit but we have external audits that are a bit more in-depth' (P78, 10th October 2011); 'we've become very report orientated. Things coming down from the management, it's all statistics' (P79, 11th October 2011); and 'our management are obsessed with performance indicators' (P80, 11th October 2011). It appears that while local authorities themselves are being evaluated more on an organisational level, this does not translate down to the level of individual staff member.

Participants offered a variety of reasons why PMDS was not being engaged with. One argues that 'it would be seen as being highly confrontational, and we don't like confrontation in this organisation' (P13, 13th June 2011). Various participants attested that PMDS was not being complied with due to the recent round of 'pay cuts' (P14, 14th June 2011; P77, 10th October 2011). However, another maintains that non-engagement with the PMDS process precedes the recent round of pay cuts:

> They just feel its absolute bullshit. And it's viewed with, not suspicion, but kind of like … People, certainly in among the indoor staff, people are kind of looking up going *Oh Christ. Why do we have to do this?* And you know, it's not just the clerical grades. It's the higher admin grades above my own (P66, 14th September 2011).

Public sector unions were also identified as being a reason why PMDS was not engaged with (P13, 13th June 2011; P66, 14th September 2011). This coincides with the argument in Chapter 2 that bureaucrats and professionals under the traditional model of public administration would oppose change due to their coalition strength.

While some participants advocated that 'the PMDS should be more pushed alright' (P14, 14th June 2011); and 'the theory was fantastic' (P77, 10th October 2011) the overall attitude towards PMDS was rather negative. An explanation offered for this attitude was that PMDS does not

translate directly into either rewards or acknowledgement for achievement or sanctions for underperformance, that is, meaningful accountability. The following represent typical statements; 'I just think it goes nowhere really' (P75, 10th October 2011); 'more like a paper exercise' (P76, 10th October 2011); and 'waste of time' (P79, 11th October 2011).

Participants from the housing sector overwhelmingly expressed a positive attitude towards the idea of implementing appropriate evaluation measures within their organisation. This was often framed in terms of acknowledgement of employees with glowing performance rather than just punitive measures, for example, 'more recognition for people who actually do work hard' (P5, 25th May 2011); and 'often people who are doing good work don't get any recognition or any praise' (P13, 13th June 2011). However, two participants did argue that stronger measures need to be taken regarding those who under-perform in the organisation, for example an assistant staff officer advocates that his local authority should 'have a HR department that's able to fire people if they are not doing a good job ... so in other words a HR department with teeth' (P76, 10th October 2011). While a staff officer recommends that:

> If they are under performing they should be let go. If they commit a crime, defraud local authorities, they should be prosecuted to the highest extent. ... if you are in a position of trust, i.e. a government worker, you are punished to a higher level than the man on the street. So if you defraud the local authorities as an employee, you should get a more serious prison sentence than someone who robs a supermarket for example because you are in a position of trust (P77, 10th October 2011).

The market culture on the CVF links rewards with achievement and sanctions to under-performance. Therefore, on attitudes towards evaluation and accountability participants widely conform to market culture. One caveat discussed by participants as regards individual responsibility was that the employee could and should not be held accountable for their actions if underperformance and lack of training is not addressed by the organisation. Indeed, participants noted that the budgets for training and re-training have all but disappeared due to the current recession.

A significant feature of the traditional model of public administration is that everything is recorded and this practice is very evident in the housing sector. As one clerical officer states 'you've to keep an account of every detail and everything that happens so if you are gone in years to come they can, at least there is a trail of paperwork to justify what you did in that circumstance' (P75, 10th October 2011). Recording everything is a measure of accountability, as one assistant staff officer argues; 'well you document everything you do, any conversations I have with people I'll do a memo or an email or something, print it out' (P79, 11th October 2011).

There is extensive evidence of bureaucratic work practices here, as Collins and Cradden (2007: 12) point out 'all official business is documented in written form' in a bureaucratic organisation. Participants were aware that their written records can be examined in the case of legal proceedings, for instance, 'oh you have to cover yourself. We could end up in a court situation' (P79, 11th October 2011); or, under FOI legislation. As one participant argues:

> one has to be careful of what one says of course and what one writes, so with the freedom of information we are always wary of that, not wary, you know we are rightly conscious of the fact that, an email is a public communication, and people can demand access to it, so unless you can stand over whatever you write, you shouldn't be putting it down on email, if you want to pass on information which can be of a controversial nature, of if you want to have a discussion with somebody which you don't want to have it in public, you need to do it face to face, don't do it by email (P13, 13th June 2011).

Together with extensive use of rules and procedures, the high levels of paperwork yet again firmly places the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats within the housing sector at the control end of the axis on the CVF. Figure 7.2 below illustrates the variety of responses regarding accountability and evaluation measures from housing sector participants (for a note on how tabular data should be interpreted please refer to Section 3.7.4).

Figure 7.2 Housing: A CVF Analysis of Reported Accountability and Evaluation Measures

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Accountability and Evaluation	Increased control through rules, policies and procedures. Recording everything continues to be accepted practice. Paperwork is a means of accountability – justification for your actions.		PMDS not engaged with However, Local authorities themselves increasingly evaluated at organisational level: through the use of audits and performance indicators.	Participants overwhelmingly expressed the need to implement appropriate evaluation measures.

Throughout this research, it has been acknowledged that administrative culture is a dynamic system consisting of both visible and invisible manifestations which compete and co-exist with each other. Therefore, in order to obtain a more nuanced picture of the administrative culture of street-level bureaucrats in the housing sector, the analysis now turns to the invisible aspect of administrative culture.

7.3 H2: INVISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H2 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. As was argued in Chapter 2, deciphering the invisible aspects of administrative culture is not as effortless as the visible aspects. The invisible aspects of administrative culture analysed as part of this research are values; work motivations; and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

7.3.1 Values

Chapter 2 discussed how NPM ideas may have altered the values of the public sector (see for example, Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen, 1997; Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005; and Gray and Jenkins, 2003). According to Figure 2.1 values associated with the traditional model of public administration are transparency, neutrality, fairness, due process, integrity, honesty and probity. Whereas the typical values associated with NPM are customer service, productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money. The distinctive values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture include balancing different interests, developing networks, openness and responsiveness.

Schein (2010) asserts that the espoused values of an organisation relate to how the organisation represents itself to the outside. As was observed in Chapter 4 the espoused values of Irish public sector reform programmes continue to reflect NPM ideas. However, Chapter 2 also noted that the espoused values of an organisation may not necessarily be consistent with those of all its subcultures or occupational groups. The literature (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Ashburner *et al.* 1996; Vrangbaek, 2009) indicates that regardless of the espoused values of an administration, public sector employees have retained the underlying values of traditional public administration.

In order to investigate participants' values a wide variety of questions were posed, including a number relating to what participants regard as ethical behaviour and what skills or attributes they consider necessary to perform their jobs. As noted in the former part of this chapter participants from the housing sector vigorously conform to the hierarchical culture on the CVF. Indeed, the values discussed by participants in relation to ethical behaviour further enhance this point. For example, Collins and Cradden (2007: 12) point out that a feature of bureaucracy is that those employed within it do not have any personal gain from their employment and participants do refer to this. As one clerical officer points out; 'if you were doing a job, inside in the authority, you couldn’t do the same job outside' (P14, 14th June 2011). While, an assistant

staff officer describes ethical behaviour as 'don't exploit the system. Treat your staff, fellow staff members with respect. I'd imagine don't be abusing your telephones, the internet, paperwork' (P76, 10th October 2011). In particular, participants discussed the phenomenon of engineers, planners or other technical grades engaging in consultancy work for private gain with outside contractors bidding for public contracts.

Other values associated with the traditional model of public administration frequently mentioned by participants were confidentiality, honesty and integrity. Several participants mentioned codes of conduct which outline what one can and cannot do. Once more this can be taken as a focus on rules and policies and an adherence to the control end of the axis on the CVF. Related to this, participants referred to dressing appropriately when at work, for example, 'modest' (P74, 7th October 2011); and 'we are not allowed wear maybe skirts you know too short' (P75, 10th October 2011).

While participants did refer to 'customer handbooks' (P79, 11th October 2011) and good customer service, no mention was made of business-like values such as efficient use of resources or providing value for money. This is consistent with H2, that is, the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy. Thus, one can argue that on this invisible aspect of administrative culture, participants from the housing sector continue to correspond to hierarchical culture. These findings are presented in tabular form in Figure 7.3 below (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 7.3 Housing: A CVF Analysis of Reported Values

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Values	No personal gain from their position Confidentiality, honesty and integrity Adhering to codes of conduct at all times		Customer Service No mention made of business-like values such as efficient use of resources or providing value for money.	

7.3.2 Work Motivations

Chapter 2 also presented differing ideas regarding the nature of human behaviour. NPM ideas contend that public sector employees are motivated by self-interest. While the idea of PSM described by Perry and Wise (1990: 368) as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organisations'. In order to assess the work motivations of participants, they were asked questions relating to how they arrived in their current state of employment and why they made those choices. Questions were also posed regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their current positions to assess whether they were in fact motivated by self-interest or public service. The work motivations of public sector employees are an essential invisible feature of administrative culture to investigate, because if the visible manifestations of organisational culture such as reward and promotion structures are completely juxtaposed to the underlying values and motivations of staff, interaction with these systems will never be meaningful.

Extrinsic work motivations such as 'convenience ... flexible hours ... solid employment' (P66, 14th September 2011); 'a pensionable job' (P74, 7th October 2011); 'pension' (P77, 10th October 2011); 'stability (P78, 10th October 2011); 'security' (P5, 25th May 2011; P66, 14th September 2011; P77, 10th October 2011; P78, 10th October 2011); a permanent position (P74, 7th October 2011; P74, 10th October 2011; P79, 11th October 2011); 'it enables you to work close by where you reside' (P77, 10th October 2011); and 'we don't have to work weekends' (P81, 11th October 2011) were frequently discussed by participants as an advantage of being a local authority employee. Additionally, the Irish public sector is highly feminised (see Chapter 4), and participants stated that the family friendly working arrangements available in local authorities were an advantage for them. Interestingly, two of the participants who mentioned that family friendly working arrangements were of benefit were male.

Participants expressed diverse views in relation to their rates of pay. While certain participants argue that they are 'reasonably well paid' (P13, 13th June 2011); or, 'paid fairly' (P66, 14th September 2011), many others maintain that 'I should be getting paid more' (P72, 4th October 2011) and 'I could be better paid' (P74, 7th October 2011). One assistant staff officer asserts that 'we have good conditions' (P78, 10th October 2011) which more than compensate for his salary. Overall though, despite the diversity of views regarding rates of pay, money does not appear to be the main motivating factor for participants in the housing sector. As one clerical officer explains;

> you're kind of apologising for your job all the time, apologising to have a job, and I think a lot of people in the public service really resent that, because when the times were good, and when there was a lot of jobs going in the public service, there was very few people going for them, because they didn't want to be, there was no money in it, they didn't want to go into it, and suddenly it's the best job in history (P14, 14th June 2011).

Indeed, the majority of the participants interviewed became public sector employees at the height of the Celtic Tiger. Therefore, if 'street-level' bureaucrats are not particularly motivated by self-interest as is argued by NPM ideas, what does indeed motivate them and more importantly, what would the appropriate evaluation and accountability systems be in this case? This is an issue that will be addressed in more detail in the concluding chapter.

Although extrinsic motivations do feature, participants also exhibit several other types of work motivations. Many participants reveal altruistic motives for example, 'I like helping' (P78, 10th October 2011). Additionally, intrinsic work motivational factors were articulated by participants, with phrases such as 'interesting' (P79, 11th October 2011) and 'good challenges' (P78, 10th October 2011) being common. Participants also cited the training opportunities available to them as being advantageous. Social motivational factors were significant to participants, for example one clerical officer states that 'I like the people I work with. I like them a lot' (P72, 4th October 2011) while another points out 'I'm a people person, I love dealing with people' (P75, 10th October 2011). Another motivational factor expressed by participants in the housing sector in choosing to embark on their career is a socialisation influence, that is, the influence or example of family members already in the occupation. Participants mention the influence of 'my buddy' (P14, 14th June 2011) and 'friends' (P66, 14th September 2011; P78, 10th October 2011) when deciding to apply for positions in local authorities. Therefore, one can argue that participants display very multifaceted work motivational factors overall.

As regards PSM being an explicit motivational factor for participants, a few participants did specifically mention the idea of public service, for example: 'I think that we're here to serve the people of our county. That's our job. In my opinion I'm very clear on it' (P78, 10th October 2011). One participant even describes what he terms as a 'culture of public ethos' as follows:

> For example the whole crisis last winter, and the previous year of the flood, people bent over backwards, and eh, if there is a crisis here tomorrow morning, the organisation here would respond, a hundred percent the best way it could. There would be no question whatsoever about people's commitment (P13, 13th June 2011).

An interest in politics and policymaking is another indicator of PSM and this was also mentioned by three participants in the housing sector (P13, 13th June 2011; P66, 14th September 2011; P75, 10th October 2011).

Moreover, PSM is connected to service to the community. Houston (2005) observed that public sector employees donated more blood and time to charity than private sector employees(but found no difference in terms of financial donations). Consequently, participants of this research were asked whether they donated blood, money or time. According to Taylor (2011) 'the World Giving Index, compiled by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), showed seventy-five percent of Irish people donated money to charity while thirty-eight percent volunteered their time each month'. The results from the housing sector regarding donations of money (seventy-two percent) are comparable to the rest of the Irish population. Slightly more than the national average (forty-six percent) from the sector testified to volunteering their time. Forty-six percent of participants also reported donating blood, which is well above the national average (according to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service, only three percent of Irish people donate blood). As an indication of an interest in politics and public policy making participants were asked whether they voted and one hundred percent of them replied positively. Again, this is in excess of the national average (for example turnout for the Fiscal Treaty Referendum was fifty percent, and the 2011 General Election was seventy percent)[20]. Participants donated their time to a local voluntary organisation for people with disabilities (P13, 13th June 2011); Vincent de Paul (P5, 25th May 2011); the local tidy towns committee (P75, 10th October 2011); and local sporting organisations (P76, 10th October 2011; P77, 10th October 2011; P80, 11th October 2011). The wide availability of flexible working arrangements could plausibly be a factor in this. However, service to the community is not of any actual career advantage to participants within the housing sector. Alternatively, one could argue that the type of individual who would volunteer their time for an interview may also be the type of individual to volunteer their time to charity (participants in the research were self-selecting). The results regarding blood donation and voting are not so simply explained and require further investigation. Then again, participants may simply have higher levels of PSM than the general population.

Thus, one can argue that the paragraphs above signal a far more complex scenario regarding the motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals than either NPM ideas or the concept of PSM can hope to describe. As is argued by Perry and Wise (1990: 369),

[20] The statistics presented here are relatively crude as the sample is not large enough to be considered representative of the entire Irish housing sector.

> Of course, people are a mix of motives, exhibiting combinations of values over a lifetime and focusing on different motives at various points in their careers. Personal or environmental factors might account for changes in individual motives, but clearly an individual can switch among public service motives as well as away from these stimuli altogether.

Undeniably, the picture painted by participants in the housing sector as regards their work motivations is a very complex one and while extrinsic motivations are somewhat important, they do not appear to be the sole motivational force. Figure 7.4 below details the variety of work motivations mentioned by housing sector participants and relates them to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).Therefore, in the case of the work motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats from the housing sector, one can argue that H2 holds true.

Figure 7.4 Housing: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Motivations

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Motivations		Helping people Training opportunities and interesting work	Diverse views in relation to rates of pay Family friendly working hours important	The majority of participants became public sector employees at the height of the economic boom (a time when private sector salaries were much higher by comparison) Participants were clear that their role is to serve the public Stated interest in politics and policy making (evidenced by all of them voting). Service to the community: Money corresponds to national average. Time slightly more and Blood far higher.

7.3.3 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

The final portion of the interview consisted of a series of questions regarding participant's attitudes to change and public sector reform. They were asked to propose possible reforms or changes to their own sector as well as to the entire Irish public sector. As was outlined in Figure 2.1, due to their emphasis on stability and rigidity bureaucrats (members of hierarchical culture) were thought to be opposed to to change. In contrast, it was assumed that participants displaying a positive attitude towards change and reform would be associated more with development or market culture.

When given the opportunity to suggest changes to their own service, participants from the housing sector made numerous suggestions ranging from increasing staff and resources to their sector to re-organising the entire local authority system. Ideas mooted were around increasing efficiencies and improving customer service, for example; 'cut down on waiting times' (P14, 14th June 2011); introducing a 'service level agreement' stating how quickly a problem will be responded to (P72, 4th October 2011); 'more private waiting area ... better training to people going to the public counter' (P74, 7th October 2011); 'a private housing interview room' (P75, 10th October 2011). These suggestions for changes are very much framed in terms of improving service to the public. Four participants also advocate improving the living conditions of council tenants (P5, 25th May 2011; P66, 14th September 2011; P78, 10th October 2011; P81, 11th October 2011).

In general participants from the housing sector saw reform of both their sector and the wider public sector as completely necessary and offered a wide variety of suggestions as to how this could take place, such as: 'cutting the salaries of senior officials' (P13, 13th October 2011); 'I'd back water charges' (P14, 14th June 2011); 'amalgamating some of the councils' (P14, 14th June 2011); 'Saturday and Sunday opening' (P66, 14th September 2011); 'reduce the councillors' (P74, 7th October 2011); and cut the rates of social welfare payments (P74, 7th October 2011). Each of these suggestions are cost saving measures, which, coupled with an openness to change moves participants more towards developmental and market culture. This demonstrates the impact of NPM ideas on their attitudes to change. Participants also recommended that more power should be devolved to local government thereby enhancing local democracy. For example, one participant suggested 'let local people decide what services are provided in their own locality' (P77, 10th October 2011), while another proposed 'more responsibility to local places' (P5, 25th May 2011). In contrast, there is minimal evidence that post-NPM ideas have influenced housing participants' attitudes to change with a minority advocating more collaboration between different government bodies: 'a joined-up co-ordinated approach' (P13, 13th June 2011); and 'try and link things up' (P78, 10th October 2011).

Aside from being asked to make suggestions regarding changes to their own service and to the wider public sector, participants were queried as to what came to mind when they heard the phrase public sector reform. The language used by participants in response was very mixed. Many participants voiced negative associations with public sector reform for example 'job cuts' (P13, 13th June 2011); 'it's just get rid of workers' (P14, 14th June 2011); 'slightly unnerving' (P5, 25th May 2011); 'curtailing services' (P66, 14th September 2011); 'red tape' (P76, 10th October

2011); and 'people suffering' (P79, 11th October 2011). However, while acknowledging their very negative views of existing reforms participants envisage reform as 'maybe some sort of opportunity' (P66, 14th September 2011); 'more value for money' (P75, 10th October 2011); and 'massive scope to join things up' (P78, 10th October 2011).

It was also assumed in Figure 2.1 that members of hierarchical culture have a very negative attitude to public sector reform due to the threat to their coalition strength and power. In the case of bureaucrats employed in Irish local authorities their coalition strength comes from union membership. Three participants pointed out that the trade unions were the reason why local authorities were not engaging with the PMDS process. One assistant staff officer identified the unions as the reason why changes cannot be implemented within their organisation as follows, 'the unions will stop an awful lot of the reforms or make it difficult which is not right' (P76, 10th October 2011). One participant suggests, however, that the relatively slow moving nature of the organisation is down to its culture:

> I'm only a relative newcomer to joining it, but I do think a lot of them joined after school, or not being disparaging about my colleagues, but they are conservative sort of people, they are people who like rules, they took the safe secure option, and it does reveal itself in the culture (P13, 13th June 2011).

Therefore, one can argue that the evidence presented above indicates a very mixed attitude to change and public sector reform by participants from housing sector, in contrast to an assumed negative view associated with those from consensual and hierarchical cultures. Figure 7.5 below tabulates housing sector participants' attitudes to change/public sector reform as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 7.5 Housing: A CVF Analysis of Reported Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform	Very mixed language regarding existing reforms. Point to unions as barriers to reform.		Suggestions for reforming their sector ranged from increasing staff and resources to re-organising the entire local authority sector. Cost-saving measures in order to increase efficiency Measures to improve customer service. Saw reform of their sector and entire public sector as completely necessary	More collaboration between government organisations.

7.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter 7 investigates the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats working within the Irish housing sector. The Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures is applied to both visible (work practices, accountability and evaluation measures) and invisible (values, work motivation, and attitudes to change/public sector reform) aspects of administrative culture in the Irish housing sector.

H1 asserts that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. This hypothesis is somewhat confirmed in relation to the housing sector as changes are evident. However, these changes are at a very superficial level. In housing, increased flexibility is confined to the introduction of flexible working arrangements such as job-sharing and the flexi-clock system. Hardiman (2010: 18) notes that Ireland was 'stronger on symbolic areas such as customer service statements than on real substantive change' and this is indeed the case with participants from the Irish housing sector. In terms of language, almost half of housing participants use the term customer to describe those whom they deal with on a daily basis, which is evidence of a market or business orientation. This can be attributed to customer service measures, such as customer service training; customer service action plans; and customer charters being implemented in Irish local authorities over the past two decades.

The analysis in Chapter 7 reveals a very narrow interaction with NPM ideas in the Irish housing sector. The administrative culture described by 'street-level' bureaucrats working in the Irish housing sector continues to adhere to many features of hierarchical culture. Participants detail bureaucratic work practices such as following rules and procedures. Recording everything also remains routine practice. Much of the work that participants do is constrained by the strict parameters of legislation, with discretion being limited to prioritising tasks within their day. Due to a strict adherence to policies and procedures, participants' ability to be innovative is curtailed. Permanent pensionable positions are an enduring feature in local authority employment. Furthermore, there is no evidence of increased time commitment amongst housing participants, with those who are obliged to work long hours on occasion noting that time can be claimed back at a later date through the flexi-clock system. It is clear that the amount and extent of managerial duties, such as supervision of staff and control of budgets, in the housing sector, is directly related to ones place in the hierarchy which remains quite rigid.

In terms of accountability and evaluation, the impact of NPM ideas is also somewhat limited. . While participants testify that local authorities themselves are increasingly being evaluated at organisational level, through the use of audits and performance indicators, at individual level, there is scant evidence of increasing evaluation. Individual evaluation, through PMDS, has been introduced to the sector. However, increments are not linked to performance, which is a key feature of market culture. Indeed, the process is so under-engaged with, that three participants could not even correctly name it. Various reasons for non-engagement with PMDS were proffered by participants including the coalition strength of public sector unions. Despite viewing PMDS in a negative light, participants overwhelmingly expressed the need to implement appropriate evaluation measures in their sector, which is a clear preference for market mechanisms. Appropriate evaluation, in their eyes, includes recognition for a job well done as well as the ability to fire employees for under- or non-performance. It is a recommendation of this research that more meaningful evaluation measures need to be introduced to the local authority sector. In addition, paperwork appears to be the means of accountability in the organisation. Recording everything justifies ones actions. Overall then, in light of the analysis above, changes to the visible aspects of administrative culture in the housing sector are minor particularly when compared to other sectors analysed as part of this study.

The second part of Chapter 7 considers the invisible aspects of administrative culture. H2 professes that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects

of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. A radical or marked change is implied by the term transformation, and this does not appear to be the case in the housing sector. Therefore, H2 is confirmed. Participants from the housing sector emphasise values allied with the traditional model of public administration such as confidentiality, honesty and integrity when discussing their work. In typical bureaucratic fashion, participants also stress the importance of the notion that personal gain should not be acquired from their positions. However, customer service values, associated with NPM, exist alongside the aforementioned traditional values, demonstrating the usefulness of the CVF model in this study. An analysis of work motivations in the housing sector produces an equally multifaceted impression. The majority of housing participants interviewed became public sector employees at the height of the economic boom in Ireland, a time when private sector salaries were much greater. However, 'it would be naive to suppose that public bureaucrats respond solely to a conception of the "public interest", or the interests of their agency, without reference to their personal circumstances' (Spicker, 2008: 160). Indeed, participants cite multiple types of work motivation including altruistic and social motivations as well as the extrinsic benefits the Irish public sector provides such as flexible working conditions; job security; generous maternity leave and allowances; and defined benefit pensions. As regards PMS being an explicit motivational factor for participants, a few of them did specifically mention the idea of public service. Participants also discuss having a particular interest in politics and policy making, which is substantiated by the fact that all of them vote. Local authority employees often have very direct contact with elected officials and their extremely high levels of voting could be explained by this socialisation factor. As an indicator of service to the community, housing participants were questioned about donations of blood, money and time. The results mirrored Houston's (2005) in that housing sector employees are more likely to volunteer for charity and donate blood (but found no difference in terms of individual donations of money). The high levels of blood and time donation are difficult to explain other than lending credence to the idea of PSM (Perry and Wise, 1990).

Chapter 7 also demonstrates that housing participants' attitudes to change/public sector reform are equally complex. Overall, participants interviewed in the housing sector were well informed about wider issues in the local government sector. This awareness had been developed through the completion of third level courses at the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) on local government. Participants offer numerous suggestions to reform their sector ranging from increasing staff numbers and resources to re-organising the entire local government system. Moreover, many participants suggest changes that would increase efficiencies and customer service, demonstrating the influence of NPM. This influence is also apparent in the suggestions

put forward regarding the wider public sector by housing participants which include cost savings ideas. In addition, participants advocate devolving more power to local authorities and more collaboration between government agencies. The CVF model of organisational cultures assumes that members of hierarchical culture would resist change yet housing participants have a very open attitude to change. Furthermore, the language used to describe reforms that have been made in the past is diverse, which indicates that the relationship of hierarchical culture to change is not clear-cut. Overall then, the analysis in this chapter outlines how NPM ideas have not led to a complete transformation of the invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within the Irish housing sector. But there is evidence of them enchanting participants somewhat, in particular, participants ideas around customer service and ideas on how to reform the entire Irish public sectorThe ensuing chapter proffers the analysis of primary data obtained from participants in the personal social services.

CHAPTER 8

PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses the primary data obtained from participants employed in the personal social services, in order to evaluate the impact of NPM ideas on their administrative culture. The personal social services can be broadly defined as services for groups and individuals experiencing social and emotional difficulties. These services are very specific and are often required by those who are marginalised within society. Individuals who may avail of the personal social services in Ireland include: minority ethnic groups; young and adult offenders; children; families; the elderly; those with mental or physical illness and disabilities; the homeless; those who are unemployed; and those with addiction issues. The personal social services are primarily based within the community and include residential, domiciliary, and day-care services. They generally fall into 2 categories: constant care services and life-time emergency services. Constant care services are for those requiring overall care on a long-term basis for example, care of the elderly and life-time emergency services might occur out of crisis such as bereavement, child abuse, or domestic violence. Usually these services respond in the short term.

A number of different occupational groups are involved in the delivery of the personal social services in Ireland. These include social care workers, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, counsellors, administrative staff and so forth, employed in day-care and residential centres for those with physical and mental health disabilities, rehab centres, family resource centres, services for those in the criminal justice system and those with addiction issues to name but a few. Social workers are also involved in the delivery of the personal social services in Ireland and make up the entire sample for this policy area. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the sample criteria required that research participants must be directly employed in the Irish public sector and many of the personal social services in Ireland are delivered in the community and voluntary sector. Secondly, participation in the study was entirely voluntary and other professions within the personal social services did not come forward to participate in the study (despite the researcher's best efforts).

Spicker (2012) explains the nature of the work undertaken by the social workers as follows,

> Social work is to some extent defined by the activities of the personal social services and the client groups they deal with. What social workers do is interpreted in various ways. 'Casework', or 'direct' work, includes
>
> - problem solving (as advisor, broker or advocate)
> - psycho-social therapy
> - meeting the functional tasks of the agency

- changing behaviour, and
- crisis intervention.

Basic skills include assessment, interviewing and recording; others include group work, counselling, negotiation and advocacy. The role of the social worker, and the methods used, depend largely on the interpretation of the problems the worker is dealing with.

The Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW) is the professional body for social workers in Ireland. According to the IASW (2012) there are approximately 2,800 social workers in Ireland at present, and around eighty percent of them work in the public sector[21]. In Ireland, the HSE has responsibility for the provision of the vast majority of the personal social services in the public sector. Social work services are also provided by local authorities Housing Directorates. See Chapters 6 and 7 respectively for descriptions of the structures of the health services and local government in Ireland and the reforms influenced by NPM ideas that have taken place within them.

Fifteen social workers participated in this study. Twelve of those participants are employed by the HSE in the following capacities: community social work; primary care; children and families (or child protection); and medical social work. Additionally, three of the participants from the personal social services are employed in Housing Directorates of local authorities.

The first part of this chapter examines whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of the personal social services in Ireland in order to determine if H1 is valid. The second section of this chapter assesses whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish personal social services, so as to assess if H2 is justifiable. The concluding section assesses how these hypotheses can be related to the overall research framework.

8.2 H1: VISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H1 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The visible aspects of administrative culture examined as part of this research are work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures.

[21] As per email from D. McGoldrick, IASW on 9th November 2012

8.2.1 Work Practices

The interviews commenced by inviting participants to describe their typical day at work and the type of duties they undertake. Participants were then asked to describe any changes to work practices that they have noticed since they commenced their careers. In addition, specific questions about budgetary and accountancy responsibilities as well as innovation, discretion and work life balance issues were asked.

The initial analysis was to assess to what extent participants from the personal social services conform to the identity of a professional group. A text search query within Nvivo 9 was undertaken of all transcripts from the personal social services using the words professional and profession to create a new node. The content of the node was then validated to ensure that the subject matter of the node related only to:

- Participants identifying as professionals, or
- Participants describing aspects of their work practices as being professional.

This resulted in ninety six separate references by fourteen of the participants from the personal social services to the terms professional or profession. P3, 24th May 2011 who is employed in a local authority is the only participant who makes absolutely no reference to these terms. In contrast, only six references were made by four of the participants to the terms bureaucracy or bureaucratic.

Numerous work practices described by participants from the personal social services correspond to the ten features Noordegraaf (2007: 768) identifies as relating to professionalism. The IASW is the professional association of social workers in Ireland. It aims to promote the standards and ideals of social work, advance the education and training of social workers and to represent the views of social workers in relation to social policy and practice. Social workers are expected to act in accordance with the code of ethics developed by the IASW. As one participant notes 'those that are members of IASW should operate to those ethics' (P9, 31st May 2011). Additionally, from May 2013, all social worker registrants must abide by a new statutory code of professional conduct and ethics. Knowledge transfer is another feature of professionalism those within the personal services conform to which is institutionalised through research programs, conferences, courses, journals and magazines. For example, the IASW holds an annual conference and prints its own journal entitled *The Irish Social Worker.* As was argued in chapter 3 professionals under traditional public administration best fit the consensual culture described on Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) CVF, as they have an internal flexibility focus.

High levels of discretion within one's occupation is the distinctive feature of consensual culture. Overall, participants within the personal social services reported that they had high levels of flexibility and discretion in both how they prioritise and organise their day and in their decision making as regards clients. However, participants point out that there are limitations on their flexibility and discretion, for example, 'the things that aren't flexible are; you know court work is always going to be a day and a time and a location. And some of the kind of multi-disciplinary meetings because you are bringing together obviously so many people' (P38, 14th July 2011); 'once a month I'd have a team meeting or there'd be other kind of meetings within the team or whatever which are scheduled anyway' (P11, 7th June 2011); 'other than using the core system of clocking in and clocking out, I make my own time, do my thing' (P12, 10th June 2011).

On the other hand innovation is regarded as an outward focus on the CVF and corresponds to developmental culture. Participants from the personal social services had mixed views as regards innovation. While they all believed they had huge scope for flexibility within their working day, the freedom to take risks or develop new ways of doing things was limited. As one social worker from the child and family services argues,

> I think I have some innovative ideas but I think your ideas have got to be supported by your line manager. And line managers have changed over the years and some have been more supportive and some, I wouldn't say that they are not supportive they're just maybe not as open to change or suggestions (P38, 14th July 2011).

This appeared to be the general consensus amongst participants from the personal social services; innovation or change is unlikely to happen without the support of their line management and is greatly dependent on the availability of resources. However, as one medical social worker emphasises:

> For all sorts of reasons it's very, very difficult in a hospital environment with, bringing in any form of new idea is, you know, it's an uphill struggle because, the culture of an organisation prevents you from, changing anything too fast. So you've sort of almost got to wait for things to catch up before, you're able to, you know, to move things along another bit (P71, 30th September 2011).

Consequently, one can argue that the culture of the personal social services conforms more to consensual culture than developmental culture on the CVF as the emphasis is on discretion as opposed to innovation. However, H1 argues that the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the work practices of 'street-level' professionals and the following analysis will evaluate if this is indeed the case in the personal social services.

According to Figure 2.1 each profession has its own specific method of work and language and in contrast NPM ideas would result in the use of business language to describe participants work practices. A text search query was performed of transcripts using the terms, citizen, customer, client, to ascertain how participants describe their work and those whom they work with on a daily basis. The results of this query were validated to ensure that the references related directly to those who participants deal with. It is possible to argue that if participants were particularly business oriented they would employ the term customer to describe whom they deal with. Not one participant from the personal social services utilised the terms customer (associated with NPM ideas) or citizen (associated with the traditional model of public administration) to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis. In line with their strong identification with professionalism the majority of participants use the term client to describe whom they deal with. The two participants who do not use the term client, describe who they deal with as 'the public' and 'our tenants' (P12, 10th June 2011) as he is a social worker in local authority housing section; and 'young people' (P45, 22nd July 2011) as she is a senior social work practitioner who deals with fostering services for minors.

Figure 2.1 pointed to other changes to the traditional administrative culture of the public sector as a result of NPM ideas. Increased flexibility is the first change examined. The vast majority (with just one exception) of the participants interviewed from the personal social services held permanent pensionable positions within the HSE or their respective local authorities. Therefore, increased flexibility in working contracts is not evident here. However, participants address increased flexibility when discussing working arrangements. An example frequently cited by participants employed in local authorities is the introduction of the flexi-clock system, while participants employed by the HSE spoke about a system of TOIL (time off in lieu). Under both of these systems, time or hours worked up by employees can be built up and taken off at another time (subject to approval by management). Thus, the phenomenon of increased flexibility as pointed to in the literature (Hughes, 1998; Taylor 2001) is indeed a change to the work practices of 'street-level' professionals within the personal social services, albeit not to a great extent.

Increased time commitment is a phenomenon cited in the literature (Lane, 200; Davies and Thomas, 2002) that is as a result of the impact of NPM ideas on the work practices of the public sector. Analysis of the transcripts from the personal social services reveals that this is not necessarily the case across the board. When questioned if they are expected to work long hours or if they find it difficult to achieve a work life balance the answer was a resounding no by participants working in all contexts outside of the child and family services. Participants

employed in these services were required to work late on occasion. However, they pointed to the fact that they were able to claim back the time worked up at a later date due to the flexi-clock or TOIL systems in operation in their respective organisations. However, the picture painted by participants in the child and family services is dramatically different to this. As one participant explains:

> I suppose it's just the kind of culture of child protection really. It's not that you really have to, you know, my boss would not be standing outside the door telling me what to do or *You've to stay late.* But due to the volume of work. You've twenty-seven cases and it's just not possible to get around to, you may get around to two or three a week. So within a year you're just tipping away at kind of every crisis but not really getting down to the nitty-gritty of it because there's not enough time. So I find if I stay late I can get on top of things. But if I don't, if you only work within the hours of nine and five really, when you take an hour for lunch, that's seven hours, and there's not enough time in the day to get all of the work done. There's a recruitment embargo so we can't hire any staff. So there are just not enough workers at all. Massive waiting lists. Families in serious danger on waiting lists that we cannot get around to (P62, 7th September 2011).

This appears to be the general consensus, with participants describing this culture of presenteeism (Davies and Thomas, 2002) as the 'culture in social work' (P11, 7th June 2011); and 'it's not voiced but it's there as a kind of a culture that you will work really hard' (P9, 31st May 2011). Not 'having the time to actually, to do the job' (P11, 7th June 2011) due to 'the massive caseload' (P62, 7th September 2011) was identified by participants from the child and family services as the biggest challenge or constraint associated with their jobs. Despite having a system of TOIL in place within the child and family services, participants argue that due to the volume of work and the lack of resources they cannot always take these hours back. One senior social work practitioner argues 'we'd be working upwards of maybe ten, twelve hours a month on TOIL, which then is really, really hard to take back, you know. And then that creates difficulties as well for service delivery, when you're looking for TOIL and they're saying no' (P45, 22nd July 2001). Indeed, participants argue that this long hours culture is not sustainable in the long term with some of them reporting that they have become 'physically unwell' (P9, 31st May 2011) due to the demands of work. One participant argues that this long hours culture is not conducive to family life with the result that:

> I think that probably gets more difficult for women as they get older and have children and I think it's probably reflective of why it's quite a young population in child protection. There are of course older people but its more unusual and I don't know if people just get fed up of that you know feel that they need a slower pace of work because you really need a lot of energy for it (14th July 2011).

This is evident in that three of the participants interviewed from the other services had worked previously in child and family services and decided to leave due to family commitments. Two participants noted that they would choose not to seek work in Child Protection for this reason. This was across the board for both male and female social workers interviewed. There is no

evidence of this pressure to work long hours decreasing any time soon, thus one can argue that increasing time commitment is a feature of work practices in the child and family social services in particular.

Thirdly, the literature review argues that employees will be increasingly encouraged to become enterprising managers (Minogue, 1998). When asked if they have any role supervising staff, participants from the personal social services replied negatively. However, seven of them responded that they had experience supervising student work placements. This consists of:

> I had to allocate cases to her and to supervise her work. For the first few weeks it was a lot of her shadowing me and then kind of doing kind of co-working and see how she, I suppose where her competencies were, where she needed to kind of work, what things she needed to focus on, and then allocating her work and then linking in with her every day, being available to her, and then shadowing her, observing her doing her visits. And then obviously any paperwork that she did, anything significant came through me for co-signing (P33, 12th July 2011).

Supervision of students within social work is entirely voluntary, and three participants argue that they don't have the time to take on this role due to large caseloads and lack of resources. The other participants who replied that they had staff supervisory duties were those in senior positions. Therefore, supervisory responsibilities are directly related to ones position in the hierarchy within the personal social services. This hierarchy is relatively flat, with few opportunities for career progression within the personal social services.

Discretion to allocate resources and the freedom to manage their own budgets is also regarded as the responsibility of a manager. When asked if they have any budgetary or accountancy responsibilities the vast majority of participants in the personal social services replied negatively. Of those who replied positively two of them argued that they are accountable for the amount of money they claimed in mileage. Participants commented on the cost of some of the services they were required to sign invoices for and argued that they could potentially be provided by cheaper means. However, the HSE has entered into contracts with specific service providers and the discretion to choose service providers is not available to individual social workers. Indeed, while some social workers are responsible for signing off on monies paid, they appear to have little control or discretion over this. One social worker states that he has been responsible for funding that came from central government for different projects in his area, 'But obviously it had to go through the accounts people here, in that process but I had responsibility how, making sure that it, that the accounts were up to date and that all the documentation came in' (P3, 24th May 2011). Therefore, increasing control over budgets does not appear to be a

change to work practices within the personal social services. Figure 8.1 below tabulates the work practices of participants from the personal social services as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 8.1 Personal Social Services: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Practices

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Practices	Permanent pensionable employment continues to be the norm.	Strong identification with professionalism and professional work practices High levels of discretion and flexibility Majority use client to describe whom they deal with	Innovation: Unlikely without support of line management and highly dependent on access to resources. Increased flexibility of job contracts? NO Flexi-clock and TOIL systems used. Increased time commitment? YES and NO Children and Family services experience massive pressure to work long hours due to excessive caseloads and under-staffing. Enterprising Managers? NO Little budgetary or supervisory responsibilities.	

From the evidence above, it is apparent that NPM ideas have resulted in some changes to the work practices of 'street-level' professionals in the Irish personal social services. The fourth change to work practices pointed to in the literature is an increasing focus on accountability and evaluation. This change is discussed in detail next.

8.2.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures

The literature suggests that an increasing focus on evaluation is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the work practices of the public sector (see for example, Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Alcock, 2003). Participants employed in local authorities all remarked that they had been evaluated through the PMDS system. However, their perceptions of this process are not

particularly positive. As one participant describes it, 'you write these very achievable goals, goals that you've already achieved and are literally achievable on a daily basis and you achieve them and then it comes to next year and you do the same thing' (P12, 10th June 2011). While all three participants from housing services argue that evaluation is necessary, none of them feel that the PMDS system is being engaged with properly in their respective local authorities. Overwhelmingly, participants employed by the HSE stated that their duties were not assessed in any manner. For example, participants note that 'we don't have formal evaluations' (P27, 7th July 2011); 'there is no performance appraisal. There's none in our job' (P33, 12th July 2011); and 'I've never heard of a formal social work appraisal system' (P45, 22nd July 2011). From discussions with participants, evaluation occurs within the social services in a negative sense. As one medical social worker describes it 'the day that something goes wrong, on the other hand I know that they'll be about fifty people trying to, you know, trying to find out what happened' (P71, 30th September 2011), while another suggests that 'accountability tends to happen at crisis' (P68, 27th July 2011).

However, three participants indicated that they are required to keep records (or statistics) regarding how many people they see as part of their work. One primary care social worker describes the failures of this system as follows:

> You can count one referral and say, yes, I have this person dealt with. But you might have done very little. You might have been, one meeting, you know, and then you go out and everyone's okay. And then you close it and you say that's it. And then somebody else, you know, you could be, spend ten hours of your week on. So, you know, it's hard to quantify that' (P70, 28th September 2011)

HIQA is the independent authority with responsibility for: quality, safety and accountability in the Irish health and social services. HIQA has the authority to carry out investigations where there is reasonable grounds to do so; and evaluate and publish information about the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services. Participants from the personal social services were aware that HIQA existed and mentioned it in terms of the push to record numbers of clients, the number of meetings held, and the number of care plans completed (P33, 12th July 2011). Another participant remarked that 'I suppose HIQA being more involved now in terms of reviews coming down the line and audits' (P45, 22nd July 2011). Overall, though the perception by participants is that HIQA does not equate to personal performance evaluation or individual accountability in any real sense.

A key feature of market culture on the CVF is that rewards are based on merit, and on the whole participants from the personal social services had a positive attitude to the idea of evaluation.

For example, 'I do think that there should definitely be some level of performance appraisal, you know, just even in a reflective way. And that's possibly even to give people quite positive feedback' (P33, 12th July 2011). Participants discuss cultural reasons for the lack of evaluation and accountability within the personal social services.

> And that culture is there; that people are not willing to tackle it and have the difficult conversations with people that aren't performing. And people are afraid of conflict or afraid, I don't know how, why it's, why people aren't accountable who need to be accountable. You know, what do you do with your day? Sit down with something as simple as that. It's sinful really (P45, 22nd July 2011).

While participants consider evaluation necessary, many argue that accountability should lie with the organisation. The reasons for this are varied. Some point to systemic failures. For example, 'I think the HSE should have you know sufficient structures in place that people can do their work and sufficient resources and sufficient supervision' (P9, 31st May 2011); and 'I don't want anyone to practice malpractice in their work but neither do I want colleagues to be made scapegoats for systemic failures' (P10, 1st June 2011). Others argue that the organisation has responsibility for hiring them in the first place, 'I mean if I go away and I start insulting clients and that kind of stuff is the city council responsible for employing an idiot like me' (P3, 24th May 2011). Therefore, it would appear that participants are only in favour of individual accountability if the organisation provides adequate training, supports and resources for employees to perform their duties.

Chapter 2 revealed that one of the inherent contradictions of NPM is that it professes to give managers freedom to manage, while at the same time endeavouring to limit the discretion of professionals. This is the case within the Irish personal social services, for instance:

> All of the information that I am supposed to know about my job, do you know, is available to me at the touch of a computer click. So we have a system called [?], which now contains all the policies and procedures for doing everything from emptying a bedpan to, whatever. So if I do anything that's outside any of those, any of those guidelines, I'm responsible. Because, somebody has absolved themselves from that, from that responsibility (P71, 30th September 2011).

Jones (2001: 552) describes a similar phenomenon in the UK as follows 'a new type of highly regulated and much more mundane and routinized relationship with clients'. This increase in rules and procedures for the behaviour of employees moves the organisational culture closer to the control and stability end of the axis on the CVF.

One of the distinguishing features of traditional public administration is the practice of recording everything. While participants in the personal social services did not note an increase

in personal evaluations or assessments as part of changes to their work practices, a substantial number did argue that there have been enormous increases in the levels of paperwork they are required to produce.

> I have to record every telephone call, every appointment, every bit, every minute of the day really, em, then a huge amount of my time would be taken up with, filling out referral forms ... it's supposed to be the kind of internationally recognised balance is suppose to be seventy percent face to face, thirty percent paper, but the reality is, now it's moving closer to the exact opposite (P11, 7th June 2011).

The increased levels of paperwork are very much tied into accountability. Applicant forms to refer clients to other services in particular appear to extremely time consuming, 'running to eight or maybe fifteen pages for the most basic of services' (P25, 7th July 2011). Numerous participants cite the levels of duplication involved in this paperwork, for instance, 'I'm writing things for myself and then I'm writing things into a medical file and I'm writing things, you know, like in a way that, stuff that's unnecessary' (P71, 30th September 2011). Completing paperwork is becoming a huge part of social workers daily duties, 'it's becoming, you know, it's just, it's becoming more and more, more difficult to have the boxes ticked. And it's about ticking boxes. And it does take a lot of time' (P45, 22nd July 2011).

One of the main difficulties that participants within the personal social services have with the levels of paperwork they are required to complete is that they feel it is having a negative impact on the amount of face to face time they can actually now spend with their clients. As one participant argues 'I think everyone is going to be focussing on filling out the form as opposed to doing good work with the people they're working with' (P33, 12th July 2011); while another states that 'social workers have become recorders and assessors rather than people who work on their relationship with the client. And I think that's sad' (P10, 1st June 2011). Indeed, this follows trends in social work in the UK with Jones (2001: 553) arguing that 'contact is more fleeting, more regulated and governed by the demands of the forms which now shape much of the intervention'. Thus, it can be argued that a perverse outcome of the application of NPM ideas within the personal social services had led to an increase in bureaucratic work practices. Coupled with an increase in rules and procedures, increased paperwork positions the administrative culture of 'street-level' professionals within the personal social services even further towards the control end of the axis on the CVF.

The focus on increased rules and procedures and increased paperwork are very much tied into both participants and their employing organisations insulating themselves from litigation. One of noticeable themes to emerge from the interviews with participants from the personal social

services was an intense fear of litigation. This culture of fear is directly related to the perceived litigious nature of Irish society by participants. As one participant puts it 'it's the thing that we're most frightened of, you know, being in court' (P71, 28th September 2011). The detailed documentation and notes undertaken by participants is to ensure that they are legally covered, just in case. Participants demonstrated an awareness of the legalities involved with statements such as:

> accountability is if the shit hits and the fan and if something happens on a case and you're called into court quickly or your case file is pulled by HIQA, that you have case notes in it, you have certain forms that are, there are some forms that are necessary in it (P68, 27th September 2011).

Another participant explains that 'in the last couple of years it's become necessary because it's a lot more legalistic and court, and everything's wrapped up in court, and you need to prove everything in writing for everything' (P62, 7th September 2011). Moreover, participants expressed awareness that their paperwork can be examined under FOI legislation. As one participant from the housing services argues 'when we went into the profession, we weren't thinking that our notes would be published in the newspaper, and that's the reality now' (P10, 1st June 2011). This directly impacts on the content of participants notes. A senior social worker describes the impact of FOI legislation as follows:

> When FOI came in, the Freedom of Information Act, the whole country went, we were being trained left right and centre, we were going here to courses and that, and people got a lot more, maybe a bit more careful, you know about what they were saying, which was a good thing I suppose, it made you think about what you record and why you're recording it (P27, 7th July 2011).

There is little evidence of this changing any time soon with one senior social work practitioner arguing 'there's going to be more of a culture of cover your arse' (P45, 22nd July 2011). Overall, the language used by participants as regards accountability is extremely legalistic. As one participant notes 'you are thinking of the court, what's a barrister going to make of this, it's not what anybody else is going to make of it really' (P27, 7th July 2011). The pressures to record everything as a means of accountability, together with the fear of litigation, represents increased bureaucracy in the work practices of participants and firmly roots the personal social services within hierarchical and consensual cultures, which is paradoxically, the very thing NPM ideas profess to eliminate. Chapter 2 indicated that the complex process of organisational cultural change will not occur by exclusively making changes to its visible manifestations. Hence, the next part of the chapter examines invisible aspects of administrative culture.

The information presented in Figure 8.2 below represents the range of responses gained from participants employed in the personal social services and correlates them with the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted)

Figure 8.2 Personal Social Services: A CVF Analysis of Reported Accountability and Evaluation Measures

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Accountability and Evaluation	Increased control through policies, rules and procedures. Required to keep records of how many people they see. Enormous increases in levels of paperwork required: High level of duplication within this. Negative impact on amount of time available to spend with clients. Accountability in the negative sense. If something goes wrong then they will hear about it. Accountability should lie with the organisation rather than the individual, particularly if the organisation does not provide adequate training or supports. Intense culture of fear: Attempting to insulate themselves from litigation.		Increased evaluation? Dependent on employer HIQA mentioned in terms of increased inspections and drive for stats but not equated with personal performance evaluation.	

8.3 H2: INVISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H2 asserts that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The invisible aspects of administrative culture analysed as part of this research are values, work motivations, and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

8.3.1 Values

Chapter 2 maintained that the invisible aspects of administrative culture are far less straightforward to decipher than the visible aspects. Additionally, Chapter 2 discussed how NPM ideas may have altered the values of the public sector (see for example, Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen, 1997; Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005; and Gray and Jenkins, 2003). According to Figure 2.1 values associated with the traditional model of public administration are transparency, neutrality, fairness, due process, integrity, honesty and probity. While the

typical values associated with NPM are customer service, productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money. The distinctive values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture include balancing different interests, developing networks, openness and responsiveness.

Schein (2010) states that the espoused values of an organisation relate to how the organisation represents itself to the outside. As was noted in Chapter 4 the espoused values of Irish public sector reform programmes continue to reflect NPM ideas. However, the espoused values of an organisation may not necessarily correspond to those of all its subcultures or occupational groups. There is evidence in the literature (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Ashburner *et al.* 1996; Vrangbaek, 2009) to suggest that regardless of the espoused values of an administration, public sector employees continue to retain the underlying values of traditional public administration.

An assortment of questions were posed in order to investigate participants' values. These included questions relating to what participants regarded as ethical behaviour and what skills or attributes they consider necessary to perform their jobs. As stated above, participants from the personal social services ardently adhere to the identity of a professional group which corresponds to the consensual culture on the CVF. When discussing ethical values appropriate to their jobs, most participants from the personal social services related them directly to the code of ethics developed by the IASW as opposed to any code of ethics or behaviour developed by their employing organisation, again reinforcing their professional group identity. The values identified by participants as important were confidentiality; respect; to be non-judgemental; to be client focused; honesty; unconditional positive regard; and dignity. This value set relates to bureaucrats and professionals under the model of traditional public administration. Participants mentioned that one should behave in a 'professional manner' (P33, 12th July 2011), yet again reinforcing the identity of a professional group. Participants from the personal social services were very clear about the ethical dilemmas involved in the practice of their duties:

> You come in knowing that you're here to serve like the community and the people that you work with but you often end up compromising that because of budget restrictions or you know internal decisions so, I think for me, it would be, the code of ethics would be to remind, reminding us who we are here working for, em, the purpose of our role (P9, 31st May 2011).

There was scant indication of NPM ideas influencing the values of participants from the personal social services. No mention was made of business-like values such as customer service or efficient use of resources. There was also minimal evidence of participants expressing an

awareness of costs or making an effort to reduce their expenditure. Indeed, participants from the personal social services repeatedly bemoaned the lack of resources available to them and their clients. However, there was some mention of values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture. Participants mentioned the importance of 'networking' (P3, 24th May 2011), particularly with professionals from other services (P45, 22nd July 2011). Collaboration and networking are key values associated with the post-NPM model. The multitude of values expressed by participants in the personal social services are detailed in Figure 8.3 below (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Therefore, one can argue that H2, which asserts that the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of the work values of 'street-level' professionals from the personal social services rings true. Hence, on this invisible aspect of organisational culture, participants from the personal social services coincide with consensual culture.

Figure 8.3 Personal Social Services: A CVF Analysis of Reported Values

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Values	Honesty	IASW code of ethics Confidentiality Respect Non-judgemental Client focused Unconditional positive regards Dignity Behaving professionally.	No mention of business-like values.	Networking Collaboration with other services

8.3.2 Work Motivations

The literature review also presented differing ideas regarding the nature of human behaviour. NPM ideas argue that public sector employees are motivated by self-interest. In contrast, there exists the idea of PSM described by Perry and Wise (1990: 368), as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or

organisations'. In order to assess the work motivations of participants, they were asked questions relating to how they arrived in their current state of employment and why they made those choices. Questions were also posed regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their current positions to assess whether they were in fact motivated by self-interest or public service. The work motivations of public sector employees are an important invisible feature of administrative culture to investigate, because if the visible manifestations of organisational culture such as reward and promotion structures are completely juxtaposed to the underlying values and motivations of staff, interaction with these systems will never be meaningful.

Extrinsic motivation such as 'the conditions are excellent' (P3, 24th May 2011); and 'our holidays ... the pay' (P10, 1st June 2011) were briefly mentioned by participants from the personal social services but were not discussed in any great detail as being an advantage of their jobs. When asked directly about their salary participants describe their pay as 'adequate' (P10, 1st June 2011; P12, 10th June 2011; P68, 27th September 2011) and 'very well paid' (P24, 6th July 2011). On the whole they argue that 'you're never going to be a millionaire or anything but like you're never going to be on the bread line either' (P11, 7th June 2011); 'I think we were overpaid for a long time' (P45, 22nd July 2011); and 'compared to social work in a lot of other countries it's better paid than most' (P70, 28th September 2011). Money does not appear to be a main motivating factor for participants, 'I want to be able to kind of pay my bills and have enough money, em, but it's not my main motivator' (P9, 31st May 2011). This may be because social workers are relatively well paid in comparison to other healthcare professionals in Ireland[22].

Chapter 4 revealed that the Irish public sector is highly feminised and the family friendly working arrangements associated with working in this sector were an attraction cited by some participants to the profession. For instance, 'as a woman I've a lot more rights in the public sector if I want to become a mother, which I am' (P24, 6th July 2011). As mentioned in the section on work practices, there is a huge time commitment associated with working in the child and family services. Participants argued that they would not want to work in this service for this very reason. Indeed, P70 (28th September 2011) stated that he left child and family services for primary care because of the long hours.

[22] According to the Department of Health and Children (2010) staff nurses start on €27, 211, medical interns start on €30, 257 while a professionally qualified social worker's salary scale starts at €38, 819.

While participants do indeed exhibit some extrinsic motives regarding work, they also display a several other types of motivations. Altruistic motives featured prominently: 'trying to help' (P38, 14th July 2011); ' I suppose I've always kind of, I hate saying this now it sounds, a bit silly, wanted to help people' (P3, 24th May 2011); and 'you feel that you make a small bit of difference' (P25, 7th July 2011). Autonomy also appeared important to participants, 'it's not as though you're working, if you like, on an assembly line where, you know, where you perhaps are constrained to work in a particular way' (P71, 30th September 2011). Intrinsic motivations such as interesting work and the opportunities to learn were a factor mentioned repeatedly by participants from the personal social services: 'You're always learning ... and it's challenging, you know. You won't be bored.' (P33, 12th July 2011); and 'It's really interesting and it's really diverse' (P38, 14th July 2011). Social motivational factors such as dealing with people and co-workers are extremely important to participants from the personal services. Indeed, this type of motive was mentioned without fail by participants, for example, 'I have great colleagues who are friends as well as colleagues' (P38, 14th July 2011); 'you get to work with people a lot' (P11, 7th June 2011); 'I just always wanted to work with people' (P62, 7th September 2011); 'people are absolutely hilarious' (P45, 22nd July 2011); 'the staff group are very supportive' (P9, 31st May 2011).

As regards PSM being an explicit motivational factor for participants, a few participants did specifically mention the notion of public service and having an interest in politics and policymaking, which is illustrated by the following respectively: 'when we had the bad winter, and when things needed to be done and when roads were icy on Christmas day the public service came out, and people had a number to call' (P27, 7th July 2011) and 'I like current affairs. I like knowing what's going on in the world' (P45, 22nd July 2011). PSM also relates to service to the community. Houston (2005) discerned that public sector employees are more likely to make donations of their time and blood than private sector employees (but found no difference between public and private employees in terms of individual philanthropy). Houston (2005) used these findings to support the concept of PSM. In order to investigate this, participants of this research were asked whether they donated blood, money or time. According to Taylor (2011) 'the World Giving Index, compiled by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), showed seventy-five percent of Irish people donated money to charity while thirty-eight percent volunteered their time each month'.

Fewer of those employed in the personal social services make donations of money (sixty-six percent) or time (thirty-three percent) than the rest of the Irish population (and the other sectors

investigated in this study). However, fifty-three percent of participants reported donating blood, which is well above the national average (according to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service, only three percent of Irish people donate blood). As an indication of an interest in politics and public policy making participants were asked whether they voted and over nine-three percent of them replied positively. Again, this is superior to the national average (for example turnout for the Fiscal Treaty Referendum was approximately fifty percent, and the 2011 General Election was seventy percent)[23]. The results for donations of money are difficult to explain as social work would appear to be a relatively well paid profession. However, the lower donations of time relative to the general population could be explained by the increased levels of time commitment and culture of presenteeism evident within the personal social services. Another explanation offered by one participant for his lack of time spent volunteering is as follows:

> Not anymore. I did a football team, like a kid's football team a long time ago now but I haven't done, I'd say since I started all the social work stuff. And sometimes I think to be honest with you, maybe it's something I would like to do again in the future but to be honest with you dealing with people, I feel like I'm doing that all day every day and it's kind of I need a break from it at the end of the day (P11, 7th June 2011).

Likewise, the results regarding blood donation are not so easily explained and require further investigation. As regards the high level of interest in politics as demonstrated by their voting patterns, when describing his job, one participant argued that 'it's made me far more ... politically aware' (P70, 28th September 2011). Perhaps, daily interactions with marginalised groups in society has had the effect of increasing interest and awareness in politics.

Thus, the evidence presented above evokes a far more complex scenario regarding the motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals than either NPM ideas or the concept of PSM can hope to describe. The picture painted by participants in the personal social services as regards their work motivations is a very multifaceted one and while extrinsic motivations are somewhat important, they do not appear to be the sole motivational force. Indeed, Figure 8.4 below details the variety of work motivations discussed by participants from the personal social services (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted). Therefore, in the case of work motivations of 'street-level' professionals from the personal social services one can argue that H2 holds true.

[23] The statistics presented here are relatively crude as the sample is not large enough to be considered representative of the entire Irish personal social services sector.

Figure 8.4 Personal Social Services: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Motivations

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Motivations		Helping people and making a difference very important. Autonomy important. Challenging and learning.	Money does not appear to be a main motivating factor. Family friendly working arrangements important.	Specific mention of public service and interest in politics and policy making. Very politically aware group. Report high rates of voting. Service to the community: Lower than national average on money and time donation but much higher on blood. Difficult to explain.

8.3.3 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

The interviews concluded with a series of questions regarding participant's attitudes to change and public sector reform. They were asked to suggest possible reforms or changes to their own sector as well as to the entire Irish public sector. As demonstrated throughout this chapter, participants from the personal social services display a robust adherence to a professional group identity and the associated consensual culture on the CVF. According to Figure 2.1, members of consensual culture are opposed to change/public sector reform or at least have a negative attitude towards it due to their emphasis on group maintenance and cohesion. Alternatively, under the NPM model (market and developmental culture), change is seen as necessary and under the post-NPM model, participants would have a positive attitude to change.

When given the opportunity to suggest changes to their own service, participants from the personal social services made numerous suggestions which involved increased resources. As one participant argues, 'I'm qualified and paid to do a particular job which I can't do because of a lack of basic resources' (P11, 7th June 2011). Participants proposals included 'hire more social workers' (P33, 12th July 2011); 'early intervention services' (P45, 22nd July 2011); 'create a separate out of hours service' (P62, 7th September 2011); and simply, 'hire more staff' (P9, 31st May 2011). Numerous participants also advocated the need for increased funding for training. These suggestions were often couched in terms of better facilities and access for clients (as opposed to making their own jobs easier to perform). For instance, 'if money was no object I think for equality's sake that people would have access to the same service regardless of where they live' (P70, 28th September 2011); and

> Small things that would just make it a better place for staff, em, but mostly for the people who use this as a service you know. That it would just be more welcoming,

> comfortable, better service, that things would happen more quickly, that they'd have people at their door when they needed them (P9, 31st May 2011).

The proposals for extra staff and resources should be seen in the context of the current economic crisis and the concurrent cuts to public expenditure. Nevertheless, not all of the changes proposed by participants involved increased spending on resources. Frequent suggestions were made to increase collaboration between service providers such as 'engage more with local community projects and to start linking or looking at funding local community projects' (P68, 27th September 2011) and 'I think there is a lot of joint training that needs to happen between social workers and other professionals like the teachers, community workers, crèche workers, (P11, 7th June 2011). Participants also maintained that more teamwork should take place between the different professions within their service. Collaboration and developing networks is a feature of post-NPM organisational culture. Participants argued that this could be achieved by better leadership and decisive decision-making. Only one participant argued for taking an NPM type approach by 'introducing a more business-like approach to social work or evaluating it' (P24, 6th July 2011).

While participants from the personal social services were very much in favour of increasing resources to their own service, a different picture emerged when questioned about what they would do to reform the entire Irish public sector. The following quote neatly summaries the type of suggestions made by participants in terms of reducing costs:

> God, I think in terms of all the money that they're paying high level civil servants, that really, that needs to stop. And that they need to filter out all the people that are doing nothing and start like as in regular reviews for a year. So, yeah, I think more audits of everything (P62, 7th September 2011).

The type of language used in the above quote is very much influenced by NPM ideas. Comments such as 'I think it's weeding out the wasters which there are an immense amount of' (P45, 22nd July 2011) were also typical. Rewards based on achievement is a key feature of market culture on the CVF. However, the reforms suggested were not all framed in terms of reducing costs for instance, 'I think anybody who has joined the public sector in the last ten years should, there's no excuse, should be able to do the vast majority of their admin themselves' (P70, 28th September 2011); introduce policies of open recruitment to higher grades and specialist grades and reduce duplication of services (P27, 7th July 2011); 'invest in more technology' (P24, 6th July 2011); and 'more stakeholders involved in any reform' (P33, 12th July 2011). These suggestions conform more to the post-NPM organisational culture.

Aside from being asked to make suggestions regarding changes to their own service and to the wider public sector, participants were asked what came to mind when they heard the phrase public sector reform. In response to this question, the language used by participants was in general rather negative: 'slash and burn' (P9, 31st May 2011); 'getting blood from a stone' (P12, 10th June 2011); 'wage cuts, wards closures, job losses' (P25, 7th July 2011); and 'pay cuts' (P33, 12th July 2011). On the whole, participants from the personal social services argued that reform was crucial but were in general quite critical of the reforms that have taken place. As one child and family social worker argues:

> I think these moves to say all, look at the private sector, I think that's completely wrong, I think the private sector should be looking at the public sector. There are lots of good things about the public sector. Terms and conditions of employees, these are things we should hold on to and cherish. Like family friendly working conditions, things they are now trying to roll back, they are cutting off their nose to spite their face, they are getting rid of these things, they are the only things which have been progress in terms of workers' rights and stuff like that (P11, 7th June 2011).

Participants from the personal social services were generally dismayed and expressed frustration as to the slow pace of change within their respective organisations. It was assumed in Figure 2.1 that members of professional groups under traditional public administration would be resistant to change due to their coalition strength and power and four participants point to the power of public sector unions as hindering change. The following participant describes his anger regarding the problems associated with relocating public sector employees due to union involvement:

> I don't think it should be that difficult really, you've got a job you know you still get paid the same at the end of the say, it's just a different fucking class or a different department in here you know, or it's the HSE it's a different office, who cares, it's still a job you know, don't be too precious about that kind of thing (P12, 10th June 2011).

Other participants point to the nature of their employing organisations as the underlying reason for the slow rate of change 'having sat working in it, you see how large it is and how, you know, quite a labyrinth. So I don't think it can be done quickly because of that' (P71, 28th September 2001). Whichever reason offered by participants for the pace of change and reform, the consensus is that it has been slow. The variety of attitudes to change/public sector reform articulated by participants is detailed in Figure 8.5 below (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Therefore, one can argue that the evidence presented above relates to very mixed attitudes to change and public sector reform by participants from the personal social services sector, in

contrast to an assumed negative view associated with those from consensual and hierarchical cultures.

Figure 8.5 Personal Social Services: A CVF Analysis of Reported Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform	Very negative language used in relation to existing reforms. Generally dismayed and expressed frustration at slow rate of change within their respective organisations. Blamed the unions.		Cut civil servants pay. Introduce better technology. More open recruitment to higher and specialist grades. See change as necessary.	More staff and resources. Increased funding for training. Couched in terms of better facilities and access for clients. More collaboration between different public sector organisations. Better teamwork across organisations and professions. To be achieved through better leadership and a decisive decision making. Positive attitudes to evaluation.

8.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter 8 expresses a number of significant points in relation to the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of those employed within the Irish personal social services. The first portion of the chapter applies the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures to the visible (work practices, accountability and evaluation measures) aspects of administrative culture in order to assess whether H1 is confirmed or not. H1 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. It is obvious from the analysis presented above that some changes have occurred, therefore, H1 holds true. Firstly, working arrangements within the sector have become more flexible with the introduction of the flexi-clock and TOIL systems. Secondly, participants employed in the Children and Families (more commonly known as child protection) services report massive pressure to work long hours due to ever increasing caseloads

and staff shortages, with participants discussing issues such as burnout and stress related illness. In addition, participants argue that working in child protection services is not conducive to family life, and choose to either leave the service after a period of time, taking their experience with them, or avoid working in the service completely. The consequent long-term costs to the individual and organisation are considerable and issues such as loss of institutional memory are a concern. More importantly, this significantly impacts children, one of the more vulnerable groups in Irish society, and the wider consequences for the justice, criminal and healthcare systems cannot be predicted in the long-term. According to the IASW (2011: 7) 'to even begin to provide the minimal required level of service, including having a social worker allocated to all children in care and for social workers to have safely manageable caseloads, significantly more social workers will need to be appointed'. Furthermore, there is little purpose in legislating for a referendum on children's rights if adequate resources are not put into child protection services, which includes supporting the staff working within these services.

While some changes have occurred in the personal social services as a result of NPM ideas, much remains of hierarchical and consensual cultures. Social workers continue to have a strong identification with professionalism and professional work practices (consensual culture). They also testify to having high levels of discretion in both how they priorities and organise their day and in their decision making relating to clients. Innovation (developmental culture) is dependent on the support of local line management and access to resources. In terms of language, participants do not once mention the term customer; therefore, the impact of NPM ideas is limited in this instance. Moreover, permanent pensionable employment continues to be the norm within the personal social services. The analysis also provides scant evidence of social workers taking on additional managerial responsibilities. Some participants have experience supervising student placements, but this is entirely voluntary. Supervisory duties, on the whole, are connected to hierarchical position within the personal social services. In addition, participants control over budgets is minimal.

The literature also pointed to increased evaluation (see for example, Alcock, 2003) as a result of NPM ideas. Social workers employed in local authorities articulate similar responses regarding PMDS to those given by participants in the housing sector (Chapter 7), that is, PMDS is not engaged with in their organisation. Social workers employed by the HSE report that they are not subject to individual personal performance evaluation. . However, participants do show an awareness of the existence of HIQA, mentioning it in terms of statistical information required Yet again, participants testify to increased protocols, rules, procedures and policies as a means

of standardising their work practices. A substantial number of social workers describe the enormous increases in the amounts of paperwork they are required to complete, which they argue has a negative impact upon the amount of free time they have to spend with clients. Extensive case notes are used as a means to insulate participants from litigation. There is an intense culture of fear within the sector and the language used around accountability is very legalistic. Accountability is in the negative sense within the personal social services. In other words, if there are no complaints against an employee, then they are perceived to be doing their job correctly. Many argue that accountability should lie with the organisation rather than the individual, particularly if the organisation does not provide adequate training and supports. Overall, one can argue that while some changes are evident within the sector, there has also been a corresponding growth in bureaucratic work practices and red tape which is consistent with hierarchical culture on the CVF.

The second portion of Chapter 8 applies the Competing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures to the invisible (values, work motivations and attitudes to change/public sector reform) aspects of administrative culture to evaluate whether H2 holds true or not. H2 maintains that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The term transformation denotes a deep-seated and significant change. This does not appear to be the case in the personal social services therefore, H2 can be confirmed. In terms of values, participants from the personal social services emphasise confidentiality, respect, being non-judgemental and client focused, honesty, unconditional positive regard and dignity, all of which are associated with the traditional model of public administration. Furthermore, social workers stress the need to behave in a professional manner. There is scant evident of NPM values being of significance to social workers, however, they do underline the importance of networking and collaboration with other services, which is associated with the post-NPM model. Money does not appear to be the main motivating factor for participants but this may be because social workers are relatively well paid in comparison to other healthcare professionals in Ireland. Social workers put significant emphasis on altruistic (helping people), intrinsic (challenging and learning) and social (colleagues and the people they deal with) motivations, which is contrary to the view held by proponents of NPM ideas that all public sector employees are self-interested. The analysis also demonstrated some evidence of PSM (Perry and Wise, 1990) as participants explicitly mentioned the notion of public service. An interest in politics and policy making was demonstrated by voting levels that are substantially in excess of the national average. Contrary to Houston's (2005) findings, and the other sectors investigated in this study, social workers have lower than average donations of time and money. The low donations of time may be

explained by the large time commitment required of those employed in the child protection services[24], however, the low donations of money are difficult of explain as social work is a relatively well paid profession. On the other hand, social workers report the highest levels of blood donation compared to other sectors investigated in this study. Overall, the evidence regarding work motivations is mixed. Social workers attitudes to change/public sector reform are also diverse. When invited to propose changes to their own service, participants identify the need for increased staff and resources. There is substantial evidence of post-NPM ideas here, with participants advocating the need for more collaboration and networking between government agencies and other services. When invited to suggest changes to the entire Irish public sector, the influence of NPM ideas becomes more apparent. Social workers suggest cost savings measures such as cutting civil servants pay, increasing evaluation and more open recruitment to higher and specialist grades. However, participants from the personal social services expressed frustration at the slow rate of change within their organisations and were generally dismayed and negative towards the phrase public sector reform. Therefore, the values of the CVF is once again demonstrated as there are many competing and co-existing cultures evident in the invisible aspects of social workers administrative culture.

In conclusion, Chapter 8 clearly illustrates that administrative culture can be regarded as a dynamic system consisting of both visible and invisible levels. NPM ideas have not so much become ingrained within the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working in the personal social services, but have been layered upon traditional models. In other words, while many aspects of consensual and hierarchical culture have not disappeared, aspects of both market and developmental cultures are also evident. Chapter 9 recounts the analysis of the Irish social welfare sector.

[24] However, there are no such issues with time commitment reported by participants in the other social services.

CHAPTER 9

SOCIAL WELFARE

9.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Timonen (2003: viii) 'the social welfare system provides the main source of income support to those who are unable to participate in the labour market and supplements the wages of those on low incomes'. The terms social welfare, social security, social protection and income maintenance are often used interchangeably (Considine and Dukelow, 2009: 196). In essence, these terms relate to a system that provides for an individual or families financial needs when they cannot provide an income for themselves due to circumstances such as unemployment, disability or illness. Systems such as these ensure that individuals and families are not left to the mercy of the market, charitable organisations or other family members. In Ireland, the term most commonly used is social welfare. The following chapter illustrates the ways in which NPM ideas impact upon the visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture by analysing the primary data obtained from participants engaged in the delivery of social welfare. This is done in order to test the research hypotheses developed in Chapter 2. The Department of Social Protection (DSP) has responsibility for social welfare services in Ireland. The Department was established in 1947 and in the intervening years, it has undergone a number of name changes, despite its primary functions remaining largely the same (i.e. income support). The Department's present title dates from March 2010 and currently it administers over seventy separate schemes and has a wide range of functions, the main ones being:

- administering social insurance and social assistance schemes;
- activation, employment and community services;
- and developing social policy, including pension policy.

According to Figure 4.1, the Department had 6,162 staff at the end of 2011. It has a network of ten regional headquarters offices and over one hundred and twenty local and branch offices spread across the country. The annual expenditure for the DSP in 2012 was in the order of €21 billion. Of that, approximately €6 billion was spent on pensions, €4 billion on jobseekers payments; €3.5 billion on illness/disability/carers schemes and €2 billion on child benefit[25]. Norman (2011: 177) argues that 'social welfare payments and their administration are near-constant targets for reform prescriptions due to their share of the total budget and the politics of redistributing wealth'. He goes on to point out that public expenditure on social welfare is more politically contentious than expenditure on health or education because it involves the redistribution of wealth from taxpayers to other (less powerful) groups of society. 'Given these clashes of political and social values, it is inevitable that social welfare has been a high-profile target for New Public Management (NPM) prescriptions during the past 30 years' (Norman, 2011: 177).

[25] As per email from K. Stack, D/Social Protection on 9th November 2012.

As all government departments, the DSP has undergone reform measures influenced by NPM ideas. Strategic planning has been in place since the 1990s. The Department also produces annual reports, annual output statements, customer action plans and customer charters. Furthermore, the DSP undergoes value for money reviews of its various schemes. In addition to the administration of social welfare being influenced by NPM thinking, social welfare schemes themselves have undergone changes. According to Considine and Dukelow (2009: 217), in the period from the 1990s to the late 2000s, the Irish social welfare system gradually became 'more inclusive and expansive, contrary to attempts at cost containment that have prevailed elsewhere'. However, the Irish social welfare system is still heavily reliant on means testing. Christensen *et al.*, (2009: 1001) point out that as a result of, and perhaps in reaction to, NPM ideas

> Social protection as a system of temporary income assistance in an economy defined by full employment has increasingly been superseded by measures to activate the unemployed and economically inactive through new labour market schemes and alteration of benefit eligibility rules.

Activation measures introduced to the Irish social welfare system include the Back to Work Allowance 1993, the Back to Education Allowance 1990 and the Back to Enterprise Allowance 1999. Benefit eligibility rules were also changed in this period. The more recent period of economic recession has resulted in cuts to basic rates and further changes in eligibility criteria in social welfare payments (including child benefit) (Curry, 2011: 48).

Structural reforms have also taken place within the Irish social welfare sector. On 1st October 2011, following an earlier Government decision, the Community Welfare Service (CWS) was formally transferred from the HSE into the Department and is now officially part of DSP. It was decided to classify Community Welfare Officers (CWOs) into the social welfare category for this reason. Also, the majority of the work they do involves the daily administration of the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme which is funded by the DSP even though it was historically administered by the HSE.

The DSP launched its new Intreo Service in October 2012. Intreo is a new service which aims to assist people with their unemployment and income support needs. As part of this service, closer integration of the CWS and the FAS employment services (which were also transferred into DSP) is being rolled out. In practice, this means having employment services and income support services co-located in various locations around the country where possible, along with

traditional DSP services. This one-stop-shop approach sits 'within a broader international modernisation trend evident across OECD countries' (Christensen *et al,* 2009: 1002).

Fourteen of the eighty-three participants in this study are employees of the DSP. Two of the participants are at Clerical Officer (CO) grade, one is at Staff Officer (SO) grade, two are Executive Officer (EO) grade; two of the participants are Higher Executive Officers (HEO). At the time the interviews were conducted seven of the participants were CWOs[26]. All of the participants fit into the category of bureaucrat. Seven of the participants are female and seven male, and the level of experience they have working within the Department ranges from one to forty years.

9.2 H1: VISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H1 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The visible aspects of administrative culture examined as part of this research are work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures.

9.2.1 Work Practices

The initial interview question asked of all participants was to describe their typical day at work and the type of duties they undertake. Participants were then asked to describe any changes to work practices they have noticed since they began their careers. Specific questions were posed about budgetary and accountancy responsibilities, as well as innovation, discretion and work life balance issues.

The preliminary analysis was to assess to what extent participants employed in the delivery of social welfare schemes conform to the identity of bureaucrat. A text search query within Nvivo 9 was undertaken of all social welfare transcripts using the words bureaucracy and bureaucratic to create a new node. The content of the node was then validated to ensure that the subject matter related only to:

- participants identifying as bureaucrats, or
- participants describing aspects of their work practices as being bureaucratic.

[26] Now HEO's within DSP grading structure.

Two participants from the social welfare sector refer to the terms bureaucracy and bureaucratic. They speak of 'layers and layers of bureaucracy' (P4, 24th May 2011) and 'a bureaucratic nightmare' (P40, 15th July 2011) when referring to their work. Both of these references paint bureaucracy in a negative light. As expressed in Chapter 2, bureaucrats best fit the hierarchical culture described on Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) CVF, as they have an internal control focus. While specific references to the terms bureaucracy or bureaucratic are minimal, participants from the social welfare sector do describe features of bureaucratic work practices as depicted by Collins and Cradden (2007: 12). For instance, one participant identifies the generalist nature of his job, 'it doesn't require any particular education qualifications' (13th July 2011), while another emphasises the standardised nature of his work 'consistency of decision- making is obviously very important' (P73, 5th October 2011). Participants discuss the procedures, rules and regulations set out in legislation that have to be abided by when carrying out their daily duties. One CO describes how he is 'too low down on the food chain' (P2, 19th May 2011) to undertake certain duties. This comment relates to the hierarchical nature of bureaucracy whereby one's responsibilities are clearly defined by one's place in the hierarchy. Another participant specifically mentions the anonymous nature of his organisation (P40, 15th July 2011). Therefore, one can argue that features of hierarchical culture such as the cult of the generalist, formalised and standardised rules and procedures, and rigid structures are present in the work practices of participants within the social welfare sector.

A text search query was also performed for the terms professional and professionalism within the social welfare transcripts and the results were four separate references by two of the participants. These references related to dealing with the public in a professional manner (P35, 13th July 2011) and behaving in a professional manner by not getting emotionally involved with members of the public (P84, 21st October 2011). Therefore, the identification with professionalism and a professional work identity is negligible by participants from social welfare.

Flexibility and discretion are curtailed within hierarchical culture as the emphasis is on adhering to rules and procedures and high levels of control and structure. All of the participants argue that they have the discretion to prioritise the completion of tasks within their day/week. This discretion can be constrained by the demands of the public counter in the local offices and clinics which are scheduled at regular intervals every week in the CWS. However, degrees of discretion as regards decision-making are varied. As one EO explains:

> There are certain things that are absolutely tied to legislation, and that there is no discretion on. Ok so you'd need to have a certain number of contributions to qualify, there is no leeway on that, that is set in stone. But absolutely there are different readings of things. So there is discretion (P83, 20th October 2011).

This also appears to be the case for those in the CWS:

> There are guidelines with some payments. So for a basic payment, which is your weekly payment, it's a means test. And the same for rents and mortgages. They're quite clear the guidelines. It's a means test, we calculate it out, and have an entitlement. With ENPs (Exceptional Needs Payments) and UNPs (Urgent Needs Payments), we have a lot more discretion. And we do have guidelines, but again it's not that they're vague but they're very much open to interpretation. And so I would have a huge amount of discretion with them (P34, 13th July 2011).

Therefore, discretion is evident but only within the boundaries of existing legislation, rules and guidelines, which clearly correlates to hierarchical culture. Participants were also asked directly if they got a chance to be innovative at work, as innovation is regarded as an outward focus and relates to developmental culture on the CVF. Overall, participants equated innovation with having discretion within their jobs. As one CWO argues:

> You can find little ways of speeding them on or making a process more efficient. But fundamentally the process is the process. I can't change, I can't come up with a new process. All I can do is come up with a slightly quicker way of doing it. But the process is the process (P40, 15th July 2011).

Four participants working in the DSP state that they are very much encouraged to come up with new and innovative ways of reducing queues within the public offices and of completing tasks in a faster manner. Thus, innovation is encouraged if it results in more efficient work practices but not in the sense of being dynamic or taking risks, as is associated with developmental culture. Therefore, it appears that participants from social welfare conform more to hierarchical culture, as they are very aware of constantly remaining within the boundaries of rules, regulations and legislation in their everyday work practices, regardless of levels of discretion or innovation.

According to Figure 2.1, each profession has its own specific method of work and language while, NPM ideas result in the use of business language by participants to describe their daily work practices. A text search query was performed of transcripts using the terms citizen, customer and client to ascertain how participants describe their work and those whom they work with on a daily basis. The results of this query were validated to ensure that the references related directly to those whom participants deal with. One could argue that if participants were particularly business oriented, they would use the term customer to describe whom they deal with. As all participants from the social welfare sector were classified as bureaucrats, it was assumed that they would utilise the term citizen (associated with the traditional model of public

administration) most extensively. Although three participants from this sector made reference to the term citizen, it was not once used by participants to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis. Eight of the participants made twenty four references to the term customer demonstrating the influence of NPM ideas on their daily work practices. Measures have been introduced into the Irish civil service which have encouraged a customer focus, dating back to the Quality Customer Service (QCS) Initiative which was launched in the late 1990s. As Butler and Collins (2007: 143) argue 'Customer Charters and Customer Action Plans represent a serious and sustained attempt to communicate a customer oriented ethos and to foster customer-focused practices in the Irish public sector'. However, the term used most extensively by social welfare participants to describe whom they deal with is client (associated with professionals under traditional public administration). The term is used by nine participants across all grades eighty seven times. This represents an interesting and unexpected finding, and could perhaps be explained by the presence of former CWOs in the participant group.

Figure 2.1 pointed to other changes to the traditional administrative culture of the public sector as a result of NPM ideas. It is evident that within the social welfare sector, the notion of a permanent pensionable position is far from being eroded. Only one of the participants interviewed was on a temporary work contract and this was due to the public sector recruitment embargo. In order to cope with the large increases in work volumes in the DSP associated with the current economic crisis, additional staff were hired on a temporary basis. Therefore, evidence of increased flexibility is limited in this sense. However, participants did speak of flexibility in terms of working arrangements such as the flexi-time system or job-sharing and family-friendly arrangements available to them. Thus, the phenomenon of increased flexibility as pointed to in the literature (Hughes, 1998; Taylor, 2001) is indeed a change to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats within the social welfare sector, although not to any great extent.

The literature also argued that increased time commitment is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the administrative culture of the public sector (Lane, 2000; Davies and Thomas, 2002). When questioned if they are expected to work long hours or if they find it difficult to achieve a work life balance, participants on the whole answered negatively. However, most participants mention increased workloads due to the current economic crisis and the associated pressures involved in getting this work completed. Participants speak of having to stay at work until every person in the queue is dealt with; regardless of how long that takes. Several participants also mentioned that they were on the flexi-time system and that this extra time can

be claimed back at a later date. However, participants at higher grades or in the CWS were not on this system and could not claim back extra time worked. Nonetheless, this did not appear to be an immense issue for them as these participants were not regularly obliged to put in long hours. Therefore, increased time commitment is not a marked change to work practices within DSP.

Thirdly, the literature review argues that employees will be increasingly encouraged to become enterprising managers (Minogue, 1998). When asked if they have any role supervising other members of staff, most of the participants replied negatively. Four participants mentioned that they had been involved in training new members of staff or had acted up as supervisors for a limited amount of time. Of the three participants who mentioned that they currently have supervisory duties, two of them were very tentative in describing themselves as supervisors or managers: 'I have staff that give me in work, but I, I just, we just work as a team' (P4, 24th May 2011); and 'for training purposes and for mentoring. But other than that no. I'm sort of on my own' (P84, 21st October 2011). Another measure of enterprising managers is that they have control and discretion over their own budgets. Only one participant from social welfare has any budgetary or accountancy responsibilities. As one CO explains 'I'm too low down on the food chain to actually do anything with money as such. That is done by supervisors only' (P2, 19th May 2011). Therefore, there is also very little evidence of enterprising managers in the social welfare sector. There was also minimal reference to post-NPM type work practices such as networking, collaboration, teamwork or facilitating citizens' needs mentioned by participants from social welfare. Figure 9.1 below outlines the work practice discussed by social welfare participants as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 9.1 Social Welfare: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Practices

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Practices	Participants speak about bureaucracy in negative terms but describe bureaucratic work practices such as Cult of the generalist Formalised and standardised rules and procedures Rigid structures Discretion: allowed but only within the confines of existing legislation, rules and policy guidelines. Permanent pensionable employment very much in evidence.	9 out of 14 use client to describe whom they deal with (unexpected – perhaps explained by CWOs)	Innovation: encouraged if results in more efficient work practices but not in the sense of being dynamic or taking risks. 8 out of 14 participants use the term customer to describe whom they deal with. Increased flexibility in job contracts? NO Flexi-clock and family friendly working arrangements. Increased time commitment? NO Very little supervision responsibilities – relates directly to position within the hierarchy. No control or discretion over budgets (one exception).	

From the evidence above, it is clear that NPM ideas have resulted in some changes to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats in the Irish social welfare sector. The fourth change to work practices pointed to in the literature is an increasing focus on accountability and evaluation. This change is discussed in detail in the next section.

9.2.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures

The literature suggests that an increasing focus on evaluation is one of the ways in which NPM has impacted on the traditional administrative culture of the public sector (see for example, Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Alcock, 2003). Upon examination of the transcripts of participants from the social welfare sector evidence of increased evaluation is not present. When asked how their duties were evaluated or assessed, participants employed within the DSP cited PMDS. PMDS was launched in 2000. Since 2005, the awarding of pay increments and eligibility for promotion within the Irish civil service has been conditional on completing this annual assessment.

Participants had very mixed attitudes about the effectiveness of PMDS. Positive attitudes were evident. For instance, a HEO argues that:

> I really think it's good. I mean, I've always believed in PMDS. It's a fantastic way of managing performance and it's the only way there is at the moment in my own experience of managing under-performance as well, as opposed to non-performance. And also I believe in upward feedback as well. It works. We have to be open and transparent (P32, 12th July 2011).

The prevailing attitude to the PMDS system was, however, generally very negative. As one SO points out:

> If I decide to come into the office and sit on my backside from one end of the year to the other there's not a thing they can do. I'm on the max of my salary, they can't touch me. Unless I defraud the system they can't remove me, so, it is a non thing whatsoever like. There's no bite in it at all, you know, I mean at all (P4, 24th May 2011).

Indeed, under older civil service contracts, employees could only be dismissed if they were convicted of a criminal offence such as fraud. Additionally, (unlike more recent contracts issued) underperformance was not a criteria for dismissal. There seems to be an acceptance that within the civil service PMDS is not used to address performance issues with staff. As one EO argues,

> It is just seen as a reporting mechanism, just a box to tick and that's where the problems start because if you are trying to deal with disciplinary issues or performance the first thing they are going to ask for is the PMDS forms and if people have been getting their threes all along, so there is nothing that can be done really (P73, 5th October 2011).

These attitudes regarding PMDS seem to prevail across the Irish civil service generally. O'Brien (2013) reports that 'Department of Public Expenditure officials say there is evidence that the process is perceived as a form filling exercise, too cumbersome and lacking in fairness and consistency'. Consequently, one can argue that while personal evaluation systems have been introduced within the civil service, there is very little actual meaningful engagement with them. An EO offered one reason for this as follows 'it does get bypassed in PMDS because we don't like confrontation and I don't like saying to you, I know you are very happy with your job but hello you haven't done it right. We don't like doing that' (P83, 20th October 2011).

When asked the same question, overwhelmingly the CWO cohort stated that as HSE employees, their duties were not assessed in any way. For instance, one CWO states 'there's no qualitative or quantitative analysis of anything we do as public service' (P35, 13th July 2011), while another asserts that 'I mean even if you nearly killed somebody in the HSE you still wouldn't be fired' (P37, 14th July 2011). Unanimously, CWOs mentioned that while they were not personally evaluated, their superintendent (supervisory grade within the CWS) has the ability to do random

spot checks on payments to ensure that the correct paperwork is provided to qualify why payments were made. Although participants also mentioned that audits of the service can take place, it is noteworthy that one participant (P34, 13th July 2011) stated that in her thirteen years in the service, she had never been audited. Accountability appears to be 'a negative criterion. If we never heard about Julie then she's doing a fantastic job [laughter]' (P40, 15th July 2011). Thus, individual performance measurement takes place at a very cosmetic level overall within the social welfare sector.

Despite this, participants bemoan the current lack of accountability measures in their sector (and in the wider public sector) by stressing the need for more meaningful accountability and evaluation measures (for example, P51, 28th July 2011). This was more often than not framed in terms of recognition for a job well done. As P35 (13th July 2011) points out:

> It's very difficult within the public sector to generate enthusiasm or motivate people to give more than the nine to five, and some of them barely give that. There's no incentives. There's no, if I do my job really well and you do your job just about passably, we still get paid the same money, you know. Nobody's gonna come and say *I'm sorry. Well you're not doing your job well.* And that is the downside of it.

Participants pointed out that lack of appropriate performance appraisal measures make it difficult to deal with staff, 'you don't hire them yourself. You can't get rid of them. Effectively there's very little you can do to discipline staff' (P40, 15th July 2011). Indeed, participants proposed stricter penalties for underperformance within the public sector. 'I think public sector employees; we should be able to fire them. And they should also be imprisoned for some actions' (P34, 13th July 2011); and 'one thing you could do would be fixed-term contracts, five year contracts or something like that for everyone, if you don't buck up then you are gone, it is not renewed ' (P73, 5th October 2011). The same participant arguing that 'whatever McKevitt once said, it is easier to get Jesus Christ off the cross than it would be to sack an Irish civil servant' (P73, 5th October 2011). As was previously stated, market culture on the CVF bases rewards on achievement and sanctions for under-performance. Therefore, on attitudes towards accountability and evaluation, participants appear to conform more to market culture.

Nevertheless, one caveat discussed by participants as regards individual responsibility was that the individual should not be held accountable for their actions 'if the mistake arises because, for example, I haven't been trained in a new procedure or whatever, well then it gets kicked up the line' (P35, 13th July 2011). P65 (14th September 2011) concurs with this argument by stating that 'if something goes wrong then it's the Department's fault that they did not have Jimmy up to speed'. Indeed, participants pointed to the fact that training budgets for staff have been severely

slashed with the recent budget cuts and expressed a very real fear at how this will impact on accountability within the organisation. One CO argued that she had repeatedly requested the same training year in and year out through the PMDS process but had never received any response regarding her requests. Overall, participants argued that if underperformance was not addressed by the organisation, then it's the organisation that should be held responsible if something goes wrong.

As was pointed out in Chapter 2, one of the inherent contradictions of NPM is that it professes to give managers the freedom to manage, while at the same time, endeavouring to limit the discretion of professionals. This increase in rules and procedures is evident in social welfare, particularly within the CWS. For example, several participants discuss the increased introduction of rules and procedures which limit their discretion, 'there's been significant legislative changes which have curtailed what we do. When I started in the job it was much more discretionary ... the legislation and successive budgets has moved towards a much more prescriptive rule-orientated' (P35, 13th July 2011); and 'there is an awful lot of memos and dictats and everything coming down the track from the DSP' (P37, 14th July 2011). An emphasis on rules and procedures is associated with hierarchical culture on the CVF.

A key feature of the traditional model public administration is that bureaucrats and professionals record everything and this practice is very much in evidence within social welfare. Paperwork has to be provided as evidence for every decision made. As one CWO argues:

> We had a meeting there recently between a large group of people. It's called an Activation Team. And anyway, one thing, as I left that room at the end of the meeting I said to my colleagues, *Well I learned one thing today and it's our new motto, which says 'If you can't record it, it hasn't happened'. A*nd that's the mentality with Social Welfare (P39, 15th July 2011).

Recording everything is a measure of accountability, as one CO argues 'so paperwork exists and all these checks and balances exist to prevent fraud and to try and minimise as much as possible' (P2, 19th May 2011). There is extensive evidence of bureaucratic work practices here, as Collins and Cradden (2007: 12) point out 'all official business is documented in written form' in a bureaucratic organisation. Participants were aware that their written records could be examined by others on appeal, through audit or through FOI requests. As one CWO points out, 'it actually takes much more work to say no to somebody because you really have to cover your ass basically. Because if it goes to appeal, you have to have all your documentation' (P37, 14th July 2011). Taken together, the focus on rules and procedures and the emphasis on the practice of recording everything and paperwork yet again firmly places the administrative culture of 'street-

level' bureaucrats in the social welfare sector at the control end of the axis on the CVF. Figure 9.2 below details the range of accountability and evaluation measures described by participants from social welfare as they correspond to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 9.2 Social Welfare: A CVF Analysis of Reported Accountability and Evaluation Measures.

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Accountability and Evaluation	Increased rules, procedures and protocols. Record everything Paperwork has to be provided as evidence for every decision Aware that their written records can be examined by others. Accountability should lie with the organisation rather than the individual, particularly if the organisation does not provide adequate training and supports.		Increased evaluation? NO PMDS present but not engaged with meaningfully. Acceptance that it is not used to address performance issues. CWOs argue that duties not assessed in any way. Overall, participants bemoan lack of accountability and propose stricter penalties for underperformance.	

However, administrative culture cannot be deciphered by examining its visible aspects in isolation, and the next portion of the chapter deals with the invisible aspects of administrative culture.

9.3 H2: INVISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

H2 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. The invisible aspects of administrative culture analysed as part of this research are values, work motivations, and attitudes to change/public sector reform.

9.3.1 Values

Values are the first invisible aspect of administrative culture to be dealt with in this chapter. As was argued in Chapter 2, invisible aspects of administrative culture are more complicated to

decipher than the visible aspects. Chapter 2 discussed how NPM ideas may have altered the values of the public sector (see for example, Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen, 1997; Dingwall and Strangleman, 2005; and Gray and Jenkins, 2003). According to Figure 2.1 values associated with the traditional model of public administration are transparency, neutrality, fairness, due process, integrity, honesty and probity. The typical values associated with NPM would be customer service, productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money. The distinctive values associated with the post-NPM model of organisational culture include balancing different interests, developing networks, openness and responsiveness.

Schein (2010) states that the espoused values of an organisation relate to how the organisation represents itself to the outside. Chapter 4 illustrated how the espoused values of Irish public sector reform programmes continue to reflect NPM ideas. However, Chapter 2 noted that the espoused values of an organisation may not necessarily correspond to those of all its subcultures or occupational groups. There is evidence in the literature (Taylor and Kelly, 2006; Ashburner *et al.* 1996; Vrangbaek, 2009) to suggest that regardless of the espoused values of an administration, public sector employees have retained the underlying values of traditional public administration.

In order to investigate participants' values, a wide variety of questions were posed, including those relating to what participants regarded as ethical behaviour and what skills or attributes they consider necessary to perform their jobs. As evidenced above, participants from the social welfare sector clearly coincide with the hierarchical culture on the CVF. Indeed, the values discussed by participants in relation to ethical behaviour further enhance this point. Values associated with the traditional model of public administration discussed at length were confidentiality; respect; duty of care; equality; fairness; and responsibility. Collins and Cradden (2007: 12) point out that a feature of bureaucracy is that those employed within it do not have any personal gain from their employment and participants do refer to this. As one CO points out, 'well you can't defraud the state, and you can't be paying yourself' (P2, 19th May 2011), while another participant argues that 'Welfare Officers will forgive just about any kind of little, will forgive almost any sin amongst ourselves except stealing' (P40, 15th July 2011). Participants also put an emphasis on following the rules and procedures, for instance one HEO maintains that one should operate, 'always within the confines of our Acts. And with the page of the Act that says what powers we do have' (P84, 21st October 2011). Emphasis on control through rules and procedures is a feature of hierarchical culture.

Two participants also referred to business values such as customer service. However, no mention was made of business-like values associated with NPM such as efficient use of resources or providing value for money. CWOs, in particular, did mention that it was imperative to be aware that they are spending taxpayers money and that they needed to be accountable, just and honest when making decisions on this. Perhaps, this overall lack of emphasis on business-like values within social welfare can be explained by the nature of the work being carried out by staff in this area:

> You can make anything efficient if you wanted to but the public sector is not a private business. Having worked in both I understand the difference. Like a hospital should not be run for profit. The dole office should not be run for profit. They've tried these experiments in different places, they don't work. Because public sector is public service, it's called service for the public not making profit. Unfortunately, a lot of what the public sector does isn't about saving money. That's the problem, it's about giving money away (P2, 19th May 2011).

Thus, stress is put on values associated with the traditional model of public administration. This is consistent with H2, that is, the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy. Indeed, one can argue that on this invisible aspect of organisational culture, participants from the social welfare sector continue to correspond most with hierarchical culture. Figure 9.3 below details the multitude of responses from social welfare participants in relation to their work values (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 9.3 Social Welfare: A CVF Analysis of Reported Values

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Values	No personal gain Emphasis on rules and procedures Fairness Integrity Respect for the rule of law and due process (awareness of spending taxpayers money)	Duty of care Respect	Customer service No mention of efficient use of resources or providing value for money	Equity

9.3.2 Work Motivations

Chapter 2 also presented differing opinions regarding the nature of human behaviour. NPM ideas argue that public sector employees are motivated by self-interest. Alternatively, there

exists the idea of PSM described by Perry and Wise (1990: 368), as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organisations'. In order to examine the work motivations of participants, questions were posed relating to how participants choices regarding their career paths. Questions were also asked regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their current positions to assess whether they were, in fact, motivated by self-interest or public service. The work motivations of public sector employees are a vital invisible feature of administrative culture to explore, because if the visible manifestations of organisational culture such as reward and promotion structures are completely juxtaposed to the underlying values and motivations of staff, interaction with these systems will never be meaningful.

Extrinsic work motivations such as 'flexitime' (P2, 19th May 2011); 'job security and your pension' (P73, 5th October 2011); 'security of employment' (P83, 20th October 2011); 'the family friendly policies are brilliant' (P83, 20th October 2011); and 'well the very obvious reason these days is its permanent and pensionable' (P84, 21st October 2011) were frequently mentioned by participants from social welfare. Overall, while expressing dismay at the recent cuts to their salaries (due to pension levies, tax increases and pay cuts), participants from social welfare were quite happy that they are paid adequately for what they do, arguing that 'its sufficient' (P2, 19th May 2011) and 'we get well paid for it' (P37, 14th July 2011). Money did not appear to be a massively motivating factor for participants. However, participants felt very de-motivated by the fact that other people they work with are paid the same or more despite being 'not as proficient in the job, again the public service you get an increment. It's not based on your ability' (P65, 14th September 2011). This relates directly to issues with the accountability and evaluation measures within the sector discussed as part of the visible aspects of organisational culture.

While participants do indeed exhibit extrinsic motives regarding work, they also display a several other types of motivations. Many participants reveal altruistic motives. For example, CWO states 'occasionally you can actually make a difference' (P35, 13th July 2011), while an SO argues that:

> Satisfaction is if people come back to you and say you know, thank you for the way that you've helped me. You know and it might only be in a small, small way but we're hitting people, people are coming into us at a very, very vulnerable time, and to be able to, be able to be nice (P4, 24th May 2011).

Autonomy was essential to participants from social welfare as evidenced by statements such as 'I am captain of my own ship' (P73, 5th October 2011); and 'there is nobody like literally over my shoulder' (P37, 14th July 2011) while discussing the advantages of their jobs. Intrinsic work motivations were also expressed, for example, 'it's something different every day' (P34, 13th July 2011); and 'tough at times like, but never dull like. And every day different ... The job is interesting. It's satisfying' (P51, 28th July 2011). Social motivational factors such as dealing with people or colleagues were extremely significant for participants from social welfare, with practically all of them making statements similar to 'I like working with people' (P34, 13th July 2011); 'if you enjoy people it's great fun'(P40, 15th July 2011); and 'I just love dealing with the public' (P82, 20th October 2011). Another work motivational factor conveyed by participants from social welfare, is the influence of 'a friend' (P35, 13th July 2011; P37, 14th July 2011); 'a family member' (P65, 14th September 2011); 'my mother' (P82, 20th October 2011), or a socialisation influence.

As regards PSM being an explicit motivational factor for participants, participants did specifically mention the idea of public service, for example:

> When I started in 1993 I had naïve ideas. I kind of thought the public service is a great place to be. The public service serves the public. That's logical. But I have since learned that public service serves itself. I was very naïve about that (P40, 15th July 2011).

While an EO questions 'I mean is public service a vocation then, is it a thing you do because you have the sense of obligation as a citizen?' (P73, 5th October 2011). Participants from social welfare also expressed an interest in politics and policy-making, for instance, 'I've always been socially aware so it suited me, you know. I've always had a social conscious and it suits me' (P32, 12th July 2011).

Furthermore, PSM relates to service to the community. Houston (2005: 81) learned that 'public sector employees are more likely to volunteer for charity and donate blood' (but found no difference between public and private employees in terms of individual philanthropy), arguing that these findings support the idea of public service motivation. In order to investigate this, participants of this research were asked whether they donated blood, money or time. According to Taylor (2011) 'the World Giving Index, compiled by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), showed seventy-five percent of Irish people donated money to charity while thirty-eight percent volunteered their time each month'.

Eighty-six percent of participants from the social welfare sector report donating money and seventy-one percent report donating time. These results both exceed the national average. Forty-two percent reported donating blood, which is also well above the national average (according to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service, only three percent of Irish people donate blood). As an indication of an interest in politics and public policy making, participants were asked whether they voted and all of them replied positively. Once more, this is far greater than the national average (for example the approximate turnout for the Fiscal Treaty Referendum 2012 was fifty percent, and the 2011 General Election was seventy percent)[27].

Participants volunteered their time to charitable or community organisations such as the Civil Service Third World Fund (P32, 12th July 2011); the Guide Dogs (P34, 13th July 2011), Women's Aid Helpline and the Parent Teacher Association (P37, 14th July 2011); Haiti Build it Week (P39, 15th July 2011), a local theatre group (P65, 14th September 2011); a local soccer club (P73, 5th October 2011); the Kidney Association (P83, 20th October 2011) and the Irish Cancer Society (P84, 21st October 2011). Service to the community is not of any particular advantage to progressing one's career in this sector. Perhaps the availability of flexible working arrangements can be mooted as a contributory factor to the vastly higher levels of time volunteered by participants from the social welfare sector. Moreover, as the participants in the research were self-selecting, one can contend that the type of individual who would volunteer their time for an interview may also be the type of individual who would volunteer their time to charity. However, the results regarding money, blood donation and voting are not so easily explained and requires further investigation. Alternatively, of course, participants may simply have elevated levels of PSM compared to the general population. Figure 9.4 presents a summary of the analysis undertaken in this section regarding the work motivations of participants from the social welfare sector (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

[27] The statistics presented here are relatively crude as the sample is not large enough to be considered representative of the all employees of the DSP.

Figure 9.4 Social Welfare: A CVF Analysis of Reported Work Motivations

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Work Motivations		Making a difference Autonomy was important. Practically all participants stated that dealing with people and colleagues were important.	Money not a hugely motivating factor. Expressed de-motivation that others are paid the same despite under performance by comparison.	Specific mention of public service and interest in politics and policy making. Evidenced by all of them voting. Service to the community: higher than national average on blood, money and time donations.

Thus, the analysis above evokes a far more complex scenario regarding the motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals than either NPM ideas or the concept of PSM can hope to describe. Peters (2010: 310) contends that 'although employees certainly want to be paid a decent wage, money is not the only means of motivating people to do their job well – involvement in decisions and having an interesting job are potentially even more important'. Therefore, in the case of work motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats from the social welfare sector one can argue that H2 holds true.

9.3.3 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

The final segment of the interview consisted of a series of questions regarding participants' attitudes to change and public sector reform. They were encouraged to suggest possible reforms or changes to their own sector, as well as to the entire Irish public sector. Chapter 2 highlighted how members of both consensual culture (professionals) and hierarchical culture (bureaucrats) would be resistant to change and/or public sector reform or at the very least have a negative attitude towards it. Whereas under the NPM model (market and developmental culture), change is seen as necessary and under the post-NPM model, participants would have a positive attitude to change.

When given the opportunity to suggest changes to their own service, participants from the social welfare sector almost without fail, made suggestions that involved putting increased resources into their own sector. These proposals included refurbishing the public office and more supports for staff (P32, 12th July 2011); more staff (P35, 13th July 2011; P83, 20th October 2011); and

more training for staff (P34, 13th July 2011; P65, 14th September 2011). The calls for more staff were in the context of recent cuts to numbers of public sector employees and the argument was that it would result in a better service for the public. As a result of the ongoing recession workloads within DSP in particular have increased to due huge increases in unemployment rates. In addition, some participants made suggestions that were cost savings measures, including more co-ordination and information sharing between services such as social welfare, revenue and the prison service (P2, 19th May 2011; P4, 24th May 2011; P84, 21st October 2011). Participants also proposed the streamlining of benefits available as well as calling for more inspections into welfare fraud. Suggestions were also made to reduce the number of management grades within the sector. Cost savings measures can be seen as a more business-like approach in participants' attitudes.

In general, participants from social welfare saw reform of the entire public sector as 'badly needed' (P35, 13th July 2011) or necessary because of extensive ' wastage' (P65, 14th September 2011). Again, cost saving measures were suggested, for example 'I would cap wages at a certain level' (P32, 12th July 2011); 'too many middle managers' (P65, 14th September 2011); 'streamline an awful lot of the Departments' (P4, 24th May 2011); 'simplify things. Social Protection has too many schemes' (P40, 15th July 2011); 'I think some of the services should be cut and I think somebody should be able to stand up and say no to the politicians' (P51, 28th July 2011); and 'I would introduce a law banning any further name changes for this Department' (P84, 21st October 2011). Overall, the measures for reforming the entire public sector suggested by participants from the social welfare sector are very influenced by NPM ideas and language. In particular, one participant argues 'the public service is too large and costs too much money. They have to privatise a lot of stuff' (P40, 15th July 2011).

Rewards based on merit is a feature of market culture and this was something that participants from social welfare advocated should be applied across the entire public sector. For instance, 'I definitely do think they should be accountable and you should be able to fire them if they are crap' (P34, 13th July 2011); and

> We've got to make individuals in public service accountable for what they do and don't do. This business of, I mean, the whole issue of public service and civil service anonymity was so that we couldn't be got at politically. I wouldn't be named and shamed by an incoming party or a politician I had displeased. But it has now created a shield of legal invulnerability which is unsustainable (P40, 15th July 2011).

Therefore, the administrative culture of participants from social welfare is significantly influenced by NPM ideas in relation to attitudes to public sector reform as there is a notable appetite for change, which correlates to the market and developmental cultures on the CVF.

Aside from being asked to make suggestions regarding changes to their own service and to the wider public sector, participants were asked what came to mind when they heard the phrase public sector reform. In response, the language used by participants was in general rather negative. Participants describe public sector reform as 'a joke' (P2, 19th May 2011); ' I just get this colour like this grey, the greyness of it, the dourness of it' (P37, 14th July 2011); 'more for less' (P39, 15th July 2011); 'an impossible job, isn't it? You are trying to halve the staff and still give the same service' (P51, 28th July 2011); 'doing more with less' (P65, 14th September 2011); 'always reforming, never improving' (P73, 5th October 2011). Participants expressed disappointment about the reform measures that have been undertaken to date in the Irish public sector, for example:

> I get really enthusiastic when I hear people say anything about reform and I really genuinely every time people talk about doing things I'm going right, they're going to sort things out and things are going to get better. And they don't, so you do become disillusioned (P34, 13th July 2011).

Overall, participants from the social welfare sector have a positive attitude to the idea of reform and change but have had negative experiences of changes that have taken place thus far. One reason offered for resistance to change within the public sector was coalition strength associated with public sector unions, 'there is nothing but just huffing and puffing from both sides between the unions and management' (P4, 24th May 2011). Indeed the coalition strength of public sector employees was mooted as contributing to resistance to change in the literature review. An indication of the variety of attitudes to change/public sector reform expressed by participants working within social welfare is presented in Figure 9.5 below (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 9.5 Social Welfare: A CVF Analysis of Reported Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

Administrative Culture within the Public Sector	**Traditional Public Administration**		**New Public Management**	**Post-New Public Management?**
	Bureaucracy	**Professional**		
CVF of Organisational Cultures	**Hierarchical Culture**	**Consensual Culture**	**Market and Developmental Culture**	**Aspects of All Four**
Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform	Negative attitudes towards existing changes. CWOs – In transition. Range of emotions: fear, hope, confusion.		Cost savings measures suggested for their own service and wider public sector. More inspections into welfare fraud. Reduce numbers of management grades. Rewards based on merit should be applied. Reform seen as necessary.	More coordination and information sharing between government services.

At the time the interviews were conducted the CWS was in the process of being transferred from the HSE to the DSP. Seven CWOs were interviewed as part of this research and were considered to be 'in transition' at the time, and the following section will analyse their attitudes to this process specifically (as opposed to change in the wider public sector). Therefore, this cohort of research participants is particularly interesting as they were undergoing the process of organisational change at the time of interview. Furthermore, while the HSE and the DSP are both organisations within the Irish public sector, differences may exist in manifestations of administrative culture. While both exhibit very bureaucratic work practices, this research points to differences in accountability and evaluation systems. However, participants from both organisations revealed similar values, motivations and attitudes to public sector reform. It is worth re-stating that because CWOs can be regarded as bureaucrats under the traditional model of public administration, it was assumed that they would have a very negative attitude to change.

Diverse attitudes were evident regarding the change process. Participants were very hesitant about what the transfer to the DSP would mean for their roles. This was connected with high levels of fear and uncertainty about the process due to a lack of information from management. A clear plan by management for this transition was not evident from these conversations. For example, 'while in theory I think yes it is a good idea and I can see the logic behind it, I think they haven't done sufficient planning. Nobody is telling us what's happening, where we're going, and what we're going to be doing. (P34, 13th July 2011). Indeed, P65 (14th September

2011) explains 'October the first is when we are transitioning, we are currently seconded, whatever that means, and we are all becoming HEOs Higher Executive Officers, but we are not really sure as to what that means really. And its two and a half weeks away'. Participants felt that they were being moved against their will, 'A lot of feeling of kind of being pushed into going into social protection' (P37, 14th July 2011).

Nevertheless, several participants were also hopeful that the transition would have a positive outcome for them, even going so far as to describe it as 'exciting' (P65, 14th September 2011). Participants hoped that the changeover to the DSP would result in better promotional opportunities in the long run; better accountability and evaluation; and new duties and more diverse work. Participants could appreciate the necessity of subsuming the CWS into the DSP to avoid duplication of services as a cost saving measure but were extremely worried about the human aspect. As one CWO explains:

> I mean the amount of overlap of work and duplication of work is ridiculous. And it's a nonsense. But my real concern is what happens to the people that don't fit into social welfare's little ticky tack boxes. The people who I am concerned about are the people who are marginalised with mental health problems, with addiction problems, who, you know their language, English may not be their, or for whatever reason, cannot access social welfare services. And I sort of feel we're their safety net (P34, 13th July 2011).

Thus, participants were concerned that their clients would be the losers in this change process.

Where opportunities have presented themselves, staff from the CWS (and FAS) are moving into roles that traditionally had been held by DSP staff. It would be extremely interesting to investigate whether these participants have had a positive or negative experience to the change process after a period of time employed in the DSP, because as one participant so eloquently points out:

> So the goalposts shift. And I know, maybe this is going off on a different stream of thought, but it does really point up to also something else, which is different cultures as well, you know, going on between Social Welfare and our CWS, which is going to be eroded over time, our service, our culture, whatever about what happens to us in a technical way, you know, as we merge in, ... it does require very serious examination about what is happening to the culture of the smaller service, no more than in a business world where you have a takeover or mergers, you know. Even footballs clubs that merge, you know. And something, the addition of the two or the merge of the two does not mean that you come out with something better or greater or something. That something's lost in the process (P39, 15th July 2011).

Therefore, the evidence presented above demonstrates that NPM ideas have influenced to some extent the attitudes of social welfare participants to change and public sector reform. However, one can argue that this is by no means a complete transformation and that attitudes are, on the

whole, very mixed. This is in contrast to the assumed negative view associated with those from consensual and hierarchical cultures.

9.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter 9 analyses the primary data obtained from 'street-level' bureaucrats employed in the delivery of Irish social welfare policy, utilising the Completing Values Framework (CVF) of organisational cultures to do so. The first part of this chapter examines whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of participants to determine if H1 is valid. The second section of this chapter assesses whether NPM ideas have impacted upon the invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of participants to assess if H2 is justifiable.

H1 states that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. Some changes have occurred to the visible aspects of the administrative culture of social welfare participants, therefore, H1 is valid. Chapter 2 argues that increased flexibility, increased time commitment and evidence of enterprising managers are the changes to work practices resulting from NPM. Firstly, we witness increased flexibility to working arrangements in the sector with options like job sharing and the flexi-clock system being introduced. Secondly, as is argued by Hardiman (2010) and Collins *et al.*, (2007) one of the main areas where the Irish civil service has been successful at implementing NPM ideas is customer service. As this analysis indicates, customer service ideals associated with NPM have indeed made an impact upon the Irish social welfare sector. More than half the participants use the term customer to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis. This can be attributed to the introduction of customer charters and customer action plans in the civil service.

In spite of the changes outlined above, the analysis clearly illustrates a continued adherence to features of hierarchical culture in the social welfare sector. Features of bureaucracy (hierarchical culture), such as the cult of the generalist, are discussed by participants. Moreover, participants argue that discretion in decision making is permitted but only within the boundaries of existing legislation, protocols and guidelines. Innovation is encouraged if it results in more efficient work practices but not in the sense of being dynamic or taking risks, as is associated with developmental culture. Permanent pensionable employment also continues to be the norm. There is no evidence of increased time commitment in the sector, with participants noting that

while workloads have increased due to the current economic crisis, any extra time worked up can be claimed back at a later date through the flexi-clock system. In addition, supervisory duties continue to be related to position in the hierarchical structure, which remains quite rigid. Moreover, participants note an increase in rules and procedures, policies and protocols. Paperwork must be furnished as evidence for every decision made and participants demonstrate awareness that their written records can be examined by others in light of one of their decisions being appealed, or through audit and FOI requests. All of the above points to bureaucratic work practices (hierarchical culture) lingering within the sector. Interestingly, client is the term most used by participants in the social welfare sector to describe whom they deal with on a daily basis. The term is associated with professionals under the traditional model of public administration (consensual culture). This represents an unexpected finding, and could perhaps be explained by the presence of former CWO's in the group studied.

Chapter 2 also pointed to increased evaluation resulting from NPM. On the whole, evaluation is engaged with in the social welfare sector at a superficial level. DSP employees display very mixed attitudes regarding the effectiveness of the PMDS process, while CWO's in the HSE argued that their duties were not assessed in any way. There is an acceptance among participants that PMDS is not used to address performance issues with staff. Indeed, their perceptions of the process may well be accurate. In 2010, the Department of Finance conducted a review into PMDS in the Irish civil service (Department of Finance, 2010). This report highlighted that PMDS was not, in many cases, being used as an effective tool in the management and improvement of performance. Figure 9.6 below details the distribution of PMDS rating across the Irish civil service from 2008 to 2011. In 2011, just 1.3 per cent of those rated under the system were ineligible to receive their increment or apply for promotion.

Figure 9.6 Distribution of PMDS ratings[28] in the Irish Civil Service

Rating	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**
Normal Distribution %*	**% of staff**	**% of staff**	**% of staff**	**% of staff**
5 (0-10)	7	8	9	8
4 (20-30)	49	55	56	56
3 (40-60)	42	36	34	35
2 (10-20)	2	1.3	0.95	0.90
1 (0-10)	0.28	0.08	0.05	0.13

*** As set out in General Council Report No 1452**

In response to the Department of Finance report, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform decided that the PMDS process needed to be simplified. This was to be achieved through the introduction of a new PMDS form for the 2012 PMDS cycle. It would seem that the new form has had little impact as O'Brien (2013) reports that 'the performance of less than one percent of civil servants was assessed as unacceptable or needing improvement' under PMDS in 2012. In other words, ninety-nine per cent of Irish civil servants assessed under PMDS in 2012 were eligible to receive their increment and apply for promotion (that is, they received a grade of three or higher). The response by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to this was to introduce further changes to the form in the 2013 cycle. Whether these changes have been successful or not remains to be seen. However, my instinct is to predict that changes to the PMDS form will not result in a better (sic) distribution of ratings across the civil service because the real issue is the underlying culture of the civil service. This culture includes a fear of confrontation and unwillingness by management and staff to engage with an evaluation process they feel is not linked to performance. There also appears to be a disconnect between PMDS and the work motivations of DSP staff.

Furthermore, within the community welfare service, accountability is a negative criterion, in that a lack of complaints is equated with good performance. Overall, participants bemoan the lack of accountability in their sector and propose stricter penalties for underperformance. Thus, the attitudes of participants in the social welfare sector demonstrate a preference for market culture in this regard. Aside from increased flexibility in working arrangements, increased customer service awareness, and a preference for market culture performance mechanisms in

[28] Figures from Department of Public Expenditure and Reform http://hr.per.gov.ie/pmds-2011/

the sector, many visible aspects of administrative culture continue to adhere to hierarchical culture.

H2 asserts that 'the introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy'. Transformation implies a thorough or dramatic change, which is not evident in invisible aspects of administrative culture of social welfare participants, therefore, H2 is justifiable. Chapter 2 outlined the usefulness of the CVF in demonstrating that different cultural forms can co-exist and even compete with each other within organisations. This is clearly the case concerning the values of social welfare participants. Values discussed at length by participants are confidentiality, respect, fairness and responsibility. Participants also note that they should not benefit any personal gain from their positions and an emphasis is put on following rules and procedures. The aforementioned all correspond to the traditional model of public administration (hierarchical culture). At the same time, social welfare participants stress the need for customer service which aligns with NPM.

Competing and co-existing work motivations were also testified to by social welfare participants. NPM ideas and performance evaluation systems assume that public sector employees are motivated purely by self-interest. However, the analysis illustrates that money does not appear to be a hugely motivating factor for social welfare participants. Furthermore, two participants note that they feel de-motivated by the fact that colleagues with are paid the same or more despite not performing to the same level. Social motivational factors were extremely important to social welfare participants, with practically all of them stating that dealing with colleagues and members of the public was an advantage of the job. In relation to PSM (Perry and Wise, 1990), participants did make explicit mention of public service as a motivational factor. They also discussed an interest in politics and policy making which is borne out by the fact that all of them testify to voting on a regular basis. This high level of voting could be related to socialisation, that is, civil servants often have very direct contact with politicians. As a marker of service to the community (Houston, 2005), participants were questioned about their donations of blood, money and time and on all counts report higher than the national average levels of donation. The high levels of time donation could be connected to the presence of flexible working conditions within the sector but it is more difficult to offer a plausible explanation for the greater than average donations of blood and money. Therefore, there is reasonable evidence of PSM within the sector.

The picture painted concerning attitudes to change/public sector reform in the social welfare sector is also far from simple. Chapter 2 described how, according to the CVF, members of hierarchical and consensual cultures are resistant to change, while members of developmental and market cultures would express a positive attitude. The influence of NPM ideas is apparent in the cost savings measures suggested by social welfare participants to both their own sector and the wider Irish public sector. In addition, they express a preference for market culture mechanisms by advocating that rewards should be based on merit. On the whole, participants see reform and change as necessary. However, the language used in relation to the phrase public sector reform is rather negative. At the time the interviews were conducted, the community welfare service was in the process of being transferred from the HSE to the DSP. Participants expressed mixed emotions ranging from fear, confusion, hope and concern regarding the transition process. Many of these emotions can be traced back to lack of information and consultation regarding the change process. It would be interesting to re-interview this cohort now that the process has been completed to better understand how 'street-level' bureaucrats experience changes to differing aspects of organisational culture. In sum, while there is evidence of NPM ideas having some impact on invisible aspects of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats working within social welfare, these ideas are competing and co-existing with those of traditional public administration. The concluding chapter of this thesis compares and contrasts the views of participants from all five policy sectors in order to draw some overall conclusions regarding the two hypotheses and research framework.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Building on the work of authors such as Colyer *et al.* (2000); Bradley and Parker (2006); Hajnal (2005); Jingjit and Fotaki (2010); and, Van Beek and Gerritsen (2010) this study specifically examines the ways in which NPM ideas have impacted upon the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. In answering this question, this work adds two significant perspectives to the existing literature. Firstly, this study brings together two strands of the literature, namely, the one on administrative/organisational culture and the one on the impact of NPM ideas on traditional public administration. The CVF model identifies four distinct organisational culture types which this research has linked with the literature on organisational cultures within the public sector. To briefly recap, the Internal Process Model or hierarchical culture mirrors bureaucrats within traditional public administration. The Human Resources Model or consensual culture best reflects professionals under traditional public administration. The Open Systems Model or developmental culture is epitomised by managers under NPM, while the Rational Goal Model or market culture represents employees under NPM. The post-NPM model of organisational culture in the public sector presents problems when attempting to position it on the CVF (see Figure 2.2). This is because it contains elements of all four cultural types.

Bradley and Parker (2006: 90) point out that within public sector organisations there has been 'a shift in emphasis from rule enforcement and administration to the attainment of results through mission statements, performance management and performance-based rewards'. In other words, there has been a shift from the control mechanisms of hierarchical culture to those of market culture, reflecting 'an external rather than internal perspective in terms of the CVF typology' (Bradley and Parker, 2006: 91). Furthermore, they argue that NPM ideas have 'encouraged a shift in organisational culture away from an internal process model' (Bradley and Parker, 2006: 91) to a model which emphasises flexibility and innovation. By examining administrative culture at both its visible and invisible manifestations this research provides an in-depth answer as to whether or not this is occurring at the ‘street-level’ in the Irish context. By linking both the visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture this approach clearly demonstrates the viability of using the CVF model to illustrate how administrative culture can be regarded as a multifaceted and dynamic system of competing and co-existing cultures.

The second important contribution this research makes is the unique context to which it relates. This research analyses the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy, a group which has been largely neglected in the Irish context.

Moreover, research assessing the impact of NPM ideas on their administrative culture is noticeably absent. Therefore, this research fills a void in the literature. Change and restructuring in the Irish public sector has been influenced by NPM ideas since the launch of SMI in 1994. Understanding the inconsistencies between the espoused culture at the top of the public sector, as articulated in public sector reform programmes, and the culture in action at the 'street-level' may help explain why past reforms influenced by NPM ideas may have not been overly successful. Consequently, one can argue that this research contributes to the literature in two very important ways.

When evaluating the overall contribution of this research one must also be aware of its limitations. Firstly, the data collected was of a qualitative nature and therefore cannot claim to be statistically representative of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. The value of this research however, is that it provides a template for others to undertake comparative research in this field, whether this comparison is between levels of hierarchy; policy fields; or, national jurisdictions. Secondly, while the CVF does facilitate the researcher in painting a more nuanced than usual picture regarding the impact of NPM ideas than is often presented in the literature, it does so within certain boundaries. As is illustrated in Figure 2.2, there are difficulties associated with placing the post-NPM model of organisational culture on the CVF framework. Despite these limitations, this research makes a number of valuable points about the nature of the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy.

The preceding five chapters of this thesis present the findings of this research in relation to the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals from the education, health, housing, personal social services and social welfare sectors respectively. Applying the CVF model of organisational cultures, each chapter analyses the impact of NPM ideas on both visible (work practices and accountability and evaluation measures) and invisible (values, work motivations and attitudes to change and public sector reform) elements of administrative culture in order to assess the validity of the two research hypotheses developed in Chapter 2. This chapter now compares and contrasts the findings which emerged from each sector examined. In this manner, an overall assessment is made as to whether the two research hypotheses regarding the impact of NPM ideas on both the visible and invisible manifestations of administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals are confirmed or not. The results largely confirm the two hypotheses made.

10.2 H1: VISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE

The first research hypothesis is stated as follows:

H1: The introduction of NPM ideas has led to changes to the visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

The visible manifestations of administrative culture examined are work practices, and accountability and evaluation measures. Overall, the analysis demonstrates that *some* changes are evident to visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals employed in the delivery of social policy in Ireland. Therefore, H1 is confirmed. The extent of these changes is discussed in the following paragraphs, with particular reference to the context depicted in Chapter 4.

10.2.1 Work Practices

The first visible aspect of administrative culture analysed is work practices. According to the literature (Hughes, 1998), increased flexibility is a change to public sector work practices as a result of NPM ideas. The analysis clearly highlights that increases to flexibility at the 'street-level' of Irish social policy vary according to policy sector under examination. In the education and health sectors in particular, job contracts are becoming more short-term and flexible. However, within housing, the personal social services and social welfare sectors, permanent pensionable employment continues to be the norm. The increasing casualisation of labour in the health and education sectors is linked with the current recruitment embargo across the entire Irish public sector and government efforts to reduce overall public sector numbers since the onset of the economic crisis in 2008[29]. Whether this can be directly attributed to NPM ideas is difficult to say. Across the five policy sectors investigated however, flexible working arrangements such as the flexi-clock system and family friendly working hours have been introduced. Rather than NPM ideas being directly responsible, it is plausible that much of this flexibility in working arrangements is associated with the need to reduce costs and the recognition that the public sector workforce is exceedingly feminised.

Additionally, the literature (Davies and Thomas, 2002; Grummell *et al.* 2009; Lane, 2000) asserts that increased time commitment from public sector employees is the result of the implementation of NPM ideas. The findings of this research indicate that a long hours culture is apparent amongst some (but not all) professional groups working at the 'street-level' of Irish social policy. Teachers and lecturers are required to work extra hours under the Croke Park

[29] In 2008, the Irish public sector workforce peaked at approximately 320,000 employees. By 2012 this number had been reduced to approximately 290,000 employees, a reduction of around 30,000.

Agreement, with a discernible culture of presenteeism amongst lecturers in particular. Nurses and doctors also report that they routinely work extended hours (often unpaid). Due to immense caseloads and understaffing, working excessive hours is also part of the culture of social workers in Child and Family services. Worryingly, participants from these professions discussed the potential (and actual) high levels of stress and often serious mental and physical illness associated with the levels of time commitment required from their positions. Noblet *et al.* (2006: 350) found that the numerous changes introduced as a result of NPM have resulted in increased levels of employee stress, dissatisfaction and declining organisational commitment. Noblet *et al.* (2006: 336) argue that this will lead to 'substantial costs for the organisation', which would 'ultimately affect the overall efficiency and effectiveness'. This, Noblet *et al.* (2006: 336) contend, is because 'employees are central to the success of any organisation, particularly service-oriented public sector agencies, and the human costs of NPM could prevent agencies achieving the benefits they set out to obtain'. Therefore, this research indicates that in order to have a well functioning public sector, adequate supports for staff, in conjunction with compliance with international standards, such as the EU Working Time Directive, urgently needs to be put in place (see Chapters 6 and 9 for a more detailed discussion). Nevertheless, this does not appear to be the case across the board. On balance, while reporting increasing workloads, the other participants in this study do not feel obliged to work excessive hours as part of their routine duties. This is due in large part to systems such as the flexi-clock and TOIL where employees can claim back extra hours worked at a later date.

Language is often described as one of the defining features of culture (Martin, 2002). It was argued that if NPM ideas have a substantial impact on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, participants will employ the term customer to describe those whom they deal with on a daily basis, along with business language to describe their work practices. Once more, this varies according to occupational group with Irish social policy. Bureaucrats across the board are more influenced by NPM ideas in relation to customer service ideals. The term customer is utilised by over half the bureaucrats in the research sample. Meanwhile, the professional groups continue to use their own language to describe whom they deal with. Depending on the occupational group, terms such as patient, student, pupil and client are employed unanimously, while the terms customer and citizen are extensively ignored. According to Kaarst-Brown *et al.* (2004: 37) 'occupational language and rituals associated with speciality fields such as medicine, library science, accounting, and others create bonds between those who share them and may exclude those who do not have knowledge of them'. Certainly, consensual culture is concerned with group maintenance (see Figure 2.2). Therefore, in terms of customer service language, it seems that members of hierarchical culture have been more

extensively influenced by NPM ideas than members of consensual culture. This is a very interesting finding as it implies that hierarchical culture is not as stagnant as one might first suppose. This finding is in the context of the prolonged use of customer charters and customer service action plans in the Irish civil service and local authorities (see Chapters 7 and 9 for details). Hardiman (2010) and Collins *et al.*, (2007) argue that the adoption of customer service ideas are where the Irish public sector is particularly strong on NPM (see Chapter 4). However, the professional groups participating in this study do not appear to have internalised customer service ideas to the same degree as the bureaucrats.

While some changes are evident to the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy, the overall impression is one of cultural stagnation. For instance, the literature (Minogue, 1998) argues that NPM ideas result in public sector employees increasingly becoming enterprising managers. In hierarchical culture, employees' responsibilities are formalised and structured. It is obvious that, within Irish social policy, the level and extent of managerial duties (such as supervision of staff and control of budgets) is directly related to position within the hierarchy, which remains quite rigid. Additionally, participants express a very robust alignment with bureaucratic and professional identities by repeatedly depicting bureaucratic and professional work practices as detailed in Figure 2.1. Participants from education, health and the personal social services express a deep-seated affinity with professional work identity and describe professional work practices in detail. This is characteristic of consensual culture. Numerous descriptions of bureaucratic work practices are offered by participants from the housing and social welfare sectors, which correlate to hierarchical culture. Bureaucracy is spoken negatively across the board as the term is associated with increased paperwork, red tape and rules and procedures. Many aspects of traditional public administration - such as, emphasis on rules and procedures; permanent secure employment; paperwork; the practice of recording everything; political neutrality; and minimal to no discretion over budgets or staff issues - are still very much in evidence in the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy.

Further, bureaucracy is associated with limiting the discretion of employees. The analysis establishes that discretion and flexibility within decision making varies greatly according to profession. The majority of participants argue that they have discretion on how to organise their day and prioritise their tasks. Comparatively speaking, doctors, community welfare officers and social workers appear to retain the highest levels of discretion within their work. Even so, all decision making within these occupations remains within the confines of existing legislation,

rules and procedures (to avoid litigation). Aside from doctors being encouraged to develop new work practices through research as part of their career progression, innovation - a feature of developmental culture - and risk taking is not encouraged in the work practices of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Participants also made scant mention of work practices such as networking, teamwork and collaboration which are associated with the post-NPM model. Figure 10.1 illustrates the similarities and differences in responses from participants regarding work practices between the five policy areas analysed as part of this research (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 10.1 Work Practices: Similarities and Differences between Policy Sectors.

	Education	**Health**	**Housing**	**Personal Social Services**	**Social Welfare**
Traditional Public Administration **(Hierarchical and Consensual Culture)**	Professional work practices. Tend to relate innovation with discretion as to how/what they teach (inward focus). Unanimously: Student or Pupil. Limited control of staff or budgets.	Professional work practices. Discretion: depends on the profession. Client and Patient used interchangeably by three participants, rest use patient exclusively.	Bureaucratic work practices Discretion on how to organise their day and prioritise tasks Job for life remains the norm. Level and extent of managerial duties directly related to position within the hierarchy (remains rigid).	Professional work practices. High levels of discretion and flexibility. Majority use client (Some make specific mention of the groups they deal with). Job for life remains the norm. Little to no control over budgets.	Bureaucratic work practices. Discretion allowed but only within the boundaries of existing legislation, rules and guidelines. Job for life remains the norm. Client used most extensively. Level and extent of managerial duties directly related to position within the hierarchy (remains rigid).
New Public Management **(Market and Developmental Culture)**	Increased flexibility - casualisation of job contracts Increased time commitment	Increased flexibility - casualisation of job contracts Increased time commitment Innovation: Encouraged but within the confines of existing rules and procedures (Doctors the exception). Acute awareness of costs	Innovation constrained by legislation. Almost half use customer.	Innovation unlikely without the support of line management and dependent of resources. Increased time commitment - participants working within child protection services only.	Innovation encouraged if results in more efficient work practices but not in the sense of being dynamic or taking risks. Customer used by eight participants.
Post-NPM? **(Aspects of All Four?)**	Discuss the need to team building and trust. Lecturers speak about the need to develop networks.		Teamwork and collaboration mentioned as important.		

Therefore, to summarise the analysis above, it seems that despite some changes, participants continue to display a strong adherence to the hierarchical (control and internal focus) and consensual culture (flexibility and internal focus) described by Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) CVF. This is significant because administrative culture can be regarded as a dynamic system consisting of both visible and invisible levels. Therefore, if 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals continue to adhere to hierarchical and consensual culture it is assumed that they

are resistant to change/public sector reform (because of the emphasis on control and stability within these organisational cultures). Attitudes to change/public sector reform is one of the invisible aspects of administrative culture examined later in this chapter.

10.2.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures

The literature also indicates that an increasing emphasis on accountability and evaluation measures is a way in which NPM has impacted upon the work practices of public sector employees (Alcock, 2003; Taylor and Kelly, 2006). In terms of the impact of NPM ideas on accountability and evaluation measures, the analysis yet again reveals changes that vary according to sector. Apart from the education sector, where the incidence of whole school and incidental inspections, and workload reviews are increasing, there is scant evidence of increased evaluation in Irish social policy. Indeed, participants employed in the HSE almost universally argue that their duties are not assessed in any way. Where evaluation does take place, engagement with it by both management and 'street-level' staff is superficial at best. Evaluation measures such as PMDS are often viewed as mere box ticking exercises by participants. 'Street-level' bureaucrats and professionals cite reasons such as the public sector trade unions and a dislike of confrontation by management for non-engagement with evaluation measures within their respective organisations. Across all five policy areas investigated, rewards and sanctions are not based on merit, therefore, evaluation within Irish social policy does not equate with accountability.

Contrary to the stereotype of the lazy public sector employee, participants overwhelmingly state a preference for market culture in relation to accountability and evaluation measures. They argue that under-performance should result in sanctions and that the consequence of non-performance should be dismissal. Participants also express disappointment and de-motivation that it is possible to perform excellently in their jobs and not have it acknowledged. Participants did not appear to be seeking monetary rewards, but rather recognition for a job well done from management. Of course the opinions expressed by participants regarding evaluation and accountability measures should be taken with a little pinch of salt as it would be naïve to assume that each and every one of them is performing to the best of their abilities within their jobs. It is entirely plausible that some of them at least were merely expressing the sorts of opinions they felt the researcher would like to hear. However, the section below on work motivations indicates that public sector employees are not solely motivated by self-interest (contrary to what NPM ideas suggest) which lends the analysis more credibility. Therefore, it is a recommendation of this research that more appropriate evaluation systems should be put in

place to ensure the smooth running of Irish public sector organisations. Overall, participants are very articulate and insightful when discussing accountability issues. While the majority argue that individuals should be held personally responsible for their actions in relation to fraud, misconduct and non-performance, many vehemently argue that the organisation should bear responsibility if the employee makes errors due to inadequate staffing, resources, training and supports being provided by the organisation.

One of the apparent paradoxes associated with NPM ideas is that while they aim to give managers the freedom to manage, the intention is to also limit the discretion of professional groups within the public sector (Hill, 2005). Unsurprisingly then, what we witness across all five policy sectors is an increased emphasis on control through policies, rules and a standardising of procedures. This continual limiting of discretion and flexibility shifts the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy further towards the hierarchical culture on the CVF model. The analysis evokes a picture of participants drowning under ever increasing volumes of paperwork. This paperwork is associated with reporting mechanisms where extensive duplication is often required. A negative consequence of the excessive levels of paperwork being undertaken by participants is that it eats into the amount of time available to care for patients or spend with clients. Rules and procedures; formalised and structured ways of undertaking tasks; and the practice of recording everything are key characteristics of the work practices of bureaucrats under the traditional model of public administration (hierarchical culture). This evidence furthers the argument made in the previous section that hierarchical culture continues to linger within Irish social policy.

Another striking finding of this research is the prevalence of a 'cover your ass' culture in education, health and the personal social services in particular. Sixteen participants across all five policy areas make specific reference to the terms ‘cover’ or ‘covered’ (including stem words). Many more describe work practices and behaviours which relate to this ‘cover your ass’ culture. The practice of recording everything is associated with covering oneself for fear of legal repercussions. Accountability is achieved by providing a paper trail; to the extent that the phrase (or a version thereof) 'care not written is care not given' is repeatedly uttered by participants in the health sector. It is difficult to assess, whether participants' fears surrounding the litigious nature of Irish society are well founded. On the one hand, Daugherty Rasnic (2004: 186) states that 'Americans are notoriously litigious, but the Irish seem to be in a race for the dubious distinction of being even more so. Ireland now is statistically the most litigious country in Europe, and she is now second only to the U.S.A. worldwide'. While on the other, Van Aeken

(2012: 226) argues that 'comparative data on litigation are surprisingly scarce. Very often scholars use and reuse the same figures even when these data are seriously outdated'. The data Van Aeken (2012) refers to is from 1998 and shows Ireland as the thirteenth most litigious country in world on 32.7 cases taken per one thousand and in the same graph, the USA is ranked fifth. However, the data referred to by both of these authors relates to civil litigation in its entirety. General figures for litigation would include suing employers (private sector), defamation, businesses suing businesses, and family law. Figures for professional negligence (claims against public sector employees) might only comprise a small percentage of the overall figure. Nevertheless, regardless of whether the fear of litigation is well founded or not, it is very much engrained in an administrative culture that is preoccupied with insulating the organisation and individual against legal proceedings. In sum, the analysis demonstrates that despite participants expressing a preference for market culture evaluation and accountability mechanisms, they are largely absent in Irish social policy Figure 10.2 below compares and contrasts participants responses regarding accountability and evaluation measures across all five policy areas under investigation (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted).

Figure 10.2 Accountability and Evaluation Measures: Similarities and Differences across Policy Sectors.

	Education	**Health**	**Housing**	**Personal Social Services**	**Social Welfare**
Traditional Public Administration **(Hierarchical and Consensual Culture)**	Increased control mechanisms - rules, procedures and protocols. Rewards and sanctions not linked evaluation.	Paperwork - High levels of duplication. Care not written is care not given. Negative impact on time available to spend with patients.	Recording everything very much continues to be practice Paperwork - justification for ones actions. PMDS not used to address performance issues.	Increased Paperwork - Negative impact on time available to spend with clients. Increased control mechanisms - rules, procedures and protocols	Recording everything very much continues to be practice. PMDS not used to address performance issues.
New Public Management **(Market and Developmental Culture)**	Increased evaluation and assessment. Increased planning and reporting.	Professional associations continue to licence, regulate and evaluate. Limited evaluation within the HSE.	PMDS not engaged with to any great extent Local authorities increasingly evaluated – audit and performance indicators.	HIQA mentioned in terms of drive for stats but not equated with personal performance evaluation	PMDS not engaged with in DSP. CWO's not assessed.
Post-NPM? **(Aspects of all Four Cultures?)**					

Accountability and evaluation systems are an important aspect of visible administrative culture for this analysis because, in order for reward and promotion structures to be meaningful for 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, they need to be cognisant of the underlying values and motivations of staff. As was pointed out in Chapter 2, the complex process of organisational culture change will not occur by merely making changes to its visible manifestations.

10.2.3 Conclusions: H1

Generally speaking, H1 is confirmed because some changes have been made to visible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy as a result of NPM ideas. These changes include increased flexibility, increased time commitment and the use of customer service language. However, the changes to work practices vary greatly depending on the policy area and occupational group under investigation. Added to this, (with the exception of the education sector) there is very little evidence of increased evaluation. If anything, the introduction of NPM type reforms has had the perverse effect of increasing levels of control and paperwork which are associated with hierarchical culture. Thus, one can argue that the impact of NPM ideas on the visible aspects of organisational culture is cosmetic, with change occurring at a very sluggish pace.

10.3 H2: INVISIBLE ASPECTS OF ADMINITRATIVE CULTURE

The second research hypothesis is stated as follows:

H2: The introduction of NPM ideas has not led to a transformation of the invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of Irish social policy.

The invisible manifestations of administrative culture examined are values, work motivations and attitudes to change/public sector reform. Overall, the analysis establishes that a complete transformation to invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy is not apparent as a result of NPM ideas. Therefore, H2 is confirmed. However, there does appear to be some limited influence by NPM ideas. The extent of this influence is discussed in the following paragraphs.

10.3.1 Values

Antonsen and Beck Jorgensen (1997); Dingwall and Strangleman (2005); and Gray and Jenkins (2003) all concur that NPM has altered the values of those employed in the public sector. If this were the case, participants in this study would emphasise business-like values such as efficiency, cost effectiveness, economy and customer service. As demonstrated in Chapter 4,

successive Irish governments have repeatedly espoused values and ideas associated with NPM as a vehicle for public sector reform. But as Brown (1995: 26) explains;

> espoused culture refers to a normative or desired state of vision of the organisation, that is, what the organisation should be. In contrast, an organisations culture-in-practice is its actual culture as experienced by employees. The difference between an organisations espoused culture and culture-in-practice can be dramatic. For example, some universities espouse concern for teaching quality ('we are a teaching oriented institution') while in practice they recruit and promote employees on the basis of their research endeavours.

This research indicates that the values associated with NPM ideas, first championed by senior management within the public sector, have not filtered down to the bureaucrats and professionals at the 'street-level' of Irish social policy. The prevailing values mentioned by participants are linked to the traditional model of public administration. These values include honesty, integrity, confidentiality, respect, duty of care and so forth. Adherence to rules and regulations is also important to participants. Therefore, at first glance, one can argue that the values of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals are firmly aligned to hierarchical and consensual culture on the CVF. While one cannot argue that participants' values have been transformed, NPM ideas do have some influence. For instance, participants discuss the need to provide good customer service to those whom they deal with. There is some distinction between bureaucrats and professionals here. Far more emphasis is placed on customer service ideas in the housing and social welfare sectors. Furthermore, the sole bureaucrat interviewed in the health sector also discussed the need for customer service. Professional groups continue to extensively use their own specific group language to describe whom they deal with. Added to this, while participants demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities associated with spending taxpayers money, business-like values not given prominence. The exception to this rule is the health sector where participants display an acute awareness of costs. It is difficult to say whether this emphasis on economy has more to do with widespread budget cuts in the HSE or NPM ideas. It is also noteworthy that apart from participants from the personal social services, scant mention was made of post-NPM values such a networking and collaboration.

As Figure 10.3 below clearly demonstrates, this analysis offers proof that values are a more complex matter than either NPM ideas or theories of public service would have one believe (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted). Undeniably, the values of participants of this research compete and co-exist with each other. This correlates with Jingjit and Fotaki's (2010: 69) study which highlighted 'the limited ability of managerial type of reforms to transform organisational culture. Given that the reform was largely implemented through the government's top-down change management, the study illuminates the flaws in such

an approach'. Therefore, along with Jingjit and Fotaki's (2010) study, this research challenges the rationalist managerial approach (of which NPM is part) to organisational culture, which maintains that managers can somehow create and manipulate efficient corporate cultures. Additionally, one can argue that along with the structures of traditional public administration, its values continue to be retained by 'street-level' staff.

Figure 10.3 Values: Similarities and Differences between Policy Sectors.

	Education	**Health**	**Housing**	**Personal Social Services**	**Social Welfare**
Traditional Public Administration **(Hierarchical and Consensual Culture)**	The need to follow rules and procedures. Strong personal integrity: obligation to set a good example for students. Ethics related to codes of behaviour and practice e.g. dressing and behaving properly.	Honesty. Integrity. Dignity. Respect for patients.	No personal gain from their position. Confidentiality, honesty and integrity. Adhering to codes of conduct at all times.	Honesty. IASW code of ethics. Confidentiality. Respect. Non-judgemental. Client focused. Unconditional positive regards. Dignity. Behaving professionally.	No personal gain. Emphasis on rules and procedures. Fairness. Integrity. Respect for the rule of law and due process (awareness of spending taxpayers money). Respect.
New Public Management **(Market and Developmental Culture)**	Displayed some awareness of costs (economy).	Only one participant mentions the need for customer service. Awareness of costs (economy).	Customer Service.		Customer service.
Post- NPM? **(Aspects of All Four Cultures?)**	Duty of care to students. Equity.			Networking. Collaboration with other services.	Duty of care. Equity.

10.3.2 Work Motivations

In order for evaluation and accountability systems to be effective, they need to be aligned with the values and motivations of employees. Two opposing stereotypes emerge from the literature on motivations. The first is of the lazy public sector employee who is only in it for the permanent employment and lucrative pension (NPM ideas). The alternative is the virtuous public sector employee that is the epitome of self-sacrifice for the benefit of the community at

large (PSM). This analysis clearly illustrates that both continue to remain stereotypes and that the work motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals are highly complex.

In general, financial reward is not the central motivator for participants. However, alternative extrinsic motivations such as security of tenure and annual leave entitlements are cited as an advantage of public sector employment. The Irish public service is highly feminised and eleven participants mentioned that, as women, the public sector is an attractive career option due to the family friendly working arrangements available. Interestingly, participants are very similarly motivated. Helping people (altruistic motives); doing interesting and varied work (intrinsic motives); dealing with people and interacting with colleagues (social motives) are frequently mentioned across the board. Socialisation (the example of a family member or friend in the public sector) is also relevant in all sectors investigated. Furthermore, the findings of this study largely mirror Houston's (2005) findings regarding donations of blood, money and time in public sector employees, and illustrate that 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy are active community members and contribute to Irish society, which is plausible evidence of PSM. This is in stark contrast to the image of the lazy self-interested public servant hanging on for their profitable pension as is so often portrayed by NPM ideas. That is not to say of course that issues such as pay, benefits, stability and flexibility are not important to public sector employees, or to argue that public sector employees are utterly un-corruptible. To argue otherwise would be far too simplistic. When the above is considered, it is very difficult to assign one overall cultural type to participants as regards their work motivations, and more research should be conducted on this aspect of administrative culture.

This research paints a very complex scenario regarding the work motivations of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, which is not as clear cut as theories of NPM or PSM would have one believe. Figure 10.4 below demonstrates the variety of responses illicited from participants regarding their work practices and relates them to the theoretical framework (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this table should be interpreted) All of the above should of course be qualified with the statement that the type of person who volunteers for interview might also be the type of person that would donate their blood, money and time. This study was not designed to provide a statistically accurate profile of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professions in Irish social policy and on that basis it is possible to strongly suggest that large scale quantitative research should be conducted on this matter to investigate if the results triangulate. The value of the CVF model as a research framework is again apparent when discussing the competing and

co-existing work motivations of street-level bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy.

Figure 10.4 Work Motivations: Similarities and Differences between Policy Sectors.

	Education	**Health**	**Housing**	**Personal Social Services**	**Social Welfare**
Traditional Public Administration **Hierarchical and Consensual Cultures**	Making a difference. An extraordinary privilege. Specific mention of wanting to work in the public service. Independence. Interesting work.	Money not a main motivator: Participants describe themselves as being lucky to have jobs or to be paid at all. Overwhelmingly describe their jobs as interesting. Helping people.	Helping people. Training opportunities and interesting work.	Helping people and making a difference. Autonomy. Challenging and learning.	Making a difference Autonomy. Practically all participants stated that dealing with people and colleagues were important.
New Public Management Market and Developmental Cultures	Security, pay, holidays all of benefit but most participants argue that they would do their jobs for much less. Family friendly hours important.	Learning and development on the job.	The majority of participants became public sector employees at the height of the economic boom (a time when private sector salaries were much higher by comparison). Family friendly working arrangements.	Money does not appear to be a main motivating factor. Family friendly working arrangements.	Money not a hugely motivating factor. Expressed de-motivation that others are paid the same despite under performance by comparison.
Post- NPM? Aspects of All Four?	Collaboration: importance of colleagues. Specific mention of wanting to work in the public service. Service to the community. Interest in politics and policymaking.	No specific mention of public service or an interest in politics or policy making. However, report higher than national average on voting Service to the community.	Participants were clear that their role is to serve the public. Interest in politics and policy making. Service to the community.	Specific mention of public service and interest in politics and policy making. Very politically aware group. Service to the community.	Specific mention of public service and interest in politics and policy making. Service to the community.

10.3.3 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

Section 2.9 described how members of each of the four organisational cultures identified on the CVF would interact with change. Due to their focus on stability and rigidity, it was argued that members of hierarchical culture would resist change. Within consensual culture, on the other

hand, it was deduced that members' resistance to change comes from their emphasis on tradition and cohesion. Added to these defining features of consensual and hierarchical culture, it was assumed that the coalition strength derived from their membership of professional associations and public sector unions would also contribute to opposition to change within these groups. With this in mind, participants were asked to suggest changes to their own service and the wider Irish public sector. Participants were also asked to describe what comes to mind when they hear the phrase public sector reform.

Overwhelmingly, participants from across all five policy areas suggest increasing staffing levels and resources to their own sectors. At first glance this appears to fall into the budget maximising bureaucrat stereotype described by Niskanen (1971). However, further analysis demonstrates that these suggestions are more often than not framed in terms of facilitating students learning; providing better care for patients; and better facilities and access for clients, rather than to making their jobs easier. The influence of NPM ideas on 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals is evident in the cost saving suggestions they make. Participants from housing and social welfare in particular propose ideas to increase efficiencies and improve customer service. Repeatedly, participants discuss the need to urgently introduce a system whereby sanctions and rewards correspond to performance within their sector and the public sector at large, which is a preference for market culture mechanisms. The influence of post-NPM ideas is also apparent with numerous participants advocating more collaboration between services, and more co-ordination and information sharing between public sector organisations. While on the one hand participants advocate increasing resources in their own sectors, on the other, they most usually recommend cost cutting measures to the wider public sector such as a reduction in the number of managers and administrative staff. Participants argue that cuts such as these will allow more resources to be diverted to critical frontline services such as health and education. In general, participants of this study agree that reform of entire Irish public sector is completely necessary. This openness to reform and preference for market mechanisms in relation to accountability and evaluation was unexpected.

The language evoked by the phrase public sector reform is essentially very negative. Overwhelmingly, participants view change as entirely necessary, while at the same time being highly critical of changes that have previously taken place. Statements such as 'always reforming, never improving' (P73, 5th October 2011) were not unusual which corresponds to Kirkpatrick and Ackroyd's (2003: 525) findings that constant calls for cutting costs acted to reinforce ‘existing prejudices held by many front-line professionals about change as essentially

a negative exercise concerned with cost control'. It is obvious from the analysis that the reform process in the Irish public sector to date has been very much a top-down exercise, and in order for future reform programmes to be meaningful, they need to be more inclusive of the views of those at the 'street-level' within public sector organisations. Yet again, a complicated picture is painted of attitudes to change/public sector reform amongst 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy, a synopsis of which is presented in Figure 10.5 below (See Section 3.7.4 for a note on how this tabular information should be interpreted in relation to the research findings).

Figure 10.5 Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform: Similarities and Differences between Policy Sectors.

	Education	**Health**	**Housing**	**Personal Social Services**	**Social Welfare**
Traditional Public Administration **Hierarchical and Consensual Cultures**	Negative attitudes to exiting reforms. Many did not identify themselves as being part of the wider public sector.	Mixed attitudes regarding existing reforms. Point out the need to address vested interests such as unions.	Very mixed language regarding existing reforms. Point to unions as barriers to reform.	Very negative language used in relation to existing reforms. Generally dismayed and expressed frustration at slow rate of change within their respective organisations. Blamed the unions.	Negative attitudes towards existing changes. CWOs – In transition. Range of emotions: fear, hope, confusion
New Public Management Market and Developmental Cultures	Accountability and evaluation should correspond to sanctions for non-performance. Reduce the amount of managers and administrators. Reform as a necessity.	Introduce a culture of hiring and firing. Cost-saving measures suggested. Reduce numbers of managers and administrators Reform as a necessity.	Re-organise the entire local authority sector. Cost savings measures. Measures to improve customer service. Saw reform of their sector and entire public sector as completely necessary.	Cut civil servants pay. Better technology. More open recruitment to higher and specialist grades. See change as necessary.	Cost savings measures. More inspections into welfare fraud. Reduce numbers of management grades. Rewards based on merit. Reform seen as necessary.
Post- NPM? Aspects of All Four Cultures?	Increase resources in their sector: in order to facilitate students learning, rather than to make their jobs easier.	Increase staffing levels in order to provide proper patient care.	More collaboration between government organisations.	More staff and resources – better facilities and access for clients. More collaboration between different public sector organisations. Better teamwork. To be achieved through better leadership/decisive decision making.	More coordination and information sharing between government services.

10.3.4 Conclusions: H2

There is minimal evidence to support the hypothesis that NPM ideas have led to a transformation of invisible aspects of the traditional administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. This furthers the argument that members of hierarchical and consensual Participants continue to retain values associated with

the traditional model of public administration. Furthermore, this study provides plausible support to the idea of public service motivation. Participants were also highly critical of reforms that have already taken place within the Irish public sector. Therefore, one can state that H2 also holds true. However, while NPM ideas have not led to a complete transformation, they do have some appeal. The influence of NPM ideas is apparent in participants' emphasis on customer service values. In addition, they demonstrate an unexpected openness to the idea that change is necessary and to cost cutting measures. The findings of this study clearly illustrate the complexities of deciphering the invisible aspects of an administrative culture that consists of co-existing and even competing values, motivations and attitudes to change. The following section discusses a number of significant issues regarding the influence of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy.

10.4 DISCUSSION

Chapter 4 identified the key historical, political, social and economic features which have influenced the formation and development of the dominant administrative culture of Irish social policy. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011:49) define dominant administrative culture as 'the expectations the staff of an organisation have about what is normal and acceptable in that organisation – "the way we do things around here"'. Consequently, we can speak of a dominant administrative culture within the public sector of a state, where different pockets or segments of culture can exist with their own norms, values and customs due to differences in departmental goals and functions, job requirements or location in the hierarchy, while still exhibiting the main aspects of the dominant culture. Initially, one might come to the conclusion that the evidence presented in the preceding chapters and above paragraphs provides very little sense of one cohesive overriding administrative culture within Irish social policy. Indeed, the analysis clearly distinguishes between each of the policy sectors and the occupational groups within them.

A more nuanced analysis however, identifies five important similarities across all policy sectors and occupational groups under investigation. Firstly, despite the diverse contexts of all five policy areas, a considerable number of participants underline how cumbersome processes and procedures have become and the extent to which levels of control have tightened within their respective sectors. This research reveals first hand an increasingly bureaucratised administrative culture within Irish social policy, obsessed with rules and procedures and fuelled by a fear of litigation. Secondly, accountability has not been enhanced by NPM, nor does there appear to be

any alignment between evaluation systems, if in place, and individual performance. Thirdly, apart from the extensive use of customer service language by 'street-level' bureaucrats in housing and social welfare there is little evidence of participants internalising NPM ideas. While participants did display an awareness of costs to the exchequer and taxpayer associated with their jobs, there was scant mention of business values such as efficiency, economy and effectiveness. Nor did participants retain any enhanced discretion in relation to their own budgets. Fourthly, this study demonstrates that the work motivations of 'street-level' staff working within Irish social policy do not wholly conform to the self-interested stereotype associated with NPM ideas. Additionally, when donations of blood, money and time are examined in conjunction with levels of voting, there is plausible evidence to support of the idea of PSM. Fifthly, participants from each of the five policy areas exhibit similar recurrent criticisms of previously implemented reforms in their respective sectors, while simultaneously advocating the necessity of further reforms. The core findings derived from the data obtained in this research imply that cultural transformation is a highly complex process and cannot be easily achieved, which supports the symbolist view of organisational cultural change.

One must question the extent of the gap between rhetoric and reality when discussing the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy. Is it merely 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing' (Macbeth Act V, Scene V)? According to Schon-Quinlivan (2008: 322) 'full-scale NPM' would require 'more competition, considerable contracting out, the proper implementation of merit-based personnel assessment policy, contractual appointments as well as performance-related pay'. Chapter 4 revealed that implementation of the aforementioned appears to be patchy at best within the Irish public sector. From an analysis of both visible and invisible aspects of administrative culture, it seems that NPM ideas have not so much become embedded within the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy, but have been layered upon traditional models to form a uniquely Irish version of NPM.

The analysis indicates that the administrative culture of bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy continues to adhere to many aspects of hierarchical and consensual cultures with the influence of market and developmental cultures (NPM ideas) being marginal. This finding is not unique to the Irish case however. Bradley and Parker's (2006) research relates to the Queensland public sector. They found that after a decade of reform employees

> still perceive their organisations to be characterised by an internal process culture which focuses on internal issues, and has an orientation towards control rather than flexibility. These organisations are perceived by respondents as being hierarchical in nature with an emphasis on the enforcement of rules, conformity, and attention to technical matters (Bradley and Parker, 2006: 95).

Although utilising a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach, the findings of this research broadly mirror Bradley and Parker's (2006). Hajnal (2005: 510) investigates the Hungarian context and argues that his 'results imply that NPM does not cause, nor-involve, a de-bureaucratisation of governmental organisations'. Moreover, in the Irish context, we witness intensified control mechanisms via increased rules, procedures and protocols which are blended together with ever expanding quantities of paperwork. This is in fact putting an *increasing* emphasis on bureaucracy and the associated hierarchical culture. Chapter 4 identified three Irish specific obstacles to NPM ideas: social partnership; lack of capacity for policy coordination; and, lack of political drivers. The following paragraphs discuss explanations offered in the international literature as to why NPM ideas have minimal impact and are evaluated in light of the Irish context.

One possible explanation outlined in the literature for the minimal impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of the public sector is the length of time that NPM style reforms have been in place. Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) examined the impact of NPM reform in Thailand, utilising the CVF model, and found that NPM did not result in changes to organisational culture. They argued that change happened at the superficial level of organisational culture, pointing to organisational artefacts such as new physical environments and technology as well as civil servants overt behaviours. Lack of time for cultural change to occur was mooted by Jingjit and Fotaki (2010) as one potential cause for this, noting that their study was conducted merely five years after the reforms were introduced. In contrast, reform programmes influenced by NPM ideas have been in place in Ireland for nearly three decades (since the SMI was introduced in 1994). Therefore, lack of time for cultural change to occur is not a valid reason in this instance.

Lack of consultation with frontline staff is another possible reason for the cosmetic impact of NPM ideas in the Irish context. Colyer *et al.* (2000: 85) argue that while organisational culture change is slow, it is possible and can be achieved over time but 'must involve all people in the organisation to change the way things are done'. To date, the nature of public sector reform in Ireland has been overwhelmingly top-down. The apparent disconnect between the espoused culture of the Irish public sector and the culture in action at 'street-level' must be addressed. Minister Howlin (2012: 28) advocates that 'we must win hearts and minds by putting in place

the structures and processes to empower public servants to assume ownership of the change process'. In other words, it is a recommendation of this research that if the Irish government or those at the senior levels of the public sector aspire to altering the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals, a more inclusive reform process should be instigated. This process must be one that emphasises the needs of the public and not just budget requirements which is admittedly difficult under current circumstances. However if this recommendation is not followed, 'street-level' employees may increasingly feel de-moralised and de-motivated which in turn may result in unanticipated individual and organisational costs.

In Chapter 2 it was assumed that the coalition strength (associated with their membership of professional associations and public sector trade unions) of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals would contribute to their resistance to change/public sector reform. Additionally, Chapter 4 identified the social partnership process as an Irish specific obstacle to the implementation of NPM ideas in Ireland because changes to work practices were often traded off for pay increases and pay was not linked to performance. Performance related pay is a key feature of market culture. Indeed, the power of public sector trade unions is offered as an explanation for the slow rate of change in the Irish public sector by twenty-five participants in this study. The role of public sector trade unions in Ireland cannot be ignored when assessing the reasons why NPM type reforms have not been implemented in a widespread manner. However, it is possible to overstate their coalition strength and power to obstruct change. Indeed, the public sector unions have demonstrated limited ability to obstruct recent changes as a result of the fiscal crisis and at the time of writing almost all public sector unions have signed up to the Haddington Road Agreement. It seems when the political drivers are present changes will occur.

Bradley and Parker (2006: 97) suggest that 'perhaps there has been resistance to change due to the roles and objectives of public organisations ... It may just be that the new public management ideals are in fact not appropriate for the type of "public service" objectives that some public sector agencies pursue'. Van Beek and Gerritsen (2010: 1280) found that when a market orientated culture was present in some of the nursing homes they researched; it was negatively related to quality of care. This goes back to the arguments presented in the literature review by Dominelli (1996) and others about the appropriateness of NPM values for government organisations, particularly those who carry out social policy functions. As one participant of this research argues:

> You can make anything efficient if you wanted to but the public sector is not a private business. Having worked in both I understand the difference. Like a hospital should not be run for profit. The dole office should not be run for profit. They've tried these experiments in different places, they don't work. Because public sector is public service, it's called service the public not making profit. Unfortunately a lot of what the public sector does isn't about saving money. That the problem, it's about giving money away (P2, 19th May 2011).

In fact, one of the main reasons for undertaking this research in the social policy context is that it is an area in which the application of NPM type reforms may pose problems, as policy goals, means and results may not be easily identified or quantified due to their 'soft' nature (Ferris and Graddy, 1998; Lane, 2000a). An analysis of the findings of this research illustrates that this argument is substantially correct. In the case of the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy the impact of NPM ideas is limited. This lends significance to the symbolist view of organisational culture change and the relevance of context. Further research is required to assess the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals across the wider Irish public sector. This research would then be able to answer the question of whether policy sector/functional area/occupational group/sub-culture really do matter when discussing the impact of NPM ideas on the traditional administrative culture of the public sector. An additional research possibility would be to do a comparative case study of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within social policy from other jurisdictions to ascertain the impact of national context on the uptake of NPM ideas. Therefore, numerous future research possibilities exist as a result of this research.

The above discussion makes four important points regarding the analysis of the data obtained in this research. Firstly, it is plausible to speak of a dominant administrative culture at the 'street-level' of Irish social policy. Secondly, this research has demonstrated the appropriateness of the CVF model for research of this kind as a clear picture is painted of organisational culture as a dynamic system of competing and co-existing cultures. Thirdly, the discussion addressed the reasons which contribute to the lingering presence of hierarchical and consensual cultures within Irish social policy. Importantly, the reasons mooted were evaluated in a context specific way. Fourthly, possibilities for future research were identified.

10.5 CONCLUSION

Despite the application of reforms associated with NPM ideas in Hungary and Australia respectively, Hajnal (2005) and Bradley and Parker (2006) found that hierarchical (or

bureaucratic) culture was the most prominent organisational culture in the public sector. The findings of this research not only echo this but point to increasing bureaucratisation as a result of NPM with ever more emphasis on control mechanisms associated with hierarchical culture. It seems that regardless of inspiring almost thirty years of change within the Irish public sector, the impact of NPM ideas on the administrative culture of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy remains inconsistent. The influence of NPM is confined to increased flexibility in working arrangements and job contracts; increased time commitment; and a customer service focus. Moreover, many aspects of consensual and hierarchical cultures - such as an emphasis on rules and procedures, permanent pensionable employment, and increasing amounts of paperwork and red tape - remain firmly in place. This study further emphasises the value of the CVF model, by reinforcing the idea that administrative culture is very much a dynamic system of competing and co-existing cultures.

From the analysis undertaken as part of this research two clear recommendations emerge. First and foremost, accountability and evaluation within the Irish public sector needs to be urgently addressed. Historically, through the social partnership process, increments and pay bonuses (to senior level employees) were awarded without being linked to performance. This has led to a situation where performance evaluation systems (if in place) are not engaged with on a meaningful level. Examples are rife throughout the public and social services in Ireland.. Within primary and secondary schools the incidence of evaluation has increased but participants argue that it does not lead to increased accountability. In the university sector, research, rather than teaching, is what gets measured and therefore, increasingly gets done. Participants from across the HSE argue that they are not evaluated in any way, with their individual professional associations retaining responsibility for licencing and regulation. PMDS in Irish local authorities is not engaged with and not linked to increments. In the civil service, where PMDS is linked to increments, less than one percent of employees received a rating in 2012 that meant they were ineligible to receive their increments or apply for promotion (O'Brien, 2013). Participants of this research discuss at length their desire to have more appropriate rewards and sanctions based on performance within the public sector. The key word here is appropriate. Whatever form new accountability and evaluation systems take, they must consider employees' work motivations and values. As Peters (2010: 310) argues:

> although employees certainly want to be paid a decent wage, money is not the only means of motivating people to do their job well – involvement in decisions and having an interesting job are potentially even more important. … Many senior civil servants may, in fact, be insulted that their political masters assume they are interested primarily in the financial rewards of the job.

Indeed, the findings of this research lend support to the notion of public service motivation at the ‘street-level’. Furthermore, it is the researchers’ opinion that in order for performance evaluation to work effectively in the Irish public sector, employees must also be provided with adequate training and supports. ‘Street-level’ bureaucrats and professionals should not be subject to punitive measures for non- or under-performance if their employers do not provide up to date training and supports such as counselling and do not comply with international standards regarding working hours.

The second recommendation is just as important and clearly interlinked with the first, that is, administrative culture change must be a process that is more inclusive of 'street-level' employees. Contrary to the view that members of hierarchical and consensual culture would pose resistance to change, this research clearly illustrates that a very large appetite for change exists in the attitudes of 'street-level' bureaucrats and professionals working within Irish social policy, with many participants suggesting changes that correspond to NPM ideas. There is most definitely a lack of ownership of the reform process at the 'street-level' with the perception that top-down change is driven by economic necessity more than anything else. Therefore, in order for any change strategy to be successful in the Irish public sector it must be developed and implemented in consultation with 'street-level' employees. Perhaps setting up a body similar to the constitutional convention would be appropriate, where a random sample of ‘street-level’ public sector employees could undergo informed lengthy discussions regarding policy and make recommendations to government. Unlike the constitutional convention however, the recommendations that emerge would need to be somewhat binding. Whatever type of consultation process is to emerge, employees need to feel legitimate ownership of the decision making process.

Boyle and O'Donnell (2008: 13) argue that 'culture is, therefore, a key battleground in the context of management reform in the public service. ... A fuller understanding of culture and the reasons for particular organisational cultures in the public service is central to successful management reform'. Consequently, the intersection of NPM ideas with administrative culture is an area that poses multiple research possibilities. If a meaningful cultural change is to be occuracross all levels of the Irish public sector, the two aforementioned issues must be addressed. As Kaarst-Brown *et al.* (2004) point out 'changing an organisation's culture is not a quick fix but a multilayer process'.

APPENDICES

A.1 INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM





INFORMATION SHEET

I am a postgraduate student at University College Cork and am currently engaged in doctoral research on **frontline staff involved in the delivery of social policy in Ireland**. This interview is a vital part of my research, which is funded by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS).

If you take part in this exercise, you will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview at a time and place convenient to you**.**

Interviews will be audio recorded and will last for **between 40 minutes and one hour**.

During the interview you will be asked to discuss such issues as:

- Your everyday work practices.
- Your views on the Irish public sector.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you may choose not to answer any of the questions put to you during the interview. Further, you may choose to withdraw from the exercise at any time without giving a reason.

Following our **interview**, I will produce a typed account of our discussion. If you wish to check the accuracy of this account, copies of the transcript will be made available to you.

Your responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. At no point will your actual identity be revealed. You will be assigned a random numerical code. The key linking the code to your name will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a locked office, and no one else will have access to it.

Once all the interviews are completed, the audio recordings and transcripts will be deposited in an archive, where other bona fide researchers may consult them. Your name will be removed, and your comments made unattributable. At your request, other details that may provide a clue to your identity may also be removed.

The data you give me will be used for my doctoral thesis and may be used as the basis for articles or presentations in the future.

During this process, the transcript account of our interview and reports on this topic may be submitted to my academic supervisors Dr. Aodh Quinlivan and Dr. Emmanuelle *Schon*-Quinlivan for review. It is also possible that my thesis examiner will request to view the transcripts.

If you have any questions regarding this research please don't hesitate to contact me, Julie Connelly at 0879935507. You are also welcome to contact my supervisor, Dr. Aodh Quinlivan at 021- 490 3368 or A.Quinlivan@ucc.ie. We would be happy to answer any queries you may have.

If you are happy to participate in this interview, I will ask you to sign the attached consent form, which details your rights as a participant. Although the study doesn't benefit you directly, it does offer you the opportunity to express your opinions on something which you may not usually be asked about. All the information collected will be kept confidential and, at no point, will your name be disclosed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for contributing to this research as your opinions are valuable and vital.

Yours sincerely,

_____

Julie Connelly
PhD Candidate and IRCHSS funded Scholar
Department of Government
University College Cork
Phone: 087-9935507
Email: julieconnelly@hotmail.com

CONSENT FORM

I, the undersigned, declare that I am willing to participate in an **interview** as part of Julie Connelly's postgraduate research in University College Cork.

- I am 18 years of age or older.
- I declare that I have been fully briefed on the nature of this study and my role in it and have been given the opportunity to ask questions before agreeing to participate.
- The nature of my participation has been explained to me and I have full knowledge of how the information collected will be used.
- I am also aware that my participation in this study will be recorded (audio) and I agree to this. However, should I feel uncomfortable at any time I can request that the recording equipment be switched off. I am entitled to copies of all recordings made and am fully informed as to what will happen to these recordings once the study is completed.
- I fully understand that there is no obligation on me to participate in this study.
- I fully understand that I may be contacted after the interview is transcribed to clarify or explain things I have said.
- I fully understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without having to explain or give a reason.
- I am also entitled to full confidentiality in terms of my participation and personal details.

	Yes	No
I would like a copy of the recording of the interview.	☐	☐
I would like a copy of the transcript of the interview.	☐	☐

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

A.2 TOPIC GUIDE AND SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Work Practices and Duties

Describe your typical day at work to me.

What are your duties?

What skills are required to perform your job?

What level of freedom in decision making do you have?

Do you have any role in supervising colleagues work?

Do you have any accountancy or budgetary responsibilities?

Are you expected/pressured into working long hours?

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

How important is work/life balance to you?

Do you spend much time on paperwork?

Do you get a chance to be innovative at work?

Do you feel you have much discretion when carrying out your duties?

Since you've started in this career do you feel your work practices have changed in any way? What has influenced this? What is behind the demands for change?

2. Accountability/Evaluation

Are your duties assessed/evaluated?

How are your duties assessed?

Do you have targets or performance indicators?

How are targets set and by whom?

What happens when targets are not met? What happens if you don't do your job?

What do you think should happen?

How should you be evaluated/how would you design a form to evaluate your job?

Is your work evaluated in a meaningful/realistic manner?

Who should be accountable when something goes wrong? The individual or the organisation? Why?

Who is accountable?

3. Values

Is there a code of ethics for your job?

If you were training a new person into the job, how would you tell them to treat patients/students/customers (repeat back their language to them)

For you personally, what would you say are the advantages and disadvantages of your job?

What gives your job meaning?

Do you like your job?

4. Work Motivations

Did you always want to become a …. ?

If you were going to change jobs what would you be looking for?

What would your dream job be?

Is location important for you?

If the opportunity presented itself would you change profession? Could you imagine yourself doing another job?

Do you think your job is well paid?

Are wages an important factor for you when thinking about changing job or looking for promotion?

Do you donate blood?

Do you vote?

Do you give time or money to other charitable organisations/community groups?

5. Attitudes to Change/Public Sector Reform

If money were no obstacle, what is the one thing you would do improve the service you are part of?

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase public sector reform?

If you were the minister, what would you do to improve the entire public sector in Ireland?

A.3 PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

File Name	Gender	Job Title	Organisation	Category	Policy Sector	Education
P1 18May2011	F	Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Degree
P2 19May2011	M	Clerical Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Degree
P3 24May2011	M	Social Worker/Childcare	Local Authority	Professional	Personal Social Services	Degree
P4 22May2011	F	Staff Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Not mentioned
P5 25May2011	M	Clerical Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Degree
P6 26May2011	M	Senior House Officer in Psychiatry	Hospital	Professional	Health	Postgraduate
P7 27May2011	F	Lecturer	University	Professional	Education	Postgraduate
P8 30May2011	F	Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Degree
P9 31May2011	F	Community Social Worker	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Degree
P10 01June2011	F	Social Worker/Housing	Local Authority	Professional	Personal Social Services	Not mentioned
P11 07June2011	M	Social Worker/Child and Family	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Degree
P12 10June2011	M	Social Worker/Housing	Local Authority	Professional	Personal Social Services	Masters
P13 13June2011	M	Senior Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Masters
P14 14June2011	M	Clerical Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Degree
P15 24June2011	F	Secondary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P16 28June2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P17 29June2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P18 30June2011	M	Trainee GP	HSE	Professional	Health	GP Training
P19 02July2011	F	Trainee GP	HSE	Professional	Health	GP Training
P20 02July2011	F	Research Nurse	HSE	Professional	Health	Degree
P21 04July2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P22 05July2011	F	Secondary/PLC Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Masters
P23 06July2011	F	Lecturer	University	Professional	Education	PhD

P24 06July2011	F	Social Worker/Medical	Hospital	Professional	Personal Social Services	Masters
P25 07July2011	M	Social Worker/Medical	Hospital	Professional	Personal Social Services	Masters
P26 07July2011	F	Speech and Language Therapist	Hospital	Professional	Health	Not mentioned
P27 07July2011	F	Senior Social Worker/Medical	Hospital	Professional	Personal Social Services	Masters
P28 07July2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P29 08July2011	F	Occupational Therapist	Hospital	Professional	Health	Degree
P30 08July2011	M	Lecturer	University	Professional	Education	PhD
P31 08July2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P32 12July2011	F	Higher Executive Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Masters
P33 12July2011	F	Social Worker/Child and Family	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Masters
P34 13July2011	F	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Degree
P35 13July2011	M	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Masters
P36 13July2011	M	Secondary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P37 14July2011	F	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Degree
P38 14July2011	F	Social Worker/Child and Family	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Degree
P39 15July2011	M	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Not mentioned
P40 15July2011	M	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Degree
P41 19July2011	F	Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Degree
P42 20July2011	F	Clinical Nurse Manager 2	Hospital	Professional	Health	Diploma
P43 20July2011	F	Health Promotion Officer	HSE	Bureaucrat	Health	Masters
P44 21July2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P45 22July2011	F	Senior Social Work Practitioner	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Masters
P46 25July2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P47 25July2011[30]	*F*	*Community Nurse*	*Voluntary Org*	*Professional*	*Health*	*Not mentioned*
P48 26July2011	M	Staff Nurse	HSE	Professional	Health	Not mentioned

[30] Discounted from the study for consistency at it emerged after the interview that the participant is employed in a voluntary organisation funded through the HSE (as opposed to being directly employed in the HSE).

P49 27July2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P50 28July2011	M	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P51 28uly2011	M	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Not mentioned
P52 10August2011	F	Student Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Postgraduate
P53 11August2011	F	Secondary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P54 22August2011	F	Radio Therapist	Hospital	Professional	Health	Degree
P55 23August2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P56 24August2011	F	Secondary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P57 25August2011	F	Secondary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Higher Diploma
P58 31August2011	F	Phlebotomist/Staff Nurse	HSE	Professional	Health	Degree
P59 01September2011	F	Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Not mentioned
P60 02September2011	F	Primary School Teacher	D/Education	Professional	Education	Degree
P61 05September2011	F	Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Postgraduate
P62 07September2011	F	Social Worker/Child and Family	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Postgraduate
P63 07September2011	F	Staff Nurse	Hospital	Professional	Health	Postgraduate
P64 13September2011	F	Administrative Officer	University	Bureaucrat	Education	Postgraduate
P65 14September2011	M	Community Welfare Officer	HSE/DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Degree
P66 14September2011	M	Senior Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Postgraduate
P67 21September2011	F	Senior House Officer/Medical	Hospital	Professional	Health	Postgraduate
P68 27September2011	M	Social Worker/Child and Family	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Postgraduate
P69 28September2011	M	Lecturer/Social Worker	University	Professional	Education	Postgraduate
P70 28September2011	M	Social Worker/Primary Care	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Postgraduate
P71 30September2011	M	Social Worker/Medical	HSE	Professional	Personal Social Services	Postgraduate
P72 04October2011	M	Clerical Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Degree
P73 05October2011	M	Executive Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Degree
P74 07October2011	F	Clerical Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Not mentioned
P75 10October2011	F	Clerical Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Certificate

P76 10October2011	M	Assistant Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Degree
P77 10October2011	M	Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Degree
P78 10October2011	M	Assistant Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Degree
P79 11October2011	M	Assistant Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Higher Diploma
P80 11October2011	M	Staff Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Not mentioned
P81 11October2011	F	Clerical Officer	Local Authority	Bureaucrat	Housing	Not mentioned
P82 20October2011	F	Clerical Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Not mentioned
P83 20October2011	F	Executive Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Not mentioned
P84 21October2011	F	Higher Executive Officer	DSP	Bureaucrat	Social Welfare	Not mentioned

Age Profile of Participants

Age	**20s**	**30s**	**40s**	**50s**	**60s**
Number of Participants	14	34	14	19	2

Geographical Spread of Participants by County

County	**Cork**	**Dublin**	**Galway**	**Kerry**	**Kildare**	**Limerick**	**Offaly**	**Tipperary**
Number of Participants	33	17	13	15	2	1	1	1

A.4 CAREER STRUCTURES

Position	Career Progression Route
Primary School Teacher	Both primary and secondary school teachers in Ireland have relatively flat career structures with limited opportunities for career progression. Promotion is from teacher to principal. However, opportunities exist to be a teacher who holds a special post of responsibility within a school. There are two types of special post. The first is a post of responsibility with special duties, that is, teachers have special responsibility to take care of a particular area within the school, for example curriculum coordination, green flag initiatives, anti-bullying and so forth. The second type is a middle management post, that is, assistant principle. Teachers also have opportunities for horizontal career progression such as language support, resource, home-school liaison, behavioural support and so on.
Secondary School Teacher	
Lecturer	Academic career progression structures are also relatively flat. A lecturer at entry level is then promoted to senior lecturer and professor after that. However, academic and administrative career paths are blurred with management positions such as Head of Department, Head of School, Dean of Faculty, Vice-President, and President.
University Administration	University administration has a very steep hierarchical career structure. Entry level grades are Executive Assistant/Clerical Officer, which then progress as follows: Senior Executive Assistant/Executive Officer, then Administrative Officer V, III, II, I (Grade 5, 6, 6A and 7 respectively), then Senior Administrative Officer IV, III, IIA, II.
Nurse	Nurses begin their careers as Staff Nurses and follow a steep grading structure including Senior Staff Nurse, Dual Nurse, Senior Dual Qualified Nurse, Clinical Nurse Manager 1, Clinical Nurse Manager 2, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Clinical Nurse Manager 3, Assistant Director of Nursing, Area Director of Nursing, and, Director of Nursing/Matron. Teaching and Public Health Nursing Grades also exist.
Doctor	Doctors commence their careers as Interns, then progress to become Senior House Officers, Registrars, Senior Registrars and Specialist Registrars.

Speech and Language Therapist	Speech and Language Therapists are recruited at Basic Grade. This is followed by Senior Grade, Speech and Language Manager, Speech and Language Therapist in Charge, and Speech and Language Clinical Specialist.
Occupational Therapist	Occupational Therapists are recruited at Basic Grade. This is followed by Senior Grade, Occupational Therapist Manager, Occupational Therapist in Charge and Occupational Therapist Clinical Specialist.
Radiation Therapist	Radiation Therapists are recruited at Basic Grade, Senior Grade, Radiation Therapist Manager, Radiation Therapists in Charge and Radiation Therapists Clinical Specialist.
HSE Management and Administrative Grades	The HSE management and administrative grades begin with Clerical Officer (grade 3), followed by Assistant Staff Officer (grade 4), Staff Officer (grade 5), Senior Staff Officer (grade 6), and Administrative Officer (grade 7).
Local Authorities	A common set of employment practices and conditions exists across all local authorities in Ireland, thus providing mobility for employees who can regard their careers in terms of the local government sector rather than individual local authorities. This structure is relatively hierarchical. Clerical/administrative grades begin with Clerical Officer, followed by Assistant Staff Officer, Staff Officer, Senior Staff Officer, Administrative Officer and Senior Executive Officer. These grades are followed by senior management positions of Director of Services and City/County manager. Technical/professional grades begin with Graduate, followed by Assistant, Executive, Senior Executive and Senior, which also lead on to senior management positions. However, the most numerous group of employees within Irish local authorities are outdoor staff, which consists of manual workers and trades people.
Social Worker	There are a number of different roles for social workers within the HSE - Children and Family Services (commonly known as Child Protection), Primary Care, Mental Health, Learning Disability Services, Medical Social Work. Some of these have slightly different grading structures/career paths. However, the basic grading structure is: Basic Grade Social Worker, Senior Social Worker (requires minimum 3 years

	experience), Senior Social Work Practitioner, Social Work Team Leader (requires minimum 5 years experience) and Principal Social Worker.
Social Welfare	Career progression within the Irish civil service is through steep hierarchical structures. Entry level grade is Clerical Officer, then Staff Officer, Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer and Administrative Officer. This is followed by Assistant Principal Officer and Principal Officer, Assistant Secretary and finally Secretary General. The Community Welfare Service career structure was much flatter than the civil service. The career progression route is CWO to Superintendent.

A.5 QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position	Qualifications/Educational Requirements
Primary School Teacher	A recognised three year full-time programme, leading to the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree or a recognised Graduate/Higher Diploma in Education (Primary) combined with a primary degree. From 2014 the Bachelor of Education degree programme will be lengthened to four years.
Secondary School Teacher	Currently, there are two ways of training to become a secondary teacher. Firstly, one can complete the one year Higher Diploma in Education after successfully completing a primary degree. Alternatively, a primary degree which specialises in a particular subject as well as teaching skills can be undertaken. From 2014 the one year Postgraduate Diploma in Education is to be lengthened to two years.
Lecturer	There is no specific course to become a lecturer. In general, requirements for a lecturing position will be a minimum of a Masters degree in the relevant subject or, most likely, a PhD in the relevant subject.
University Administration	Training requirements to gain an administrative/academic support position within a university vary according to the specifics of the post.
Nurse	Specialised Degree. Further training required to specialise and progress.
Doctor	Specialised Degree. Further training required to specialise and progress.
Speech and Language Therapist	Specialised Degree. Further training required to specialise and progress.
Occupational Therapist	Specialised Degree. Further training required to specialise and progress.
Radiation Therapist	Specialised Degree. Further training required to specialise and progress.
HSE Management and Administrative Grades	The minimum educational requirement for an entry level (grade 3) position is the Leaving Certificate.

Local Authorities	Specialist qualifications are not required in order to obtain an entry level clerical/administrative position within a local authority.
Social Worker	In order to qualify as a social worker in Ireland, it is vital to hold a qualification recognised by the National Social Work Qualifications Board (NSWQB) that will lead to the award of National Qualification in Social Work (NQSW). This can be achieved by two routes. The first is through combining an undergraduate academic social science degree with professional social work training at Trinity College Dublin via a Bachelor of Social Studies (BSS) or for mature students University College Cork offers a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW). The alternative route is through postgraduate study. Entry requirements to postgraduate professional courses are a three-year social science degree or its equivalent. Graduates from other disciplines are required to take a pre-professional training course. Candidates must also satisfy certain standards of personal suitability for the work.
Social Welfare	There are four entry level grades for the civil service with differing educational requirements. A Leaving Certificate is the minimum requirement for Clerical Officer grade, while a Bachelors Degree (in a relevant subject) is required for entry at Executive Officer, Administrative Officer and Third Secretary (Diplomatic Grade).

A.6 UNION REPRESENTATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Position	**Union/Professional Association**
Primary School Teacher	Irish National Teacher's Organisation (INTO)
Secondary School Teacher	Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI) Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI)
Lecturer	Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT)
University Administration	Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU).
Nurse	An Bord Altranais is the regulatory body for the nursing profession with union representation provided by the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) and the Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU).
Doctor	Doctors are represented by the Irish Medical Association (IMO), which is the sole negotiating body on behalf of all doctors in Ireland.
Speech and Language Therapist	The Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists (IASLT) is the recognised professional association of speech and language therapists in Ireland with the Irish Municipal, Public and Civil Trade Union (IMPACT) providing union representation.
Occupational Therapist	Occupational therapists are also represented by IPACT and their professional body is the Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI).
Radiation Therapist	The Irish Institute of Radiography and Radiation Therapy (IIRRT) is the professional body representing radiographers and radiation therapists in Ireland, with SIPTU providing union representation for the profession.
HSE Management and Administrative Grades	SIPTU and IMPACT.
Social Workers	The IASW (Irish Association of Social Workers) is the professional body for social workers in Ireland. Union membership depends on

	which organisation social workers are employed by.
Social Welfare	Union representation is dependent on ones grade within the civil service career structure. Clerical and Staff Officers are represented by the CPSU (Civil Public and Services Union). Executive, Higher Executive and Administrative Officers are represented by the PSEU (Public Services Executive Union). Assistant Principal and Principal Officers are represented by the AHCPS (Association for Higher Civil and Public Servants). Assistant Secretaries and Secretaries General do not have a union but rather an informal network.

A.7 ANALYSIS TEMPLATE – RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND TOPIC GUIDE

Topic Guide/Sample Interview Questions	Relationship to Theoretical Framework/Literature for Analysis
1. Work Practices and Duties	
Describe your typical day at work to me. What are your duties? What skills are required to perform your job?	Opening Questions Do work practices and duties described by participants correspond to any of the administrative cultures described in Figure 2.1
What level of freedom in decision making do you have? Do you feel you have much discretion when carrying out your duties?	Developmental and consensual culture – Figure 2.2 Professionals have high levels of discretion – Figure 2.1 NPM paradox: limit the discretion of professionals while giving managers the freedom to manage
Do you have any role in supervising colleagues work? Do you have any accountancy or budgetary responsibilities?	Primacy of management practice – Figure 2.1
Are you expected/pressured into working long hours? How do you achieve a work/life balance? How important is work/life balance to you?	Evidence of increased time commitment – as per Figure 2.1
Do you spend much time on paperwork?	Bureaucratic work practices – as per Figure 2.1
Do you get a chance to be innovative at work?	Developmental culture – Figure 2.2
Since you've started in this career do you feel your work practices have changed in any way? What has influenced this? What is behind the demands for change?	NPM attempts to change the culture of the public sector
2. Accountability and Evaluation measures	
Are your duties assessed/evaluated?	NPM focus on evaluation – Figure 2.1
If yes, How are your duties assessed? Do you have targets or performance indicators? (if yes) … How are targets set and by whom? What happens when targets are not met?	Relate answers to models of evaluation described in Figure 2.1
What happens if you don't do your job? What do you think should happen? How should you be evaluated/how would you design a form to evaluate your job? Is your work evaluated in a meaningful/realistic manner?	TPA (hierarchical culture) – rewards based on rank NPM (market culture) and post-NPM – rewards based on merit Figure 2.2
Who should be accountable when something goes wrong? The individual or the organisation? Why? Who is accountable?	TPA – ministerial accountability NPM – increased personal responsibility
3. Values	
Is there a code of ethics for your job? If you were training a new person into the job, how would you tell them to treat patients/students/customers (repeat back their language to them) For you personally, what would you say are the advantages and disadvantages of your job? What gives your job meaning? Do you like your job?	Relate answers to value models described in Figure 2.1

4. Work Motivations	
Did you always want to become a …. ? If you were going to change jobs what would you be looking for? If the opportunity presented itself would you change profession? Could you imagine yourself doing another job?	Relate motivations described to Figure 2.1 Are participants Self interested (extrinsic) – NPM Public Service/self-sacrifice – TPA and post-NPM
Do you think your job is well paid? Are wages an important factor for you when thinking about changing job or looking for promotion? Is location important for you?	All extrinsic motivators - NPM
Do you donate blood? Do you vote? Do you give time or money to other charitable organisations/community groups?	Houston (2005) – Blood, Money and Time Study Public Service Motivation - alternative to self-interested public servant motivated by money
5. Attitude to Change/Public Sector Reform	
If money were no obstacle, what is the one thing you would do improve the service you are part of? What comes to mind when you hear the phrase public sector reform? If you were the minister, what would you do to improve the entire public sector in Ireland?	Usually closing questions As per Figure 2.2 Open or resistant to change/public sector reform What type of reform measures are suggested?

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