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ABSTRACT

Author: **Faith Gordon**

Title: **THE BUSINESS AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY PROJECTS**

Management Consultancy is an industry in which the UK is a world class performer. However, the industry has been little studied. The majority of the industry's revenues are earned in the field of IT Management Consultancy. The aims of this research were:

1. To identify the clients of IT management consultants and the work conducted for those clients.
2. To identify the factors that have led to IT management consultants being commissioned to undertake IT/IS projects.
3. To identify the factors that influence the performance of IT management consultants when undertaking IT/IS projects.
4. To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.
5. To identify the factors that may influence the clients' feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of the IT/IS projects.

To achieve these aims the study was conducted in two parts. The first part of the study was quantitative and a questionnaire was issued to 120 IT management consultants. Frequency, crosstabulations and factor analyses were undertaken and were based on the 57 responses. There were nine factors identified: *BENEFITS*, *OWNERSHIP*, *CLASSIC MEASURES*, *ROLES*, *WORKING RELATIONSHIP*, *CEO INVOLVEMENT*, *INTERACTIONS*, *COMMUNICATION* and *SYSTEM OUTPUT*.

Subsequently, two case study interview schedules were developed and distributed in the qualitative part of the study. These were responded to by clients and consultants, from eight different IT/IS projects, to determine which factors were important in assignment outcome success from both perspectives. A cross case analysis of the various issues identified in the interview schedules was then conducted and finally the projects were ranked in terms of literature defined and respondent defined project success measures. Some of the hypothesised relationships require further investigation before conclusions can be drawn.

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To undertake a research project of this type requires the support of more than just the author. The following are all those to whom I would like to express my gratitude for their assistance and support:

I would like to thank God for making a way when there was no way.

I would like to especially thank my supervisor Professor John Sharp, who provided constructive criticisms and suggestions for this study.

I wish to thank the IT management consultants and their clients who played a vital part in this research, by completing the consultant survey instrument and taking part in the case study interviews.

I would like to express my appreciation to the members of staff at Canterbury Business School for their administrative support.

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A final and special thank you should be given to my Mother who has had to make financial sacrifices to help me to get this far and has supported me in every way throughout the duration of this research project.

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PREFACE: MOTIVATION FOR UNDERTAKING THE RESEARCH

At the commencement of this study, the author had completed a period of employment for the Home Office. One of her projects as an internal consultant had been to evaluate and redesign the initial contact forms sent to divisions in the Home Office. This form attempted to obtain detailed information about the particular Home Office section or division and the project that the client wanted the consultancy division to undertake. Once the form was returned to the consultancy division, the responses were analysed and then a start date for the assignment could be set. This project's findings indicated that the departments had not been implementing the consultants' recommendations, once these projects were completed. The author speculated that this situation was unlikely to be limited to an internal consultancy but might also be a feature of external management consultancy practices' projects. This led the author to examine what occurred in external consultancy practices in more detail. The original intention of the research was to study the whole of the management consultancy industry. However, after reviewing Evan's (1994) figures for fee income it became apparent that approximately fifty percent of work that was conducted in the profession was within the IT sector. Therefore, it was decided to focus the research on this sector and determine what the social and business dimensions of IT management consultancy projects were.

The preliminary research undertaken used a similar methodology to that of Willcocks and Fitzgerald (1993), whereby a series of telephone interviews were conducted to establish the parameters for the study. In addition, the author visited two of the industry lead bodies, the Institute of Management Consultants (IMC) and the Management Consultancies Association (MCA), management consultants from a variety of specialisms, e.g. human resource and psycho-therapy consultants, engineering management consultants, generalist and IT consultants, to determine how this research would be best conducted. In addition, the author also informally discussed the ideas with a number of internal consultancy staff from organisations such as the Home Office and a number of other public and private sector organisations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research was conducted for the following reasons: 1) to provide additional empirical evidence on the project and relationship dynamics for the little studied but highly lucrative information technology (IT) management consultancy profession and 2) to identify the means by which clients select IT management consultancy practices, develop working relationships, monitor their performance and assess the success of information technology and information systems projects. This chapter presents the background premises from which the study was developed, i.e. what are considered professional service firms (Section 1.1), the professional bodies in the management consultancy industry (Section 1.2), the specific research aims for this study (Section 1.3), the motivation for undertaking the research (Section 1.4) and the thesis' structure (Section 1.5). The literature discussed in this chapter is different from that reported in the literature review (Chapter 2), as the latter focuses mainly on issues which are related to IT management consultancy and not to the literature associated with the management consultancy profession in general.

1.1 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

To determine what service IT management consultants provide as professionals common definitions of relevant terms need to be established. Below are definitions of profession and professional service.

Profession: Any occupation that requires considerable education and specialised training, as opposed to purely technical or manual skills (Ammer et al., 1977).

Professional Services: A professional service is one purchased by industry and institutions from individuals and organisations and is designed to improve the purchasing organisation's performance or well-being and to reduce uncertainty by the application of skills derived from a formal and recognised body of knowledge, which may be interdisciplinary, and

which provide criteria for the assessment of the results of the application of the service (Wilson, 1972, pXVI)

The reason for the use of this latter definition of profession is that it provides a link with what "reputable" consultants require in terms of training. Quinn et al. (1996, p72) state that "the true professional commands a body of knowledge - a discipline that must be updated constantly". The professional operates on four levels presented here in order of increasing importance: 1) cognitive knowledge (or know what), i.e. training and certification - which alone is not sufficient for commercial success; 2) advanced skill (know-how), i.e. application of book learned rules; 3) systems understanding (know-why), i.e. understanding and applying the knowledge of cause-and-effect relationships to solve complex problems; and, 4) self motivated creativity (care-why), i.e. the will, motivation and adaptability to be successful (Quinn et al., 1996). Organisations that nurture the latter need are more likely to develop individuals who thrive in situations of rapid change and renew their cognitive knowledge, advanced skills, and systems understanding and are likely to outperform other individuals who have greater physical or financial resources (Quinn et al., 1996).

Wilson's (1972) explanation most effectively sums up the concept of a professional service. He clearly and concisely communicates what the client company obtains when purchasing a professional service. Wilson (1972) however, believes that this definition relies too heavily on the control of the professions by the institutes. For the management consultancy profession there are controlling bodies but it is a moot point as to whether they have sufficient power or commitment to fulfil their enforcement role. Before discussing the Management Consultancy industry the following section briefly discusses a related service industry, i.e. the accountancy industry.

1.1.1 ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

The reason for the inclusion of this section is that many of the largest IT management consultancy firms began as parts of large accountancy practices. Thus it was felt important to view an industry that shared the consultancy practices' origins to determine if there were lessons that might be extrapolated. The government has acted to help regulate the

accountancy industry with the setting up of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) in 1990 (Wilkins, 1998). The accountancy industry although self-regulating 'have to' comply with edicts of the government and other powerful financial institutions. This type of regulation does not occur in the management consultancy industry, as there are no legal requirements set for the types of report that need to be produced at the end of a project.

The accountancy industry has a similar problem in using its standards and performance measures to retain customers, as do management consultancy firms. They expect to lose approximately 20% of their customers each year (Hope, 1998). Their marketing departments use satisfaction surveys to gauge their customers' satisfaction levels. However, Hope believed that the marketers were not collecting the right data to determine customer loyalty and ultimately customer profitability. Even with regulation the accountancy industry appears to be undergoing problems, e.g. recognising those clients that provide the greatest value to the organisation. The following section provides a generic definition of the professionals in the management consultancy industry and the industry lead bodies and their roles.

1.2 THE PROFESSIONAL BODIES OF THE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY INDUSTRY

The following paragraphs provide a definition of the professionals within the industry and a brief summary of the work that the Management Consultancies Association and the Institute of Management Consultancy undertake. The Management Consultancies Association (MCA), the trade association for the profession, defined a management consultant as:

"A person or firm whose principal activity is to provide businesses, public and other undertakings, assistance in identifying and investigating problems and/or opportunities concerned with policy, procedures and methods, recommending appropriate actions and helping to implement those recommendations" (Management Consultancies Association Internal Document).

The MCA had 34 corporate members and there were no grades of membership at the time of data collection. Within the MCA there are four special interest groups that the members can become involved with, i.e. Public Sector, Human Resources, Marketing and Outsourcing.

The Institute of Management Consultancy (IMC), formerly the Institute of Management Consultants, was founded in 1962 (IMC Internal Document). Its role is as the professional body for UK Management Consultants. There were 3950 members at the time of the data collection. The institute aims to promote the highest standards of performance, by its members, so that they will be used in preference to others in the industry (IMC Internal Document). There were a number of levels of membership at the time of the study which included: Affiliate, Associate, Full and Fellow. The grades of membership are determined by the numbers of years of professional experience and the consultants' qualifications. The Institute requests that its members adhere to a code of conduct which require the consultants to provide clients with a high standard of performance, e.g. being dependable, objective and having integrity in their dealings with clients (IMC Internal Document). The Institute also has access to independent arbitrators who act in situations where there is a dispute between one of their members and a client. The arbitration process is rarely used; this is possibly because the institute principally represents the smaller consultancy practices whose firms account for a relatively small percentage of the fee income earned in the industry. Another reason for its limited use may be that clients firms do not know that the service exists.

Edvardsson (1990) cites Sasser et al. (1978), Berry (1980), Gronroos (1983), Edvardsson (1988), Edvardsson and Magnusson (1988), Gummenesson (1988) and Collier (1989) who have made distinctions between the products of the service and manufacturing industries. Morgan (1991), Hayward-Farmer (1988) and Shostack (1988) (who cited the following authors Judd (1964), Rathmell (1974), Shostack (1977), Bateson (1977)) refined Edvardsson's definition of services and products. The following list is how these authors differentiate services from products:

- Intangibility – professional services and their quality are difficult to describe to prospective customers. The degree of intangibility varies between the professional services, (see Figure 1.1). There is also a difficulty in being able to pre-test the service

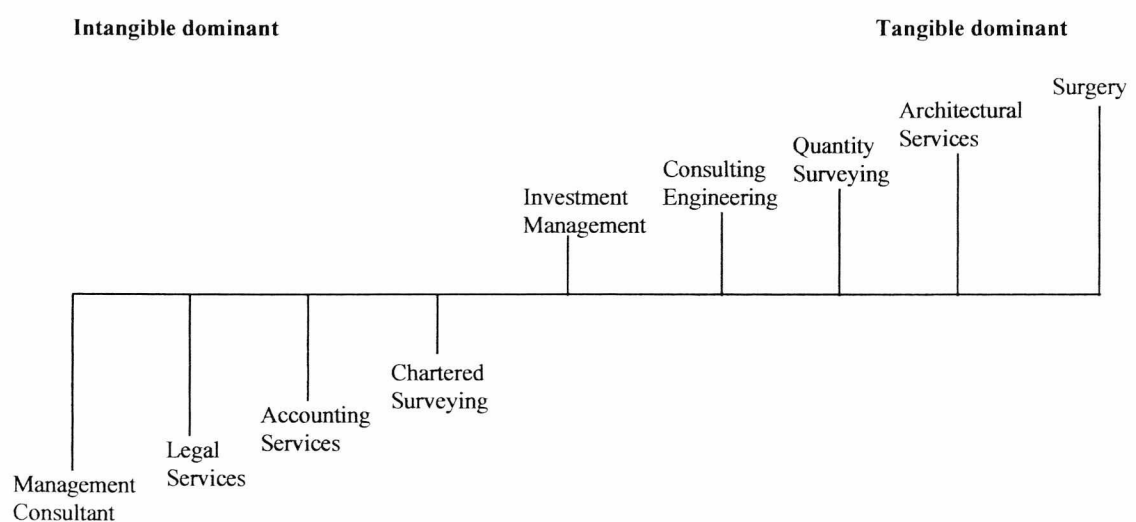
before it is bought; though there may be tangible elements of the service that is bought, the service itself is intangible.

- Inseparability - the service is indistinguishable from the provider. Also the client is usually an integral part of the process of the service's provision.
- Heterogeneity - the service is variable due to the heterogeneity of the providers, in terms of skills, knowledge and communication etc. and is therefore difficult to standardise.
- Perishability - a service cannot be stored, therefore, there needs to be a constant supply of work and the fluctuation in demand is one of the problem from which the professional services suffer.

Thus for services, the traditional manufacturing means and standards used to assess quality and ultimately control it are difficult to impose.

Goods and services can be differentiated using these dimensions: search properties - these are easily identifiable pre-purchase attributes, e.g. the style of dress; experience properties – those attributes that are ascertained post purchase or use, e.g. the taste of a product (Nelson 1974); credence properties - those attributes which are difficult to judge because the consumer has insufficient information or are just difficult to evaluate (Darby and Karni, 1973). When making judgements concerning services consumers use experience or credence properties, which are more difficult to evaluate (Zeithaml, 1981).

Figure 1.1 Degrees Of Intangibility



Source: Morgan (1991, p9)

Management consultancy is a diverse professional service. It is essentially a two-way relationship of seeking and receiving help or information by a help needing person and the help or information being given by a professional helper (consultant) voluntarily and temporarily (Kubr, 1980). The idea of this relationship being voluntary in all cases is a moot point, as in some cases a consultant is imposed on an organisation by the senior management or an owner. Management consultancy's offerings involve judgement, discretion, situational adaptation and complexity (Shostack, 1988). Consultants provide: 1) behind the scene support for the decision makers of an organisation (Basil et al., 1997); 2) temporary man- and brain-power to help managers provide a solution for problems where it is not economically feasible to employ someone on a full time basis; or 3) necessary training in benchmarking, best practice and corporate self-improvement exercises (Caulkin, 1997).

The following are recognised as the fields of management consulting activity for membership of the MCA.

- Corporate strategy and organisational development
- Finance and administrative systems
- Human resources (including executive search and interim management)
- Production and services management (including technology, logistics, R&D and quality control)
- Marketing and corporate communications
- Information technology and systems
- Project management
- Economic and environmental studies (Management Consultancies Association Internal Document).

Management consultancy includes a wide range of activities and the definition is dependent on the individual consultancy practice. Turner's (1982) view was that clarifying goals of the consultancy project is a way of influencing engagement success. Thus he identifies eight goals, which are arranged hierarchically below:

- 1 providing information to clients
- 2 solving clients' problems
- 3 making a diagnosis, which may necessitate redefinition of the problem
- 4 making recommendations based on the diagnosis
- 5 assisting with implementation of recommended solutions
- 6 building a consensus and commitment around corrective action
- 7 facilitating client learning, i.e. teaching clients how to resolve similar problems in the future
- 8 permanently improving organisational effectiveness.

There possibly would be identifiable differences between the practices of firms as to whether they would redefine the problem once clients had identified what they considered the problem to be. Assisting with implementation can be considered an ethical issue for consultancies. At first sight implementation of recommendations appears the next logical stage to their consultation. The view of the literature appears to support the notion of implementation of recommendations, wherever possible (Turner, 1982; Edvardsson, 1990; Raimond and Eden, 1990). Issues of client dependency are discussed later in this chapter; enabling client learning and empowering them to deal with similar situations in the future appears to be one of the foremost tasks of any consulting assignment. However, if a client becomes too highly skilled then this could have an adverse effect of the consultant's ability to sell additional services to that client.

Consultancy firms are categorised as one of the following: 1) a sole proprietorship, i.e. an owner and possibly associates; 2) a partnership, a comparatively small number of joint owners which on expansion, for legal reasons, are converted into a private limited company, even though the spirit of this relationship may continue; 3) a private limited company, which may be further sub-divided into departments; and 4) a public limited company (Kubr 1980). Combinations of these organisations are considered in the study. However, the predominant players in the industry are those that belong to group 2.

Evans (1994) produced figures for the sources of European consultancy fee income (see Figure 1.2). As the histogram shows the major source of fee income in 1994 was derived from information technology (IT) assignments; this figure had fallen to approximately one-third of all the work done in management consultancy by 1997 (Anketell, 1997). These figures were an influencing factor in deciding to study IT management consultants (see Section 3.3). This group possesses similar general consulting skills to the other professionals in the industry but in addition they possess specialised IT knowledge.

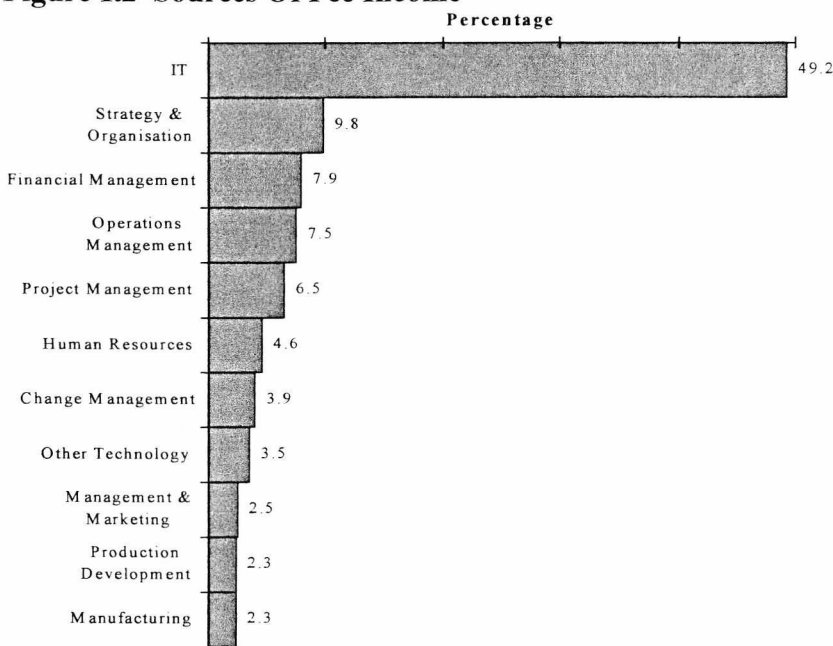
The figure quoted in 1989 for the size of the European consultancy market was £11bn (Holberton, 1991). However, several years later the Economist reported that there had been a slump in fee income with consultants being harder hit by the recession than their clients (Economist, 1991). The estimate of the global consultancy market that provided employment

for upwards of 100,000 people in 1997 was £24.6 billion, of which more than a third was spent in the United States (Caulkin, 1997).

Both the Economist (1991) and Evans (1994) discuss how American systems houses have bought their way into both Europe and management consultancy. Evans specifically comments on the diminution of the distinction between software-houses and consultants. This is particularly important for this study, as one of the case study consultancy practices was a software-house that promotes itself as a management consultancy.

The public sector uses a great deal of IT management consultancy services and Caulkin (1997) identifies that this increased with the privatisation and marketisation of this sector. Over two-thirds of public-sector consultancy fees between the periods of 1993-1994 came from central government and more than half the revenue was spent on IT consultancy (Abbot, 1995).

Figure 1.2 Sources Of Fee Income



Source: Evans (1994, p21)

Abbot noted that the fees earned from central government rose 8.6% over this period and represented 70% of public sector consultancy earnings. During this period the Home Office, Department of Employment, Inland Revenue, Foreign Office, Welsh Office and DTI all appear to have brought from far fewer consultancy firms than in previous years. The number of firms working in health has increased, while numbers working for all other public-sector

clients declined (Abbott, 1995). The NHS alone paid £200 million in consultancy fees in 1996 (Caulkin, 1997). Accurate estimates of the amount spent in each industry sector was difficult to obtain for this thesis because of the confidential nature of the consulting industry and the limited amount of information that is provided to researchers. As there were no figures concerning fee income collected by the industry lead bodies this presented additional challenges when collecting data.

There are a number of books, articles and papers that discuss the importance of the consultant and client relationship but few are supported by empirical evidence. Chapter 2 includes the recent literature concerning the IT management consultancy profession. The trend in the past was for these publications to warn clients about the actions of consultants (Bell and Nadler, 1979). Since the beginning of the 1990s there has been an increase in the number of publications that discuss consultancy projects Covin and Fisher (1991); the dynamics of relationships Covin and Fisher (1991); Kets de Vries (1991); Raimond and Eden (1990); Edvardsson (1990); Clark and Salaman (1998) and the roles of the consultant and the client. Davey (1971) recommended that objectives and expectations of the project be set at the beginning of the assignment. This may be difficult for clients who realise that they have a problem but have no conception of exactly what it is or how to develop a solution to it. This problem has existed for many years and was discussed by Tilles as early as 1961.

There is a need for consultants to identify the factors which when brought together contribute to the success of the consultancy relationship and the project. Consultancy practices that comprehend these principles may provide their clients with a better quality service and thus retain their true long-term loyalty. Clear understanding of each party's roles should facilitate clear communication leading to easier resolution of differences by negotiation and an understanding of the mutuality of the relationship (Bell and Nadler, 1979). However, these authors suggest that there has not been agreement as to either the consultants' or the clients' roles in the projects.

Equally for the client it is in their interest to investigate the market because of the two inherent areas of uncertainty: the first being the uncertainty of whether a professional service firm (PSF) should be used (Wittreich, 1966) and secondly the uncertainty of which PSF to use (Morgan, 1991).

Of particular importance to this particular research is the idea that is provided by Eccles (1991). He advocates that consulting firms and trade associations should play a part in identifying key performance measures, and researching methodologies for and supplying comparative performance statistics to their members. The incentive for firms to provide this information is that it may generate improved business opportunities.

At the commencement of this study neither the literature nor the industry lead bodies provided an operational definition of an IT management consultancy. Michell and Fitzgerald (1997, p225) have in recent times supplied a definition, which will be used as the definition of IT consultants throughout this thesis:

“IT consultancies exist as part of operational management consultancy firms or are very large/global systems houses which cover both traditional software development services and IT consultancy and systems integration roles (for example, EDS). Their main characteristic is large numbers of highly trained/high cost staff and traditional high margin and diverse consultancy services covering IT solutions from strategic to operational levels, but driven from a business not technology focus”.

1.3 THE RESEARCH AIMS

Mintzberg (1979) suggests that the requirements of successful research are the use of systematic and anecdotal data, i.e. the use of ‘hard’ information to uncover the relationships and the ‘soft’ to help explain such relationships. It became clear from the outset of this research that there was very little published in refereed journals, books concerning management consultancy or the specialised area of information technology management consultancy. The main sources were the books by Kubr (1980) and Bell and Nadler (1979) which had extensively discussed the subject. More recently Sturdy (1997) has continued to report that there is limited research concerning the practices and perceptions of both consultants and clients.

The original intention of this study was to investigate the management consultancy industry in general but was not done because almost 50% of the fees were spent in IT management

consultancy. Even the next largest sector accounted for less than one-fifth of this and there was likely to be sufficient diversity in the IT management consultancy firms for the study to obtain some findings that would add to the current body of literature. Again, until recently these professionals had been overlooked as significant contributors to this country's economy directly and indirectly. Consequently in this study the author has attempted to investigate and comprehend only the IT management consultancy segment of the management consultancy industry.

This study has the following research aims:

1. To identify the clients of IT management consultants and the work conducted for those clients.
2. To identify the factors that led to IT management consultants being commissioned to undertake IT/IS projects.
3. To identify the factors that influence the performance of IT management consultants when undertaking IT/IS projects.
4. To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.
5. To identify the factors that may influence the clients' feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of the IT/IS projects.

A further aim of the research was to develop a platform from which other studies, e.g. longitudinal studies, might be conducted.

1.4 THE THESIS' STRUCTURE

This introductory chapter identifies the need for empirical evidence in the management consultancy and the reasons for conducting this research. The research questions are presented in Section 1.3. A summary of the remaining chapters in this study is as follows:

Chapter 2

This chapter identifies those essential issues that are relevant to the discussion of the management consultancy profession and the work undertaken by its professionals. The

literature used draws parallels with the generalised outsourcing industry and more specifically IT outsourcing. Similarly, the information technology and information systems that are designed or utilised by consultants are discussed. Subsequently the literature discussing the IT management consultancy profession and its use is presented. Various aspects of quality and the provision of a quality service are then presented. Finally, literature concerning project performance measures is presented. A list of the hypotheses that were developed is also included.

Chapter 3

This chapter outlines the theoretical background to the use of the survey instrument and case studies. The methodology used to undertake the study and the reasons for its use is also discussed. Finally, the issues that were likely to cause a threat to the validity of the study and the measures taken to reduce these threats are presented.

Chapter 4

The statistical analysis of the postal survey data is conducted in this chapter. A frequency analysis, cross tabulations and a factor analysis were used to investigate the issues that the senior IT management consultants believed affected the dynamics of the client and consultant relationships, the projects and their profession. A summary of the chapter's findings and research questions which are derived from the analysis conclude this chapter

Chapter 5

A description of each case study project is presented in this chapter. The outline for each case identifies the consultant and client respondents and their organisations, the reasons for undertaking the projects, including the benefits that could be derived once the outputs were delivered. Finally, the stages of the projects were also discussed.

Chapter 6

A cross case analysis of the case studies is conducted in this chapter. There are three major headings under which the analysis was conducted, i.e. the key parameters of the projects, the relationships on the project and the measurement of success, satisfaction and value for money. The culmination of this analysis is the ranking of the projects using two indices, which were developed from the theoretical variables included in the assessment of success in

Chapter 2 and the other derived from the empirical measures identified from the analysis of the data collected.

Chapter 7

The assumptions, the validity and the limitations of the research design used are discussed in this chapter. A summary of the research aims findings, based on the hypotheses and research questions, and conclusions are also presented. A list of the contributions this study is believed to make to the literature is outlined. The final section identifies possible directions for future research.

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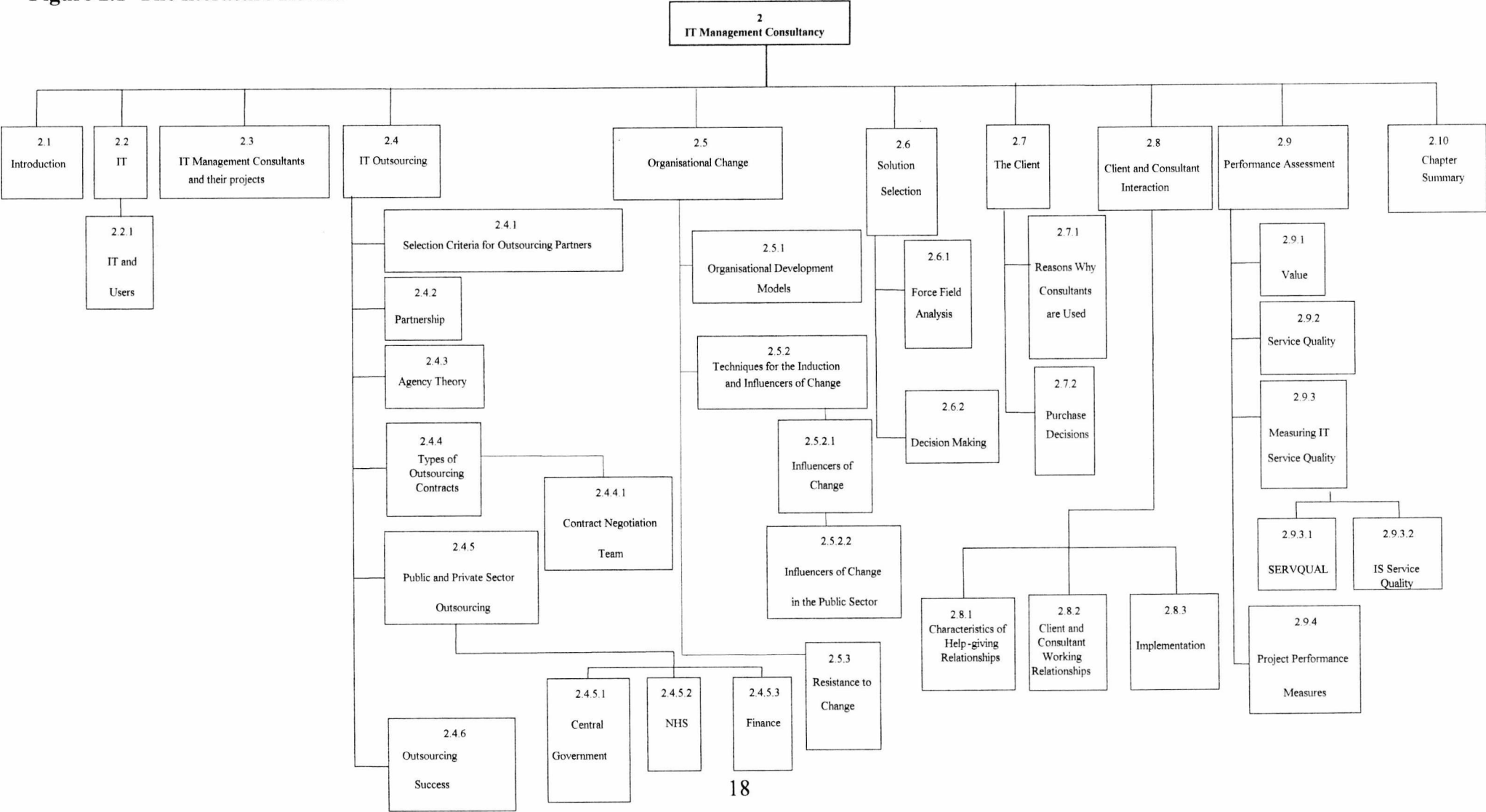
2 IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter aims to: 1) set the parameters of this study in relation to information technology management consultancy; 2) discuss information technology (IT) and information systems (IS) which are related to aspects of IT management consultants' activities; 3) develop hypotheses which will be tested; 4) collect information for the data gathering instruments; and, 5) attempt to place the findings of this thesis in their theoretical context. Figure 2.1 below shows how this chapter is organised. Section 2.2 concentrates only on those aspects of IT that were relevant to the development of the consultant survey instrument and the case study interview schedules. Section 2.3 discusses the characteristics of and work conducted by IT management consultants. Section 2.4 draws some parallels between IT outsourcing and IT management consultancy. Organisational change may result from the activities of IT management consultants and this subject is dealt with in Section 2.5. Section 2.6 looks at the forces that oppose or aid in bringing about such change and the types of decisions that can be made throughout the decision making process.

Section 2.7 and its subsections discuss the clients, the reasons why consultants are used, and the types of consultancy purchase decisions that are made. A review of the literature concerning the characteristics of help-giving relationships and the client consultant interaction is conducted in Section 2.8. The penultimate section (2.9) reviews the performance literature in relation to how projects are managed. This section draws together the concepts of value and quality. The final section in this chapter summarises its contents and includes a list of the hypotheses developed from the literature.

Figure 2.1 The literature Review



2.2 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This section deals with an important issue for this study, that of information technology. The term information technology (IT) refers to “the supply of information-based technologies” (Willcocks and Fitzgerald, 1993, p224). The term information system (IS) refers to organizational applications principally IT-based, which are designed to deliver the information needs of an organization and its stakeholders (Willcocks and Fitzgerald, 1993). An alternative classification of an IS proposed by Hirschheim et al. (1991) posits that it is a form of social action involving the interplay of seven elements: knowledge, power, subjective meaning, human interests, consensus, conflict, and resistance. The latter definition is related to social systems. In the context of this thesis Willcocks and Fitzgerald’s definition of IS will be used to understand what is referred to when discussing IS because of its direct reference to IT. These terms are further discussed in Section 2.3.

2.2.1 IT AND USERS

As IT usage has become increasingly a part of individuals’ jobs and therefore an involuntary activity, how they view and perform these jobs depends more and more on the task-technology fit (Goodhue and Thompson, 1995). These authors’ research demonstrate that users who utilised an information system (IS) a great deal were more likely to become frustrated with it because of its performance not meeting their expectations. Therefore Goodhue and Thompson (1995) suggest that if users who understand the functions of the business are also involved in systems design then the resulting system is more likely to fit the task and be successfully implemented.

When considering IS/IT projects, Barki and Hartwick (1989) distinguish between the terms ‘user participation’ and ‘user involvement’. The term user participation relates to the behaviour and activities performed during the systems development process. User involvement refers to an individual user’s subjective opinion of the importance and relevance attached either to a given system or to management information systems (MIS). Barki and Hartwick (1994, p75) conclude, “users who participate in the development process were likely to develop beliefs that a new system is good, important and personally relevant”. They

suggest three reasons why users should have these feelings, i.e. that by participating in the design stage users: 1) satisfy their requirements; 2) develop feelings of ownership; and, 3) have a greater understanding of how the system operates.

Hunton and Beeler's (1997) study involving 516 accounting clerical personnel who participated in the development of accounting applications used three decreasing levels of user participation: *instrumental voice*, *non-instrumental voice* and *no voice* (a control condition). The research was designed to test whether user involvement in the development of systems made a difference to the users' attitudes towards the system and was based on Hartwick and Barki's (1994) model of user participation and involvement. The term *instrumental voice* refers to a situation where users are permitted to express their opinions, preferences and concerns to decision makers during the development process. *Non-instrumental voice* (value expressive) refers to the instances when users are allowed to express an opinion about a decision that has already been made. The opinions expressed will not affect the outcome of the decision. *No voice* refers to the situation where there is no participation by the users in the decision making process.

Hunton and Beeler's (1997) original assumption was that there were more successful project outcomes when the users were actively involved in the project. The first finding was that the mean gain scores (post- minus pre-experiment responses) for user involvement and user attitude to the IS system were highest in the *instrumental voice* group and lowest in the *no voice* participants. Secondly, user performance was highest in the *instrumental voice* condition but there was no significant difference between *non-instrumental voice* and *no voice* groups. The reason that it was believed that *non-instrumental voice* did not show any gain in performance was because rather than being able to provide 'input' into the development process throughout the entire programme of work, they were only able to do so on one occasion. The third finding was that Hartwick and Barki's theory was supported and that mandatory users participation in the development of the IS is most effective when the users recognise their *instrumental input* into the development of the IS. Understanding the involvement of 'users' in the decision making process in client organisations may help in determining the likelihood of resistance to the deliverables of the IT consultancy projects (see Section 2.5.3 for further information concerning resistance to change).

McKeen et al.'s (1994) study supports the argument that user participation is related to user satisfaction. They believe that user participation is most needed in situations of complexity arising from uncertainty or ambiguity. They go on to conclude, "it is simply not universally true that more user participation is better in all cases. Therefore, the task becomes one of determining those cases where user participation is most indicated" (McKeen et al., 1994, p447). Working from the premise that the above factors may all play a part in contributing to project success or failure, this study attempts to identify whether there are any that were particularly important in all IT/IS projects. Based on the discussion of Section 2.2.1 the following hypotheses test whether project success is related to user involvement in the development of an IT/IS and the feelings of ownership:

- H1. If the success of IT/IS projects is related to the involvement of users in the development process then projects will be considered more successful, by the client, if the users and project managers have more of an instrumental voice.
- H2. If feelings of ownership of the IT/IS system are related to the involvement of users in the development process then the outputs of the projects will be considered owned by the client if the users and project managers are involved in the development of the IT/IS system.

2.3 IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS AND THEIR PROJECTS

In the period between 1970-1987, three groups, i.e. IT management consultants, hardware suppliers and systems houses were identified as IT service providers in the IT service market (Michell and Fitzgerald, 1997). The factors that gave rise to the start of the IT management consultancy industry were: 1) organisation's internal IS staff could not keep pace with the technological advances which would allow them to maintain competitive advantage; 2) organisations required outside help to adopt new technologies; and, 3) due to increases in complexity of programming languages, database management tools and operating systems support staff needed help to orient themselves by outsourcing their IS tasks to the consulting firms (Basil et al., 1997). At the commencement of the study reported in this thesis neither the literature nor the industry lead bodies provided an operational definition of an IT

management consultancy. Michell and Fitzgerald (1997, p225) have in recent times supplied a definition, which will be used as the definition of IT consultants throughout this thesis:

“IT consultancies exist as part of operational management consultancy firms or are very large/global systems houses which cover both traditional software development services and IT consultancy and systems integration roles (for example, EDS). Their main characteristic is large numbers of highly trained/high cost staff and traditional high margin and diverse consultancy services covering IT solutions from strategic to operational levels, but driven from a business not technology focus”.

Peled (2001) conducted qualitative research of close to 70 managers of Public Management Information Systems, consultant and vendors. In addition a small group of Management Information Systems directors from private sector and local municipalities were also interviewed. He provides definitions for the terms ‘vendor and ‘consultant’ and states that the term vendor refers to “a company or an individual that fulfils part or all of the technical job of building, testing, or implementing an information system” (p496) and the term consultant refers to “a seasoned technologist who is hired to serve as the ‘super-architect’ for a new information system” (pp496-497). The consultant’s role is to create the vision and devise the new systems, develop the outsourcing contract, and oversee the work of one or more vendors (Peled, 2001). He goes on to suggest that the power politics literature has shown that senior members of an organisation “who are not technically skilled manipulate the acquisition and application of technical skill within the organization to ensure that computers are made to fit whatever agenda they [members of the organization] already had in mind” Peled (2001, p497). Therefore the consultants are used as non-politically influential weapons to be used by a faction to support its position. To address research aim 3, an understanding of the importance of IT/IS within organisations and particularly so in order to place the case study projects within their context is required. This leads to the following hypothesis:

- H3. If senior non-technical managers’ manipulation of the acquisition and application of IS/IT is associated with the use of IT management consultants as weapons then where these managers’ influence has been greatest in determining use of IS/IT then IT consultants being used as political weapons will be greatest.

IT consultants need to have the IT technical skills, as well as Clark’s (1994) consultancy skills of planning, conducting and analysing surveys and interviews, conducting organisational analysis or mapping of work processes, selecting and designing tools for

products and procedures, preparing interview reports and recommending performance interventions (Basil et al., 1997). In addition to these characteristics, Davis (1979) identifies skills that should be possessed by management consultants, i.e. problem finding and solving, implementation, knowledge of work management, and persuasive and human interaction skills. Bloomfield and Danieli (1995) state that in their research it was rare to find consultants who possessed both IT and organisational skills.

When commenting on IT consultants as individuals, Ward and Peppard (1996) suggest that IT professionals fail to see the political elements of organisations and believe all problems can be solved technically. Peled's (2001) study seems to support Ward and Peppard's notion and portrays IT consultants as individuals who possess inextricably linked technical and socio-political skills and who are capable of translating social and organisational problems into technical ones. This Ward and Peppard attribute to IT professionals' thinking being highly disciplined and to their training being reinforced by traditional system development methodologies. An interesting claim is that IT professionals "tend to have a low tolerance for ambiguity and often shy away from dealing with emotions" (Ward and Peppard, 1996, p44). This leads to the following hypothesis:

- H4. If being an IT professional and being unable to deal with emotions are related then IT management consultants will find it difficult to discuss their emotions and how their emotions affect the IT/IS projects.

Alvesson (1992) conducted case study research in a computer consultancy company (CCC). Managers within CCC assumed the success of projects were rated higher on how social relations were managed within the project group and in relationship to the client's management and operative personnel than technical problem solving. Hence when recruiting staff, ability to manage the client relationship, as well as technical capability, was also looked for in prospective consultants. Once they were part of the organisation, then the employees were encouraged by management to see the organisation as a 'family' and provided with social activities within the main corporate building ('home'). They also socialised during coffee breaks and after work over a beer. It is implied that the outcome of this may be the development of new ideas and innovations in the organisation and a sense of community. Alvesson's ideas will be used to discuss the working relationships of the IT management consultants.

Basil et al. (1997) state that there are a variety of sizes of IT management consultancies. These range from the very large organisations, such as Accenture, Ernst and Young LLP, the large software vendors such as Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, Digital Equipment Corp. and Hewlett-Packard through to medium sized practices such as BSG Corp. and small local consultancies. The latter group not only provide the hardware and software but also implement client/server technologies.

The following are the main services Basil et al. (1997) suggest IT consultancies offer:

1. Business analysis and planning, i.e. understanding the firm's operations and also the problems that need correcting.
2. Systems integration and solution services for specific technical problems.
3. Outsourcing.
4. Network integration, i.e. planning technology to help in the implementation of local- and wide-area networks.
5. Desktop services, such as support from procurement through to the training and help desk facilities in the use of desktop technology.
6. Equipment maintenance.
7. Activity based costing, i.e. when the costs associated with activities are identified and unnecessary activities are eliminated in new cost management areas.
8. Financial services costing. These activities range from paying customers' bills to transmitting, tracking and dispensing information worldwide.

The tasks found in this list will be compared to those that the IT management consultants reported that they performed (see Chapter 4).

Peled (2001) suggests that the terms 'vendor' and 'consultant' are often confused because vendors wish to sell services to bureaucrats. The definitions of these terms can be found in Section 2.2 above. Although, Peled's definition were for IT professionals working in the Public Sector, no evidence was presented which indicated these definitions could not be used for private sector organisations. Therefore these definitions were used as comparators of the work undertaken by the contractors in the case study projects. This section of the study will be used to attempt to answer research aim 1 (see Chapter 1).

Ram (1999) raises the point that when considering to do work for a client the consultants face the challenge of deciding on the fee to charge for the project and whether they should provide the client with a solution that is based on the client's definition of the problem. Ram reports that the consultants in his study would undertake 'unprofitable' work for a preferred supplier. In addition, undertaking repeat business meant that the consultants were seen as members of the client team without having the same accountability that client staff had.

When considering the projects conducted by IT consultants, Ward and Peppard (1996) indicate that often IT projects cost more and take longer than specified by the consultants. Morris and Hough (1987) earlier drew the same conclusions when considering a variety of projects including IT projects. Ward and Peppard (1996) claim that when IT projects are finally delivered they do not satisfy the users' requirements. In this situation it may be hypothesised that the client organisations would be unlikely to implement recommendations that did not meet their needs.

Inexperienced clients are unlikely to question consultants concerning the project scheduling and both parties may underestimate the time and resources required for implementation. Both time and cost are important performance measurement factors, as clients use these to determine the success of projects (Ward and Peppard, 1996). Client organisation managers' also may not understand IT/IS issues and are reliant on specialist departments within the organisation to provide the business with its IT/IS solutions (Ward and Peppard, 1996). Morris and Hough (1987) note that often project management are not competent in recognising internal or external variables that may cause projects to fail, e.g. a price escalation, government action, strikes, corporate decisions, or acts of God. Ward and Peppard (1996) state that IT projects come in over time and budget and when finally implemented often do not satisfy the user requirements. Andersen et al. (1984) discuss the factors that will hinder the success of a project. These are grouped under five headings:

1. *The foundations of the project*: which includes insufficient support of the project by senior management and the project is poorly defined.
2. *The planning of the project*: which includes determining the scope of the project plan, the reporting arrangements are not focused enough on the current activities, plans are too focused on deadlines, planning methods discourages creativity and the planning of time is over-optimistic.

3. *The organisation and co-ordination of the project*: the organisational structure of the project team is not suitable, task responsibilities are not defined; the principles of co-operation are unclear; resources are not available when required; people working on the project are not motivated and there is poor communication or project leadership.
4. *The control of the project* (which includes the project manager and the project team): no awareness of the purpose of reporting arrangements, the plan and progress reports are not incorporated, there is no well defined communication between the project manager and the team and the project manager has responsibility with no authority.
5. *The implementation of the project*: the complexity of implementation is underestimated; there are uncontrolled changes to the plan or specification; interdependent activities are not completed before others begin and, time, cost and quality targets are unbalanced.

Andersen et al. (1984, p45) state that good planning is the first step in project management. Therefore undertaking a scoping study would allow the clients and IT management consultants to assess the risks to a project. It would allow them to put in place procedures that might reduce the potential for project failure. The following hypothesis was developed to test this assumption.

- H5. If there is a relationship between IT management consultants not being permitted to undertake scoping studies at the beginning of projects and the IT projects coming in over time and budget, then projects will be considered more successful, by the client, and are less likely to come in over time and budget if a scoping study has been undertaken.

2.4 IT OUTSOURCING

The reason for the inclusion of this section in the literature review is that IT management consultancy is a form of outsourcing. Many organisations have outsourced their IT operations since the 1960s (Loh and Venkatraman, 1992). Willcocks and Fitzgerald (1995) and Cheon et al. (1995) broadly define outsourcing of IS functions as an organization's decision to transfer part or all of its IS functions to one or more external service providers.

These IS functions include applications such as: development and maintenance, systems operation, networks/telecommunications management, end-user computing support, systems planning and management, and purchase of application software but exclude business consulting services and after-sale vendor services (Cheon et al., 1995). The value of the (UK) IT outsourcing industry was predicted to be £1013 million by 1995 (Willcocks and Fitzgerald 1993). For 1994 the revenues in the UK IT outsourcing industry were actually recorded at £1.1 billion and were predicted to double by 1997 (Willcocks and Lacity, 1995). More recent figures cited by the Outsourcing Institute, show that US spending on IT outsourcing was \$56 billion in 2000 and was expected to reach \$100 billion by 2005 (Casale, 2001).

McLellan et al. (1995) define a core activity as one, which contributes to a company's competitive capability. This is the type of activity that an organisation can perform better than any other organisation globally and Cronk and Sharp (1995) and Peled (2001) suggest that such an activity be retained in-house. Thus the following hypothesis is proposed:

- H6. If core activities should be retained in-house, then IT management consultants who recommend that only non-core IT activities be outsourced in the projects will be more likely to be selected than those that do not.

2.4.1 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR OUTSOURCING PARTNERS

The main selection criteria for IT outsourcing found in Michell and Fitzgerald's (1997) research were: 1) the cultural fit or cultural match between the clients and vendors; 2) the vendors' provision of added value to the contracted services; 3) the vendors' value to other existing in-house capabilities; 4) that staff who were transferred were well treated; 5) the vendors' organisations, their cultures and staff were of high quality; 6) the vendors had good track records in the relevant areas of work; 7) the vendors' organisations were financially stable; 8) the cost of the service provided by the vendors (other factors were brought into the equation); and, 9) the vendors were to be independent of hardware and software suppliers. Michell and Fitzgerald's list will be used to make comparisons between these selection criteria and how the IT management consultants were selected in the case studies.

2.4.2 PARTNERSHIP

The term partnership is often used when referring to an outsourcing arrangement. Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994) provide two interpretations of this term: 1) the cultural compatibility/fit between the clients and the vendors, i.e. in the treatment of staff that have been transferred to the vendors; and, 2) the cultivation of flexible relationships. Partnership in this respect is different from the legal business definition of the word. In this study Partnership is concerned with the mutual sharing of risks, rewards and mutual incentives for success, which Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994) state the client vendor relationship often does not truly embody. They suggest that for the partnership to be considered successful the working relationship is reliant on excessive profits for the vendors and the prevalence of problem free environment. The relationship is likely to decline when the vendor is not performing adequately at the latter stages of the contract or if problems arise.

Klepper (1995) discusses the development of the partnering relationship from the client firm's perspective. His study tries to compensate for the inadequacies in the IS partnership literature which approaches the situation from a non-theoretical standpoint. He uses Dwyer et al.'s (1987) model of sequential partnership development or relational exchange development, where the stages are: awareness, exchange, expansion and commitment. There are five subprocesses that can either strengthen or weaken the partnership between the client and the consultant, i.e. attraction, communication and bargaining, power, norms and expectations. An interesting aspect of these subprocesses is the manipulation of power in the client consultant relationship. Peled (2001, p495) asserts that "IT consultants exert an enormous amount of political power because they are the "glue" binding together all the actors involved in producing and maintaining public information technology." Klepper (1995, p253) states "one party has power over a second party if the second is dependent on the first for valued resources, and this power is enhanced if there are limited alternative sources available to the second party". The power can be administered unjustly, e.g. when the second party takes advantage of the situation and the benefits are accrued solely by the second party without the first party's consent or understanding. Just power is exhibited when the second party works towards mutual benefits or is adequately compensated for the first party's power. In the latter situation a partnership relationship is more likely to thrive. The discussion concerning partnership development and the use of power in IT consultancy projects leads to the following hypothesis:

H7. If partnership development and the client's and the consultant's use of power are related then the IT projects that are considered most successful will be those in which the power is distributed equally distributed between the client and the consultant.

These ideas similar to that found in Game theory (see Section 2.4.3 below) and its identifications of the necessity for the power differential to be equalised between the two parties to maintain the most effective working relationship.

Using Klepper's (1995) notions about power in an outsourcing relationship the author suggests that there may be various sources of power that can be used by both parties in a consultancy assignment. From the clients' perspective they have: 1) power based on knowing their organisation better than the consultants; 2) the capacity to make resources and information available to the consultants; 3) the financial power to withhold fees; and, 4) secret agendas to which the consultant may or may not be privy. The consultants' power base may be derived from: 1) their specialist knowledge which they can employ to solve the clients' problems; 2) the contracts, which quite often they have written, that operate in their favour and not the clients'; and, 3) their own agendas for the projects. This study investigated the various aspects by which power in the relationship is derived and attempted to identify how it is used and is discussed in Chapter 6.

2.4.3 AGENCY THEORY

Cheon et al. (1995) point out the relevance of Agency Theory to the study of the consequences of outsourcing. Agency theory is composed of two related theories, i.e. the Theory of Agency and the Theory of the Principal and Agent (Douma and Schreuder, 1992). These theories will be employed, in this study, to assist in understanding the client and consultant contractual relationship.

To appreciate how the Principal and Agent theory operates one has to grasp the concepts associated with Game Theory. Game theory studies the "strategic interaction between individuals or organisations" (Elitzur and Wensley, 1997, p45). A special case of this theory involves two players as occurs in an outsourcing arrangement. The use of the term strategic refers to the potential for the actions of one player to affect/influence the other player's

behaviour. 'Game' in this sense is a set of strategies for each play. Each combination of strategies results in benefits and losses for individual players. Elitzur and Wensley (1997) discuss the idea of the power differential in games, which if too great may deter participants' involvement. Therefore, it is in the interest of any player (e.g. the client and/or consultant) to reduce the power differential thereby obtaining a more even pay-off. This sections will be used to look at how power is managed in the case study projects.

The Theory of Agency concerns the effect of the contract on the behaviour of the participants. The second component of Agency Theory, i.e. Principal and Agent Theory, determines how the Principal should design a reward structure for the work the Agent has performed. One of the underlying assumptions of the Principal and Agent Theory is that the Agent likes to be rewarded but dislikes working to complete the job. Three types of contracts that impact on the participant's behaviour are reported in Principal and Agent Theory, i.e. the forcing, wage and rent contracts (Douma and Schreuder, 1992, pp92-93 and pp95-96).

Forcing contract:	Under a forcing contract the Principal agrees to pay an amount W_0 if the Agent puts in at least e_0 amount of work (the optimal level of work). If the Agent does not put in e_0 amount of work then he is paid nothing but has to pay the Principal an amount A .
Wage contract:	This contract is similar to an employment contract with a fixed wage. The disadvantage of the reward structure for this type of contract is that the Agent has no incentive to do a good job. In this situation the Principal bears all the risk.
Rent contract:	In this situation the Agent receives a pay-off, minus an agreed fixed amount for rent. The Agent now works for himself and pays the Principal an amount to use resources 'owned' by the Principal. The Agent now bears all the risk but has the maximum incentive to work well.

The type of contract opted for will be dependent on each party's willingness to bear risk. These contracts are found in the symmetrical state, i.e. in the case of a forcing contract when the Principal can observe the Agent's behaviour or in an asymmetrical state, i.e. in the wage or rent contract when the Principal is unable to observe the Agent's level of effort (Douma and Schreuder, 1992). The factors that determine agency costs are: 1) outcome uncertainty, 2) risk aversion of the outsourcing partner, 3) the predictability of the outsourcing supplier's behaviour, and 4) the duration of the outsourcing relationship (Eisenhardt, 1989a). A forcing

contract, as opposed to the other types of contracts would compel the IT management consultants to undertake a certain amount of work before being paid. The discussion of the types of contracts found in the Principal and Agent Theory gives rise to the following hypothesis:

- H8. If outsourcing contracts are dependent on the Principal's [Client] ability to observe the Agent's [IT management consultant(s)] degree of effort then a Forcing contract is more likely to be used in IT management consultancy projects than either a wage or rent contract alone or any combination of these.

2.4.4 TYPES OF OUTSOURCING CONTRACTS

This section has been included in the review to determine the type of outsourcing contracts that can be used and the findings will be compared to those found in the case study projects. Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994) and Clark et al. (1995) discuss outsourcing as a contractual arrangement. Six types of outsourcing contracts have been identified: time and materials; fixed fee; fixed fee plus variable elements; cost plus management fee; fee plus incentive scheme and share of risk and reward (Fitzgerald and Willcocks, 1994). Their research findings show that 28% were tightly defined contracts, 19% were short flexible service contracts, 36% were partnerships based on trust, and finally 7% were strategic alliances. There was a recognised trend, which was a move towards flexible and trust based outsourcing relationships. Secondly more tightly defined contracts were being entered into, which identified the performance measures that would end disputes about the expected level of service (Fitzgerald and Willcocks, 1994; Michell and Fitzgerald, 1997). This suggests that there is a need to incorporate performance measurement systems into outsourcing-type contracts. The type of contract used in the case study projects was determined by the use of indirect evidence. The method used is described as indirect because contracts were considered confidential and the clients and consultants were not willing to discuss the details. The minimum recommended outsourcing contract specifications should be service level agreements, penalty clauses, provisions for adapting to changing future circumstances and early termination clauses (Fitzgerald and Willcocks, 1994). In conditions of uncertainty, they advocate formulating a looser contract because in drawing up a tight contract assumptions are made about the future that are not likely to be true. Clark et al. (1995) maintain that if a loose

contract is used it exposes the client to unnecessary risk and the possibility of the vendor charging extra for anything not fully specified in the contract. If clients rely on the possibility that vendors are totally trustworthy they may be leaving themselves open to risk. Thus in this situation risk may be reduced by use of a risk/reward contractual arrangement with a looser contract definition, i.e. in terms of service levels and penalty clauses. Willcocks and Fitzgerald (1993) recommend that several points be learnt from their research: 1) the need to draw up a detailed contract, preferable for a short duration (one to five years) and 2) to understand the charging implication of the service levels required.

Cross (1995) introduces a further complicating feature of the contracting process, i.e. allowing the outsourcing vendor to subcontract services that can be done more cheaply and effectively by other organisations. Two of the cases studied operated using such subcontracting arrangements.

2.4.4.1 CONTRACT NEGOTIATION TEAM

Lacity et al. (1995) recommend that when negotiating contracts the team should be headed by the senior IT executive not the Chief Executive Officer and should include a variety of specialists including an IT outsourcing consultant distinct from the supplier, and a contract lawyer to detect any hidden costs and clauses in the contract. However, Clark et al. (1995) recommends that the Chief Executive Officer should be included and not the Chief Information Officer (CIO), as the latter is often protective of internal functions even when the benefits of outsourcing can clearly be seen. This may be because it threatens the CIO's own and subordinates' careers (Sobol and Apte, 1995). The final member of the team, Lacity et al. (1995) suggest, is an IT expert to ensure that the company stays abreast of technological changes. They go on to suggest that the entire outsourcing team, including those involved in contract negotiation, may have up to 20 people, who span the user groups or are at different levels in the corporate hierarchy.

The outsourcing team literature is included in the review because it raises the issue of differing viewpoints as to who should be involved in project teams and the possible effects of team members' own personal agendas to the project's success. This is important for this research as the case study respondents identified a variety of project management structures.

Ram (1999) also comments on the fluidity of the team's structure and notes that consultants were brought into and removed from project teams on the basis of the information or skills they could bring to the project.

It should be noted that it was not possible to directly view the contracts that had been negotiated for the case study projects as they were considered to be restricted information and therefore confidential. The inferences about the contracts and the people who negotiated them were collected from the case study respondents' accounts of the projects.

2.4.5 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR OUTSOURCING

The practice of outsourcing varies across different industry sectors. There has not been a great deal written about outsourcing in specific industries and the following section reviews the literature that is relevant to the case studies.

2.4.5.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Studies that have either focused on IT outsourcing in the public sector or have included empirical evidence from public sector respondents have been undertaken by researchers such as Willcocks and Fitzgerald (1993), Clark et al. (1995) and De Loof (1995). Due to the previous UK Central Government's policy of compulsory competitive tendering, public sector departments were encouraged to outsource, which required up to 80% of the services in the marketplace to be tested and evaluated (Fitzgerald and Willcocks, 1994; Michell and Fitzgerald, 1997). Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994) quote the example of the £1 billion deal made by the Inland Revenue (IRS) with EDS to outsource its IT operations in 1993. Furthermore they indicate that public sector accounts with outsourcers made up approximately 50% of the market in 1996. Peled (2001) reports that in Israel compulsory competitive tendering has led to the rise of powerful IT consultants who 'surreptitiously' manage numerous public computing projects.

2.4.5.2 NHS

This section has been included in the literature review because two of the case study projects were conducted in the National Health Service (NHS). Leys (1999) notes that since the early 1990s because of NHS trusts attempting to find ways to survive within the funding provided by the Treasury, they have had to become reliant on private sector management consultants to help them find ways to survive in this environment. The publication of the White Paper 'Working For Patients', in 1989, raised the profile of IT/IS usage in the NHS (Willcocks and Fitzgerald, 1993). By 1990, 9 of the 14 Regional Health Authorities had privatised their computer operations through outsourcing or management buyouts.

Leys (1999) states that there does not appear to be any stakeholder (client or consultants) that can provide estimates of the size of the market but estimates the range from £25 million to £500 million. Consultancy projects with a budget of over £104,000 have to be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Community but even small projects have to be put out to tender (and are sent to firms with which the trusts are familiar) (Leys, 1999). The majority of the players in the market, Leys (1999) suggests, are small consultancy practices (with only one person working in the company) and there are only two or three that have more than 50 staff. Due to the downsizing of the trusts former employees from regional operational research, management, management service and architects' departments were being 're-employed' by the trusts as management consultants to assist with their strategic planning (Leys 1999). Using a specialised, experienced vendor may reduce technical uncertainty and risk (McLellan et al., 1995). One of the case study projects used one such IT management consultancy firm that worked solely for NHS organisations.

When working in trusts, Leys (1999) comments that often management consultants reported that collaborating with clinicians was central to their work. However, in the analysis of problems the clinicians were often cited as being part of the problems. As the reports produced for the trust are 'commercially confidential' there is no one for them to be accountable to and no one to challenge their findings.

2.4.5.3 FINANCIAL SECTOR

Outsourcing in the financial sector is common due to the overlap in the resources required in different markets, i.e. the effect of firms expanding into and withdrawing from markets. When it is no longer feasible to operate directly within a market then the services offered or provided may be outsourced to a third party (Cheon et al., 1995). McLellan et al. (1995) cite Huff and Beattie (1985), Tuman (1988) and Burch (1990) whose work suggests that outsourcing of banks' IS departments occurred from the late 1980s (even though IT was viewed as a core competence).

McLellan et al.'s (1995) work in the early 1990s suggests that the bank executives viewed their IS as one of their core activities which contributed to their competitive capabilities and that their IT functions were strategic components in their organisations. Contrary to convention within other industries of that time IS was still being outsourced in this industry. The reasons given for flouting conventional wisdom were that the financial institutions found that: 1) there were large financial savings realised for both IT and business costs, 2) their IT suppliers were also more responsive to their needs than internal IS departments had been, 3) they could still maintain tight management control of their IS functions, 4) strong trust relationships were built between the banks and their vendors, and 5) the banks believed they could rely on the vendors to provide them with the correct quantity and quality for their IS resources (McLellan et al., 1995). These relationships are not without their conflicts but in most instances there is a positive resolution to any difficulties. Overall the financial firms believe that their IS outsourcing relationships were good. The financial service case study project is closely related to the banks and was analysed in the light of these views.

2.4.6 OUTSOURCING SUCCESS

This section has been included in this study to review the factors used to assess outsourcing projects and have been used in the development of the consultant survey instrument. Michell and Fitzgerald (1997, p231) identify five major problems recognised by clients in relation to the contract "(1) defining service levels, (2) managing the contract and its details, (3) getting different contractors and vendors to work together, (4) vendors' lack of flexibility and (5)

vendors' lack of responsiveness". The success of the case study projects success will be interpreted using these categories.

Willcocks and Fitzgerald (1993) and Lacity et al. (1995) suggest a number of conditions for successful outsourcing. These are: 1) that target costs are achieved or are less than anticipated; 2) current service levels are maintained or improved; 3) the user's management are satisfied; 4) there are few vendor-client disputes; 5) vendors are responsive to client requests; 6) there is a good correlation between the set objectives; and, 7) contracts are renewed. Lacity et al. (1995, p93) note that the companies that profited the most from their contracts were those that had usually assigned a manager "with experience in administering leasing or licensing arrangements, some IT knowledge, and a proven ability to manage complex relationships". Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994) and Michell and Fitzgerald (1997) maintain that clients want vendors to make a profit. This is because it is in the clients' interest that the vendors remain solvent, so that clients do not lose their investment in the relationship. Driving too hard a bargain would perhaps influence the vendors to act solely in their own interests rather than in that of the clients'.

2.5 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

This section discusses the use of organisational change models (Section 2.5.1), techniques for the induction and influencers of change (Section 2.5.2) and resistance to change (Section 2.5.3). It has been included in the literature review because IT management consultancy projects generally involve an element of change.

2.5.1 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODELS

This section deals with organisational development models and the factors that impact on consultant facilitated organisational change. Numerous attempts have been made to design multi-stage models: four stage models (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969), five stage models (Lippitt et al., 1958; Beckhard, 1969) and seven stage models (Schein, 1969; Kolb and Frohman, 1970).

Kolb and Frohman's seven stage (phase) model incorporates the major stages of earlier models whilst integrating additional points that they considered had been previously overlooked. The seven stages are *scouting*, *entry*, *diagnosis*, *planning*, *action*, *evaluation* and *termination*. This model focuses on two main issues which are highly interrelated, the first being the relationship between the consultant and client and secondly the nature of the work (Kolb and Frohman, 1970). Margerison's (1988) twelve step model consists of the following stages: *contact*, *preparation*, *contract negotiation*, *data collection*, *analysis*, *diagnosis*, *data feedback*, *data discussion*, *proposals*, *decision*, *implementation* and *review*. A combination of these two models would seem to provide the most usable model of the facilitated change process. The 13 stages of the refined model are: *scouting*, *contact*, *contract negotiation*, *entry*, *diagnosis*, *data feedback*, *data discussion*, *proposals*, *decision*, *evaluation*, *implementation*, *termination* and *review*. As with the other models the stages of the model are not as linear as portrayed but are likely to be worked through and some stages are likely to be repeated before the final stages are reached. Due to confidentiality issues within the case study projects, which are discussed in Chapter 3, only the stages from entry through to review will be covered in this thesis.

2.5.2 TECHNIQUES FOR THE INDUCTION AND INFLUENCERS OF CHANGE

This section presents tactics that consultants use to induce change in client systems and will be used to analyse the case studies. Kubr (1980) states that the change process involves two major factors: (i) identification with the change, and (ii) internalisation of the change. To achieve the latter there appears to be a need for participation from all those involved in or affected by the change.

The stages of Lewin's (1958) three-stage change process model are *unfreezing*, *changing* and *refreezing*. When change is required in an organisation a situation which may cause ambiguity or uncertainty promotes the requirement for change. This then leads to a change in behaviour. Finally, maintaining the new operating practices reinforces the required behaviour.

Kubr's (1980) research findings show that when individuals are permitted to adopt their own solution to a problem at the *unfreezing stage*, after which the best-method or approved

solution is imposed on them at the *changing stage*, there will be some conformity at first but after some time there will be divergence and a return to their original working practices at the *refreezing stage*. If an approved method of working is imposed at the beginning of the *change process*, there is much less departure from the newly prescribed approach in comparison to the former situation. If consultants introduce the required behaviour at the beginning of Lewin's change stage, then the model predicts that the new behaviour is more likely to be the behaviour that will be conformed to by those involved in the change process. A further lever for the maintenance of the new paradigm is the use of performance measures to monitor the work (Schneier et al., 1991).

In Orlikowski's (1996) study an organisational change phenomenon called *emergent change*, in which organisational change does not result as a consequence of a predetermined cause and effect relationship but occurs spontaneously in response to what is happening in the environment, was discussed. The customer service department (CSD) of Zeta, a software company in the USA, which decided to upgrade to using Lotus Notes to track customer calls rather than an in-house developed system, was used as the case study organisation. The new IT system was called the *Incident Tracking Support System* (ITSS) and its database could be accessed by all members of the CSD. There were no IT management consultants used in this project. However, there were internal experts, e.g. a developer assigned to the Implementation Team of Zeta's Technical Services Division. The inclusion in this study of Orlikowski's research is to review the nature user involvement in the implementation of new kinds of IT. The findings will be used to look at organisational change in the case study projects.

Throughout the 2 year period of ITSS's implementation Orlikowski identified 5 metamorphoses which occurred throughout and after the period of implementation. These were as follows:

Metamorphosis 1: These changes were both intentional and in response to requirements, involved managers' and specialists' working practices, had unforeseen outcomes and involved the ITSS. For example the specialists recorded chronological information in ITSS. However, after they maintained their practices of writing details on paper first, they found it inconvenient to type and interact intelligently with customers.

Metamorphosis II: These changes arose from emergent changes in work practices. For example: managers created a 2 tier support system, i.e. front line (inexperienced specialists) and back line (experienced specialists) and a member of the back line was responsible for overseeing and assigning work to a front line colleague. Managers were forced to act as intermediaries and reassigned work as necessary because of the reluctance of back line staff to do so.

Metamorphosis III: These changes were emergent and resulted from specialist actions. As specialists were able to review others' cases electronically they began to work more collaboratively and proactively offered each other advice on how to solve problems.

Metamorphosis IV: Both managers and specialists participated in deliberate and emergent changes to facilitate global interdepartmental support and working. After some initial problems, managers from all the CSDs (USA, UK, Europe and Australia) had to agree common guidelines for working together. Similarly, specialists also negotiated how cases were to be dealt with. A more difficult problem to overcome was the requirements of the CSD to have developers use ITSS notifications of problems to provide fixes for the company's products. As the developers felt that providing fixes was a small part of their role they were resistant to developing fixes in response to CSD requests to do so. The long term result was that there was little interaction between the developers and the support staff.

Metamorphosis V: Again this was a case where managers and specialist participated in deliberate and emergent changes. The archival information stored in ITSS was a good source of knowledge and other departments within Zeta wanted access to it. Initially the CSD managers refused access on the grounds that if misinterpreted the information could cause damage to the CSD or a specialist. Finally, it was decided that there would be restricted access to specific individuals. Summary Technical Notes were also published and the CSD published an online warning on ITSS abdicating responsibility for the use of ITSS information outside of its use in the CSD.

Orlikowski (1996) commenting on these metamorphoses noted that many of the changes were emergent, not discrete, contextual and were likely to be ongoing. In this situation there also did not appear to be any resistance to change because specialists were encouraged by managers to learn from and experiment with the new technology. This may also have been because there were micro-level changes effected by the affected individuals over a period of time.

On many occasions it is u?nfeasible to predetermine what changes will be required or their long-term impacts (Orlikowski and Hofman, 1997). Orlikowski and Hofman developed the *improvisational model of change management* in which three types of change occur over time: 1) *anticipated changes* – those planned for and realised, 2) *emergent changes* – those changes which arise spontaneously and 3) *opportunity-based changes* – not previously anticipated but are implemented intentionally in response to an unexpected opportunity, event or breakdown. These changes occur iteratively and build upon each other. Also, for changes to be made appropriately qualified technical support is required to implement IT changes. In contrasting how the Lotus Notes software was used in another firm, Alpha, Orlikowski and Hofman note the company reward systems and outlook will also have an impact on the type of change seen. For example in Alpha the anticipated changes occurred more slowly because the incentive and evaluation systems were not changed to encourage sharing of information and similarly roles and policies stayed the same. Orlikowski and Hofman go on to conclude that company cultures that do support experimentation and learning are unlikely to succeed in their change project if the improvisational model is employed.

Kubr (1980) suggests when communicative and persuasive techniques are used four sequential steps be employed to facilitate successful change: 1) gaining attention, 2) interest, 3) desire, and 4) commitment to action by the people involved in the change process. He identifies two methods used by consultants to raise the awareness of the necessity for change: 1) arousing anxiety and 2) the provision of information. The most effective of these methods is anxiety arousal, especially when used minimally to elicit attention. When heightened anxiety is used to bring about Lewin's (1958) unfreezing state, the consultant can then provide a solution. However, results show that the continued use of the heightened anxiety approach tends to be self-defeating, as recipients eventually ignore such threats when they are not substantiated (Kubr, 1980).

Huczynski (1993) suggests that ambiguity is another state from which relief is sought and when possible solutions to a problem are explored. He further states, "researchers have discovered that managers place disproportionate weight on certain variables and not others. Under pressure, they would make accept-reject decisions on the basis of only one criterion" (Huczynski, 1993, p457). Schwenk's (1986) research suggests that if management were provided with consistent, anecdotal, vivid and salient information relating to a particular choice it would discourage them from seeking additional information. The literature from

this section is used to provide a basis for comparison of the stimuli which highlighted the need for change in the case study projects. Using these ideas and those discussed in Section 2.6.1 below this leads to the following hypothesis:

- H9. If the realisation that there is a need for change in the IT/IS of a client company is associated with an internal or external organisational stimulus then at least one type of stimulus should be found in the client companies which promoted the need for an IT/IS project.

Berglund and Werr (2000) discuss how management consultants use rhetoric founded on two myths:

- 1) The *rationality myth*, which is based on the possession of knowledge encapsulated in management theories, methods and models which is employed rationally by management consultants to formulate problems and solutions. In this myth managers are also considered to be rational decision-makers.
- 2) The *normative/pragmatic myth*, the use of the above models and theories are no longer held to be valuable by management consultants. What is now important is the management consultants' experience and personal characteristics. Each project's solution can no longer conform to established methods and theories for resolution but what is now essential to a successful outcome is the use of management consultants.

Management consultants use these two myths interchangeably, promoting first their special knowledge of models, methods and theories for organisational change but then suggesting that these models are pointless without their personal experience to implement them (Berglund and Werr, 2000). Therein, Berglund and Werr (2000, p652) conclude lies the 'invincibility' of management consultants in their ability to live in the "worlds between academia and practice'. Consultants have also been reported to insert themselves between IT and the clients or IT suppliers and the clients and therefore the selection of an IT system, IT strategy or implementation of an IS cannot be undertaken without their involvement (Bloomfield and Danieli, 1995).

2.5.2.1 INFLUENCERS OF CHANGE

This section has been included in the literature review because it looks at the influencers of change in projects and will be used to analyse the case study projects. For external information to impinge on companies it has to cross 'organisational boundaries'. People within the organisation who offer technical advice/information which bridges the information 'gaps' between the specialised units and external information sources or who are responsible for managing the vendor client relationships for outsourcing arrangements are called *boundary spanners* (Klepper, 1995; Paolillo, 1982).

Kubr (1980) and Paolillo (1982) discuss a change induction method called the two step information process, which was originally proposed by Lazarsfeld et al. (1948). It uses individuals within the organisation to act as the boundary spanners. The underlying idea is that the acceptance and effective introduction of change occurs as the result of a multiplier effect in the flow of information. These ideas are summarised as follows: certain people are more likely to experiment and are influenced by new approaches that possess certain characteristics. These people are labelled "isolates" (Kubr, 1980) or "technological gatekeepers" (Paolillo, 1982; Nochur and Allen, 1992). They are inclined to be highly technically oriented but not directly influential on their peers. Their principal role is to investigate new technologies.

Opinion-leaders possess similar characteristics to the isolates. Due to their widespread interests in other fields, they do not have the degree of time available to experiment and test new methods in any considered depth but they keep track of the work done by the isolates. Opinion-leaders have considerable influence over and beyond their reference group. This is demonstrated in their assuming ownership and responsibility for a new scheme once it has been accepted by the isolates. The remaining members of the organisation will follow the opinion-leaders' direction in taking ownership of the scheme. The process of taking ownership is one that Kubr (1980) considers should be managed by the consultant. Unless one is permitted to infiltrate an organisation it is difficult to identify who the isolates and opinion-leaders are. This phenomenon is discussed further in the section dealing with resistance to change (see Section 2.5.3). The discussion above leads to the following hypothesis:

H10. If taking ownership of the outputs from an IS/IT project is associated with the IT management consultants identifying and eliciting the support of opinion-leaders then IT/IS projects where this is done are more likely to be considered more successful by the client organisation than those where this has not been done.

2.5.2.2 INFLUENCERS OF CHANGE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Morris and Hough (1987) suggest that the Government itself can have a role in influencing projects and that this may be one of the most critical success factors for projects held in the public domain. The Government may act as a project's sponsor, regulator, champion or owner. The Government's role in the case study projects will be briefly commented on in Chapter 6.

Within the public sector there are a number of other influencers in the change process. These influencers tend to have a link to the financial departments of the public body and are quite often in the position of trying to determine whether the public has obtained 'Value For Money' (VFM) from the public sector (Glynn et al., 1992). There are a number of such organisations but only the Treasury, the National Audit Office and the Efficiency Unit (located in the Cabinet Office at the time of the study) have been important in this research. Below is a brief description of those bodies which influenced the case study projects and whose work influenced the development of the monitoring of the consultancy profession section of the consultant survey instrument and the client interview schedule.

The Treasury

Although the Treasury's primary role is to raise revenue, it shares an accountability role with other 'audit bodies'. The Treasury also advises the Chancellor of the Exchequer and plays a part in influencing the financial environment in which VFM analyses are conducted.

The National Audit Office (NAO)

The NAO monitors the expenditure of Central Government departments. The NAO reviews the departments' yearly financial plans, which are part of each division's five-year financial plans, and identifies possible 'report' subjects. A preliminary study of such subjects is conducted and then three investigators with the aid of specialists, e.g. academics or

accountants, undertake a full investigation. The Comptroller and Auditor General's report that is produced will include the full study's findings and is agreed with the audited body. The report is presented to the Committee of Public Accounts (PAC). In response to the PAC's findings, the Treasury, the audited body and Ministers produce a final reply; the document is called a 'Treasury Minute', and shows the remedial action likely to be taken. Follow up reports are produced if recommended work is not carried out.

The Efficiency Unit (EU)

The unit was originally designed to promote efficiency and eliminate waste and was under the control of Lord Rayner. At the time of the study it was part of the Cabinet Office. One or two civil servants conduct a 90-day study, in consultation with Permanent Secretaries, and report their recommendations directly to ministers. In one such report, "The Government's Use of External Consultants", in 1994 it was reported that consultants were employed in government because of their specialist expertise. They brought a broader perspective on the issues and they were considered to have an independent viewpoint (Efficiency Unit, 1994). It was further noted that they had helped government departments and agencies to adopt good commercial practices in a variety of areas, had assisted with change programmes and had enhanced the quality of decision making and had assisted Government to achieve some of its major objectives such as privatisation and the establishment of strong and effective agencies (Efficiency Unit, 1994). The authors of the report believed that the success of projects was dependent on the individuals and the context in which they were used. At this time they noted that there had been too many projects let by single tender. When the projects went through a process of tendering there had been difficulty in identifying the most appropriate consultants. The discussion above leads to the following hypothesis:

H11. If public sector organisations are more likely to use single tenders rather than competitive tendering when selecting consultants, then more case study projects conducted in public sector organisations should have IT management consultants selected on the basis of a single tender than those selected using competitive tendering.

The Efficiency Unit made a number of recommendations about the use of consultants in Government. The twenty-seventh recommendation suggested that the Department of Trade and Industry's Small Firms and Business Links Division should "extend its proposed Consultancy Brokerage Service to cover consultancy within Government" (Efficiency Unit,

1994, p8). It proposed to cover: 1) the previous projects undertaken in Government, 2) the experience and expertise of individual consultants, 3) their fee rates and 4) the resources of consultancy firms. The author believed that further information could be collected that consultants and clients felt would be useful to hold on such a database. Such information would not only be useful for Government but also for all types of client organisations. Accordingly the data gathering instruments incorporated a series of questions examining the need for and type of information that should be stored such on a database.

2.5.3 RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

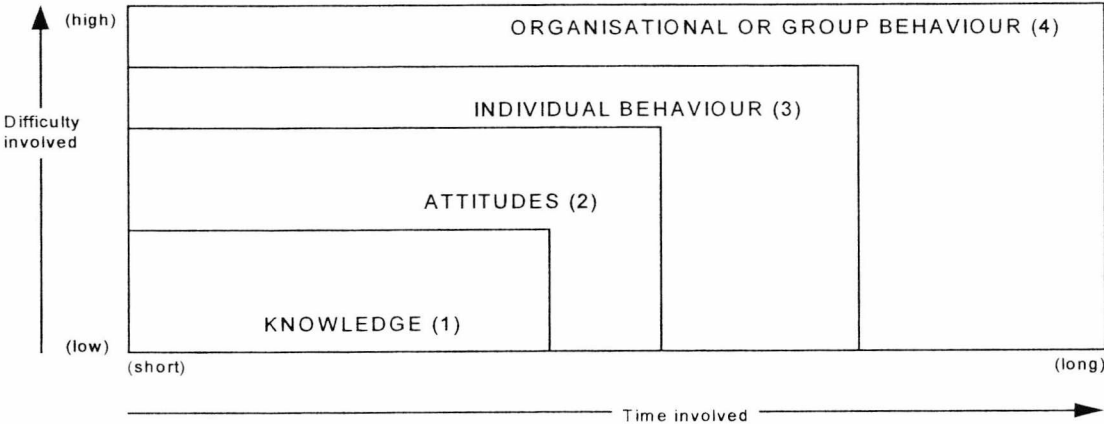
Ultimately what can prevent a change programme or introduction of new technology from being implemented is resistance to the proposed change. The resistance can arise at different levels throughout the organisation and its consequences can be varied. Hersey and Blanchard (1972) discuss their comprehensive model of the time taken for various organisational levels to accept organisational change (see Figure 2.2). Their model recognises that there are four ways by which change can occur: (1) knowledge changes, (2) attitudinal changes, (3) individual behaviour changes, and (4) group or organisational performance changes. A change agent is likely to find it increasingly difficult to penetrate each successive layer. However, Hersey and Blanchard suggest that a combination of individually participatory or coercive change techniques can be used to bring about the desired change.

Participatory change is brought about by the introduction of knowledge (1), which it is hoped will then influence the individuals' attitudes (2). Once the individuals' behaviour (3) is changed then this is likely to be reflected by a change in the group's behaviour (4). This change Hersey and Blanchard (1972) suggest is evolutionary but is more likely to be longer lasting. Coercive change operates in the opposite direction when changes in behaviour are imposed on the organisation. The consequence of such change is an increased likelihood of resistance to the change (Hersey and Blanchard, 1972).

Consultants have to be able to act as a "holding environment" for emotions, particularly negative ones, until clients are able to address the issues which give rise to them (Nichol, 1997). Kubr (1980, p42) states "that the consultant must learn, very early in his career, to overcome objections" and hence deal with the emotions and frustration which cause clients to

resist the change. A further subject discussed in this study is that of the emotional reactions of clients and consultants in the case study projects and the factors that may influence resistance to the changes being proposed or undertaken.

Figure 2.2 Time Span And Level Of Difficulty For Various Levels



Source: Hersey and Blanchard (1972, p160)

Kubr (1980) maintains that when change becomes a matter of inter-group conflict different problems requiring special treatment may arise. Understanding and decoding the emotions that motivate ‘actors’ within an organisation can help to explain their behaviour (Kets de Vries, 1991). When a particular group feels threatened then its course of action is to ‘close ranks’ and to take ‘more cohesive action’, i.e. undertake or encourage participation in activities that unite the individuals. The typical characteristics of this type of group are that it is more likely to submit to dictatorial leadership and become increasingly hostile to groups who hold alternative opinions (Kubr, 1980).

Kubr (1980) notes that communication becomes distorted and difficult if each group is prepared to admit only the positive aspects of its own argument and the negative aspects of the ‘enemy’s’. In this situation the consultant should be involved in the organisational politics and in influencing the communication network (Margerison, 1988). Kubr (1980) suggests that this restores inter-group communication, as the groups are now distracted and their focus is directed at overall rather than sub-group goals. Harrison (1990) argues that if consultants anticipate the internal political impacts of their work, which is one of the forces acting to oppose change, they may be able to reduce the risk of opposition and hence support the study or the implementation of their recommendations. This study investigated the effects of resistance and conflicts, which occurred between the consultants, clients and organisations,

and their effects on the outcome of the case study projects. The following hypothesis is developed from the literature discussed in this section:

H12. The more IT/IS consultants become involved in the client's organisational politics and communication networks the less the likelihood that there will be resistance to the proposed change or outputs.

2.6 SOLUTION SELECTION

This section discusses how particular solutions may be selected. Solution selection is important as both consultants and clients are responsible for the output of the project. Initially force field analysis, which identifies how opposing internal and external forces act to facilitate or oppose change, is briefly discussed (Section 2.6.1). The literature that deals with decision making, i.e. how decisions are defined and the premises and assumptions they are based on is reviewed (Section 2.6.2).

2.6.1 FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

Carnall (1990) describes a methodology that may be used to analyse complex problems, i.e. Force Field Analysis. Lewin (1947) was the originator of this methodology. It begins with the definition of the problem and attempts to describe the desired organisational state. Next the forces operating are identified and ranked. The forces are categorised into those that oppose and those that support the change. Agreement is then sought concerning the actions to be undertaken, which lessen the forces that oppose and promote those which support the desired change, i.e. the development of a solution, needs to be reached. The notion of opposing and supporting forces was used to describe the forces acting within the case study projects.

2.6.2 DECISION MAKING

Decision making has been included in the literature review because there were various types of decisions that were made throughout the course of the case study projects, i.e. from the initial decision to act upon a stimulus that promoted the need for change through to the decision to implement a particular IT/IS solution (see Chapter 6). There are four main bodies of research that deal with decision making processes and these include the theories of cognitive psychologists, social psychologists, management theorists and political scientists. A decision is defined as “the selection of a proposed course of action” (Butler et al., 1993, p6). These authors believe that with this definition there are certain notions that are inherent: 1) there is a choice of possible actions but there is uncertainty about which to select; 2) there is an intended action which may not be realised before the decision’s implementation; and, 3) there are usually multiple participants in the decision making process in organisations. The type of decision making that Butler et al. (1993) discuss is based on a framework defined by Thompson and Tuden (1956). The framework consists of four categories of decision making: computational, judgement, bargaining and inspiration. Butler et al. (1993) provide alternative means of identifying these categories: rational, bounded-rational, political and garbage can, respectively.

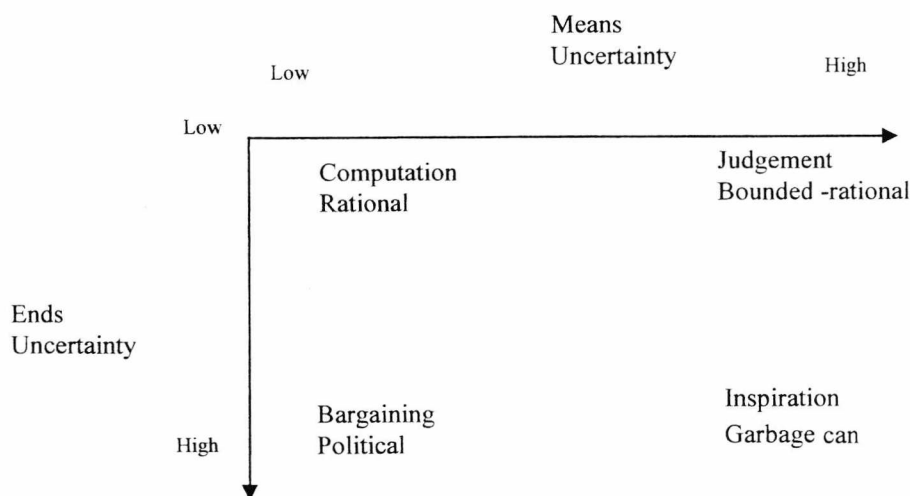
Rational Model

Butler et al. (1993) suggest that the rational decision maker has clear objectives, has regard to all information and analyses every possible solution and therefore can knowledgeably select the best solution, which can then be authorised and implemented. This decision making process is used for routine decisions and is programmed into the organisation’s systems so that particular events stimulate specific actions (Butler et al., 1993). This type of decision occurs in situations where there is low uncertainty as to the outcome and low uncertainty about the means by which a decision will be implemented. Thompson and Tuden (1956) classify this type of decision as computational. It would be placed in the upper left quadrant of Figure 2.3. The type of organisation that would be expected to exhibit computational processes are formalised, demarcated, centralised structures with an appropriate number of experts carrying out analysis and expecting the results to be acted upon (Butler et al., 1991).

Bounded-rational Model

Butler et al.'s (1993) bounded-rational decision making process occurs when there is a time pressure, incomplete information, disagreement about the goals and the managers have accepted that a non-optimal solution needs to be selected under non-ideal conditions.

Figure 2.3 The Contingencies of Organizational Decision Making



Adapted from: Butler (1991, p59)

The list below outlines the features of the bounded rational approach that are dissimilar to those of the rational model:

- Problemistic search - a decision is made in reaction to an external stimulus rather than proactively identifying internal problems and solving them.
- Cognitive limits - managers have a limited capability to visualise all possible results and consequences of complex decision scenarios.
- Time pressures.
- Disjointedness and incrementalism - complexity of the problem may lead to partial or sporadic implementation. The apparent disjointedness of the solution implementation process may be dealt with by separating the solution into small steps and actioning them. Thus one is unlikely to overcommit resources to the project in its early stages.
- Intuition and judgement.
- Satisficing – a word invented by Simon (1957). It is used to suggest the concept of managers making do with a satisfactory solution rather than continually searching for the ideal one.

The bounded-rational model is more likely to be used for non-programmed, unfamiliar, non-routine and more argument arousing problems (Butler et al., 1993). Using Thompson and Tuden's (1956) categories this type of decision would be defined as a judgmental strategy where there are certain ends but uncertain means. The type of organisation for which Butler et al. (1993) suggest this strategy will be useful is a professional one, in which communication is more horizontal than vertical, there is high participation and expert-based influence.

Political Model

The political model is principally concerned with the different interest groups in an organisation competing for resources and attention. The formation of temporary alliances between various interest groups was discussed by Cyert and March (1963). The primary purpose for each group was the selection of a particular decision or to achieve a particular end. The IT management consultants working on projects within such an organisation may be caught up in this process wittingly or unwittingly, either providing support for a particular position or the necessary ammunition for one interest group to promote the forces that favour their preferred course of action. A bargaining strategy comes to play in this situation, as there is uncertainty about the ends. Butler et al. (1993) identify the possible outcomes as: 1) either a compromise is reached or 2) there is a win-lose situation. There are several processes related to the political model: bargaining, guile (not disclosing or lying about the information), coalition building and biasing (being able to influence the decision making process).

Garbage Can Model

The garbage can model, originally discussed by Cohen et al. (1972), is described by Butler et al. (1993) as 'organized anarchy'. There are three characteristics of this model: *problematic preferences* - the problems, alternatives, solutions and goals are ambiguous; *ambiguous technology* - the effect of actions are not easily identified; and *fluid participation* - there is a high turnover of participants who have only a limited time to allocate to any one problem or decision. The solution that emerges does not arrive by a series of ordered steps or by a logical sequence of events. This would suggest that where this model is applied the solutions that were developed by the IT management consultants arose perhaps by 'error' or were the result of internal or external inspiration, e.g. from the IT management consultants themselves, the client organisation or other third party sources.

Butler et al. (1993) suggest that organisations for the most part do not find themselves in a garbage can type decision making situation all the time. They go on to identify four streams of garbage can decision making Butler et al. (1993, p15): 1) *problems* - when a problem arises but there is a gap between the desired and actual state of performance leading to dissatisfaction. The solution that may be adopted may not solve the problem; 2) *solutions* - a ready-made solution may be found and then a search is made for a problem that it may 'solve'. The problem may not be one that the solution will resolve; 3) *participants* - the participants of the group may differ in their experience, values, training and perception of the problem and the time that they can devote to identifying a solution; 4) *choice opportunities* - when an alternative decision is authorised and the solution implemented. The manner in which the four types of garbage can decision-making categories are brought together will determine if an appropriate solution is found which can solve the problem. To the outsider this type of decision may seem disorderly but there are greater demands for communication and information than for any other type of decision (Butler et al., 1993).

These four decision-making models were used to understand the types of decision processes and the implications for the selected models used in the IT management consultancy case study projects.

Mintzberg et al. (1976) classify decisions by their solutions in four ways:

- a) *Given:* solutions, which are fully developed at the start of the process.
- b) *Ready-made:* solutions that are fully developed in the environment during the process.
- c) *Custom-made:* solutions that were developed especially for the decision.
- d) *Modified:* a combination of ready-made and custom-made solutions changed to suit a particular decision.

Mintzberg's classification was used to help provide a possible explanation of the results of the time for system development responses in Chapter 4. These categories are likely to take various times to develop and implement. Given solutions are implemented over a short period of time whilst custom-made or modified solutions are likely to be implemented over longer periods. These categories can only be used as a very basic tool for assessment of time for system development.

2.7 THE CLIENT

Problems associated with project dynamics are possibly derived from unclear areas of responsibilities of the individuals working on the projects within the client organisations and their roles. Hislop (2002) notes that the role of the client in shaping the client consultant relationship remains neglected and unexplored. Alvesson (1992) suggests that in consultancy companies, as in other service industries, the boundaries between the customer (client) and the consultant are often unclear. Both Tilles (1961) and Kubr (1980) address the question "Who is the Client?". Tilles identifies the client as any combination of individuals sharing responsibility for accomplishing a particular task. Kubr defines the client as the entire organisation that employs the services of a consulting unit. He further defines the client as the person (or group of persons) in the commissioning organisation that initiates consultant employment, discusses the assignment and receives reports.

Hislop (2002) undertook a study of four organisations that were all implementing multi-site technological innovations. He notes that in much of the client consultancy relationship literature in the 1980s and 1990s the client is portrayed as being passive in the relationship. He reports that in his study recommendations of consultancy organisation by contacts, or what he describes as the embedded social networks, are a means by which clients attempt to reduce their levels of risk and uncertainty based on a level of pre-established trust. This view is supported by Ram (1999) who states that this trust is more important than price or regulated standards. Ram goes on to report that consultants in his study spent time developing these social links and making the client feel like a member of the 'family'. Secondly, the attitude towards consultants in an organisation appears to be transmitted through stories and myths. However, the relationships evolved over the course of the project. Finally, when consultants had a significant level of autonomy the organisation modified more than the systems being implemented.

This study attempts to identify who uses the services of IT management consultants and whether there are any distinctions between the types of clients. This section will attempt to provide answers for research aim 1 (see Chapter 1). In the following sections the reasons why consultants are used and the types of purchase decision that are made are examined. Next the stages of the engagement of consultants are discussed.

2.7.1 REASONS WHY CONSULTANTS ARE USED

Kubr (1980), McIver (1986) and Sturdy (1997) discuss why consultants are used. McIver believes that clients are employed for at least one of nine reasons. These cover the areas of:

- *help*;
- *whitewash* - senior management attempt to perpetrate a 'cover up' and do so by informing the board or shareholders that consultants are currently undertaking a project and therefore they are dealing with the issues of concern;
- *company politics* - when one faction in a senior management 'battle' require support for their case (this however can sometimes backfire if the consultants are truly objective and honest). This was also reported by Bloomfield and Danieli (1995);
- *technical assistance; learning* - keeping managers informed of changes in the marketplace;
- *the air freshener* - senior management cannot clarify a problem. The consultants bring insight into the situation as they are not too closely involved and therefore can remain more objective;
- *the hired assassin* - often in senior managements' hidden agenda includes job losses and they need scapegoats to blame for their actions;
- *the messenger of the gods* - this use is a variation of the hired assassin but the employees and lower levels of management are informed indirectly that senior management is displeased with them; and,
- *the temps* - the consultants are used as temporary management support for an overworked team (McIver, 1986).

Sturdy (1997, p391) offers reasons specifically why IT projects are conducted: "(1) executives wanting to exercise control over the management and investment of IT, but lacking the expertise; (2) a 'user' or IS department (manager) lacking the skills or resources for a project and/or, less explicitly, to compete with each other; (3) an individual or one of the above groups using the 'objectivity' and/or status of consultants to legitimate or influence a course of action". Reasons (1) and (3) seem to fit into McIver's *company politics* category, whilst (2) appears to be an overlap of the *company politics* and *technical assistance* categories. This study used McIver's comprehensive classifications to identify why the consultants were used in the case study client organisations.

A consultant's first encounter with an organisation is critical (Bitner, 1996). The motivation behind the employment of a consultant will inevitably have an effect on the ensuing organisation consultant relationship. Davey (1971) identifies three methods by which consultants are brought into the client system.

1. The board of directors or the parent company may engage consultants and "impose" them on the organisation.
2. The organisation's CEO engages the consultants or imposes them on subordinates and is the sole point of contact with the consultant.
3. Middle or junior management may bring in the consultant, or the decision to do so may originate from this group.

The case studies will discuss how the consultants were brought into the projects and the impact that this may have had on the outcome of the projects.

2.7.2 PURCHASE DECISIONS

Consultant selection is influenced by the effects of organisational buying behaviour. Morgan (1991) recognises the diverse nature of clients and suggests that their purchase decisions will vary with their size, aversion to risk, complexity, and the timescale of the project. Various attempts have been made to classify buying decisions, but Morgan (1991) suggests that that developed by Robinson et al. (1967) is the most robust. These researchers formulated a typology of decision situations faced by organisational buyers that identified three distinct buying situations. Below can be found a summary of Robinson et al.'s (1967) work, as cited by Morgan (1991).

1. New Task Purchase - the purchasers are inexperienced and are therefore more likely to be uncertain about the process of buying-in professional services. These individuals require more information and access to a wider variety of professional service firms (PSFs) before making a decision.
2. Modified Rebuy - the client buyer has some limited experience of employing PSFs for dealing with similar problems. This type of purchase requires less information and the purchaser is less uncertain than a new task purchaser.

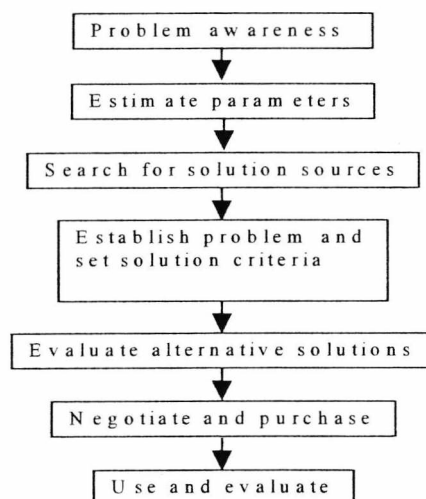
3. Straight Rebuy - the purchasers seek to buy services from a PSF that they have used before. This purchase decision is characterised by the least uncertainty and requires little information. Organisations facing such buying decisions are much more likely to use firms that they have previously used to deal with a similar problem.

These categories led to the following hypothesis:

- H13. A straight rebuy purchaser is less likely to require information about the IT consultancy firm before making a decision to purchase the services of the IT consultants than either the modified rebuy or new task purchasers.

Morgan (1991) adapted his framework for analysing the purchase decision making processes from Wind and Thomas (1980) (see Figure 2.4). This process is further discussed in Section 2.9.1 below using the ideas of Bounds et al. (1994), whose work is based on that of Bonoma (1982) and Lehmann and Winer (1991). The organisational buying decision process starts with an awareness at some level within the organisation that there is an opportunity or problem which appears to be beyond the skill set or is not important enough to be dealt with by individuals within the organisation. These individuals would be called the Initiators. (Bounds et al., 1994).

Figure 2.4 Purchase Decision Framework



Source: Morgan (1991, p36)

The gatekeepers (or those who have previously in this thesis been called isolates) will conduct the analysis and make recommendations. At this point a PSF is sought. Morgan

(1991) posits that the client organisations usually undertake this stage quickly and do not carry out a systematic search for a PSF if they are modified or straight rebuyers. An officer or a group of client representatives meet with representative(s) of the PSF. Further refinement of the problem/opportunity definition by the purchasing organisation, using the insights provided by the PSF, may be undertaken at this stage. The decision to select one PSF over its competitors is made by the decider, who has the budgetary authority to make this decision. The purchaser makes the actual purchase. The service is then utilised by the user. Within an organisation a group or an individual may conduct these roles. This study will investigate the clients' purchase decisions and discuss whether the type of purchaser influences the management of the project.

2.8 CLIENT CONSULTANT INTERACTION

A central component of the IT consultancy project is the relationship between the client and the consultant. Sections, 2.8.1, 2.8.2, and 2.8.3 present first a generalised view of consultative relationships and then discuss the client and consultant relationship in more depth. In addition issues related to the scope and nature of the intended consulting assignment are presented. Examples of features here include: 1) the agreed time at which the consultants commence working, 2) agreeing the project timetable, 3) how the consultants will meet the client's expectations and performance measures, 4) how information will be disseminated throughout the client organisation and third party organisations, 5) the limitations on consultant access to resources and client employees, 6) the role and responsibility of the consultant and 7) the time at which the project will be considered complete. The final sub-section (Section 2.8.4) discusses the effects the latter relationship might have on the implementation of the project.

2.8.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF HELP-GIVING RELATIONSHIPS

Rogers (1961) defines helping relationships as ones in which at least one of the parties has the intent of promoting the growth, development, maturity, improved functioning and improved coping strategies of the other individual or group. Rogers (1961) cites a number of

studies carried out in the medical field by Heine (1950), Quinn (1950), Fiedler (1953), Baldwin et al. (1954), Seeman (1954) and Whitehorn and Betz (1954). Their subjects of research ranged from parent-child relationships through to therapist and patient interactions.

The findings showed that helping-relationships worked best when the dominant/authority figure (parent or therapist) was warmly emotional and expressive but not overly so, respectful of the individuality of both parties, and exhibited non-possessive caring, e.g. facilitating self-realisation, inducing trust and independence. The situation was also improved when the therapist clarified and openly discussed feelings that the client was unsure about. An unsuccessful outcome resulted when the therapist was seen as remote, uninterested in the client's problems and authoritarian rather than collaborative when working towards a solution. Rogers (1961) assumes that this helpful behaviour when exhibited in any helping relationship would have similar results. These ideas were used to understand the emotional aspects of the clients' and consultants' behaviour and their understanding of the other party's feelings in relationship to the case study projects. Secondly, the study investigated the impact of their relationship on the projects. Working from an understanding of the type of factors that help to promote the success or failure of help-giving relationships the specific literature concerning the client consultant relationship can now be addressed.

2.8.2 THE CLIENT CONSULTANT WORKING RELATIONSHIP

The client consultant working relationship is not solely the responsibility of the consultant. Both parties need to want the relationship to be successful (Tilles, 1961). The general approach to the client consultant relationship was summed up in the title of Covin and Fisher's (1991) paper "Consultant and Client must work together". Davey (1971) reviewed and confirmed hypotheses concerning this subject and produced a concise list of effective client working practices when using consultants. Davey's (1971) work was based on that of Bennis (1966) and Lippitt et al. (1958) who, like him, realised that the client organisation consultant relationship is a vital factor in the effectiveness of consultant assisted change efforts.

Tilles (1961) describes the nature of the client consultant working relationship using the following analogies:

- 1 *Purchase - sale transaction*, i.e. the clients see the relationship with the consultant in terms of that of a customer to a vendor.
- 2 *Flow of information*, the process involves information first flowing from the clients to the consultants and then flowing back from the consultants to the clients.
- 3 The *patient and physician analogy* is favoured by the consultants and is probably the most prevalent. The consultants are pictured as the medical practitioners and giving life-saving help to their patients, i.e. the clients.
- 4 The *process analogy* provides the clients with the greatest benefits as its aim is to achieve specific organisational results and the problem is resolved through a process of activities.

Margerison (1988) uses analogies and describes consultancy in terms of other professions: 1) *the doctor*, 2) *the detective*, 3) *the salesperson*, and 4) *the travel agent*. The doctor and salesperson comparisons are analogous to Tilles' medical practitioner and purchase analogies, respectively. These two analogies of the client consultant relationship offer a possible means of providing credence to Rogers' (1961) belief that there are certain fundamental similarities between all consultative relationships. Margerison's explanation of the sales model suggests that consultants develop a solution that they then try to match to a problem. The detective model looks for the culprits causing the problem hoping to either change or eliminate them. Margerison's favoured model is that of the travel agent who helps the client to reach the desired location (e.g. obtaining a new IT/IS system) by a suitable method. These models provide an understanding of the relationships that can exist between clients and consultants and are used to investigate the client consultant case study relationships.

Kolb and Frohman (1970), using their model, determined that the client and consultant interrelationship was particularly important when attempting to introduce change into systems where the power structure was ambiguous or diffuse. The entry phase was highlighted as the stage where agreement concerning expectations was important in order to develop an effective working relationship. The negotiations would be influenced by the bargaining power of clients, consultants and other stakeholders in the negotiation process. Frohman (1968) listed ten areas in which agreement should be reached:

- 1 The consultant's and the client's goals for the project.
- 2 The broad definition of the problem (to be redefined as the relationship progressed).

- 3 The relationship of the problem to the overall system.
- 4 The client's resources and abilities applicable to the problem.
- 5 The consultant's resources and abilities applicable to the problem.
- 6 The broad mode of approach to the problem.
- 7 The nature of the client consultant relationship.
- 8 The expected benefits for the client.
- 9 The expected benefits for the consultant.
- 10 The ability of one party to influence the other.

Davey (1971) identified a further five elements which are not covered in Frohman's list above. These are: 1) the consultants' reporting arrangements; 2) the manner in which the consultants secured the clients' management and employees' involvement and commitment to the recommendations and change programme; 3) how the diagnosis of the organisational problems is made; 4) the nature of any proposed changes to scope etc. that are made throughout the course of the assignment; and, 5) the extent to which the consultants are involved in implementation, if at all. As with Froham's list, Davey's areas on which agreement has to be reached was also used to formulate the questions in the case study interview schedule.

Rogers (1961), Tilles (1961), Harrison (1990), Covin and Fisher (1991) and Vallely (1991) identify trust, rapport, mutual respect and confidence as being particularly important in influencing the outcome of the project. These are softer more social indicators used to assess success. The importance of these factors is investigated in Chapters 4 and 6.

Gable (1991) and Covin and Fisher (1991) investigated the factors that influenced success when external consultants were used by client organisations. These authors found that the client and consultant relationship was key to the success of the project.

Gable's (1991) study was conducted in two parts. First 6 case studies were carried out and then a survey was conducted with two types of clients (naïve and experienced) and consultants to test the models developed. Three models were developed from the initial case studies, i.e. the Success Model, the Involvement Model and the Process Model. These models attempted to identify the association between:

- (a) the six success dimensions in the success model: 1) recommendations acceptance, 2) recommendations satisfaction, 3) understanding improvement, 4) understanding satisfaction, 5) performance objective and 6) performance satisfaction.
- (b) the relations and involvement to success in the involvement model.
- (c) one's intention to behave in a certain way and the pressure to conform to a certain behaviour and the barriers which inhibit one's intention to operate in a certain manner.

The main findings were that three success dimensions were identified: 1) recommendations fit, i.e. the solutions available met their requirements, 2) independence improvement, i.e. there was an understanding of requirements selection process and improvement of the selection process which might result in increased client independence and 3) performance objective, i.e. how the cost, project complexity and duration compared to the estimated value. Client involvement was higher when clients wanted to be involved and when the consultants wanted them to be involved but lower when there were barriers to client involvement. Finally the direct path between involvement and success was not established. Gable's work was primarily used in this study in the development of the consultant survey instrument.

Covin and Fisher (1991) identify several key consultant and client behaviours that enhance or detract from the success of consultation. Consultant and client behaviours, which indicate a professional orientation, are those which relate to: 1) effective communication between the consultant and members of the client organisation; 2) constant commitment by the consultant to the client organisation's mission; and, 3) demonstration of the client's commitment to the goals of the consulting project. Covin and Fisher (1991) emphasise that the main factor in the working relationship between consultant and client is that of change. The consultant's function is that of a change agent and the client's management has to assume the main responsibility for the implementation of change, even if a consultant is involved. The quality of the working relationship between the clients and consultants is only one of the many factors contributing to the success or failure of the IT/IS project. Sturdy (1997) notes that the IT management consultant may be used as the scapegoat when IT projects fail.

Margerison's (1988) results, obtained from a study of participants of a consulting skills course, compare the behaviours of effective and ineffective consultants (see Table 2.1). The behaviours of the effective management consultant are mainly task oriented with very little

emphasis placed on the relationship building elements of effective behaviour which are identified by Rogers (1961). This leads to the following hypothesis:

- H14. When a combination of effective consultant and help-giving relationship behaviours is exhibited both the clients and consultants view the projects as more successful than where one or both of these two behaviour types is missing.

Table 2.1 The Behaviours Of Effective And Ineffective Consultants

Effective consultant	Ineffective consultant
Listens to understand	Appears superior in attitude
Accepts data without contradicting what client says	Decries what client says as being unimportant
Initially non judgemental	Criticises or blames client
Concentrates on the assignment as a priority	Has many irons in the fire at the clients' expense
Takes time to assess problems	Shows impatience
Gets to know the problem or opportunity	Proposes instant pre-packed solutions
Summarises accurately what clients say	Interested in own views, not the clients'
Gives confidence through gesture and behaviour	Lacking confidence
Fulfils promises	Fails to deliver
Adopts positive approaches	Only points out what is wrong
Works to facilitate action improvement	Works but no positive change emerges

Adapted from: Margerison (1988, p9)

Good results require effective interaction and communication between the client and consultant as the buyer often takes part in the delivery of the service (Edvardsson, 1990; Klepper, 1995). The quality of the communication is dependent on each individual's sensitivity to the feelings of the other (Nichol, 1997). Bloomfield and Danieli (1995) note that consultants' advice and how it is perceived is dependent on a common understanding of a particular issue between the client and the consultant. This study attempts to quantify the type and nature of communications between the clients and the consultants (see Chapter 4).

Vulnerability is defined as the "scale and complexity of the problems facing the change agent, the degree of uncertainty and risk involved, and to the anticipated degree of contention and resistance which the change is likely to generate" (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992, pp 53-54). Buchanan and Boddy (1992) suggest that "change agents who combine a limited technical background with strong process skills can be very effective in high vulnerability contexts, whereas change agents with sound technical understanding and limited process skills are more likely to excel in low vulnerability contexts" (p29). Vulnerability is an aspect that is included in the literature review because it relates to the technical competence of the IT consultants. Vulnerability may be high in IT/IS projects when there are: 1) frequently

changing goals and priorities, 2) complex organisational interdependencies, 3) the change responsibilities are ambiguous, and 4) where senior management are either hostile or indifferent with respect to the change. Conversely, vulnerability is low when there are: 1) stable goals and priorities; 2) limited simple organisational interdependencies; and, 3) clearly understood goals and top management care and are supportive of the change.

Covin and Fisher (1991) using the data derived from their empirical study of the relationship between consultants and clients, give reasons as to why projects succeed or fail. Most of these (see Table 2.2) relate to the quality of the consultant/client relationship.

An internal report produced by the Institute of Management Consultants in 1997, suggests that additional reasons for project success are: 1) having tight and immovable project deadlines; 2) the appointment of the consultant is communicated positively to staff; 3) the consultant is willing to learn from the client; 4) the consultant provides realistic assessment of the resource implications and effectively manages the project; and, 5) the consultant provides post project reviews. Additional reasons provided for project failure in the same report are that: 1) consultants do not appreciate the client organisation’s culture; 2) the consultant does not understand the client’s requirements; 3) there are too many consultants working on the project; and, 4) unachievable project objectives were set by the client. This section was used to assess the types of criteria that were used to assess the success of case study projects.

Table 2.2 Reasons Given By Consultants For Consulting Project Success Or Failure

MAJOR REASONS CONSULTING EFFORTS SUCCEED
There is a good match between the needs of the project and the consultant’s knowledge and abilities.
Competent clients and consultants.
The case is well diagnosed.
The consultant has faith and conviction in what he is doing and knows what he is doing is in the best interest of the client.
Effective communication between the consultant and the client.
There is rapport and trust between clients and consultants.
There is mutual collaboration and shared responsibility.
Clients and consultants have realistic expectations.
All involved/affected people are included in the project.
There is a clear and specific contract reflecting clients’ real expectations.
MAJOR REASONS CONSULTING EFFORTS FAIL
There is a lack of sincere management support.
The consultant is incompetent.
There are unrealistic expectations on either side.
Upper management dictates the project and therefore there is no commitment by project leaders and staff.
There is a poor match between the client's needs and the consultant's abilities.
Not relating changes to financial and business health.
There is a lack of trust.
Poor communication, internally and/or externally.
Lack of clear cut objectives/expectations.
Lack of needed resources.

Source: Covin and Fisher (1991, p18)

The variables in this table were used to develop the questions for the consultant survey instrument.

Ford's (1974) study attempts to attribute culpability for failure to either the consultant or the client. The following are Ford's list of failure factors for consultants: 1) the consultant fails to identify the real problem; 2) the consultant promises too much too soon; 3) the consultant fails to specify his role; 4) the consultant fails to adapt to the individuality of the client's problems; 5) the consultant's recommendations are not feasible; and, 6) the consultant lacks competence. The factors that are attributable to the client are: 1) the client fails to properly screen prospective consultants; 2) the client does not seek clarification of how the consultants will operate; 3) the client fails to seek clarification of what his money will buy; 4) the client fails to accurately identify the problem; 5) the client fails to explain his resource limitations; 6) the client fails to adequately inform his organisation of the consultant's role and goals; and, 7) the client fails to adequately try to solve his own problems.

This review of the characteristics, behaviours and skills identified in the literature that positively or negatively influenced the outcome of a project also provided much of the background material for the sections concerning outcome measures and client and consultant interaction in the consultant survey instrument in Chapter 4. This study attempts to identify those measures most subscribed to by the clients and consultants to judge the success of the case study projects. The literature discussed in the section above gave rise to the following hypotheses:

- H15. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered successful by the client, if it has tight and immovable deadlines.
- H16. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered successful by the client if the appointment of the consultants was communicated positively to staff.
- H17. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if the consultant does not appreciate the client organisation's culture.
- H18. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if there are many IT consultants working on the project.
- H19. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if the consultant does not achieve the objectives that were set by the client.

At the final stages of an IT/IS project there are a number of possible outcomes: (1) at least one report is produced, i.e. a project report, a strategy document and an implementation plan etc.; (2) a new subproject that is an additional step of a larger project is begun; (3) an IT/IS system may be implemented; and, (4) the projects may be terminated without completion. The next section briefly discusses implementation.

2.8.3 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation is one of the final stages of the refined organisational development model. At this stage the selected strategy is put into action and then evaluated. Raimond and Eden (1990) believe that the creation of a strong positive emotional commitment to the implementation plan is not only a barometer for it being implemented, it is a major cause of it being implemented. Therefore change is brought about by a combination of financial gains, individual personal values, visions, beliefs and personal commitment. This study investigated the organisational dynamics of the implementation of IT/IS systems. Basil et al. (1997) suggest that a problem with consultants is that often they are not part of the project for its entirety. This possibly leads to the client believing that the consultant was unlikely to have fully understood their problems and therefore the client does not implement the resulting recommendations.

2.9 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this section is to identify models that can be used to assess client satisfaction and performance measures in a consulting project. The concept of value is briefly discussed (see Section 2.9.1). The specialised fields of service quality and associated measurement systems are presented in Sections 2.9.2 and 2.9.3. The subsequent Section 2.9.4 looks specifically at project performance measures.

2.9.1 VALUE

When attempting to determine the influences on customer perceptions of value for money certain fundamental questions need to be addressed:

What is value?

Are there any absolute limits on what can be considered to be of value?

Definitions of value for money have been included in this study because a determination of what this concept constitutes provides the basis for assessments, which the client organisations possibly make when considering to proceed with the IT/IS projects or in their evaluation of how successful the interventions have been.

Heskett et al. (1994, p166) remark that their customers say value means "the results they receive in relation to the total cost (both the price and other costs to customers incurred in acquiring the service)". Bounds et al. (1994, p172) define value as a "sense of what ought to be" or "that which is important".

The simplest definition of value is that of monetary value (Bounds et al., 1994). Price is directly equated to value in this definition and uses the following equation:

$$\text{Monetary Value} = \text{Price}$$

This however is a limited notion, as it does not consider the value of an object to the consumer beyond the price paid for it.

Throughout the process of production to final delivery to the consumer, value is added at every stage. This process Porter (1985) calls the value chain. Value stops being added when the product or service is consumed/used. A simple equation to define added value (buyer value) is:

$$\text{Added Value} = \text{Price} - \text{Costs}$$

Bounds et al. (1994) believe that this definition is also limited. Their definition only considers the financial implications, in terms of the sacrifices that a customer must make in using the product or service. It does not consider other sacrifices that may be made, such as loss of time or frustration because of a poorly designed product or badly performed service.

The second flaw is that the equation considers only the supplier-customer supply chain. There is no consideration given to the wider partnerships that can be developed with other businesses to provide superior customer value (Bounds et al., 1994).

The third definition of value presented by Bounds et al. (1994) is that of Customer Value. This concept takes the emphasis away from the product or service and places it on the customer's use and satisfaction with the product or service. Another influencing factor will be the relationship that the supplier and customer have. They note that the relationship can have a profound impact on the customer's perception of value. Customer value is represented by the equation:

$$\text{Customer Value} = (\text{Benefits} - \text{Sacrifices}) * \text{Relationship}$$

Customer value is therefore based on the concept of satisfying the customer by meeting their needs. Relationships can be built on the functional aspects of a service, i.e. how it is delivered, the amount of pre- and post-sales support and the effectiveness of the user supply chain in meeting customers' requirements (Donaldson and O'Toole, 2002). This definition is closely associated with the idea of service quality (see Section 2.9.2), as they are both concerned with the overall notion of meeting the customer's needs.

2.9.2 SERVICE QUALITY

The service quality literature has been included in this review because it will be employed to assist in understanding the motivations for clients' assessments of IT/IS consultancy projects. There are two main perspectives: 1) the Nordic where the major researcher is Grönroos and 2) the American whose work is characterised by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (Brady and Cronin, 2001). The Nordic perspective defines service quality in global terms and consists of functional and technical quality. The American perspective looks at the actual contact and view from the perspective of reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurances and tangibles. Brady and Cronin (2001) note that current views are that service quality assessment is multidimensional and cites the following authors and number of dimensions each attributes to it: 1) two (Grönroos, 1982; Lehtinen and Lehtinen, 1982; Mels, Boshoff and Nel, 1997); 2)

three (Rust and Oliver, 1994); 3) five (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988) and 3) ten (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1985). Brady and Cronin (2001) go on to provide support for a 3 dimensional model. The greatest number of dimensions that have been proposed was 11 (Farrell et al., 2001). The Nordic and American perspectives were based on a disconfirmation paradigm, which in the Nordic perspective is a comparison between the perceived with expected performance and in the American is the average of the sum of 5 disconfirmation gaps of perceived against expected performance (Brady and Cronin, 2001) (see Section 2.9.3.1 for further details of the SERVQUAL model).

Customer satisfaction and quality have been used interchangeably in the press but researchers have tried to refine the meanings of the terms. Although the debate is unresolved it has been noted that both can be viewed at the encounter (transaction) level or at a more global level (the accumulation of experiences of an industry) (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). Customer satisfaction may be viewed as a broader concept than service quality and the latter is a component of the former (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). Customer satisfaction can be defined by “comparing perceptions of the service received with expectations of service desired” (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 1994, p189). Zeithaml and Bitner (1996, p117) define service quality as “the delivery of excellent or superior service relative to customer expectations.” Although, Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) and Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (1994) note that an assessment of service quality, unlike satisfaction, can occur before a person has personally experienced the service. Farrell et al. (2001) points out that there is in fact a debate between whether service quality is a component of customer satisfaction or vice versa. However, Farrell et al. (2001) note that the majority of recent studies, which they cite in their paper, seem to support Zeithaml and Bitner’s view that service quality precedes customer satisfaction which leads to customers’ behavioural intentions.

There have been quality improvement initiatives such as total quality management (TQM) which have been introduced into service industries and directed at employees of service firms in order to motivate them to provide better service rather than trying to put checks and balances in place to monitor their work (Clutterbuck et al., 1993). In addition quality systems such as the British Standard for Quality Systems BS5750 and its European (EN29000) and International (ISO9000) equivalents also exist to try to assist firms in putting in place procedures which maintain the same standard over service provision. These quality systems

do not ensure good service but only consistent levels of the same service (Clutterbuck et al., 1993).

In services which deliver advice, support and where there is personal contact between the customer and deliverer, then quality of service is most effectively delivered through the relationship (Donaldson and O'Toole, 2002). Donaldson and O'Toole (2002) suggest there is a gap between what firms suggest that they do in managing their customers' relationship and what they actually do. They propose a gap analysis which looks at how firms can manage the deliver and execution of the relationship. The gaps are as follows:

GAP A – the management customer interface - senior managers should devote more time to key customers as the organisation grows.

GAP B – the staff-customer interface - front-line staff are more likely to interact with customers but are generally the lowest paid and least influential. Therefore they should be made aware of the needs and expectations of their customers which should be reflected in their approach and demeanour as these play a part in customers' satisfaction levels.

GAP C - the management-staff interface – the calibre of the staff will determine the service provided. Therefore managers should recruit suitable people, train and reward staff appropriately.

GAP D – the management-system interface – the administrative and management information systems and their use influence customers' perceptions about a firm. Therefore these systems should be user-friendly as well as cost effective.

GAP E - the service process interface – managers should be continuously attempting to improve their services, enhance quality and reduce costs.

GAPs C, D and E were not reviewed in this study as they would have involved entering the management consultancy organisations. However, the relationships in the case study projects will be analysed in light of GAPs A and B.

Chase and Dasu (2001) apply behavioural science to develop the following principles to perfect company's service. These are as follows: 1) *Principle 1: Finish strong* – customers recollect the end of an encounter more clearly than the start, 2) *Principle 2: Get the bad experiences out of the way early* – in long-term consulting engagements perception for the customer is reality; therefore if there are unpleasant events these should be undertaken at the

start of the assignment and not at the end, 3) *Principle 3: Segment the pleasure, combine the pain* – when deliver good news the customers should present it in multiple parts and all the bad news should be communicated at one time, 4) *Principle 4: Build Commitment through choice* – when people feel that they have some control over a situation then they are happier, especially when this is an unpleasant experience (see Section 2.2.1 above for the type of voice exhibited), and 5) *Principle 5: Give people rituals, and stick to them* – these rituals, e.g. PowerPoint presentations, formal presentations to the CEO, and final celebrations, especially in long professional service engagements mark key moments, establish professional credence, create inclusion, set expectations and provide opportunities for feedback.

One reason for measuring service quality is because provision of poor service has a cost implication for the company. There are four ways in which the costs can be measured: 1) *failure costs* – this occurs when customers need to be reimbursed for poor service or equipment needs to be replaced; 2) *appraisal costs* – these are the costs associated with monitoring performance which may reduce failure costs; 3) *prevention costs* – these are costs incurred when services are proactively improved; and 4) *psychological costs* – these costs are incurred by service-staff and customers for example when there are inefficient administrative procedures and customers and staff time is spent trying to correct mistakes (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 1994; Clutterbuck et al., 1993).

The information collected for a performance measurement system may be utilised to overcome the inseparability and heterogeneity aspects of the professional service. However, Clutterbuck et al. 1993 suggest that service firms have shied away for setting standards or measuring performance. Haywood-Farmer (1988, p27) states that quality is “the difference between perceived expectation and perceived reality”, which is in line with his belief that quality will mean different things to different people. This view is supported by Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) and Donaldson and O’Toole (2002). Advertising, marketing and third party sources of information, e.g. product tests and consumer reports may affect these perceptions (Karmarkar and Pitbladdo, 1997). Instruments such as SERVQUAL have been designed to attempt to measure the differences in individuals’ assessment of service quality. Garvin (1984) suggests that services which can be considered of high quality are those that meet customers’ requirements and expectations. The service quality assessment involves a comparison of customers’ expectations with their perceptions (Maister, 1984). Haywood-Farmer (1986) and Van de Vliet (1997) advise that given a user-based definition of service

quality managers should identify what their customers (or target market segment) expect from the service. These arguments parallel the earlier discussion of the involvement of users in the development of IT/IS systems (see Section 2.2.1).

Haywood-Farmer (1988) segments services into those with high and low degrees of: contact and interaction; labour intensity; and, service customisation (see Figure 2.5). He suggests that as labour intensity increases (as one moves towards octants 2, 4, 6 and 8), variations between individuals performing the services become more important. However, the elements of personal behaviour and professional judgement remain relatively unimportant as long as the degree of customisation, contact and interaction remain low. As customisation increases (as one moves towards octants 3, 4, 7 and 8), by definition the service processes and products must be designed to fit the customer's needs. For example, where a system is to be implemented the IT management consultants will advise the client of the specification of the system required to meet the client's needs. In addition the consultants need to decide how best to provide the IT consultancy service. These functions require professional judgement on the part of the IT consultants.

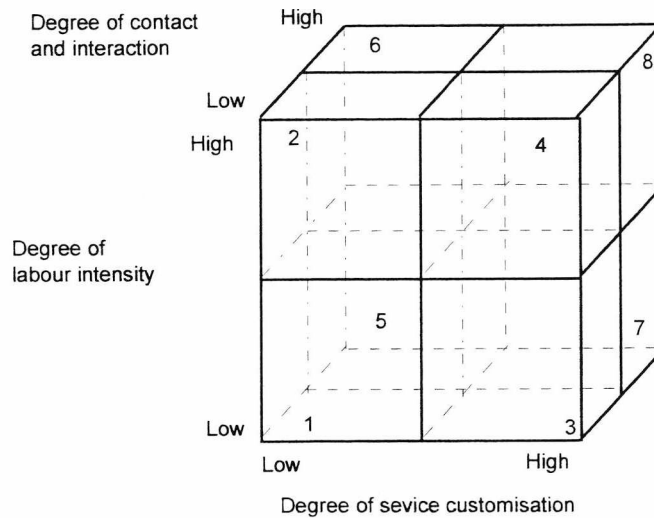
In services high on all three dimensions (see octant 8 of Figure 2.5), e.g. IT management consultancy, the proper quality balance should be near the centre of the octant, where physical facilities, procedures, processes, personal behaviour and professional judgement are of equivalent importance. Consulting firms, rely on use of judgement more than other services because much of their time is spent evaluating the available information and deciding what additional information to collect.

At the current time when financial accountability has become important both the consultant and the client are required to measure how well a service has been performed. These arguments led to the development of the following hypothesis:

H15. For the IT/IS project to be considered successful by the client both the consultants and clients will formally measure the quality of the service provided by the consultants.

The following section briefly outlines methods that have been used to measure IT service quality.

Figure 2.5 A Three-Dimensional Classification Scheme of Services



Some examples of services in each octant:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Utilities, transportation of goods | 5. Computerised teaching, public transit |
| 2. Lecture teaching, postal services | 6. Fast food, live entertainment |
| 3. Stockbroking, courier services | 7. Charter services, hospitals |
| 4. Repair services, wholesaling, retailing | 8. Design services, advisory services, healing |

Adapted from: Haywood-Farmer (1988, p25)

2.9.3 MEASURING IT SERVICE QUALITY

As suggested above, measuring service quality is important when aspiring to provide customers with high quality services and will be used to look at the service provision of the case study projects. Measurement of service quality provides a challenge because customer satisfaction is comprised of many intangible factors (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 1994). Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) suggest that whenever customers are unable to accurately assess the technical quality of a service then they use their own 'shorthand' or cues to evaluate it which may not be evident to the service provider, e.g. courtesy of service provider. There are different methods which these service providers can use to measure service quality: 1) customer satisfaction surveys, 2) transaction based surveys, e.g. linking customer's rankings of services to late flights for an airway, 3) customer focus groups, 4) employee survey and focus groups, 5) benchmarking and 6) check-lists (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons 1994; Clutterbuck, et al., 1993). Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (1994) use the service quality system to identify 5 perspectives of quality: 1) *content* – are standard procedures being followed?, 2) *process* – is the sequence of events in the service process appropriate?, 3) *structure* – are the physical facilities and organisational design adequate for the service?, 4) *outcome* – what change in stage has the service effected. Is the consumer satisfied?, and 5) *impact* – what is the long-range effect of the service on the life of the consumer? A service

firm may use these quality perspectives to provide a description and measurement categories to assess their service delivery. Fishbone analysis (a cause and effect tool) and Pareto analysis (arranges data so that the causes of a problem can be seen in descending order) are tools that may be used to determine the underlying causes of poor service delivery.

In the management consultancy profession one method that is sometimes used to measure service quality is the distribution of satisfaction surveys. Customer satisfaction surveys may be used to shape service managers' decision making. Jones and Sasser (1995) comment that customer satisfaction secures customer loyalty, which is reflected in increased long-term financial performance. Two types of loyalty exist: true long term and false loyalty. There are driving factors which generate false loyalty, e.g. government regulations which limit competition, high switching costs, proprietary technology that limits alternatives and strong loyalty-promotion programs, such as frequent-flier plans. When these constraints are removed then customers behave like those in highly competitive markets, i.e. they remain loyal only if they are completely satisfied because they have been provided with outstanding value. Customers' survey findings, from one company, identified that consumers were six times more likely to repurchase goods if they rated their satisfaction as very satisfied rather than only satisfied (Jones and Sasser, 1995). Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (1994) provide a cautionary note to the use of customer satisfaction surveys in that monitoring of only the final impression through survey may be too late to avoid losing future customer sales.

2.9.3.1 SERVQUAL

The reason for the inclusion of the SERVQUAL literature in this study is because it disaggregates the 5 factors of the instrument into those things which clients may find are things that they used to make their assessment of the professionalism of the consultants and also the level of service that they provide. These are likely to be similar to the type of components mentioned by Chase and Dasu (2001) above. The Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL), developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), consists of what the developers define as five "gaps". In essence, the gaps that were identified were as follows:

- Gap 1. The gap between the executives' perceptions of the services and those that they expected should exist. This arises from management's lack of understanding of

- how customers formulate their expectations on the basis of advertising, past experience with the firm and its competitors.
- Gap 2. The difference between what executives say they would like to deliver and what they actually deliver. However, what is actually delivered to consumers will determine their perceptions of the service company's service delivery. The problems that arise may be beyond the service company's control.
 - Gap 3. The difference between the service quality specification and the service delivered. Standardisation of service delivery is difficult, even when there are set procedures. This is due to the heterogeneous nature of employee performance.
 - Gap 4. Communication, or its absence, can affect the expectations and perceptions of a service, i.e. a company's advertising may promise more than it can deliver. Because of these elevated expectations, the consumer then forms a lower perception of the delivered service.
 - Gap 5. The final gap is the discrepancy between the customers' expectations and perceptions. It will be determined by the size and direction of the four gaps associated with the delivery of the service.

The five factors of the SERVQUAL model are (Parasuraman et al., 1988, p23):

Tangibles:	Physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel
Reliability:	Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
Responsiveness:	Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
Assurance:	Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence
Empathy:	Caring, individualised attention the firm provides its customers

To calculate the coefficient (Q) Parasuraman et al. used the disconfirmation/difference scores:

$$Q = P - E$$

where Q is the difference score representing the perceived quality along that item. P and E are the perception and expectation ratings for that statement, respectively (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Then the average of the sum of the P-E scores for the attribute gaps provides the SERVQUAL score. The score for Q can range between +6 and -6. The higher (more positive) the P-E score, the higher is the level of perceived quality. Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) suggest that these dimensions represent how consumers organise information about service quality in their minds and from empirical studies were found to be relevant in a variety of industries. This model and the advantages and disadvantages of its use are extensively discussed in the marketing literature. Brady and Cronin (2001) identify alternative conceptualisations of the model but these are beyond the scope of this study. A parallel

debate which has occurred in the IS industry and is more relevant to this study is discussed in the next section.

2.9.3.2 IS SERVICE QUALITY

This literature has been included in the study as it provides a basis from which to identify the clients' assessment of the success of the projects. Pitt et al.'s (1995) view is that service quality should be an additional measure of IS success. Conrath and Mignen (1990) suggest that the second most important component of user satisfaction after general quality is user expectations and actual IS service. Pitt et al. (1995) agree with Parasuraman et al. (1988) that service quality is a measure of the difference between the perception and expectation. However, Pitt et al. (1995) present an additional influence on service expectation which does not appear in Zeithaml et al.'s (1990) model, which operates in the IS field, that of vendor communication. This they argue "can be a positive force for change when they [*vendors*] make users aware of what they should expect from IS" (Pitt et al., 1995, p177). The following section reviews the literature of the measurement of performance in consulting projects.

2.9.4 PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Turner (1993, p8) defines a project as:

"an endeavour in which human, material and financial resources are organized in a novel way, to undertake a unique scope of work, or given specification, within constraints of cost and time, so as to achieve beneficial change defined by quantitative and qualitative objectives".

Morris and Hough (1987, p3) had earlier described a project as "an undertaking to achieve a specified objective, defined usually in terms of technical performance, budget and schedule." The methodology used to conduct a project is important. Bentley (1997) discussed the PRINCE 2 project management methodology which is recommended for use in government

projects and was used as guidelines for managing several of the case study projects. The methodology focuses on the various activities of the project. Therefore it provides more realistic and reliable estimates of time, cost and the progress of the project (Bentley, 1997). The methodology requires that the senior management team (project board), e.g. the executives, the senior user and the senior supplier are responsible for the project and are accountable for its success. The roles of the team are: 1) to ensure the project is value for money and to support the senior user and senior supplier; 2) to ensure the products fit the client organisation's purpose; and, 3) to take responsibility for designing, developing, facilitating, procuring, implementing, operating and maintaining the project's products. The day to day running of the project is undertaken by the project manager who follows a flexible project plan (Bentley, 1997). The project's success, Bentley (1997) suggests, requires deciding at the outset who is responsible for each aspect.

Critical to a project's success are: setting objectives; defining the scope; setting functional strategies - the use of a particular technology, its design and implementation, and its operations in relation to meeting the project's objectives; managing the design process so the technology is appropriate to meet the user requirements; and finally the appropriate human, financial, infrastructure arrangements, contractor's commercial performance and a supportive environment in which the project can take place (Morris and Hough, 1987; Turner' 1993).

Morris and Hough include additional variables that may lead to a project's failure, e.g. when there is an unrecognised change in the project's objectives and technical uncertainty, i.e. when the technical level of innovation is very large and relatively new technology is being considered. There are five inherent project management objectives, i.e. the managing of the scope, organisation, quality, cost and time (Turner, 1993). Associated with each of these is an element of risk that can be seen as an integral part. Risk takes two forms: business risk and insurable risk (Turner, 1993). Business risk is associated with profit and loss whilst insurable risk is concerned with loss only due to the unpredictability of external factors. Thus, it is important for the project manager to identify risk and minimise foreseeable risk by planning for contingencies.

In Turner's (1993) definition of a project, it can be seen that there are various elements that are brought together. To achieve performance targets scope, time and cost are often compromised in favour of quality (Turner, 1993). Cleland (1990) provides a much more

comprehensive list of items for which performance criteria can be set. One of those mentioned is vendor/contractor performance. However, he does not discuss further how these individuals' work or performance can be measured.

Review of performance targets should occur in project team review meetings that should be attended by the project owner, senior managers, the project team, the work package managers, and the project professionals (Cleland, 1990). Gilb (1989) suggests that to meet performance targets consultants should: 1) redefine the problem so that the deadlines are achievable and performance targets can be met; 2) use tactics which mean that there can be phased delivery of output; 3) reject the set deadline and disclaim responsibility for meeting it especially if they had initially indicated that deadlines were unreasonable; and 4) delegate responsibility for parts of the project to someone else, e.g. a sub contractor. Having control over how performance targets are met is important because an uncontrolled attribute becomes the weak point of the project (Gilb, 1989). Gilb's views lead to the development of the following hypotheses:

- H22. For the client to consider the IT/IS project successful the consultants need to have set phased output targets.
- H23. For the client to consider that the IT/IS project is successful the consultants should have outsourced tasks that they did not have the skills to perform well.

Measurement of performance of the project's output should continue even after implementation is completed, as there will always be fine tuning required (Turner, 1993). The project's end and return of staff to their respective departments or roles should also be planned to minimise any emotional trauma associated with the completion of the project (Turner, 1993). These aspects are relevant to IT consultancy projects because providing an improved service to clients may secure their total loyalty and future business.

Caulkin (1997) quotes Professor Anthony Hopwood, deputy director of the Oxford School of Management Studies who identifies firstly the 'conspiracy of silence' about failed projects and secondly, the difficulty of objectively measuring project results. Caulkin (1997) suggests this is perhaps because consultancy projects were conducted as exercises in reassurance, hand-holding and dealing with internal politics. These reasons for conducting a project appear to be simplifications of McIver's comprehensive list of reasons why consultants are

used (see Section 2.7.1 above). In the absence of measurable results, the price, Caulkin suggests, is a legitimiser of what is being bought and managers can use it to make the various stakeholders believe they are dealing with a particular problem. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H24. Clients commission IT/IS projects only so that they can inform stakeholders they are actively dealing with IT/IS issues.

Finally, Peled (2001) reports that vendors and consultants have a greater ability to hide failures because both filter feedback data before it reaches management. The client managers only know about their projects through the 'sanitized biweekly consultant reports but they know little about the people, design, and technologies of these projects' (Peled (2001), p510). Perhaps, if found to be substantiated, the most damning comment on the performance of client project management comes from Peled (2001) who suggests that when projects fail there is nobody in government who can provide a reason why because: 1) client project managers do not have to acquaint themselves with the minutiae of the project as their superiors were not interested in knowing more about technology and 2) "bureaucrats [full-time managers of Public Management Information Systems] 'outsource' their technical skills to vendors and they 'outsource' their management skills to consultants" (p509). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H25. If there is an association between how closely a project is managed and the likelihood of it either showing signs of failing or failing, then the more removed client project managers become from managing the IT/IS projects the more likely the projects are to show signs of failing/fail.

2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This Chapter began by discussing the issues relating to the IT industry that are relevant to this study. Secondly, issues such as outsourcing and organisation development and the various models used to identify the change process were discussed. This latter section also dealt with specific issues such as the techniques used to induce and facilitate change and also those factors that caused resistance to the change process. The clients, their motivations and

decision making were then examined. In the subsequent section client consultant interaction was discussed. The final bodies of literature reviewed were those relating to service quality and project performance.

The research aims, identified in Chapter 1, for this study are listed below and the hypotheses that were formulated in the course of this chapter which relate to each are also reiterated.

Research Aim 1, i.e. to identify the clients of IT management consultants and the work conducted for those clients. This was addressed in Sections 2.3 and 2.7 above and there were no associated hypotheses.

Research Aim 2: To identify the factors that led to a particular IT management consultancy firm being commissioned to undertake IT/IS projects.

- H3. If senior non-technical managers' manipulation of the acquisition and application of IS/IT is associated with the use of IT management consultants as weapons then where these managers' influence has been greatest in determining use of IS/IT then IT consultants being used as political weapons will be greatest.
- H6. If core activities should be retained in-house, then IT management consultants who recommend that only non-core IT activities be outsourced in the projects will be more likely to be selected than those that do not.
- H9. If the realisation that there is a need for change in the IT/IS of a client company is associated with an internal or external organisational stimulus then at least one type of stimulus should be found in the client companies which promoted the need for an IT/IS project.
- H11. If public sector organisations are more likely to use single tenders rather than competitive tendering when selecting consultants, then more case study projects conducted in public sector organisations should have IT management consultants selected on the basis of a single tender than those selected using competitive tendering.
- H13. A straight rebuy purchaser is less likely to require information about the IT consultancy firm before making a decision to purchase the services of the IT consultants than either modified rebuy or new task purchasers.
- H24. Clients commission IT/IS projects only so that they can inform stakeholders they are actively dealing with IT/IS issues.

Research Aim 3: To identify the factors that influence the performance of IT management consultants when undertaking IT/IS projects.

- H4. If being an IT professional and being unable to deal with emotions are related then IT management consultants will find it difficult to discuss their emotions and how their emotions affect the IT/IS projects.
- H8. If outsourcing contracts are dependent on the Principal's [Client] ability to observe the Agent's [IT management consultant(s)] degree of effort then a forcing contract is more likely to be used in IT management consultancy projects than either a wage or rent contract alone or any combination of these.
- H25. If there is an association between how closely a project is managed and the likelihood of it either showing signs of failing or failing, then the more removed client project managers become from managing the IT/IS projects the more likely the projects are to show signs of failing/fail.

Research Aim 4: To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.

- H1. If the success of IT/IS projects is related to the involvement of users in the development process then projects will be considered more successful, by the client, if the users and project managers have more of an instrumental voice.
- H5. If there is a relationship between IT management consultants not being permitted to undertake scoping studies at the beginning of projects and the IT projects coming in over time and budget, then projects will be considered more successful, by the client, and are less likely to come in over time and budget if a scoping study has been undertaken.
- H7. If partnership development and the client's and the consultant's use of power are related then the IT projects that will be considered most successful, by the client, will be those in which the power is more equally distributed between the client and the consultant.
- H14. When a combination of effective consultant and help-giving relationship behaviours is exhibited both the clients and consultants view the projects as more successful than where one or both of these two behaviour types is missing.
- H15. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered successful by the client, if it has tight and immovable deadlines.

- H16. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered successful by the client if the appointment of the consultants was communicated positively to staff.
- H17. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if the consultant does not appreciate the client organisation's culture.
- H18. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if there are many IT consultants working on the project.
- H19. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if the consultant does not achieve the objectives that were set by the client.
- H20. For the IT/IS project to be considered successful by the client both the consultants and client must formally measure the quality of the service provided by the consultants.
- H21. The consultants need to redefine the problem so that their deadlines are achievable and performance targets can be met for the client to consider the IT/IS project successful.
- H22. For the client to consider the IT/IS project successful the consultants need to have set phased output targets.
- H23. For the client to consider that the IT/IS project is successful the consultants should have outsourced tasks that they did not have the skills to perform well.

Research Aim 5: To identify the factors that may influence the clients' feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of the IT/IS projects.

- H2. If feelings of ownership of the IT/IS system are related to the involvement of users in the development process then the outputs of the projects will be considered owned by the client if the users and project managers are involved in the development of the IT/IS system.
- H10. If taking ownership of the outputs from an IS/IT project is associated with the IT management consultants identifying and eliciting the support of opinion-leaders then IT/IS projects where this is done are more likely to be considered more successful by the client organisation than those where this has not been done.
- H12. The more IT/IS consultants become involved in the client's organisational politics and communication networks the less the likelihood that there will be resistance to the proposed change or outputs.

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3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research design that was used to conduct this study. Section 3.2 outlines the procedure that was used in stage one of the research design. The rationale for the survey is then outlined (Section 3.3.1). Subsequently, the effects on the direction of the study of the pilot testing of the consultant and client survey instruments are discussed in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 respectively. A brief summary of the revised research design is reported in Section 3.3.4. Section 3.4 and its subsections discuss the consultant survey instrument that was developed as a result of the literature review and testing of the pilot survey instruments. The types of analysis that were conducted on the data are briefly presented in Section 3.5.

On completion of stage one, stage two was started (Section 3.6). The rationale for the use of the exploratory case study instruments and archival analysis for this stage is discussed in Section 3.6.1. The component parts of the resulting consultant and client interview schedules are discussed in Section 3.7 and its subsections. Sections 3.8 and 3.9 outline the selection procedure for the consultant and client respondents. The challenges faced in obtaining an appropriate sample population for the research and how these were dealt with is also discussed in these sections. The method of administering the case study interview schedule is presented in Section 3.10. The factors and the measures taken to reduce the threats to the validity of this study are presented in Sections 3.11. Finally, Section 3.12 summarises the subjects covered in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Of the five possible strategies for social science research suggested by Yin (1994), i.e. experiments, surveys, archival analysis, histories and case studies, the only one that was very unlikely to be feasible to use was experimentation, firstly because of the confidential nature of the material discussed between clients and consultants and its time and cost implications for both respondents. Secondly, neither the clients nor the consultants would have agreed to

participate in experiments, as evidenced by comments on the initial survey instruments, which was the method selected for stage one of the research, when the consultants were asked if they were interested in taking part in a future study. One of the original aims of this study was to attempt to develop theories that were based on evidence gained from data collected from management consultants who worked in a variety of specialisms. However, after conducting the preliminary interviews and the literature review, which revealed a paucity of evidence-based theories in this area, it was decided that the study would be designed so that: 1) the findings could possibly contribute to the knowledge concerning this profession and 2) facilitate further research to refute or substantiate the theories developed for the most widely used specialism within management consultancy.

A multimethod approach was selected and it was decided that several methods would be used in a two-stage study: 1) a survey and 2) and archival analysis and case study. As suggested by Mingers (2001) undertaking such multimethodology research in a single programme of research is likely to generate information about different aspects of the area being investigated and ultimately yield a better result. Figure 3.1 shows the two-stage design that was used for this research. Using Mingers' list it can be seen that the type of design that was used was sequential; initial data collection activities were undertaken to determine where the study should be placed in the current body of literature, the statistical analysis was done on a survey and in-depth interviews were undertaken to further understand the earlier findings. By employing only one method then only the limited perspective is viewed. Mingers (2001) undertook a study of all the papers in six IS journals to determine the methods that were used. It was found that there were 122 cases of multi-method research undertaken and 75% of these combined surveys, interviews and/or case studies. Therefore the research methodology used in this study could be considered standard for IS/IT research. Limitations of this approach are that;

- 1) the questionnaire and its analysis assume that all respondents share a common understanding of the meanings of the questions used and not answered objectively,
- 2) Dick (2001) notes that when developing grounded theory then hypotheses are not usually tested. However, in this study hypotheses were developed from the literature and tested. As this study is an emergent one that determines theory there is based on the findings from the research situation itself. In this study, as a mixed method methodology was used, hypotheses have been developed and tested.

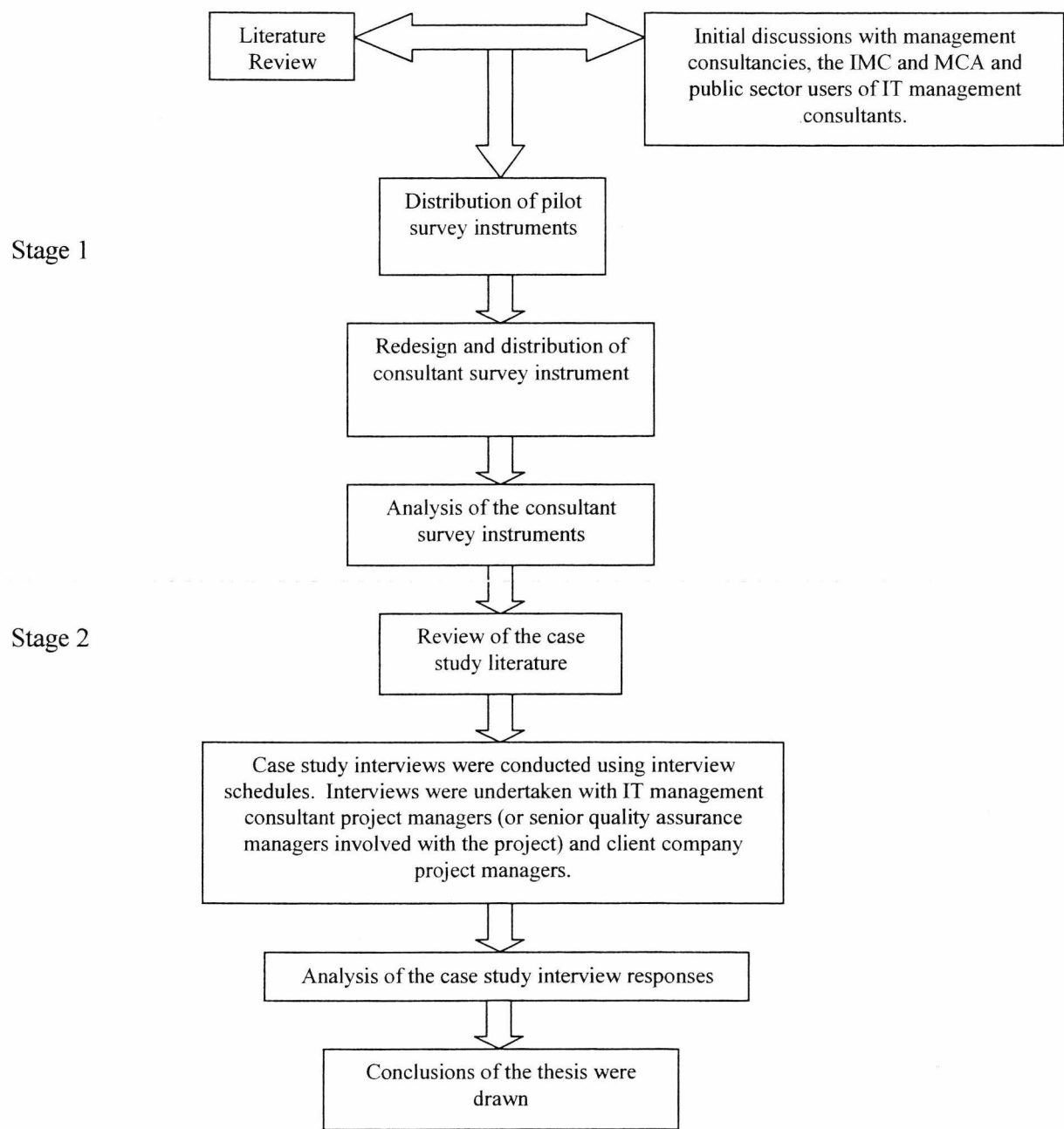
- 3) Dick (2001) suggests that in a pure grounded theory study, the place of literature to be used in the study should not be at the very beginning of the research programme. However in this study, as with traditional methods, a literature review was undertaken at the beginning but additional literature reviews were undertaken throughout the course of the study then used to shape how the study was developed.

The first stage covered the initial literature review, the preliminary interviews with 8 management consultants from 7 consultancy organisations and discussions with a variety of management consultancy representatives at the 'What Makes Consultancy Work – Understanding the Dynamics' International Consulting Conference in 1994 and management consultant training events held by Maresfield Curnow and other such events and public sector users of IT management consultants through to the design, distribution and analysis of the consultant survey instrument.

The data collection involved re-reviewing the literature during the instrument designing stages, reviewing and determining; if there was evidence to support theories suggested by other researchers or the author; discussing with practitioners in the field how useful the data collection instruments would be and whether they covered suitable areas and piloting the instruments; and, then redrafting them before the main-study data collection exercise was conducted for each of the stages. The analyses conducted in Chapter 4 identified the factors that required further investigation and disaggregated the data into nine factors using factor analysis.

A grounded theory approach (Saunders et al., 2000) was attempted for stage two of this study in order to develop an understanding of the theory concerning the work conducted by IT management consultants for their clients. The paucity of available literature in this area at the time the study was undertaken has been discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. In addition, there was also difficulty in identifying an appropriate sample for the study. Since little empirical research had been conducted on the industry the approach selected was considered suitable for use in this study. The specific research design will be outlined below. Saunders et al. (2000) outline the steps in the application of grounded theory as follows:

Figure 3.1 The Research Design



- **The grounded theory approach should begin with a clearly defined purpose, although this may be altered by the nature of the data collected.** This was done when the study started as there were the aims of the research (see Chapter 1) and also research questions which needed to be answered (See Chapter 4).
- **Explanations should be compared with existing theory.** Before commencing this part of the study a literature review was conducted to determine whether there had been additional evidence reported after the first stage of the study was completed and it was compared to the findings in Chapter 4. Further literature searches were conducted throughout the data collection stage and once writing was begun.
- **Theory development will involve lengthy data collection and concurrent analysis in order to analyse a theme adequately or to derive a well-grounded theory.** This was undertaken through the archival analysis and case study processes.
- **The open coding stage – involves disaggregation of the data into conceptual units.** This was undertaken by developing a series of tables from the data collected and then they were analysed.
- **The axial coding state – involves the process of looking for relationships between the categories of data that have emerged from open coding.** Relationships between the various units of analysis were identified within cases between the client and the consultant and also between the eight case study projects.
- **The selective coding stage – involves recognising the relationships between the principal categories which have emerged from the grounded theory approach in order to develop an explanatory theory.** As Strauss and Corbin (1998) note this is a process whereby data are reduced from many cases and ultimately form statements to explain what is being seen and the relationships found in the data. This was done in this study through another paper exercise and contributed to sections such as Section 6.4 below.

Two methods were selected to collect data for the second stage of the research, i.e. archival analysis and case studies. The author decided to use these two methods, as they are complementary. The archival analysis information was used principally to provide the background information for the case studies that are presented in Chapter 5. Bloomfield and Danieli (1995, p27), as in this study, used publicity material produced by management

consultants because they note that these sources provide a particular understanding of what is a “*bona fide* consultant, and the right way to design and implement an IT system.”

Finally the case study instrument and the analysis were designed so as to attempt to test previously identified beliefs about the sample populations and to develop theories in relation to the research aims reported above.

The multimethodology selected was designed to attempt to align with this theory, be generalisable across a range of IT management consultancy companies and meet the following research aims:

1. To identify their clients and the work conducted for those clients.
2. To identify the factors that led to IT management consultants being commissioned to undertake IT/IS projects.
3. To identify the factors that influence the performance of IT management consultants when undertaking IT/IS projects.
4. To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.
5. To identify the factors that may influence the clients’ feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of the IT/IS projects.

3.3 STAGE ONE OF THE RESEARCH

The first stage of the research involved the review of the literature that is presented in Chapter 2. As has been stated in Chapter 1, Evans’ (1994) survey exerted one of the most important influences on the direction of this research, i.e. narrowing the research target group to IT management consultants rather than the consultancy profession in general. In addition, general background information was collected by conducting interviews with representatives of the industry lead bodies, i.e. the Institute of Management Consultancy and the Management Consultancies Association, and with partners, managing directors and principals from a variety of consultancy firms. These discussions informed the direction of this research by helping the author to identify the concerns of the practitioners in the profession. These initial discussions have not been reported in detail but their effect was to shape the logical progression of the concepts and theories reported in this thesis.

The study's original design was conceived so that two types of survey instrument would be distributed, i.e. one to the consultant and the other to the client. Section 3.3.1 will outline the rationale for the survey instruments in the study. Two instruments were developed, i.e. a consultant and a client survey instrument. After pilot testing on the target groups, it was decided that only the consultant survey instrument could be used. The effects on the research of the piloting of the tools are discussed in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, respectively.

3.3.1 RATIONALE FOR THE USE OF A SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument that was designed combined analytical and descriptive elements. Oppenheim (2000) identifies the purpose of the descriptive component as a method of enumeration of a representative sample from which inferences, concerning the proportion of the population who hold a certain opinion or exhibit a particular characteristic, can be drawn about the entire population. He goes on to explain that the analytical survey begins to collate data that asks the 'why' questions in order to determine causality. In light of the grounded theory approach adopted for this study the data collected was then used to begin to test the hypotheses given in Chapter 2 and to further develop research questions to be tested using the tools designed in stage two of the research. Strauss and Corbin (1998) discuss the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in association with the use of the grounded theory approach and recommend that there should be an interplay between the two types of methods. They note that each can uniquely contribute to the development of theory. There was an attempt to use both types of method to conduct this research and as recommended by Strauss and Corbin the approach was modified in order to achieve a sample that reflected the types of organisations working in the field. The quantitative and qualitative elements of the study did not use representative sampling techniques but employed purposive sampling (Robson, 1993), as there were specific requirements of the target audiences of the instruments which are discussed below.

Ease of data collection and interpretation of the data collected was of primary concern when deciding on a means to gather the data for the first stage of the research. The information that was to be collected would be used as a basis for detailed case studies at a later stage of the study. In-depth interviews were the preferred method for gathering data but it was appreciated that

there would be difficulty in carrying out the number that would be required to make the observations statistically valid. It was therefore decided to use a self-administered survey instrument because: 1) it would answer the who, what, where, and how many questions that were required for the initial exploratory stage of the research; 2) it would have fewer resource constraints for the author as time would not be required to visit IT management consultancy practices situated across the UK; 3) there would be fewer time constraints for the respondents as they only had to complete the survey instrument and return it in a stamped addressed envelope rather than taking time to be interviewed; 4) it allowed the respondents to provide responses that were not directly influenced/biased by an interviewer; 5) the processing of responses for the majority of questions would be quite standardised; and 6) the questions were posed in such a manner as to obtain generalised responses which allowed the respondents to provide a broader view of the IT assignments they conducted.

Oppenheim (2000) provides a number of disadvantages of this method of conducting a survey. The list below combines variables that were identified by Oppenheim and those that were specifically related to this study: 1) some of the open question responses might be unclear and the respondents might not wish to be contacted so it would not be possible to make any amendments to the responses; 2) threats to the external validity of the research because a larger number of respondents had not been sampled; 3) no control over the order in which the questions were responded to; and, 4) no opportunity to ensure that the respondent had completed the questionnaire themselves. Oppenheim (2000) identified other disadvantages of this method which were possibly not likely to be a problem for the target sample group, e.g. the sample population did not contain people with poor literacy, the very old or young, or visually impaired.

Gable (1991) carried out a similar study that measured client satisfaction. There were three types of questionnaire developed by Gable: a consultant questionnaire, and experienced and naive client questionnaires. Due to the nature of this author's research, Gable's work provided a starting point from which to conduct further research. Thus, for this reason some of the items that appear in Gable's consultant questionnaire (1c, 2.2d, 3.2c, 3.2e, 3.2g, 4.1d, 4.1g, 4.1k, 4.1q, 6.2b, 6.2c and 6.2d) and experienced client questionnaire (5.3a) were modified for the consultant survey instrument. However, this questionnaire differed from Gable's instrument in that Gable anchored items on a seven point scale rather than the five point Likert scale used in this research.

Five point Likert scales have also been used in similar research into the measurement of service quality by Parasuraman et al., (1991). The psychology literature suggests that a respondent cannot simultaneously compare more than seven items (plus or minus two) without being confused (Saaty, 1983). The scale used in this research is at the lower end of this continuum and was designed to facilitate easy comprehension and therefore promote improved interpretation validity and the response rate. There were also items on the instruments that required the respondents to explain their answers or provide additional information. This type of item is found predominantly in the sections concerned with the IT systems.

Another reason for the use of Likert scales was that they aid reliable data collection, i.e. for the majority of items the respondent is requested to circle only one response in answer to the question. Thus interpretation errors should be minimised if a particular response is within the bounded limits of the scale. Analysis was also expected to be easier as each such response was assigned a pre-administration score. Only open items or those responses which required elucidation of answers to previous items needed to be assigned post-administration codes.

3.3.2 THE EFFECTS OF PILOT TESTING THE CONSULTANT INSTRUMENT ON THE STUDY

The consultant instrument comprised 10 sections with 180 items in total (although not all of these needed a response). The instrument was pilot tested on consultants and consultant trainers. The names of the consultants for the pilot test were obtained from a database held at the offices of the Maresfield Curnow School of Management Consulting. These consultants were used for the pilot study because although they worked for small consultancy practices many had started their careers working for the larger consultancy firms and thus had an overview of more than one facet of the profession.

None of the pilot consultant survey instrument were returned. Discussions with consultants working at Maresfield Curnow, who had also been asked to review the pilot survey instrument indicated that to obtain a higher response rate from the consultants the comprehensive instrument needed to be reviewed and the number of items reduced, while still attempting to garner as much information as possible. After reviewing the instrument in light of their

feedback, the author felt it was necessary to contact all the potential consultant respondents by telephone, to obtain their commitment to complete the consultant questionnaire prior to it being sent. This course of action had considerable financial and time implications. However, it was believed that if the consultant respondents were approached individually and had the opportunity to discuss the proposed data collection method and ask questions about the study they were more likely to find the study interesting and wish to participate. The response rate to the revised questionnaire (47.5%) seemed to support the post-pilot study research design.

3.3.3 THE EFFECTS OF PILOT TESTING THE CLIENT INSTRUMENT ON THE STUDY

A client instrument, based on the consultant instrument, comprised of 8 sections and 141 items was devised. The client pilot study survey instrument was distributed to MBA students and also to managers from two central government departments who had used consultants in their previous careers or were current users of consultants. This phase of the research was conducted during the same period as the distribution phase of the consultant survey instrument.

The client instrument had a better response rate than the consultant survey tool. However, when approached, potential client respondents did not demonstrate the same enthusiasm to participate in the research, as had the pilot study target group. After a number of failed attempts had been made to: 1) contact client companies to discuss their use of IT management consultants and 2) request client contact details from IT management consultants, it was decided to either distribute the client instrument at a later stage of the study or collect the client data in another manner. This pivotal decision was taken because the responses from the client companies and IT management consultancies fell into a number of categories:

1. There was no central control of IT management consultancy projects and therefore managers did not know who had undertaken projects.
2. There was outright refusal to take part in a survey of this type, as the information that would be provided was confidential.
3. Client managers would only take part in the study if the consultants who had undertaken the work introduced the author.
4. Management consultants had been used in companies but had not conducted IT projects.

5. The IT management consultants were not willing to provide the author with names of their clients until they themselves had completed a case study interview schedule.

The author spent some time reviewing and evaluating the possible options that could be used to collect client data. It was decided that, of the available options, using the consultants as an entry point was possibly the most effective way of entering a client company. The author realised that with this decision there was the likelihood of introducing bias into the research. The following possible biases to the study were identified:

- 1) A high proportion of client organisations that had undertaken what were considered successful IT/IS projects.
- 2) High proportions of responses that were similar.
- 3) The IT/IS projects that were proposed by the consultants for the case study component of the research might have been more routine examples of their work rather than ones that might have been exceptions, e.g. more complex in nature, highly political or unusual in the nature of the project specification.
- 4) Client respondents were likely to be positive about the consultancy experience.
- 5) Clients were likely to be more co-operative than if they had been approached via another method.

It was believed to be more important to obtain some valid client data and acknowledge that any conclusions drawn should be viewed as resulting from a method of data collection that had its limitations rather than to abandon attempts to collect such data.

3.3.4 REVISED STAGE ONE RESEARCH DESIGN

The pilot study was used to test the feasibility of the proposed direction of study. It was decided that the revised consultant questionnaire would be employed to obtain data initially and client information would be collected using an alternative method. The following section discusses the component parts of the revised consultant survey instrument. From this point on it will be referred to as the consultant survey instrument.

3.4 THE CONSULTANT SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Baroudi and Orlikowski (1988) state, “a questionnaire’s validity is the extent to which the questionnaire actually captures the concept it purports to measure” (p47). Using the various bodies of information discussed in Chapter 2, Gable’s (1991) questionnaires and one of the three questionnaires presented in Ives et al.’s (1983) paper, the consultant instrument was devised (see Appendix A). The items adapted from Ives et al.’s paper were originally designed and copyrighted by Dr. Sam Pearson. The survey instrument collected the data from senior IT management consultants and was used to provide a means of focusing the information that was collected in the case studies.

The questionnaire was comprised of 4 sections with 84 items in total (although not all of these needed to be answered). The sections of the consultant survey instrument are listed below and the numbers in brackets refers to the number of items in each section:

Outcome Measures (28)

Client Consultant Interaction (16)

The Selection Project Results (26)

Monitoring of the Consultancy Profession (14)

As with Fitzgerald and Willcocks’ (1994) study (see Section 2.4.4), the questionnaire was not only devised to examine the quantitative issues but also attempted to identify softer issues such as perceptions concerning the components of success, the client and consultant relationship and the consultants’ beliefs about the IT systems that they implemented. The rationale for each section is detailed below.

3.4.1 OUTCOME MEASURES

Success is discussed constantly in the reviewed literature in a variety of contexts (see Sections 2.2.1, 2.3, 2.4.4.1, 2.4.6, 2.8.1, 2.8.2, 2.9.3.2 and 2.9.4,) without a distinct definition being provided. Specifically, the following authors Covin and Fisher (1991), Vallely (1991), Edvardsson (1990), Turner (1982), Kubr (1980), Davis (1979), Bell and Nadler (1979), Ford

(1974) and Tilles (1961) have dealt with the concept of client consultant interaction. These authors' papers were often based on anecdotal evidence concerning what could be considered success factors for a consultancy assignment.

As mentioned in section 2.8.2, Covin and Fisher (1991) provided comprehensive empirical findings based on data that they themselves had collected and analysed. Thus the first twenty-six items in this section {Q1A, Q1B, Q1C, Q1D, Q1E, Q1F, Q1G, Q1H, Q1I, Q1J, Q1K, Q1L, Q1M, Q1N, Q1O, Q1P, Q1Q, Q1R, Q1S, Q1T, Q1U, Q1V, Q1W, Q1X, Q1Y and Q1Z} collected together ideas that have been associated with successful completion of an assignment by the above authors and attempted to identify those that were most commonly used by IT management consultants to rank the success of IT/IS projects. The use of a Likert scale was intended to provide information as to which of the success factors were considered to be the most important by the consultants.

The twenty seventh item {Q1AA} provided the IT management consultants with an opportunity to add factors they believed had not been previously included in the section. The reason for including this item was to determine whether there were performance measures that had not previously been identified in the literature but were being used by IT management consultants. Item twenty eight (Q1AB) requested the consultants to identify those measures which were key to IT consultancy assignment success. The responses to these items are presented in Chapter 4.

3.4.2 CLIENT CONSULTANT INTERACTION

The fundamental importance of the client consultant working relationship to the success of IT management projects has been discussed in Section 2.8.2. In the client consultant interaction section of the survey instrument the relationship was investigated in detail. The section began by initially looking at the health of the relationship and the degree of success of the project {Q2A}. Secondly, the relationship between the individual consultant (Q2B) and the client and the consultancy firm {Q2C} was investigated.

Using Ives et al.' (1983) attitude item (18), {Q2D and Q2E} were devised. For item {Q2D} the unprofessional/professional item was added to these authors' clients' attitude towards the

consultants' item and the user-oriented/self-centred and the positive/negative scales were dropped. Only the positive/negative scale was dropped from {Q2E}. The importance of the senior executives' and employees' attitudes and involvement in the project was discussed in Section 2.8.2. Items {Q2F, Q2G, Q2H and Q2P} attempted to ascertain how the consultants felt about these two issues. The attempts made by the clients and the consultants to be involved in and involve the clients in the project were investigated in Q2I and Q2J. The importance of communication in the client consultant working relationship and its effect in terms of limiting resistance to proposed recommendations, as discussed in Sections 2.5.3 and 2.8.2, were investigated in items {Q2K, Q2L, Q2M and Q2O}. Then in {Q2Q} attempts were made to obtain further information about the nature of the interactions. This section overlaps with Gable's (1991) work in trying to identify the dynamics of relationship between external consultants and clients.

3.4.3 THE PROJECT'S RESULTS

Unlike the preceding sections, open items were used in this part of the survey instrument to determine the clients' planning mechanisms {Q3A and Q3C}; policies to plan for computerisation {Q3B and Q3C}; the kinds of systems that were selected {Q3E} and why {Q3D}; and, the consultants' assessment of how well their clients understood what they required of their IT/IS systems {Q3H and Q3I}. Item Q3J asked the consultants to make a judgement of how well they understand their clients' problems when recommending a system. Of importance to the service quality analysis was consultants' perception of the work that was undertaken for their clients {Q3M, Q3N, Q3O, Q3Q and Q3R}. Budgetary allocations and their effect on the outcome of the projects were measured in items Q3S, Q3T and Q3U. For those consultants that were involved in implementation, the Likert scale items Q3V, Q3W, Q3X and Q3Y that asked questions about the measurement of the output, the manner of operation and the ease of using a customer graphical user interface were changed. These items correspond to items (6, 38, 10 and 12) of the Ives et al. (1983) instrument, respectively.

The twenty-sixth item {Q3Z} requested the respondents to indicate the percentage of projects with a successful outcome. The proportion of success is difficult for an external researcher to assess due to the confidential nature of the client and consultant relationship. The responses are

subjective and are likely to be biased in favour of a higher success rate than if experimentation had been used to assess it, however, it provides at least a partial view of the success of IT/IS consultancy projects.

3.4.4 MONITORING OF THE CONSULTANCY PROFESSION

This section of the instrument focused on the profession as a whole. Using the ideas from the Cabinet Office's Efficiency Unit report (Efficiency Unit, 1994), it explored the idea of a database that could be used to identify consultants who were qualified to do particular types of work. The consultants were requested to identify information that they believed should be held on a database, if they agreed that such a database should exist.

Item Q4A measures how useful the respondents felt it would be for clients to know what to expect at all stages of the assignment. If they did not agree that this would be useful, they were asked to explain their response in Q4D. If they agreed it would be useful then they were asked to progress to items Q4B1 and Q4B2. These items assessed whether they considered that a database should hold this information and whether it should be nationally available. The subsequent 10 items {Q4C1, Q4C2, Q4C3, Q4C4, Q4C5, Q4C6, Q4C7, Q4C8, Q4C9 and Q4C10} requested the consultants to identify the information that they considered should be held on such a database.

3.5 ANALYSIS OF THE CONSULTANT SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The data that was collected at this stage of the research was analysed and a number of statistical tests were conducted, i.e. a frequency analysis, Fisher's exact tests and factor analysis. The results of the analyses are presented in Chapter 4. An additional outcome of these analyses was that the findings were used to develop the two interview schedules.

3.6 STAGE TWO OF THE RESEARCH

At the outset of the second stage of the research it was felt that in-depth information should be collected from both participants in IT management consultancy projects, i.e. the client and the consultant. The reason behind collecting this information from both participants in the IT management consultancy process was because both clients and consultants have to work together throughout the project and in order to understand the dynamics of the projects then data needs to be collected from both parties. As has been stated above the method selected was not the most ideal but it facilitated the collection of client information.

A combination of archival analysis and case studies were selected for this component of the research. Histories alone were not used, as some of the case study projects were still on going during the data collection phase of the research. The case studies were designed so that they made use of paired responses provided by the consultant and the client respondent for each of the projects. The responses to the questions were used to investigate the hypotheses identified in Chapter 2 and the research questions listed at the end of Chapter 4.

3.6.1 RATIONALE FOR USING CASE STUDIES AND ARCHIVAL ANALYSIS

One of the first steps of the second stage of the study was to define what was meant by a case study in the context of this research. Eisenhardt's (1989b) definition identifies the case study as a research strategy that identifies the occurrences of particular phenomena in individual environments, whilst Yin (1994) identifies it as an empirical question studied by means of observation of the real-life situation. Yin goes on to define a case study as a research tool that can be used for three types of study, i.e. exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Eisenhardt (1989b) cites the following authors who have used the case study to attain certain objectives: to provide descriptions (Kidder, 1982), test theory (Pinfield (1986); Anderson (1983)), or generate theory (Gersick (1988); Harris and Sutton (1986)). This particular exploratory study's purpose was to confirm/disconfirm the hypothesised relationships given in Chapter 2. To do this:

1. A brief examination of each client organisation's political (internal) and technical circumstances before and during the project was undertaken, where possible.
2. An attempt was made to assess the consultants' missions, motivations and their approach to clients.
3. The data collected was interpreted in the context of the current limited knowledge of the IT management consultancy industry and where there were differences with existing theories then these were recorded.

Yin (1994) identified a number of components of a case study, i.e. research questions, propositions, units of analysis, the logical linking of the data to the stated purpose of the study and finally determining criteria for interpreting the findings. The research questions for this study have been presented in Section 1.3. The units of analysis need to be defined. McClintock et al. (1979) state that they can be almost any activity, process, feature or dimension of organisational behaviour. Case studies may have one or more unit of analysis, e.g. a person or an organisational programme. If a programme were investigated then the case study would be described as holistic. In contrast, if within a single case study there are multiple sub-units of analysis the study can be described as an embedded case study (Yin, 1994). For this research the embedded case study method was used, i.e. each individual IT/IS project under investigation was considered as one unit of analysis and within this context client and consultant respondents were interviewed for each project. When investigating the financial and strategic motivations behind IS outsourcing in the seven banks McLellan et al. (1995) used individual outsourcing alliances between the banks and the vendors as their units of analysis. The author attempts throughout the study to show how the literature and the empirical data analysis presented in the various chapters are interlinked and so hopefully leads the reader to understand how the conclusions of this study were drawn (see Chapter 7).

As explained earlier in this chapter a grounded theory approach was adopted for stage two of this research. Due to the limited amount of empirical research that was available at the start of this study the author attempted to undertake a study which would generate theories concerning the use and performance of IT management consultants which could be used as a basis from which additional research could be conducted to confirm/disconfirm any findings. Eisenhardt (1989b) believes that for theory generation the number of cases should be between 4 and 10. Theory generation she believes is difficult with fewer than 4 cases whilst with more than 10

there is difficulty in coping with the complexity and the volume of data. An influencing factor in the number of projects that could be selected was the ability to obtain access to both the consultants and the clients. For this research, eight case studies were undertaken. This is at the higher end of Eisenhardt's range and provided sufficient data for analysis. The sample was large enough so that there was potential scope for theory generation.

Yin (1994) identifies the following criteria used to assess what he felt to be the elements that characterised exemplary case studies:

1. The study must be significant - either being unusual, or of general national importance in theoretical, policy or practical terms.
2. The study must be complete - a) there is a distinction made between the phenomenon, e.g. client and consultant relationship, being investigated and the contextual environment, e.g. an IT/IS management consultancy project, in which it is found; b) exhaustive use is made of relevant and available information; and, c) the study is not prematurely terminated because of limited resources.
3. Alternative explanations should be explored and evidence provided as to why certain ones are rejected.
4. There should be unbiased representation of the data included in the study.
5. The study should be written with attention being paid to structure and its audience.

This study attempted to pursue the ideals of the type of study that Yin identifies but did not attain the ideal standards that this requires, as will be discussed below. The type of activity that was undertaken to improve the validity and reliability of the study were:

1. Within the limits of project confidentiality data was collected to support the arguments being presented for each case.
2. The study was designed within the limits of the author's known resources and was not terminated because of lack of resources.
3. Where necessary, clarification of relevant points was sought from the respondents or their senior management after the case study interviews were completed.
4. Alternative explanations are presented and evaluated, where possible.
5. Where client and consultant had contrasting viewpoints about issues these were noted.

6. Various types of clients and sizes of organisation were used in an attempt to improve the generalisability of the findings.

The advantages of the stage two methodology were that it attempted to: 1) increase the validity of the results obtained from the client and consultant case study interviews; 2) provide background material which helped in the analysis of the case study data; and, 3) limit researcher bias as the evidence or facts of each case could be verified. Using the exploratory case study strategy in conjunction with archival analysis allowed this research to be linear analytic, i.e. the manner in which it is reported is sequential, comparative, chronological and theory building as discussed by Yin (1994). The disadvantages of the stage two methodology selected were that: 1) not all the documentation that had been kept for each project was provided; 2) there were distinct differences in the amount of information that was given by the various consultant and client organisations, and; 3) during the final analysis of the data it was found that pertinent pieces of information which could have provided possible clarification of the respondents' actions were not available and it was not possible to contact the relevant individuals as they had left the organisations concerned.

There were a number of advantages of using a multiple case study design: 1) the evidence from a multi-case design is considered to be compelling and the overall study robust (Herriott and Firestone, 1983); 2) the cases represented some of the types of projects conducted by IT management consultants; and, 3) there was an opportunity to be flexible at the data collection phase, i.e. the author could explore points being raised by the respondent during the course of the interview and not adhere rigidly to the interview schedule. The disadvantages of a multiple case design were that it required greater resources and time than a single case design.

3.7 CASE STUDY INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

The case study interview schedules were designed to further investigate the theoretical constructs that were presented in Chapter 2 and the elements that were highlighted as requiring further investigation from the consultant survey instrument analysis (see Chapter 4). Two case study schedules were then devised using the above information (see Appendix B for the consultant interview schedule and Appendix C for the client interview schedule). There were

eleven sections in the client and ten in the consultant case study interview schedules. Both the client and the consultant case study schedules comprised the following sections: project details, outcome measures, mechanisms for planning computerisation, policies for controlling computerisation, business advantage, project relations, interdepartmental relations, budgets, interaction with the system and monitoring of the project. The section on monitoring of the consultancy profession is only found in the client case study schedule. The constructs measured in each section of the schedules are discussed below.

3.7.1 PROJECT DETAILS

This section compared the clients and consultants' accounts of the reason for and the decision making structures of the projects. There were eight items in the consultant schedule {1, 2.1, 2.2, 3, 4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3} and ten in the client schedule {1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3, 4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3}. Items 2.2 and 2.4 were found only in the client schedule and these addressed questions concerning whether members of the client organisation or other IT management consultancies, respectively, had proposed alternative options for dealing with the project.



3.7.2 OUTCOME MEASURES

This section further investigated the outcome success measures, originally identified in Section 1 of the consultant survey instrument, which are discussed in Section 4.2.1 below and were found to require further analysis. There were forty-five questions on the consultant case study schedule {6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 9.1, 9.2, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 11, 12, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 14.2, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 16, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 18.4, 19.1, 19.2, 20, 21.1, 21.2, 22, 23} and fifty-two on the client schedule {6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 9.1, 9.2, 10, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9, 16, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 18.4, 19.1, 19.2, 20, 21.1, 21.2, 22, 23}. This section of the interview schedules covered: 1) the competency of the consultant when identifying the client's needs,

2) whether there was a skills transfer, 3) whether the client discussed organisational strengths and weaknesses, 4) whether the client received value for money, 5) the respondent's satisfaction with the project, 6) whether having added value to the project was a measure of success, 7) whether the respondents had flexibility to extend the project, 8) the reliability of the IT/IS system delivered, 9) how good the consultants were at proposing alternative solutions, 10) whether the IT/IS system was an improvement on its predecessor, 11) the measures used by the respondents to measure satisfaction, 12) whether the technical specifications were met, 13) whether the respondents' emotional and practical needs were met and its effect on success, 14) client organisation staff morale, 15) users' ability to operate the IT/IS system and its user friendliness, and 16) the involvement of senior management and employees in the IT/IS project. There were certain items presented in the client schedule that were not in the consultant schedule, i.e. 6.1, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 11.2, 11.3, 12.2, 12.3, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9. These asked the client respondents to elaborate, from their own perspective, on the issues identified above. These items had already been identified in the consultant survey instrument and analysed (Section 4.2.1). There were two items found in the consultant schedule that were not in the client instrument {10.2 and 10.3}. These two items requested the consultants to provide examples of incidents when the project was not kept under control and how the situation was dealt with. The reason for these two questions was to further investigate issues that were identified by respondents to the consultant survey instrument.

3.7.3 MECHANISMS FOR PLANNING COMPUTERISATION

The items in this section investigated how the IT/IS system was planned and what was included in the planning mechanism. There were thirteen items on the consultant schedule {24.1, 24.2, 24.3, 25.1, 25.2, 26.1, 26.2, 26.3, 26.4, 27.1, 27.2, 27.3, 28} and eleven on the client schedule {24, 25.1, 25.2, 26.1, 26.2, 26.3, 26.4, 27.1, 27.2, 27.3, 28}. Items 24.2 and 24.3 were found only in the consultant schedule. They requested information about whether the size of a client company was related to whether a planning mechanism was found and how it would affect the project if a consultant did not know whether such a mechanism was present.

3.7.4 POLICIES FOR CONTROLLING COMPUTERISATION

This section attempted to identify the policies for controlling computerisation and the boundary spanners that were involved in influencing the decisions. This is particularly closely related to the literature discussed in Section 2.6.2. There were eight consultant items {29.1, 29.2, 29.3, 30.1, 30.2, 31, 32.1, 32.2} and seven found in the client schedule {29.1, 29.2, 29.3, 30.1, 30.2, 31, 32}. Item 32.2 found only in the consultant schedule, investigated whether there are differences when a PC system was implemented rather than a mainframe (Section 4.7.2).

3.7.5 BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

There were four items in both schedules for this section {33.1, 33.2, 33.3, 33.4} (the numbers are the same on both instruments). These items asked the respondents to identify the business motivations for the projects. Secondly, the respondents were asked to comment on the type of advantages that were created and how the client viewed the success of the IT/IS project in light of the benefits received. This section was included in the schedules as it provided an additional dimension to the discussion of the business advantages that were discussed below in Sections 4.7.3 but which had not been identified in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

3.7.6 PROJECT RELATIONS

This section dealt with two main issues in both schedules, i.e. the existence and functioning of project teams and the professionalism of the respondents. Both schedules had eleven items in this section {35.1, 35.2, 35.3, 35.4, 35.5, 35.6, 35.7, 36.1, 36.2, 36.3, 36.4} (the numbers are the same on both instruments). The first seven items on the interview schedules cover the team related items, as all the projects were organised into teams and there was no literature reviewed in Chapter 2 concerning how teams were organised in IT management consultancy projects. These items were added to the interview schedules to gain additional insight into the discussion of project teams found in Sections 2.4.4.1, 2.4.6, 2.9.4 and the results of the consultant survey (Section 4.7.6). The remaining four items investigated the professionalism of the two teams'

members. This added a further dimension to the discussion of professionalism based on the consultant survey (Sections 4.6 and 4.7.6).

3.7.7 INTER-DEPARTMENTAL RELATIONS

This section examined resistance, internal politics and problems between the consultants working on the projects. These items related to the issues that were discussed in Sections 2.5.3 and 2.8.2, i.e. techniques for the induction of change and influencers of change and resistance to change, respectively, and in the analysis of the consultant survey (Section 4.6). There were five items in the consultant schedule {37.1, 37.2, 38, 39, 40} and six in the client interview schedule {37.1, 37.2, 38, 39.1, 39.2, 40}. The additional item in the client schedule {39.2} requested the client to provide an explanation of any problems that they were aware of, which occurred between the consultants working on the project.

3.7.8 BUDGETS

This section in both the client and consultant interview schedules was comprised of eight items {41.1, 41.2, 41.3, 41.4, 41.5, 41.6, 41.7, 41.8} (the numbers are the same on both instruments). These items requested information on the budgeting of the project and the decision making processes that occurred when deciding increases to the budget. This section was included because it added to Chapter 2's findings in that it was not an issue discussed in the reviewed literature. It expanded on the findings of the consultant survey (Section 4.7.7).

3.7.9 INTERACTION WITH THE SYSTEM

There were nine items in this section of both interview schedules {42.1, 42.2, 43, 44.1, 44.2, 44.3, 44.4, 44.5, 44.6} (the numbers are the same on both instruments). The items in the section expanded on the findings of the consultant survey (Sections 4.7.4 and 4.7.5). Items 42.1 and 42.2 dealt with the language used to interact with the IT system. In addition, the remaining items dealt with the implementation of the system and how quickly and the speed and efficiency with which problems were resolved.

3.7.10 MONITORING OF THE CONSULTANCY PROFESSION

This section was found only in the client interview schedule and contained fourteen items {45.1, 45.2, 45.3, 46.1, 46.2, 46.3, 46.4, 46.5, 46.6, 46.7, 46.8, 46.9, 46.10, 47}. The first three items measured whether the clients felt there should be a nationally held database and items 46.1- 46.10 identify what information should be contained on the database. Finally, item 47 requested an explanation of any of the responses given to the other items in the section. The items in this section correspond to Section 4 of the consultant survey instrument (monitoring of the consultancy profession, see Section 3.4.4 above). It was included in this schedule to attempt to obtain a limited view from the clients' perspective of how useful a database to capture consultant information would be.

3.7.11 MONITORING OF THE PROJECT

This section gathered information on the measures of effectiveness and success the respondents used for assessing the IT/IS project. The items included in here were influenced by the discussion of the literature in Sections 2.4.6, 2.8.2 and 2.9.4. There were ten items in the consultant interview schedule {45.1, 45.2, 45.3, 46.1, 46.2, 47.1, 47.2, 47.3, 47.4, 47.5} and eight in the client schedule {48.1, 48.2, 48.3, 49.1, 49.2, 50.1, 50.2, 50.3}. The two additional items 47.4 and 47.5 in the consultant schedule required the consultants to explain whether they

provided all the necessary information that a client would have needed before employing the IT management consultancy firm for the project.

3.8 CASE STUDY CONSULTANT RESPONDENTS

One of the objectives of the research was to draw conclusions which were generalisable across the IT management industry and not just the group that was sampled because the author wanted to conduct a study which could be published in academic journals and be the starting point for additional research into the IT management consultancy profession. In order to do this a variety of IT management consultants and types of work needed to be sampled. Therefore the author used responses from the consultant survey instrument to choose those who would be interviewed. The following criteria were used to select the consultants who were asked to take part in the case studies: 1) annual fee income, i.e. up to a £1 million, £1-5 million, and £5 million or more; 2) whether they belonged to a specialist or generalist consultancy; and, 3) whether they implemented systems or not. These criteria were selected because 1) they allowed a cross section of companies and individuals from the industry to be identified, 2) they provided a means of grouping the consultant respondents, 3) the fee income was easily identifiable from the management consultancy directory and 4) it could be determined from the responses given to the consultant survey instrument whether the consultants implemented systems and were either specialist or generalists.

The fee income information was obtained from the Directory of Management Consultants, 1994. The consultants' responses to item Q3E identified whether the consultants were specialists or generalists. The implementers were identified from items Q3V-Q3Y on the survey instrument. As has been stated in Section 3.5 the consultants that had been selected to take part in this study were senior executives within their organisations and could therefore sanction access to their clients. Using these criteria twelve potential consultant respondents were contacted. For a number of reasons the final number was reduced to eight. The data that is presented in Chapter 5 however does not always reflect what the consultants stated was their main type of work. This was due to their selection of client respondents to take part in the project. In addition, the author felt near the end of the study that it was necessary to request access to client companies that had

not just commissioned IS strategy projects. An example of the author's intervention in the selection of the project type was in the choice of the BACS project, when given a variety of projects to choose from, since it was felt by the consultant to reflect the type of work often done by OSI.

3.9 CASE STUDY CLIENT RESPONDENTS

Each consultant who agreed to participate in a case study was provided with a consultant and a client interview schedule. Either the consultant arranged the time for the case study interview with the client or the author contacted the client project manager by telephone, explained the nature of the research and arranged a time to conduct the case study interview. In all cases, the client respondent was, or had been, the project manager for the project. The consultants were not present at the interviews with the clients and in some instances the client interviews were held before the consultant interviews were undertaken. Neither respondent was informed of what the other had stated during the course of the interview.

3.10 ADMINISTRATION OF THE CASE STUDY INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

This section describes the procedure that was used to administer the case study interview schedules. The consultant and the client respondents were contacted by telephone and the manner in which the case study was to be conducted was explained. Once each consultant had agreed to take part in the interview, the consultant was sent a covering letter, a copy of the consultant instrument and the client instrument and a covering letter for the client (see Appendices B and C). The consultant interviews were normally conducted in their offices and their duration was in most cases between one and one and a half hours. The client respondents were only sent a covering letter and the client interview schedules. The client respondent interviews were also conducted at the client company premises and ranged from being one and a half hours to two and a half hours in length. Each interview was tape recorded. It became apparent as the interviews were undertaken that the interview schedule that had been designed

was not geared in some cases to the type of project that was being discussed. Therefore, throughout the interviews, questions were changed to make sense of a particular situation and additional questions were asked to clarify a point.

Transcripts were made of all the interviews and returned to the respondent, who had undertaken the interview, for review. In addition, internal documentation, annual reports and any documentation relating to the project were requested from both respondents. Then for each organisation a summary report was written which provided details about the organisation and the respondents and a summary of the project which included the accounts from both respondents and also evidence gleaned from the additional literature, e.g. the consultancy project reports, government publications and internal company newsletters and other sources, e.g. newspaper articles from the Times and the Guardian (see Chapter 5).

3.10.1 ANALYSIS OF THE CASE STUDIES

The data was analysed in the light of the literature review and the consultant survey instrument analyses. At the end of this analysis two scales were developed in order to rank the projects in terms of success. The analysis of the case studies is presented in Chapter 6.

3.11 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Finally, of importance to this study was to ensure that it was as reliable and valid as possible. "Whereas *reliability* concerns how much a variable influences a set of item, *validity* concerns whether the variable is the underlying cause of item covariation" (DeVellis, 1991, p43). Zeller and Carmines (1980) state that "Reliability concerns the degree of repeatability and consistency of empirical measurements. A *reliable measure* is one that is repeatable and consistent, whereas an *unreliable measure* provides results that are unrepeatable and inconsistent" (p48). They go on to define validity as "an instrument measures exactly what it is supposed to measure and

nothing else” (p.78). Yin (1994) identifies four common measures used for assessing the quality of research, i.e. construct validity (Section 3.11.1.1), internal validity (Section 3.11.1.2), external validity (Section 3.11.1.3) and Reliability (Section 3.11.1.4). Finally, bias is discussed in Section 3.11.2.

3.11.1 THREATS TO VALIDITY

Attempts were made to ensure that this study would draw conclusions that were valid. The author attempted to follow methodological procedures that would try to reduce the threats to the study’s validity as suggested by Campbell and Stanley (1963). The following sections identify the areas that could have compromised the validity of this research.

3.11.1.1 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

Zeller and Carmines (1980, p81) suggest, “construct validity focuses on the assessment of whether a particular measure relates to other measures consistent with theoretically derived hypotheses concerning the concepts (or constructs) that are being measured”. Construct validity is established when a pattern of consistent findings emerges involving different researchers across a significant proportion of time and with regard to a variety of diverse but theoretically derived variables. This study attempted to reduce the threats to construct validity by triangulating a variety of literature related to IT management consultants and deriving hypotheses and research questions which attempted to measure constructs predicted from the literature. The findings regarding the hypotheses can be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.11.1.2 RELIABILITY

A study has high reliability when the same data are collected later and the same findings and conclusions are obtained (Yin, 1994). As Oppenheim (2000) advises, the method used to try to increase the reliability of the study was to employ sets of carefully phrased questions in attempts to measure the same construct, thus also trying to cancel out any bias. In addition, the factor analysis that was undertaken on the consultant survey instrument is the analytical statistical tool that is employed to measure reliability by determining the key underlying dimensions of a set of variables, attributes, responses or observations. The results of the factor analysis on the survey are reported in Chapter 4. Yin (1994) recommends that one of the important pre-requisites for improving reliability is to ensure that the procedures followed are well written up and that as many as possible steps are conducted in a similar manner for each case. This was done in both stages of the research but particularly so for the case studies. A further method, suggested by Yin, used in this study to reduce the threat to reliability was to maintain a chain of evidence. Therefore the case study reports included the responses from both respondents, evidence about the IT/IS sources from company documentation, including the consultants' reports and independent sources including newspapers, e.g. the Times and the Guardian.

3.11.1.3 INTERNAL VALIDITY

Internal validity is the degree to which statements can be made about whether there is a causal relationship between a variable x and another variable y (Cook and Campbell, 1979). Any research is uninterpretable without this basic minimum (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). Internal validity is challenged when an unknown or disregarded factor z also affects the relationship, therefore leading to an incorrect inference. Ideally other potential factors affecting the relationship should be anticipated in the research design, all rival theories investigated and evidence shown as to why they have been eliminated. According to Cook and Campbell, specific tactics that are used to increase internal validity are: 1) pattern matching, i.e. when an observed pattern is compared with a predicted one; 2) explanation-building, i.e. a special type of pattern-matching which attempts to build theory around a particular case leading to issues for further study rather than coming to a conclusion; and, 3) time-series analysis which attempts to determine how an event has occurred over a period of time.

The main emphasis of this study was to begin to build theory which could be tested by further studies of IT management consultancy performance, as suggested in 3.6.1 above. The primary purpose of the thesis was to develop a platform from which longitudinal studies in particular might be conducted. This would involve developing close relationships with a number of consultancy practices and/or client companies and conducting studies that would span the entire duration of an IS/IT project, i.e. from the initial commissioning of the project through to the agreed end point and possibly beyond.

One of the threats to internal validity was the presensitization effect, i.e. being influenced by the desires or requirements of the study, which may have occurred because the same consultants were used, in most cases, for both stages of the study. The author attempted to minimise this effect by not meeting with the consultants before the case study interviews had taken place, providing explanations of each stage of the data collection only as and when necessary, using paired data, i.e. data collected from clients and consultants concerning the same issues and organisational or project related documentation. If there were any discrepancies identified the author highlighted these and verified the details using other sources, either other people or documentation, where possible.

3.11.1.4 EXTERNAL VALIDITY

External validity is concerned with determining to what extent a study's findings can be generalised, i.e. across populations of persons, setting, treatments and times. There are two types of generalisation, i.e. statistical and analytical (Yin, 1994). Statistical generalisation is concerned with determining the degree to which a sample population can statistically represent an entire population. Analytical generalisation is generalisation to some specific broader theory rather than trying to select representative cases. Yin recommends that analytical generalisation be used when attempting to build theory. Using this method two or more cases can be used to support the same theory and is particularly potent if these multiples disconfirm a rival theory (Yin, 1994). If an unrepresentative case is selected then it can be used to test whether the theory that has been developed applies to that case and if it does then it provides further supporting evidence that a theory is valid. In an attempt to improve external validity, the author obtained data from a variety of consultancy practices and client organisations. However, the author

recognises that the conclusions that may be drawn may only extend to the IT management consultant community studied.

3.11.2 BIAS

Bias is defined as “Words, sentence structure, attitude, and mannerism that unfairly influence a respondent’s answer to a question” (GAO, 1991, p.96). Error in research may arise in two ways: randomly or systematically (Oppenheim, 2000). Random error will reduce the accuracy of the data but does not cause any bias in either direction. Systematic error would “cause the final, accumulated results to be an indistinguishable mixture of ‘true’ answers and ‘interviewer effects’ or interviewer bias” (Oppenheim, 2000, p. 87). In the postal consultancy survey there was no physical interviewer and so limited interviewer bias. Oppenheim (2000) reports that respondents may conjure up a ‘ghost interviewer’ onto which they can project attributes relating to the type of organisation or person who may be asking the questions and this will then introduce some interviewer bias.

To reduce the threat of bias to the study due to non-response the consultant survey instrument was piloted and then revised to take into account the comments of the reviewers. Oppenheim (2000) recommends that statistical weighting be done to increase the cells in the sample with a low response rate. However, this requires knowledge of the population and assumes that within each cell the non-respondents have the same attitudes or experiences as the respondents. Weights were not assigned to the responses of the consultant survey instrument because not enough was known about the populations and one of the purposes of this study was to determine what was actually occurring in the profession. However, in the tables presented in Chapter 4, the author has recorded the number of respondents answering each question in the frequency analysis.

Potential biases in the case studies identified were fear of misuse of the data collected, withholding information, responding differently to apparently factual questions, e.g. clients and consultants proposed different amounts for project budgets (see Chapter 5). To reduce these threats of bias in the case studies the author attempted: a) to standardize the procedures where possible; b) use of paired client and consultant data, as differing perspectives were gained from

each party; and, c) did not rush respondents to provide answers and prompted where necessary to obtain fuller factual explanations for respondents' statements without trying to search for a particular response.

To some extent it was possible to reduce bias by capitalising on opportunities that arose during the case study interview process. For example, after having conducted an interview with a consultant from BDO Stoy Hayward, the client respondent found herself in the middle of a crisis and could no longer participate in the study. The BDO Stoy Hayward consultant identified another consultant respondent within his practice, who further identified a client respondent from a different IT/IS project and the interviews for the case study were undertaken with them (see Chapter 5 for the Library project case study description). This is only one demonstration of attempts that were made to minimise selection effects on the validity of the study due to the method of selection of the respondents. The sampling biases which occurred in this study because there was a limited population of consultants and client respondents from which to select could have been further reduced if it had been possible to include all twelve cases or use IT management consultants who had not previously completed the consultant survey instrument. However, in this study's favour was the fact that the clients and consultants came from different sizes of companies, which operated in various industry sectors and which were located across the UK.

3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter discussed the research design that was used to conduct this study. Section 3.3 discussed how the initial pilot testing and the literature review affected the manner in which the data collection was performed. Detailed explanations of the sections of the consultant survey instruments were presented in Section 3.4. Section 3.5 identified the analyses of the survey instrument that can be found in Chapter 4 below. Stage two of the research design, i.e. the case studies, was presented in Section 3.6. Subsequently, in Section 3.7, there was a detailed discussion of the case study interview schedule. The selection procedure, a brief description of the target audiences for the schedules, and their administration were discussed in Sections 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10. Threats to the validity of the research were discussed in Section 3.11.

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4. INITIAL SURVEY INSTRUMENT DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The rationale for and the methodology used to conduct the initial survey were outlined in Sections 3.4 and 3.5. The primary aims of this chapter are to analyse the data from the Consultant Survey instrument described in Section 3.4 and its subsections in order to:

1. Identify the important measures of project outcome success;
2. Investigate the relationship between the clients and the consultants and use the findings to extend the generalised information presented in the client consultant interaction section of the literature review (see Section 2.8);
3. Examine the management of the consultancy projects in terms of the budgeting, time management and meeting the clients' IT/IS requirements;
4. Classify the types of systems recommended by the consultants;
5. Determine the feasibility of the development of a database to help in the selection of management consultants;
6. Identify issues that should be further investigated in the case studies.

This analysis has been principally designed so that the consultants were used as a focus group and the findings should be interpreted as such. The statistical analysis of the survey sample is detailed in the following sections. The data is presented in tables. These tables will be commented on in the analysis if they bear some significance to the literature and/or if they were those that were considered to require further investigation in the case studies.

4.2 SURVEY RESPONSES

The target group for the survey were the senior management of IT management consultancies, e.g. partners, principals and managing directors. Of the 120 survey instruments originally sent, 57 responses were received (47.5% response rate). This response rate was considered to be quite high in relation to other postal surveys undertaken in the IT/IS arena. Sturdy (1997) was more successful and managed to achieve a response rate of 63%

(39 responses) returned from an original total of 62 postal surveys that were sent out to senior IT managers and directors’ in retail financial services companies. He however, does not state where any attempts have been made to contact them previously or whether they had been selected through various types of sampling method. For Sobol and Apte’s (1995) study 48 out of 149 organisations returned responses (i.e. a 32% response rate) and Willcocks and Fitzgerald’s (1993) study only obtained a 16% response rate from over 100 data collection tools dispatched. The responses were of a high standard and demonstrated the heterogeneous nature of the respondents. The respondents were located in England, Wales and Scotland. Thus, they represent practitioners within the profession, in terms of geography, fee income and size of practice. The sections below outline the interpretations and comments on the results of the responses obtained.

4.3 SUCCESS OUTCOME MEASURES

The survey responses from Section 1 of the survey instrument are shown in Table 4.1. The aim of this section was to determine the degree of support from the respondents for statements that could be considered potential success outcome measures for a project. The table is divided into six main columns: item number, item, (number of) valid responses, frequency of values, mean and standard deviation (Std. Dev.). This type of tabular structure will be used for other Likert scale items in this chapter. The first column corresponds to the item number in the survey instrument. The second column briefly outlines the question. The third column indicates the number of respondents for each item. The frequency of values column is further subdivided into six columns. The first five subcolumns correspond to the potential responses for the Likert scale, which are coded 1 to 5. The sixth subcolumn indicates the number of respondents who did not complete that specific item. The fifth main column entitled Mean, shows the values of the average of the number of responses found in the first to fifth subcolumns of the frequency of values column, for that specific item. The final column shows the standard deviation of the response. Where the standard deviation is above 1.000, then coefficient of variation (COV) will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Coefficient of Variation} = \frac{\text{standard deviation}}{\text{Mean}}$$

Table 4.1 The Outcome Measures

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	6		
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing Response		
Q1A	The need for a good relationship between the consultant and client at the end of the project	56	35	18	3	-	-	1	1.429	.599
Q1B	The client feeling the consultant was competent and trusting him to make recommendations	57	50	6	1	-	-	-	1.140	.398
Q1C	The client's specifications and expectations being recorded in the contract	55	26	19	9	1	-	2	1.727	.804
Q1D	The project being completed on time	56	32	19	4	1	-	1	1.536	.713
Q1E	The project being completed within budget	56	25	24	7	-	-	1	1.679	.690
Q1F	The requirement for a skills transfer between the client and consultant	57	14	15	27	1	-	-	2.263	.856
Q1G	The were no major problems in the project	53	6	18	15	10	4	4	2.774	1.120
Q1H	The consultant's fees being paid promptly	51	7	19	20	3	2	6	2.490	.946
Q1I	The consultant's fees being paid in full	51	19	17	13	1	1	6	1.980	.948
Q1J	The existence of a clearly identifiable client for all projects	57	36	16	4	1	-	-	1.474	.710
Q1K	The client's CEO or Department heads being satisfied with the system installed	57	28	27	2	-	-	-	1.544	.569
Q1L	The client's employees (users and other involved parties) were satisfied with the system installed	57	38	16	3	-	-	-	1.386	.590
Q1M	The need for tangible benefits arising from installation of the system	56	19	18	13	5	1	1	2.125	1.046
Q1N	The need for intangible benefits arising from installation of the system	56	17	27	11	1	-	1	1.929	.759
Q1O	The need for the CEO and Department heads to understand the practical benefits of the system	56	24	21	8	2	1	1	1.839	.930
Q1P	The CEO and Department heads feeling ownership of the system	57	28	22	5	1	1	-	1.684	.848
Q1Q	The client's employees feeling ownership of the system	57	35	18	3	-	1	-	1.491	.759

Table 4.1 Continued. The Outcome Measures

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing Response		
QIR	The consultant should be satisfied with the project's outcomes	56	20	21	13	2	-	1	1.946	.862
QIS	The requirement for effective communication between consultant and client	57	46	10	1	-	-	-	1.211	.453
QIT	The need for all involved or affected employees' inclusion in the project	57	17	24	13	3	-	-	2.035	.865
QIU	Senior management should dictate the course of the project with little involvement from other members of staff	57	-	-	3	29	25	-	4.386	.590
QIV	Successful completion of the project does not require either the consultant nor the client to understand the other's needs	57	3	2	1	9	42	-	4.491	1.071
QIW	The suitable selection of a computing system not being reliant on the client and consultant needing to mutually appreciate each other's role	57	17	30	8	1	1	-	1.930	.821
QIX	The need for consultants to have a detailed knowledge of the client's operations for a suitable system to be selected	57	24	18	6	8	1	-	2.018	1.126
QIY	The client's need to understand the methods of the consultant for there to be a successful conclusion to the project	57	3	21	14	17	2	-	2.895	1.012
QIZ	The need for clients to have clearly understood the role each was to play in the project, for an effective solution to be achieved	55	1	-	14	23	17	2	2.000	.861

Please note that for all the tables (9) will indicate a missing response.

The smaller the deviation relative to the mean then the smaller the COV and the smaller the distribution of the values from the mean (Wright; 1997; Reid, 1987). The COV figure will only be commented on in the text and not placed in the table.

The responses that are found in Table 4.1 relate to the success outcome measures. Success was determined by looking at the mean values; the closer they were to 1, then the more successful the consultants felt that a project and a client consultant relationship was. The closer to 5, then the more a project or the relationship was considered unsuccessful. Questions Q1A-Q1T required the consultants to assign scores relating to factors that could be used to assess the success of projects. The client trusting the consultant to make recommendations (Q1B), mutual effective communication (Q1S), the client and other involved parties being satisfied at the end of the project (Q1L), the need for a good relationship between both parties at the end of the project (Q1A), the existence of a clearly defined client (Q1T) and client employees feeling they owned the system (Q1Q) were the items that the consultants rated between 1 and 1.5 and thus believed were the most important success outcome measures. In general, these accord well with the overall findings for the factors that influence the outcome of a project as identified by Rogers (1961); Harrison (1990); Covin and Fisher (1991); and Valley (1991). Important intangible issues were that CEOs and department heads were satisfied (Q1K) and felt ownership of the system installed (Q1P). Important tangible issues were that the project was completed on time (Q1D) and within budget (Q1E). These latter variables are among the classic project performance measures discussed in Section 2.9.4 by such researchers as Turner (1993).

Other factors felt to contribute to the success of a project or a relationship, i.e. scores for items found between the mean values of 1.5 and 2.0, were those that dealt with the recording of the client's specifications and expectations in the contract (Q1C), the CEO and department heads understanding the practical benefits of the system (Q1O), there needing to be tangible benefits from the system (Q1N), client and consultant needing to understand the other's role so as to select a suitable system (Q1W), and the consultant being satisfied with the project (Q1R). The consultant's belief that it is necessary to record the client's specifications is in agreement with Covin and Fisher's (1991) conclusion that there needs to be a contract outlining requirements. The consultants' responses indicated that they agreed with Margerison (1988) and Bell and Nadler's (1979) identification of roles. In addition, they felt

that when consultants clearly identify the roles that they and the client need to perform then the project is likely to be considered successful.

Three respondents each reported that they did not feel that all employees involved or affected by the change could be included in the project (Q1T), a skills transfer between the client and consultant (Q1F), there were no major problems in the project (Q1G) and the consultants' fees being paid promptly (Q1H) and in full (Q1I) were potential measures of success.

The Q1F variable has a COV value of 0.404 which indicates that for some projects there were major problems. There is quite a high neutral response which cannot be clearly interpreted because it is not clear whether the consultants were attempting to indicate that they did not have an opinion or that there were only some projects with major problems. Also the COV for Q1M was 0.492, which indicates that the consultants were relatively divided on whether there should be tangible benefits arising from system installation. The majority of respondents agreed there should be benefits. Again the large neutral response could indicate that in some projects it was necessary to have tangible benefits while in others because of the nature of the project, e.g. to improve efficiency, there may not be any tangible benefits but a high degree of intangibility or that they did not have an opinion.

Variable Q1V had a COV of 0.238. This value is quite small which indicates that there was not much variation from the mean. However there were five respondents that indicated that they felt that consultants and clients did not have to understand the other's needs in order for there to be successful completion of the project. As this question was worded in the negative, the consultants may also have misunderstood or misread the question when answering. The figure calculated for the COV for Q1X was 0.558 and was the highest value of all indicating that there was a large distribution of responses relative to the mean. Again the majority of respondents believe that the consultants need to have a detailed understanding of the client's operations for a suitable system to be selected. The variation may be due to: 1) the consultants who only recommend, in a strategy document, that a system be implemented but do not implement it, 2) they may implement given-solutions or ready-made solutions, 3) the task that they are undertaking only requires a superficial understanding of the organisations business before a system can be implemented and 4) the consultants who responded to this question may not have been very efficient at understanding their clients requirements and therefore implemented poor systems. Finally, the COV calculated for Q1Y was 0.350 and

was also quite small. The distribution of these responses was highest for the consultants who agreed with this response but there were substantial minorities for those who indicated a neutral or disagree response. The mean value 2.895, would be considered neutral overall. This would seem to indicate that possibly in some projects the clients would need to understand the consultants' methods but in others there was no necessity to do so.

Of interest in this study was that although Covin and Fisher (1991) recommended that all affected parties be involved in the assignment, the consultants did not believe this to be one of their primary outcome success measures. An issue that was believed worthy of further investigation in the case studies is that of the requirement of a skills transfer; as it is mentioned in consultancies' internal literature as one of the value added factors that are included in a consultancy assignment. Fee payment was also an issue raised in the informal discussions with the consultants, as it was an indication of client satisfaction with the project and again this was not rated very highly.

4.4 OTHER MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The consultants were asked to identify other measures of outcome success that they felt were important but that had not been addressed in Section 4.3. The results they provided are shown in Table 4.2. The areas that were identified were categorised into **client related measures**, **consultant related measures**, **project related measures**, **system related measures** and **post implementation measures**. Repeat business, the most selected measure, found in post implementation was identified by 10 consultants. Those measures that were judged would contribute to the current body of literature, particularly if they had not been discussed by other researchers, were further investigated in the case studies. It should be noted that the number of responses to an open question was not assumed to signify that other responses that were less frequently reported were of less importance and, as noted above, were further investigated if they had not been discussed by other authors.

Table 4.2 Other Measures Of Success

Success Outcome Measures	Number of Responses
Client Related Measures	
The client's needs should be met	4
The client should be willing to act as a reference site	4
The clients should be willing to discuss their strengths and weaknesses	2
The client should be satisfied they have received Value for Money	2
The client should have completed a satisfaction survey	2
A difference should be identified between the contact and contract client	1
The client should be learning continuously	1
Consultant Related Measures	
The consultant's work should reflect the client's organisational culture	1
The consultant should have a good rapport with the client throughout the project	1
Project Related Measures	
The project was always under control and problems were resolved promptly and effectively	4
There was value added to the project, in terms of intangible and tangible benefits	3
Future development was not precluded	1
There was practical implementation of proposals	1
There was flexibility to extend the project built in	1
System Related Measures	
The system performed reliably	4
The new system was an improvement on the old system	1
The System met the original specifications	1
Post Implementation Measures	
The consultant obtained repeat business	10
There was a follow up survey carried out	1

Client Related Measures

Measures that were reported by two consultants were: that clients were willing to discuss their own strengths and weaknesses, that they were satisfied they had received value for money (VFM) and that they would complete a satisfaction survey. One of the components that a client may take into consideration when determining the success of a project may be whether it was considered to be VFM. However, it was not clear what the consultants meant by the clients receiving VFM and how this related to Bounds et al.'s (1994) categories of value. Therefore it was decided to further investigate VFM in the case studies.

One consultant identified a further interesting issue: namely that there was a clearly identifiable client. Another consultant suggested that there was a need for a distinction to be

made between the *contact* and *contract* client. Neither Kubr (1980) nor Tilles (1961) appear to make a distinction between the contact and contract clients. This is important because unclear definitions of the type of client may have a negative effect on the day to day management of the project, the levels of responsibility given to each type of client which in turn may affect that individual's or group's power in relation to the consultant and how the consultancy project contract is managed and the clauses implemented. The PRINCE 2 methodology, discussed in Section 2.9.4, refers to the project board, i.e. contract client and the project manager, i.e. contact client. One should note that the same individual within an organisation may perform these two client roles.

Project Related Measures

Four consultants identified the most important project related measure as the project always being kept under control and any problems being resolved promptly and effectively. The second most identified measure was that value was added to the project, in terms of *tangible* and *intangible* benefits; this being suggested by three consultants. Added value in this context goes beyond Porter's (1985) and Knell's (1986) concept of added value and is more like Bounds et al.'s (1994) idea of customer value, which is discussed in Section 2.9.1, i.e. benefits, sacrifices and the relationship, are included in the assessment of the service offering.

One consultant believed that an outcome success measure was that flexibility to extend the project was built into the process. This may be indirectly linked to: 1) being able to influence a particularly difficult client, 2) dealing with more complex problems than were initially envisaged, 3) the client being more likely to make a rational rather than a bounded rational decision, i.e. the client would have the time to research alternative options before making a final decision, and 4) time for the client company's management to institute actions/procedures which would create the right organisational atmosphere to allow the proposed changes to be accepted by other members of staff, e.g. reducing the conditions under which the changes could be resisted. This latter belief contradicts that of the Institute of Management Consultants 1997 internal report, discussed in Section 2.8.2, which suggested that deadlines should be tight and immovable. All the issues discussed in this section were further investigated in the case studies.

System Related Measures

There were three system related success outcome measures identified. The one that was reported by most consultants (4 respondents) was that of the system's reliability of performance. Only one consultant considered it a success outcome measure that the new system was an improvement on the old. This may be considered surprising, as one may deem this to be one of the foremost requirements of the project. One reason for this may have been the consultants took for granted the fact that the output of the project would be an improvement on what it replaced. This issue was further investigated within the case studies.

4.5 KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS

In Section 1 of the survey instrument for item (1AB) the consultants were requested to identify what they considered the key measures of success. Key measures of outcome success were considered in this context to be *the measures the IT management consultants believed were the most important factors that they considered when making their assessment of the success of the IT projects*. Their responses are shown in Table 4.3. The table is divided into **client related measures**, **consultant related measures**, **project related measures** and **operations related measures**. The two measures that were identified as of most importance by the greatest number of respondents were that clients were satisfied with the project's outcomes and that the technical specifications were met. These are found in client related measures and project related measures sections, respectively. In the outsourcing literature, Lacity et al. (1995) and Willcocks and Fitzgerald (1993) identified one criterion for an outsourcing project's success as the client being satisfied with the project (Section 2.4.6). Jones and Sasser (1995) also reported that client satisfaction was related to customer loyalty and the possibility of improved long term financial performance. For the consultants having customers who repeatedly use their services because they were satisfied might reduce the perishability element of the service they provide and hence aid in sustaining their cash flow.

As has been suggested in the literature (Lewin (1958); Huczynski (1993)), reduction in uncertainty is a major reason for use of external experts. Therefore, as suggested by McLellan et al. (1995), use of technical experts reduces technical uncertainty and therefore is

likely to lead to client satisfaction. Repeat business and having tangible benefits being identified by nine and eight respondents, respectively, were the next two most important measures identified. These three issues were further investigated in the case studies.

Table 4.3 The Key Measures Of Success

Key Measures of Success	Number of Responses
Client Related Measures	
The client is satisfied with the project outcome and the solution meets the business case	13
The client takes ownership of the new system	7
The client will act as a reference site	6
The client consultant relationship is strengthened	3
The client has received value for money	2
There is good communications between all parties working on the project	1
When the client’s practical and emotional needs are met	1
Improved staff morale and initiative	1
Consultant Related Measures	
When the consultant is asked to conduct repeat business	9
When the consultant is satisfied with the project	3
When the fee is paid	2
When the consultant avoids colluding in the client’s “suicide”	1
When fee is paid on time	1
When fee recovery for the consultant is profitable	1
When the consultant has gained an improved awareness of the issues in the client organisation	1
When the consultant has had a positive impact on the operations of the organisation	1
When the consultant working on project is “forgotten”	1
Project Related Measures	
When the technical specifications are met	12
When there are tangible benefits	8
When the project was completed on time	4
When the project was completed within budget	4
When the system is user friendly	2
At end of the project the users are confident operating the system	2
When specific terms of reference are established and are flexible	2
When there are intangible benefits	2
Operations Related Measures	
When business processes are supported	2
When there is an increased turnover	2
When there are improvements in basic business policies and processes irrespective of the computerisation that is occurring	2
When the lead times are shortened	1
When the overheads are reduced	1

Key Client Related Measures

Clients feeling ownership of the systems, a client related measure, was the second most important key measure of success suggested by seven consultants. In Section 2.2.1 Barki and Hartwick (1989), Curtis (1995), Avison and Taylor (1997) and Hunton and Beeler (1997) all stress the importance of users feeling that they own the system. The findings of this survey suggest that the consultants were more inclined to agree with Avison and Taylor, Curtis, and

Hunton and Beeler's original hypothesis that when clients are involved in the design phase they would more readily take ownership of the system. This aspect of a consultancy project was felt to require further investigation in the case studies because it is likely to be one of the key measures of success and thus it was important to understand the process by which clients come to feel ownership.

Six consultants identified the client acting as a reference site, as a key measure of success. This measure was not identified in the reviewed literature. The strengthening of the client consultant relationship was reported as a key measure of success by three consultants. Gable (1991) and Covin and Fisher (1991) identified that the quality of the working relationship between the client and an external consultant was an important contributing factor to the assessment of success of the project by the participants.

Two further measures were identified: 1) there was improved staff morale as a result of the project's outcomes and 2) the clients' practical and emotional needs were met. The importance of the staff morale measure could perhaps be related to the economic climate in which the consultants were operating in, e.g. often when consultants were brought into organisations it meant job losses resulted for client employees. This reason for the use was identified as the hired assassin, by McIver (1986), in Section 2.7.1. Perhaps more importantly is the issue of a key measure of success being related to having the clients' practical and emotional needs met. These are interesting because Rogers (1961), in section 2.8.1, expressed beliefs that when the dominant/authority figure (parent or therapist) exhibited certain positive behaviours then the helping relationship would be an effective one. Given that the emotional aspect of the consultancy relationship was not dealt with in the literature, it was therefore this issue was further analysed in the case studies.

Key Consultant Related Measures

Within the consultant related measures, nine consultants stated that a key measure of success was when they were asked to do future work within the company (Repeat Business). As discussed in Section 2.9.1, it is of financial importance to the consultancy industry to have repeat business and maintain customer loyalty because services, as discussed in Section 1.2, cannot be stored and thus IT consultancy firms have to continuously seek new work or repeat business to remain profitable. A measure of success identified by three consultants was that

the consultants themselves were satisfied with the project. Only two consultants stated that a key measure of success was the payment of their fee. This perhaps would apply to consultancies that have a clause in their contracts that allow clients to opt out of payment if they are not satisfied with the work done, i.e. a contract similar to a forcing contract. Fee recovery, i.e. when the consultancy makes profit relative to expenditure, is of interest because it is likely to be important to the consultants who participated in the survey. They were at senior management level, i.e. director, partner and principal level or equivalent and as such would possibly receive a share of the practice's profits in addition to their salaries. Consequently, it would be in their interest to have profitable outcomes to projects. This variable may have been mentioned by only one consultant because the profitability of a project may have been taken for granted when answering the survey instrument.

The last three measures were related to the impact the consultants had on the organisation. They felt there should be as little disruption to the normal working life as possible during the course of the project, whilst gaining knowledge about the clients and their IT/IS requirements and eventually having a positive impact on the operations of the client organisations.

Key Project Related Measures

After having technical specifications met, the next most subscribed project related measure was that of obtaining tangible benefits; this being identified by eight consultants. Possessing tangible benefits/outputs would ensure that stakeholders e.g. Kubr's (1980) opinion-leaders (see Section 2.5.2.1), who supported the project would have evidence to support their belief that undertaking the assignment was the correct course of action. Only two consultants stated that a key measure of success was obtaining intangible benefits. Completing the project on time and secondly, within budget were each identified by four consultants, which agrees with Turner's (1993) identification of these as classic project performance measures. Only two consultants felt that it was a key measure of success for the end users to be confident when operating the IT system and secondly, for it to be user-friendly. These issues were further investigated in the case studies to attempt to determine why these views were not more widely identified as they are compatible with the professional standards required for operating in this profession. From the client's perspective it may be assumed that these factors would be of greater importance, as the IT system would be of little use if operators

could not use it, which is a belief that seems to be supported by Goodhue and Thompson (1995).

4.6 CLIENT CONSULTANT INTERACTION

Client and Consultant interaction was dealt with in Section 2 of the survey instrument. The responses are shown in Table 4.4. The consultants stated they believed their relationship with the clients had to be good to have successful completion of the project (Q2A). In Section 2.8.2, Tilles (1961) and Covin and Fisher (1991) described the variables that influenced the health of the client consultant relationship. The results of this survey support their findings and suggest that the client and consultant need to take into consideration the factors that contribute to the development of trust, mutual respect and professionalism in order for the working relationship to be considered good. In the main, the consultants felt that they had good relationships with the client firm (Q2B). However, the client relationship with the consultancy firm (Q2C) in general was not as good. This is what would be expected due to the limited contact that there would be between the senior executives of both the client and consultancy firms.

The consultants tended to report that they were slightly more cooperative (Q2E2), courteous (Q2E3) and professional (Q2E4) than the clients (Q2D1 - Q2D3) and that they were quite user-oriented (Q2E1). They felt that CEOs'/heads of departments' attitude to the project was very important (Q2F). However, the consultants felt CEOs'/heads of departments' actual contribution did not reflect how important their involvement was felt to be, i.e. the CEOs did not in practice become very involved with the supervision of projects (Q2G).

Table 4.4 Client Consultant Interaction

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q2A	In general, a good client consultant relationship is required for successful completion of the project	57	Strongly Agree 40	Agree 15	Neutral 2	Disagree -	Strongly Disagree -	Missing Response -	1.333	.546
Q2B	The relationship between the consultants and their clients, in general	57	Very Good 31	Good 24	Neutral 2	Bad -	Very -	Missing Response -	1.491	.571
Q2C	The relationship between the consultancy firm and their clients, in general	57	28	24	5	-	-	-	1.596	.651
Q2D1	The client's attitude towards the consultant throughout the assignment	55	Co-operative 12	Quite Co-operative 34	Neutral 9	Quite Belligerent -	Belligerent -	Missing Response 2	1.945	.621
Q2D2		55	Courteous 15	Quite Courteous 31	Neutral 8	Quite Dis-courteous 1	Dis-courteous -	Missing Response 2	1.909	.701
Q2D3		54	Professional 8	Quite Professional 29	Neutral 13	Quite Un-professional 3	Un-Professional 1	Missing Response 3	2.259	.851
Q2E1	The attitude of the consultant towards the client	55	User-oriented 28	Quite User-oriented 24	Neutral 3	Quite Self-centred -	Self-centred -	Missing Response 2	1.545	.603
Q2E2		55	Co-operative 27	Quite Co-operative 23	Neutral 5	Quite Belligerent -	Belligerent -	Missing Response 2	1.600	.655
Q2E3		55	Courteous 37	Quite Courteous 18	Neutral -	Quite Dis-courteous -	Dis-courteous -	Missing Response 2	1.327	.474

Table 4.4 Continued. Client Consultant Interaction

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q2E4	The attitude of the consultant towards the client	55	Professional 47	Quite Professional 8	Neutral -	Quite Un-professional -	Un-Professional -	Missing Response 2	1.145	.356
Q2F	The importance of the CEOs / Heads of departments' attitude to the projects	57	Very Important 35	Important 20	Neutral 2	Un-Important -	Very Un-Important -	Missing Response -	1.421	.565
Q2G1	The CEOs / Heads of Departments' involvement in the projects	56	Consistent 3	Quite Consistent 14	Neutral 21	Quite Inconsistent 16	Inconsistent 2	Missing Response 1	3.000	.953
Q2G2		56	Very Good 3	Good 16	Neutral 34	Bad 3	Very Bad -	Missing Response 1	2.661	.668
Q2G3		55	Significant 7	Quite Significant 24	Neutral 22	Quite Insignificant 2	Insignificant -	Missing Response 2	2.345	.751
Q2H	The importance of the client employees' (users and other involved parties) attitude to the project	57	Very Important 31	Important 25	Neutral 1	Un-Important -	Very Un-Important -	Missing Response -	1.474	.538

Table 4.4 Continued. Client Consultant Interaction

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q2I	Whether the consultants attempted to involve clients in the projects	57	Always	Usually	Neutral	Rarely	Never	Missing Response	1.211	.411
Q2J	Whether the clients attempted to become involved in projects	56	45	12	-	-	-	-	2.304	.872
Q2L	The communication with the clients being verbal	56	11	21	20	4	-	1	2.357	.796
Q2M	The communication with the clients being put in writing	56	10	17	28	1	-	1	2.500	.831
Q2O1	The communications with clients, in general, can be described as	54	8	16	28	4	-	1		
			Productive	Quite Productive	Neutral	Quite Destructive	Destructive	Missing Response		
			16	36	2	-	-	3	1.741	.521
			Precise	Quite Precise	Neutral	Quite Vague	Vague	Missing Response		
Q2O2		54	10	38	5	1	-	3	1.944	.596
			Meaningful	Quite Meaningful	Neutral	Quite Meaningless	Meaningless	Missing Response		
Q2O3		55	12	39	3	1	-	2	1.873	.579
Q2P	Whether client employees involvement is encouraged	57	Always	Usually	Neutral	Rarely	Never	Missing Response	1.842	.922
			26	17	11	3	-	-		
Q2Q1	The interaction between the consultants and their clients being described as	56	Always Candid	Usually Candid	Neutral	Usually Deceitful	Always Deceitful	Missing Response	1.589	.596
			26	27	3	-	-	3		
Q2Q2		57	Always Open	Usually Open	Neutral	Usually Evasive	Always Evasive	Missing Response	1.667	.636
			24	28	5	-	-	-		

Lack of commitment is one of the elements that Covin and Fisher (1991) attribute to the failure of consultancy assignments. Client employees' involvement was considered to be very important and was always encouraged (Q2P), although, the employees themselves were not as involved as the consultants may have wanted them to be (Q2J).

Edvardsson (1990), in Section 2.8.2, identifies the need for effective communication between the client and consultant. However he does not specify the level and type of communication needed in the consultant client relationship. The nature and level of communication is important because as Covin and Fisher (1991) identify, it is one of the factors that can cause the breakdown of the project if it is not conducted effectively. This study found that communication occurred between the consultants and clients every two to three days or weekly on average, as shown in Table 4.5. These communications tended to be more often verbal (Q2L) than in writing (Q2M) and were described, in general, as being quite productive (Q2O1), quite precise (Q2O2) and quite meaningful (Q2O3). Nichol (1997) also suggests that the quality of communication is dependent on the sensitivity of each individual to the feelings of the other person. This may also be affected by the emotional reactions the client and consultant may have towards one another. The actual interactions with the client were also considered to be quite positive, being described as candid and open by most respondents. In Section 2.9.3.2 when dealing with IS, Pitt et al. (1995) suggest that communication is an additional influence on service expectation. Conrath and Mignen (1990) believe that the second most important component of user satisfaction is the match between users' expectations and actual IS service; the former being influenced by what is communicated to them by the consultants.

Table 4.5 Frequency Of Communication Between Consultant And Client

Item Number	Frequency of communication with client	Valid Cases	Percentage of Positive Responses
Q2K1	Daily	13	22.8
Q2K2	Every 2-3 days	26	45.6
Q2K3	Weekly	23	40.4
Q2K4	Monthly	6	10.5
Q2K5	Longer than a month	2	3.5

The percentage of responses does not equal one hundred percent as some respondents selected more than one category.

4.7 THE SELECTION PROJECT RESULTS

The information discussed in this section was obtained from Section 3 of the consultant survey instrument. The information found in this section relates to the planning mechanisms and policies for controlling computerisation.

Planning Mechanisms

Table 4.6 and Table 4.7 show the number of consultants who identified the existence of a mechanism for planning computerisation within the client’s business processes and the nature of the mechanism and/or an explanation of the response, respectively. Of the forty-seven valid cases, thirty-five respondents stated that there was usually a mechanism for planning computerisation within the client’s business process. Only twelve of the cases shown in Table 4.6 stated that there was no mechanism. Table 4.7, is subdivided into four sections, **the existence of a planning mechanism, client related issues, consultant related issues and issues related to specific mechanisms for planning.**

Table 4.6 The Mechanism For Planning Computerisation Within The Client's Business Process

Item Number	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values		
		There was no mechanism for planning	There was a mechanism for planning	Missing Responses
Q3A	47	12	35	10

Table 4.7 The Existence And Nature Of The Mechanism For Planning Computerisation Within Client Organisations

Type of Response	Number of Responses
The existence of a planning Mechanism	
There is a mechanism in place	4
There is not always a mechanism	3
A variety of mechanism are used	2
If there is a mechanism it is usually out of date and wrongly focused	2
Client Related Issues	
It is the client's responsibility to have a mechanism in place	4
The client knows they have a problem but is uncertain of how to proceed	3
Planning for computerisation is an 'add-on' to the organisation's planning mechanisms and not a central part of it	3
Whether a mechanism is found is dependent of the location of the project in the organisation	2
It is dependent on the client size and sector; corporate clients acknowledge and actively develop the role of IT. Small clients usually do not have formal business plans and see it as a "one-off" tool.	2
Planning in small and medium organisations tends to be function specific	2
In the finance and production areas there is usually a mechanism but in 'non critical business functions', e.g. personnel, this is not the case.	1
Consultant Related Issues	
The consultant selects a system to fit in with client's planning and methodology	9
The consultant is unsure whether there are mechanisms in place	1
Issues Related To Specific Mechanism For Planning	
The business strategy, process and IT should be related to the organisation's structure and the individuals' behaviour and role.	3
Work in government departments and agencies must have IS/IT strategies in place in order to secure funding from the Treasury and their planning is accomplished under PRINCE	3
There is usually a mechanism where an IT strategy exists	2
The consultant used project scheduling and management techniques based upon proven experience of similar projects	1
The techniques of CIM-OSA are used	1
The initial planning is reviewed after 2-4 Weeks	1
The consultant was in the business of promoting business improvement not implementing systems	1

Client Related Issues

When considering client related issues, four consultants placed the onus solely with the client to have a mechanism in place for planning computerisation. This may be difficult for some clients, who, as three consultants stated, only know they have a problem but are uncertain of how to proceed. This is possibly because they do not possess the relevant skills within the organisation, or because they are not effectively organised to utilise their employees' planning skills. The latter situation may occur when there is a rigid hierarchical structure and/or where employees are discouraged when they show any initiative. Users or employees who find themselves in this situation, Hunton and Beeler (1997) would categorise as having no voice.

Two consultants stated that company size was of particular importance and corporate clients tended to actively develop the role of IT, i.e. that larger organisations were more likely to heavily invest in IT/IS than were smaller firms. However, one consultant believed that clients from small and medium enterprises usually did not engage in business planning and felt that to do so was a ‘one-off’ occurrence. The consultant may have held this view because large organisations often have personnel who possess the necessary planning skills and are also able to bring in expertise to help them in their planning processes. The idea that company size may affect planning needs was further explored in the case study instruments, as the client organisations that participated in the projects were of a variety of sizes.

4.7.1 POLICIES FOR CONTROLLING COMPUTERISATION

Tables 4.8 and 4.9 show the number of client organisations that consultants found had policies for controlling computerisation. Of the forty-nine consultants who responded to the items Q3B and Q3C, thirty-eight said that there were policies within client organisations for controlling computerisation (see Table 4.8). Only eleven stated that there was not usually a policy for controlling computerisation. Table 4.9 is subdivided into four sections, **the nature of the policies**, **client related issues**, **consultant related issues** and **control of the policies**.

Table 4.8 The Policies For Controlling Computerisation Within The Client's Organisation

Item Number	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values		
		There were no policies for controlling computerisation	There were policies for controlling computerisation	Missing Responses
Q3B	49	11	38	8

The Nature Of The Policies

The responses within the first section, the nature of the policies, posed some challenges in determining commonalties or themes for the responses. One respondent suggested that there is some debate as to whether the diminishing use of mainframes and the increased use of PCs has led to the declining use of policies. This was not an issue further discussed in the case studies because the primary focus of this study was concerned with the dynamics of the IT

management consultants' work and relationships with the client and to deal with the change of policy development would be beyond the scope of this study.

Table 4.9 The Division Of Responses That Indicated Whether There Was A Policy For Controlling Computerisation Within The Client Company

Issues relating to the policies for controlling computerisation	Number of Responses
The Nature of the policies	
There are usually policies for controlling computerisation	6
Lack of knowledge of the benefits of preparing policies has a direct influence on identifying appropriate procedures	2
There are seldom policies for controlling computerisation	2
The policies generally apply to a selection of hardware and software platforms	2
Increasingly end-user computing is uncontrolled, which gives rise to a fragmented corporate IT strategy	2
Computerisation tends to evolve rather than being evaluated against a policy	1
Departmental systems are not dealt with	1
There is usually a policy for controlling computerisation where an IS strategy exists	1
Where mainframes are used here are policies in place. The increased use of PCs is causing this control to break down	1
There are policies to control security.	1
Client Related Issues	
Clients have an IT/IS strategy which targets their IT/IS infrastructure to meet their business needs	5
SME clients typically have personnel who "dabble" in computerisation at an amateur or semi-professional level but quite often do not have sufficient skills / knowledge for policy setting	2
It is the client's responsibility to have a policy for controlling computerisation	1
The clients believe they have control but it is either total political control or a 'free for all' amongst rival groups	1
It is standard practice in the public sector to have management and technical policies and sometimes IS principles articulated as part of a strategy	1
The client's size and sector define whether a policy exists	1
There were more policies in the past.	1
Consultant related Issues	
The consultant develops the policies	6
A key part of the consultant's role is to control the policies	1
Control of the policies	
The policies are directed at efficiency (doing it well) rather than effectiveness (doing the right thing)	3
The accepted IT development methodologies are used	2
The standards are set by the industry, e.g. Standard Operating Procedures for the pharmaceutical industry	1
The type of policy found varies greatly. It can range from no control, e.g. ad hoc purchases that are geared to budgets through to policies geared for business planning and strategy development	1
The policies are usually "political" rather than formal, i.e. other than to ratify "political decisions"	1

4.7.2 FORMULATION OF MECHANISMS AND POLICIES FOR COMPUTERISATION

Thirty-nine consultants stated that they were involved with the formulation of mechanisms for planning and policies for controlling computerisation (see Table 4.10). Ten of the forty-nine consultants who responded to item Q3C stated that they were not involved in such formulation. Table 4.11 shows the number of consultants who were involved in developing planning mechanisms and policies for controlling the IT/IS systems. The table is subdivided into **consultant related issues** and **system related issues**.

Table 4.10 Consultant Involvement In The Formulation Of Mechanism For Planning And Policies For Controlling Computerisation

Item Number	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values		
		Consultants not involved in mechanism and policy formulation	Consultants involved in mechanism and policy formulation	Missing Response
Q3C	49	10	39	8

Consultant Related Issues

Twenty-nine of the respondents became involved with the formulation of policies and planning mechanisms for computerisation as part of the project and eight only became involved if asked (see Table 4.11). Consultants' involvement in formulating the policies for controlling or developing planning mechanisms for computerisation was not specifically stated in Basil et al.'s (1997) list of main services that IT consultants provide nor was it included in Peled's definition of the tasks of an IT consultant. These activities may be incorporated in their systems integration and solution services for specific technical problems or local- and wide-area network integration functions. Nevertheless, this activity cannot be ruled out as an addition to Basil et al.'s list and Peled's (2001) definition. In developing these planning mechanisms, it is likely that management consultants may employ rational organisational change models as noted by Berglund and Werr (2000). However, the normative/pragmatic component of their existence is perhaps more likely to be expressed in situations when they are involved in implementation solutions or presenting arguments that legitimise particular courses of action in their reports.

Table 4.11 The Division Of Responses Which Indicated Whether The Consultant Was Involved In The Formulation Of Mechanisms For Planning And Policies For Controlling Computerisation

Issues relating to the formulation of mechanisms for planning and policies for controlling computerisation	Number of Responses
Consultant Related Issues	
The consultant formulates or helps to formulate the statements as part of the project	29
The consultants only become involved in statement formulation when the client asked them to do so.	8
The consultant does not get involved	2
The consultant will help with formulation if he has previously done a scoping study	1
Most of the consultancy work done is in IS strategy formulation and agreement	1
Consultants normally inherit policies that act as constraints	1
System Related Issues	
A best practice model is used for assignments	1
In any mission statement the mechanism for planning computerisation and policies for controlling computerisation are addressed	1
The policies relate to computerisation and business planning	1
Normally the standard methodology is used as a starting point and then tailored to fit the specific project	1

4.7.3 CREATION OF A BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

Table 4.12 shows whether use of the system recommended for a specific project created a business advantage. Thirty-five consultants stated that the systems did provide additions support of their clients’ business. A further fourteen thought that the systems did not. The following section discusses the nature and existence of the business advantages created by IT consultancy projects being conducted.

Table 4.12 Whether The Systems Created A Business Advantage

Item Number	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values		
		There were no business advantages	There were business advantages	Missing Response
Q3D	49	14	35	8

The Existence And Nature Of The Business Advantages

Nine respondents in Table 4.13 stated that business advantage was the prime objective of the IT/IS system and the same number believed that systems did not always provide such an advantage. Four consultants felt that it was not a relevant item. This group might be those who worked primarily in the public sector. Two other consultants noted that in the public

sector competitive advantage is rarely the objective but the organisational objective is more likely to concern the support of the business process. This statement is to some extent in conflict with Abbot's (1995) observation that central government is increasingly becoming more 'business' oriented and spending increasing amounts on IT. This issue is discussed in Chapter 6, in relation to the client organisations studied.

Four consultants stated that IT/IS systems provided business advantage but that this was difficult to quantify. This may be due to the fact, as identified by two other consultants, that it is often difficult for the consultant to ascertain the IS infrastructure within the client's competitors. A second and more likely reason is that the benefits are intangible ones.

Table 4.13 The Existence And Nature Of The Business Advantage

Type and Nature of Business Advantage	Number of Responses
Whether the system creates a business advantage	
Creating a business advantage is the prime objective	9
The system does not always create an advantage	9
The consultant believes that the system provides a business advantage but finds it difficult to quantify	4
The item is not relevant	4
The system does create an advantage but it is not the prime reason for the system's installation	3
The system does not provide an advantage but it just allows the company to compete	3
In the public sector competitive advantage is rarely the objective, whereas fundamental support to the business process is	2
As the consultant is unable to ascertain the IS infrastructure within competitors it is difficult to assess the advantage created	2
The system does not provide a business advantage as implementation of the applications often falls too short of the specification	1
Client Related Advantages	
Other parts of the organisation may benefit not necessarily that particular client	3
Whether there is a business advantage is dependent on both the objectives and degree of 'drive' evidenced by the client and the expected benefits take this into consideration	1
The client often has to be shown how the system provides a business advantage	1

Types of business Advantages

Table 4.14 identifies the type of business advantage reported by the consultants. Six consultants stated that the system provided improvements in services; four, that it saved costs. Improvements in efficiency and effectiveness, i.e. improving the current working situation, were each only identified by one consultant. These figures may be considered particularly low as the need for improvement in both of these factors were given by Kubr (1980) and

McIver (1986) as the reasons why consultants are brought in. This, therefore, was an aspect further investigated in the case studies.

Table 4.14 The Types Of Business Advantages Created By The Systems

Type of Advantage Created	Number of Responses
Improves Service	6
Saves Costs	4
Improves the user interface	3
Improves cash flow	2
Improves quality	2
Increases yield	2
Improves efficiency	1
Improves effectiveness	1
Improves sales and marketing	1
Improves health and safety	1
Reduces the headcount	1

4.7.4 TYPES OF SYSTEMS IMPLEMENTED

Table 4.15 shows the types and usage of the recommended IT/IS systems. Seven types of systems were identified: financial systems, office systems, marketing systems, operational systems, human resource systems, military systems and miscellaneous (those systems that did not correspond to any of the above categories). Six consultants indicated that a variety of systems were implemented by their firms but did not specify their types. One consultant felt that it was a consultant’s responsibility to help identify the objectives for the IT/IS system but not normally to recommend a particular solution.

By far the greatest use of the IT/IS systems was for financial accounting; 22 respondents identified this as an application area. The next group of systems most subscribed to were those used for office support (document management). The third group, with eight respondents, was manufacturing systems followed by systems used in marketing and sales, in customer care and billing and lastly product design. A slightly smaller proportion of IT/IS systems dealt with procurement, inventory management/warehouse management and mechanical handling. A number of consultants also implemented networks. The types of systems that were implemented by the IT management consultants that were not identified in

Basil et al.'s (1997) list, in Section 2.3, were human resource, military and some of those identified in the miscellaneous category, e.g. health delivery and satellite TV.

Table 4.15 The Type Of Systems Implemented

Type of system	Number of Responses
Not specified	6
Consultant's role is to help identify objectives for systems not normally to recommend systems	1
Financial Systems	
Financial Accounting, e.g. Ledgers	22
Customer care and billing	5
Charity / trade union / non-profit fund-raising and membership subscription systems	2
Credit finance / leasing systems	1
Pension administration	1
Payroll	1
Financial sector systems (insurance, banking etc.)	1
Office Systems	
Office support (document management)	11
Networks	3
Database and analysis system	2
Laboratory information management system	1
General Management	1
Marketing Systems	
Marketing and sales	5
Operational Systems	
Manufacturing execution / systems	8
Product design and development	4
Operational processing control	4
Inventory management / warehouse management	3
Procurement	3
Business systems and commercial computing applications	2
Building infrastructure	2
Work flow	2
Logistics	1
Supervisory Control	1
Vehicle management systems	1
Human Resource Systems	
Casework	1
Human resources	1
School inspection	1
Military Systems	
Knowledge base for military and grant entitlement	1
Real time activities in the defence environment	1
Miscellaneous Systems	
Mechanical handling	3
Enterprise wide solutions for Telcos	1
Satellite TV	1
Test management	1
Health delivery	1

4.7.5 IT AND IS SYSTEMS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

The consultants considered that projects were, in the main, successful {Q3F}. Table 4.16 shows that the consultants were not completely satisfied that the clients understand their IT/IS requirements. The range of the consultants' responses may be due to factors relating to the client, e.g. 1) the clients may have varying experiences of the use of IT/IS systems that the consultants recommend; 2) the clients may have varied understandings of the level of detail the consultants require in their brief before the consultants can tender; and, 3) the clients' hidden agendas may require them, as reported by Bell and Nadler (1979), to appear more naïve than they are to determine which consultants may take advantage of them and act unscrupulously at the tendering stage of the process,. The factors associated with the consultants are: 1) they may have unreasonably high expectations of the IT/IS knowledge that clients should possess; 2) the consultants may misinterpret what the clients require possibly because the technological language that the clients use differs from that of the consultants, and, 3) the consultants may also deal with a variety of clients and therefore the large number of neutral responses may reflect this.

The consultants felt that they understood the clients' IT requirements {Q3Q}. There was a range of responses given when the consultants were asked if they felt the current information system met the client's needs {Q3P}. There was no clear indication of what the consultants felt because the majority response was neutral, while the next highest group thought that the systems did meet their requirements. A fifth of the respondents did not feel that the systems met the clients' needs. It was felt that the question might have been misinterpreted as referring to the system that the client had just received. It was therefore decided to examine this in more depth in the case studies. The consultants felt that they had successfully recommended systems that were VFM {Q3M} and that met the clients needs {Q3J}. They felt that projects were quite complicated {Q3O} but that the clients felt that the projects' outcomes were successful {Q3N}.

Table 4.16 The Projects Results And Resourcing

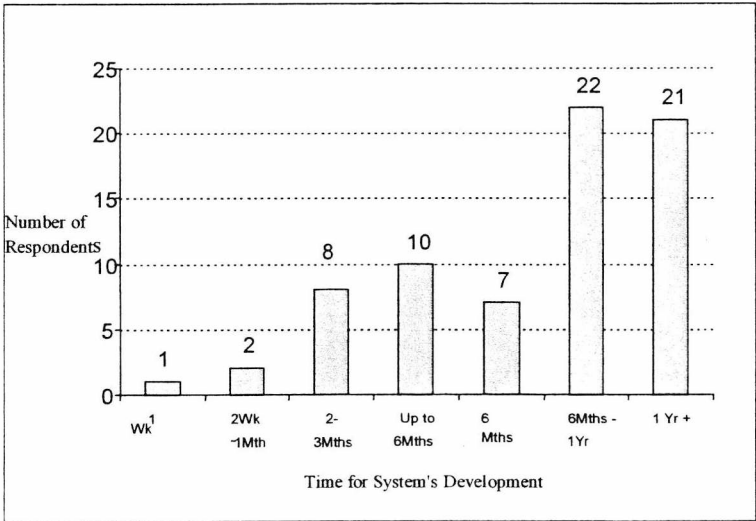
Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q3F	Projects are usually a complete success	55	Strongly Agree 6	Agree 36	Neutral 11	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree -	Missing Response 2	2.164	.660
Q3G2	Time for new systems' development, on average, can be described as:	39	Reasonable 6	Quite Reasonable 21	Neutral 6	Quite Un-Reason-able 6	Unreason-able -	Missing Response 18	2.308	.922
Q3G3		38	Acceptable 5	Quite Acceptable 17	Neutral 12	Quite Unacceptable 4	Unacceptable -	Missing Response 19	2.395	.855
Q3H	The degree to which clients usually comprehend the IS system	55	Completely Understand 3	Understand 24	Neutral 22	Mis-understand 6	Completely Mis-Understand -	Missing Response 2	2.564	.764
Q3I	How satisfied consultants felt that clients understood their IT requirements	56	Very Satisfied 1	Satisfied 16	Neutral 24	Unsatisfied 14	Very Unsatisfied 1	Missing Response 1	2.964	.830
Q3J	How satisfied were consultants, in general, with their understanding of what clients required when recommending a new system	56	15	38	3	-	-	1	1.786	.530
Q3M	How the consultants felt the systems rated in terms of value for money	52	Very Good 16	Good 32	Neutral 4	Bad -	Very Bad -	Missing Response 5	1.769	.581
Q3N	How successful did the clients consider the projects outcomes as seen from the consultant's perspective	54	Very Successful 10	Successful 35	Neutral 7	Unsuccessful 2	Very Unsuccessful -	Missing Response 3	2.019	.687

Table 4.16 Continued. The Projects Results And Resourcing

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q3O	The complexity, in general, of IT consultations	54	Very Un-complicated -	Un-complicated 2	Neutral 21	Complicated 25	Very Complicated 6	Missing Response 3	3.648	.731
Q3P	The effectiveness with which the current information system met the clients' demands	53	Very Well 1	Well 19	Neutral 22	Unwell 10	Very Unwell 1	Missing Response 4	2.830	.826
Q3Q	How successful the consultants felt they were at identifying a suitable solution	55	Very Successful 17	Successful 36	Neutral 2	Unsuccessful -	Very Unsuccessful -	Missing Response 2	1.727	.525
Q3R	The suitability of performance of the information systems for the clients needs	54	Very Good 8	Good 37	Neutral 8	Bad 1	Very Bad -	Missing Response 3	2.037	.613

The time for system development {Q3G1}, shown in Figure 4.1, has three main peaks. As discussed in Section 2.6.2, Mintzberg et al. (1976) provide a classification of decision problem based on types of solutions. This classification has been employed to try to interpret the peaks for IT/IS systems development found in this figure. The first and smaller peak occurs at a time for system development of up to 6 months; the second at 6 months to 1 year, and the third at periods of over 1 year. The first case probably corresponds to the situation when off-the-shelf systems are used, i.e. given solutions. The second peak is possibly accounted for by custom-made or modified solutions, i.e. those developed for a particular client whom Mintzberg et al. would describe as either ready-made or custom-made solutions. The third peak is presumably bespoke systems which are designed to meet specific, more complex, client IT/IS requirements. The consultants believed that the time for system development was both reasonable {Q3G2} and acceptable {Q3G3}.

Figure 4.1 The Time For New Systems' Development



4.7.6 INTERDEPARTMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

The consultants' view of interdepartmental relationships in the client organisation was investigated and the responses are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Interdepartmental Relationships With The Client Organisation

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q3K1	Throughout projects interdepartmental relations, in general, within client firms can be described as:	52	Productive	Quite Productive	Neutral	Quite Destructive	Destructive	Missing Response	2.692	.853
Q3K2		4	17	22	9	-	5			
		Rational	Quite Rational	Neutral	Quite Emotional	Emotional	Missing Response	3.096	.934	
Q3K3		1	15	16	18	2	5			
		Harmonious	Quite Harmonious	Neutral	Quite Dissonant	Dissonant	Missing Response	2.788	.667	
	1	15	30	6	-	5				

What is apparent from the findings is that the consultants did not commit themselves to describing the relationships in organisations and thus the majority of relationships were reported as neutral. These findings may support Ward and Peppard's (1996) suggestion that the consultants shy away from emotions and thus questions requiring their assessment of this issue may attract neutral responses. Possible explanations for this emotional detachment are: 1) it may be part of the consultancy organisations' culture not to express emotions in the work place; 2) it may have negative implications for the consultants' success in the industry if they are seen as becoming, or being, involved in emotional judgements of situations rather than being totally objective and 'mind-driven'; 3) the consultants may not have wanted to be viewed as making judgements about their clients' interdepartmental relationships; 4) the consultants may not have been interested in the interdepartmental relationships within client firms and thus were unable to comment; and, 5) the interdepartmental relationship may vary considerably between organisations and thus it was difficult to describe what these were in general terms. The reasons for the particular relationships are shown in Table 4.18, which is subdivided into three sections **client related issues**, **consultant related issues** and **reactions towards the consultant**.

Client Related Issues

The consultants felt that their descriptions of the client organisations' relationships were primarily influenced by the internal politics of the organisations. Six consultants believed that interdepartmental relationships needed to be managed. These findings seem to support the belief of Margerison (1988) and Kubr (1980), which are reported in Section 2.5.3, when considering the causal factors involved in client organisations resisting change.

Table 4.18 The Interdepartmental Relationships Within Organisations Client

Interdepartmental Relationships and How They Affect Those Involved in the Consultation	Number of Responses
Client Related Issues	
The Internal politics on the project affect the interdepartmental relationships	17
Interdepartmental relationships need to be managed	6
There are no generalised descriptions of the project.	4
The clients overcome any difficulties to produce productive relationships	3
Most clients approach projects in an organised and professional manner	3
Clients exhibit defensive actions in the way they respond to questions when there are strained interdepartmental relationships	2
Departmental boundaries almost always affect projects negatively, as very few organisations effectively organise teams for business change projects	2
Interdepartmental relationships are a part of team spirit	2
Where firms are suffering reorganisation or government bodies are “privatising” there is much internal tension	1
Departments or individuals are acting in their own rather than in the company’s interest	1
The relationships are affected by poor communication	1
Often interdepartmental meetings are held only to discuss the IT budget	1
The department heads’ policies cause problems	1
Organisational size is a key factor, as invariably different perspectives and priorities surface	1
It is about relationships not relatives and most organisations still employ a slave culture	1
Human beings are inconsistent, i.e. their reactions are often unpredictable.	1
Consultant Related Issues	
Departmental barriers are difficult obstacles to break down	1
Setting-up steering groups or representation of user functions will help in obtaining client ownership	1
Change management should have tangible outcomes and the implementation of change should be planned	1
Interdepartmental relations in client organisations are always complex and in general the rule is “keep out of internal politics”	1

Another suggestion concerning the causes of the negative attitudes when consultants were employed was that very few organisations formed teams to undertake business change projects effectively. It may be assumed that because organisations are of different sizes and consist of a range of departmental infrastructures then the project team structures found within different organisations are likely to be variable and dependent on the organisational structure. Bentley (1997) suggested, as discussed in Section 2.9.4, a two-tiered team structure be employed, where the day to day decisions are overseen by a project manager who may have other groups working to him. The second tier is the project board who are the decision-makers responsible for the commitment of resources. Organisational size was proffered as another possible factor that might affect interdepartmental relations. However, no explanation of why or how was offered. A means of overcoming difficult relations was provided by one consultant, who stated that setting up a steering group which represented different user functions/departments was essential, as the client feeling ownership is

paramount for the system's acceptance. The consultants felt there were a variety of explanations for the interdepartmental client organisational relationship. In Section 2.8.2 it was noted that an Institute of Management Consultancy's internal report suggested that the project be managed. One suspects that management of the project does not always include the management of the interdepartmental relationships, as the implementation of a IT/IS system or development of a strategy may not involve contact with more than the main client representative. This issue was explored in the case studies.

Consultant Related Issues

One consultant commented that departmental barriers were difficult obstacles to break down. However, as suggested by Kubr (1980), in Section 2.5.2.1, if consultants can elicit the support of the opinion leaders then breaking down departmental barriers will be eased. In this instance, Hersey and Blanchard's (1972) participatory change would be the desired method of bringing about change. One consultant, however, believed that it was best to "keep out of internal politics", but did not explain what should be done if it caused a problem within the project. This belief contradicts that of Margerison (1988), in Section 2.5.3, who suggests that consultants should be involved in influencing organisational politics. The manner in which internal politics was managed was investigated in the case studies.

4.7.7 BUDGETS

Table 4.19 presented the responses concerning budgeting for the project. The consensus was that clients slightly underestimated the IT budget {Q3S}. The consultants suggested that the amount allocated in the project did make a difference to the outcome of the project {Q3T}. The subsequent subsection discusses the explanation of their responses.

Table 4.19 How Budgetary Allocation Affected The Computerisation Project.

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q3S	Budgeting for computerisation	55	Over Estimated -	Appropriately Estimated -	Neutral 14	Slightly Under-estimated 37	Under Estimated 4	Missing Response 2	3.818	.547
Q3T	The amount allocated in the budget made a difference to the outcome of the project	55	Strongly Agree 9	Agree 27	Neutral 15	Disagree 3	Strongly Disagree 1	Missing Response 2	2.273	.870

Budgetary Allocation

Table 4.20 presents the results of the items related to the allocation of project budgets. As stated above, the amount allocated in the budget made a difference to the outcome of the project. Eleven consultants stated that the budget was a constraint. This may be because IT/IS projects often come in over budget (Ward and Peppard, 1996) and the consultants often try to work within budget constraints. However, seven other respondents felt that only the scope of the project was affected and not the quality of the work that was done if the project was under resourced. Five consultants would advise the client to amend the budget if they felt it was insufficient.

Two consultants in Table 4.20 stated that most clients' budgets arose as a result of figures obtained from sales sources and that in the majority of cases they had saved the clients' money by recommending less sophisticated systems than vendors. One consultant felt that cheap unsophisticated systems were in many projects all that were needed and that having large budgets encouraged clients to request over-complicated systems. Two consultants felt that there was usually a relationship between the resources committed and projects' outcomes; while allocating additional resources to failing projects would not improve them, withdrawing funding would almost certainly cause the projects to fail. This statement possibly also indicates that if there are other important factors, e.g. poor communication between clients and consultants not being addressed effectively there will probably be an unsuccessful outcome to the project because the client can spend large sums on the new system. Turner (1993) suggested, as discussed in Section 2.9.4, that cost is sometimes compromised in favour of quality. Finally, one consultant indicated that clients revise their figures throughout the duration of the projects. As there seemed interesting issues raised by the above discussion it was decided that budgetary allocation and its impacts should be investigated further in the case studies.

Table 4.20 The Division Of Responses Which Indicates How Budgetary Allocation Affects Computerisation Projects

The affects of budgetary allocation on the project	Number of Responses
Specific Budget related Issues	
The budget can be a constraint	11
The scope of the project is affected but not the quality if the budget is insufficient	7
Cost is always a valid factor, to be weighed against benefit	6
There is usually a relationship between the resources committed and the project's outcomes	2
Often the outcome is determined by improvements in policies and processes rather than expenditure on IT	2
Overspends are unpopular and their justification is always difficult	1
Sometimes the best results only mature with implementation of a complete system. Part solutions or too long between phases can result in inefficiencies	1
Changing the budget makes it a different project	1
Disproportionate emphasis is often given to costs when selecting systems	1
Client Related Issues	
Clients often underestimate the practical set-up costs	8
Most clients' budgets are the result of oversell figures obtained from vendors and large budgets encourage over-complicated systems	2
Clients often revise their budgets throughout a long project	1
Commercial companies' projects are unaffected by their budgets	1
The budget has a crucial effect on the public sector projects	1
Consultant Related Issues	
The consultant advises that the budget be amended	5
The Consultant must help the client identify the most appropriate system within his means as well as his needs. However, where compromises are made, provision capacity should be made for updating facilities as the business and its resources grow	1

4.7.8 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECTS

Table 4.21 shows the responses of the consultants who reported that they took part in the implementation of projects. Approximately half those who responded to this survey completed this section (29-30 consultants depending on the item). When asked to describe the outputs that clients received from their IT/IS systems, the consultants felt that they were mainly quite reasonable {Q3V1}, consistent {Q3V2}, quite relevant {Q3V3}, quite clear {Q3V4} and accurate {Q3V5}. The manner in which the systems operated was felt to be useful {Q3W3} but only quite flexible {Q3W1} and quite versatile {Q3W2}. Jones and Sasser (1995), as discussed in Section 2.9.3, discuss loyalty and how it can be fostered. From the consultants' responses, it appears that the outputs perhaps do not engender the complete satisfaction that the clients require to remain loyal. Therefore in light of the high percentage of successful projects presented in Figure 4.2 below it is unclear where the consultants obtained their information to make their assessments of the successfulness of projects. Conversely, this apparent difference may show that Jones and Sasser's views concerning

Table 4.21 The Outcomes Of Projects That Were Implemented By The Consultants

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q3V1	A description of the outputs the clients would receive from their new system	29	Reasonable	Quite Reasonable	Neutral	Quite Unreasonable	Unreasonable	Missing Response	1.759	.577
Q3V2			9 Consistent	18 Quite Consistent	2 Neutral	- Quite Inconsistent	- Inconsistent	28 Missing Response		
Q3V3			14 Relevant	12 Quite Relevant	3 Neutral	1 Quite Irrelevant	- Irrelevant	27 Missing Response		
Q3V4			9 Clear	19 Quite Clear	2 Neutral	- Quite Hazy	- Hazy	27 Missing Response		
Q3V5			10 Accurate	15 Quite Accurate	4 Neutral	- Quite Inaccurate	- Inaccurate	28 Missing Response		
Q3W1	A description of the manner in which the system would operate	29	16 Flexible	10 Quite Flexible	3 Neutral	- Quite Inflexible	- Inflexible	28 Missing Response	1.552	.686
Q3W2			3 Versatile	16 Quite Versatile	8 Neutral	2 Quite Limited	- Limited	28 Missing Response		
Q3W3			3 Useful	14 Quite Useful	10 Neutral	2 Slightly Useless	- Useless	19 Missing Response		
		30	15	12	3	-	-	27	1.600	.675

Table 4.21 Continued. The Outcomes Of Projects That Were Implemented By The Consultants

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
Q3X1	A description of the graphical user interfaces used, by the end-users, to interact with the systems	25	Simple 6 Easy	Quite Simple 6 Quite Easy	Neutral 8 Neutral	Quite Complex 4 Quite Difficult	Complex 1 Difficult	Missing Response 32 Missing Response 33	2.520	1.159
Q3X2		24	4 Powerful	6 Quite Powerful	11 Neutral	3 Quite Weak	- Weak	Missing Response 32	2.542	.932
Q3X3		25	5	7	12	1	-	32	2.360	.860
Q3Y	A description of the response time in which hardware/ software problems are dealt with		Fast	Quite Fast	Neutral	Quite Slow	Slow	Missing Response		
		30	10	13	7	-	-	27	1.900	.759

loyalty are not correct and that loyalty to an organisation may not be solely dependent on satisfaction; there may be other causal factors which are still to be identified.

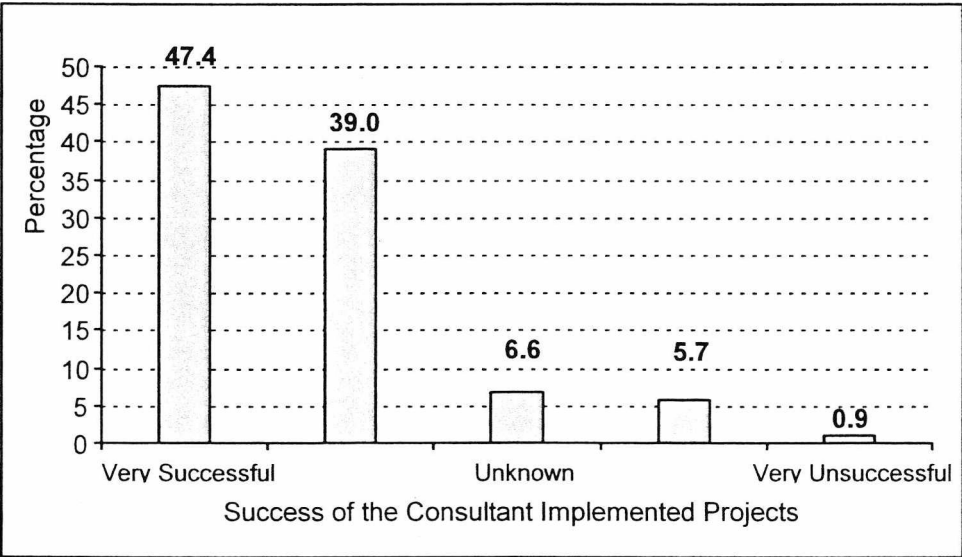
The graphical user interfaces (GUI) employed to interact with the systems were perhaps the component of the systems that the consultants felt needed most improvement. The GUIs used were felt to be not particularly simple {Q3X1}, easy {Q3X2} or powerful {Q3X3}. The COV for Q3X1 was 0.460. This indicates that there was quite a high distribution of responses relative to the mean. As the consultants were likely to have implemented a variety of systems it is not clear whether the GUIs themselves were difficult to use or their assessment of the end-users capabilities was quite poor. With the former response it may have been due to the available technology or the 'poor' design of the consultants. The responses raise questions of how the consultants could rate the success of projects as highly as was done in Figure 4.2. This assessment of the quality of the GUIs that are implemented may account for the end-user frustration identified by Goodhue and Thompson (1995), in Section 2.2.1, when IT systems do not meet the end-users' requirements. This finding then may also lend support to the belief, expressed by Barki and Hartwick (1994) in Section 2.2.1, that end-users should be involved in the development of IT systems.

When asked to describe their response times to problems {Q3Y}, consultants felt they dealt with both hardware and software problems quite swiftly. Basil et al. (1997) reported that one of the services offered by IT consultants was to provide a help desk (see Section 2.3), although one respondent felt that it was not his job to solve problems as he did not provide help desk services. This aspect of dealing with the problems of the implemented system is not one that is included in Mitchell and Fitzgerald's (1997) definition of IT consultants but an aspect that the author believes should occur in the review stage of the redefined organisation development model in Section 2.5.1. In this situation the period until which the output of the project should be monitored by the consultants, included in the contract and perhaps and be an additional element added to Fitzgerald and Willcocks' (1994) list of minimum criteria that is included in the service level agreement component of a contract.

From the response to item (Q3F) most of the respondents felt the projects were a success (see Table 4.16 above). Figure 4.2 shows that for the consultants who responded to this item more than three-quarters of projects were considered a success. The literature reviewed does not provide estimates of the number of successfully implemented consultancy projects. What

the literature does indicate is the types of behaviours that are likely to lead to unsuccessful relationships as identified by Covin and Fisher (1991), Davey (1971) and Ford (1974). In the case study projects the factors that affected the success of a project were analysed.

Figure 4.2 The Mean Value Of The Percentages Of Consultations That Have Successful Outcomes



4.8 MONITORING OF THE CONSULTANCY PROFESSION

The results from Section 4 of the survey instrument are found in Table 4.22. The consultants quite strongly agreed that client organisations would be able to use the services of consultants more efficiently, leading to a higher percentage of successful outcomes, if they knew what to expect at all stages of an assignment {Q4A}. There were varied opinions as to whether this information should be held on a national database {Q4B2}, but the majority of respondents agreed with this suggestion. The consultants felt the information that should be held on the database was a contact name and the types of organisations worked for and the specific work done by each consultant/consultancy. They were marginally in favour of recording whether the consultant was registered for BS5750 or ISO9000. The majority of responses were neutral when the consultants were asked about whether the database should record the fees charged, provide an accurate measure of the work done in each industry sector and the measure of the work done in other types of consultancy. The consultants were not in favour of having a specific measure of performance based on a standard measure for each

Table 4.22 The Determination Of The Existence Of A Potential National Database To Assess Performance Of The Consultants

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing Response		
Q4A	Client Organisations would be able to use consultancy services more effectively if they knew what to expect at each stage of to an assignment	55	30	22	2	1	-	2	1.527	.663
Q4B1	Information concerning consultancies could be located on a database of sorts	53	10	21	18	2	2	4	2.340	.960
Q4B2	This information should be nationally available	52	10	19	19	2	2	5	2.365	.971
The type of information that should be held on the database										
Q4C1	Type of organisations worked for and possibly a contact name	52	13	25	8	5	1	9	2.154	.978
Q4C2	Specific work done by each consultancy / each consultant	51	10	24	7	8	2	6	2.373	1.095
Q4C3	Specific measures of performance based on a standard measure for each consultancy firm	50	4	12	13	10	11	7	3.240	1.271
Q4C4	Specific measure of performance based on a standard measure for each consultant	50	3	6	13	12	16	7	3.640	1.225

Table 4.22 continued. The Determination Of The Existence Of A Potential National Database To Assess Performance Of The Consultants

Item Number	Item	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing Response		
Q4C5	Estimates of fees charged e.g. per consultant day	50	4	15	16	7	8	7	3.000	1.195
Q4C6	There should be an expert system based on this data by which consultants could be selected	51	1	2	13	13	22	6	4.039	1.019
Q4C7	This model could be used to determine what degree of success a specific project had. (This information to be given by the client.)	49	-	8	16	8	17	8	3.694	1.122
Q4C8	Accurate measures could be obtained about the work done in each industry sector	50	5	8	19	9	9	7	3.180	1.207
Q4C9	Measures could be obtained about the work done in other types of consultancy	50	4	5	25	9	7	7	3.200	1.069
Q4C10	Whether the consultant was registered for BS5750 or ISO9000	50	14	10	16	1	9	7	2.620	1.398

consultancy, consultant or having a model which could determine the degree of success of a project.

4.9 CROSSTABULATIONS

The second type of analysis presented in the chapter is the determination of the statistical crosstabular relationship between the variables. The findings are presented in this section. Crosstabulation is a means to determine how one variable is associated with another (Hedderson and Fisher, 1993). A series of crosstabulations were conducted but the majority showed no statistically significant interrelationships. Three sets of relationships proved to be statistically significant: 1) how good the client consultant relationship was at the end of the project and the competency of the consultant, 2) the client’s attitude and the health of the client consultant relationship; and, 3) the consultant’s attitude and the health of the client consultant relationship. All the Crosstabulations that were conducted and were either significant or slightly above the 5% significance level are shown in Appendix D. Those that showed statistically significant relationships when a 2x2 chi-squared exact test was performed are presented below.

4.9.1 THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE RELATIONSHIP AND THE COMPETENCY OF THE CONSULTANT

Table 4.23 shows the first of the significant sets of associations. The first variable was the need for the client and the consultant to have a good relationship on completion of the project, and the second variable the client trusting the consultant to make appropriate recommendations. The top row and the first column show the actual responses that were selected by the respondents from the Likert scale. The second and third columns show the number of respondents who reported to either strongly agreed or agreed/neutral that consultants’ competency had to be trusted before they could make recommendations. The exact test results suggest this relationship is significant at the 0.05 level. The inference drawn from this is that the consultants believed that clients trusting their competency facilitated a

good relationship at the end of the project. This point is accentuated by the fact that there were no negative responses (disagree or strongly disagree) on either scale. Trust was discussed in four areas of the literature review, e.g. 1) Fitzgerald and Willcocks' (1994) findings were that the trend was that consultancy relationships were tending to move towards more trust based ones; 2) Rogers' (1961) findings suggest that in helping relationships, the authority figure should induce trust to obtain the best outcomes; 3) Tilles (1961), Harrison (1990), Covin and Fisher (1991) and Valley (1991) found that trust was an influencing factor in the outcome of the project; and, 4) it is also a component of the assurance factor of the SERVQUAL instrument (see Section 2.9.3.1). In this respect the consultants' responses support the findings of the literature. In the case studies variables such as trust were investigated to determine what impact they had on project outcome success.

Table 4.23 A Good Relationship Being Based On Trusting The Competency Of The Consultant.

RGDREL1 * RCOMPET Crosstabulation

Count		RCOMPET		Total
		Strongly Agree	Agree/Neutral	
RGDREL1	Strongly Agree	34	1	35
	Agree/Neutral	16	5	21
Total		50	6	56

Key

RGDREL1 The need for a good relationship

RCOMPET Trusting the competency of the consultant to make appropriate recommendations

Chi-Square Tests

	Exact Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (1-Sided)
Fisher's Exact Test	.024	.024
Linear by Linear		
No. of Valid Cases	56	

4.9.2 THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE CLIENT'S ATTITUDE AND THE CLIENT CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIP

Chi-squared computations were conducted to determine how the health of relationship was influenced by the attitude of the client towards the consultant. Using Fisher's exact test the chi-square value for co-operativeness of the client and the quality of the client consultant

relationship was significant at the 0.01 level. Table 4.24 shows the relationship between the co-operativeness of the client and the consultant client's relationship. Although, co-operativeness is not specifically mentioned in the literature it is implied by Edvardsson (1990) and Klepper (1995) in that the interaction has to be effective for the consultation to be a success. As with trust, the co-operativeness of the client was a further issue that was investigated in the case studies.

Table 4.24 The Health Of The Client Consultant Relationship And The Co-operativeness Of The Client

RDESCL * RCLCOOP Crosstabulation				
Count		RCLCOOP		Total
		Cooperative	Quite cooperative/Neutral	
RDESCL	Very good	11	20	31
	Good/Neutral	1	23	24
Total		12	43	55

Key
 REDSCL The quality of the client and consultant relationship
 RCLCOOP The client's co-operativeness

Chi -Square Tests	Exact Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (1-Sided)
Fisher's Exact Test	.007	.007
Linear by Linear		
No. of Valid Cases	55	

4.9.3 THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE CONSULTANT’S ATTITUDE AND THE HEALTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP

This section presents the factor analysis of the data. The client consultant interaction and working relationship was discussed in Sections 2.8 and 2.8.2. The literature suggests that the relationship is based on the effective interaction between the client and the consultant and also when consultants performs the agreed upon role in the project. The following sections determine the effect of the consultant’s attitude on the health of the relationship.

Consultant User-Orientedness

The concept of being user-oriented has been explored from different perspectives in the literature by Van de Vliet (1997), Conrath and Mignen (1990) and Haywood-Farmer (1986). Their views indicate that the concept of service quality and user satisfaction is probably influenced by the users. The second concept is that discussed by Hunton and Beeler (1997), in Section 2.2.1, who use three decreasing levels of user participation in the development of IT/IS systems. The relationship between the variables shown in Table 4.25 was significant at the 0.001 level. Thus, the consultants appear to feel that for the client consultant relationship to be considered at least good then they need to be user-oriented. However, what this does not indicate is what the consultants understood by user-orientedness; whether it corresponded to either concept one, concept two or both. Therefore, in the case studies, the consultants' actual attitudes to the clients were investigated.

Table 4.25 The Effect On The Client Consultant Relationship Of The User-Orientedness Of The Consultant

RDESCL * RCNUSOR Crosstabulation				
Count				
		RCNUSOR		Total
		User-oriented	Sometimes user-oriented/Neutral	
RDESCL	Very good	22	9	31
	Good/Neutral	6	18	24
Total		28	27	55

Key

RDESCL The quality of the client and consultant relationship
RCNUSEROR The need for the consultant to be user-oriented

Chi -Square Tests

	Exact Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (1-Sided)
Fisher's Exact Test	.001	.001
Linear by Linear		
No. of Valid Cases	55	

Consultant Co-operativeness

The literature discussed in Section 2.8.2 concerning effective consultant behaviour suggests that the actual co-operativeness of the consultant has not previously been included as a factor

in the success of the project outcome. The results shown in Table 4.26 are significant at the 0.01 level, suggesting that the consultants recognise that when the client consultant relationship is considered at least good then the consultants are at least quite co-operative.

Table 4.26 The Effect On The Client Consultant Relationship Of The Co-operativeness Of The Consultant

RDESCL * RCNCOOP Crosstabulation				
Count		RCNCOOP		Total
		Cooperative	Quite Cooperative/Neutral	
RDESCL	Very good	21	10	31
	Good/Neutral	6	18	24
Total		27	28	55

Key

RDESCL The quality of the client and consultant relationship
RCNCOOP The need for the consultant to be co-operative

Chi-Square Tests

	Exact Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (1-Sided)
Fisher's Exact Test	.003	.002
Linear by Linear		
No. of Valid Cases	55	

These results were used in Chapter 6 in the discussion of professionalism in the case study projects.

4.10 ANALYSING THE FACTOR STRUCTURE

Factor analysis is a statistical method whereby a number of variables are reduced to produce factors. The variables are assumed to be linearly related and normally distributed. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) note that the factors summarise the patterns of correlations in the observed correlation matrix and that the technique is used to obtain interpretable factors.

Two types of factor analysis exist: confirmatory and exploratory. Confirmatory factor analysis may be used in the latter stages of research to confirm particular latent processes

(Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). However, this study used the exploratory approach to generate possible areas of further investigation concerning the underlying factor structure of the data collected. Gorsuch (1983) suggests that used in this way the technique can make the subsequent research more powerful.

The extraction technique that was used in this study was Maximum Likelihood factoring. This technique “estimates population values for factor loadings by calculating loadings that maximize the probability of sampling the observed correlation matrix from a population. Within constraints imposed by the correlations among variables, population estimates for factor loadings are calculated that have the greatest probability of yielding a sample with the observed correlation matrix” (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996, p665). In this study, a form of orthogonal rotation, i.e. varimax, was used. Finally, a factor-score coefficient matrix was used to predict the score of factors from the scores of the individual variables.

Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) suggest that one selects observed variables that exhibit a spread of scores. This is because if the observed scores are approximately the same on some variables “correlations among the observed variables are low and some factors may not emerge in the analysis” (p639). Another problem may be with the size of the sample and missing data. The sample size for this study was 57. Lawley and Maxwell (1971) suggest that the minimum number of cases that are required to use the maximum likelihood solution is 51. The sample group were representatives of the 120 IT management consultancy representatives that had originally agreed to take part in the study and the information they provide is used as a foundation on which further studies may be conducted.

Those variables with correlations with all other variables of between -0.3 and 0.3 were eliminated from the study, i.e. before the factors were extracted, as they may cause disturbance to the factor structure as suggested by Kim and Mueller (1978). A further problem in interpreting the data is dealing with variables unrelated to others. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) suggest that these are usually not correlated with the first few factors but may be extracted later in the analysis. Thus, caution should be exercised in interpreting factors with only one or two variables as they may not be stable and Thurstone (1947) recommends that factors should have at least three variables which correlate strongly with them. In general, the factors that were accepted in the study were the minimum number of factors that accounted for the greatest cumulative percentage as recommended by Kim and Mueller (1978).

There were four factors that were not eliminated from the analysis even though they only had two variables associated with them, i.e. CLASSIC MEASURES and ROLES (see Table 4.27) and INTERACTIONS and COMMUNICATION (see Table 4.28). These factors were kept in the analysis because: 1) as identified in Sections 2.3 and 2.9.4 the variables of time and keeping within the budget, found in the CLASSIC MEASURES factor, are two of the most commonly used measures on which project success is judged and both are included in Turner (1993) and Morris and Hough's (1987) definitions of what constitutes a project; 2) Tilles (1961) and Kubr (1980) (see Section 2.7), Ford (1974) (see Section 2.8.2) and Bentley (1997) (see Section 2.9.4) all discuss the importance of understanding the roles of the client, consultant and teams within a project which are included in the ROLES factor; 3) the inclusion of the emotional needs of the respondents being met as a variable in the key measures of project success in Section 4.2.3.1 and the variables included in the INTERACTIONS factor provide the first tentative support of Rogers' (1961) understanding of the type of behaviours that need to be demonstrated in all helping relationships; and, 4) communication has been identified as being an important part of projects (see Sections 2.4.2, 2.5.3, 2.6.2, 2.8.2, 2.9.3.1 and 2.9.3.2) and the COMMUNICATIONS factor identifies the method of communication that occurs between the client and the consultant.

4.11 FACTOR STRUCTURE OF OUTCOME MEASURES

A series of factor analyses were conducted. As mentioned above, the extraction technique used was maximum likelihood and the rotation was varimax. In this section three factor analyses are reported: outcome measures (Section 4.11.1), client consultant interaction (Section 4.11.2) and implementation of project recommendations (Section 4.11.3). The factor analysis of the Project's Results and Monitoring of the Consultancy Professions section of the consultant survey instrument proved not to be statistically significant and the factor structure was not clear. Consequently they have been eliminated from the analysis.

4.11.1 OUTCOME MEASURES

The variables for this part of the analysis were taken from section 1, items Q1A to Q1Z, of the consultant survey instrument. A number of variables that had correlations with the other variables of less than 0.3 were eliminated from the factor analysis. These were NOPROB (there were no problems on the project), TANBEN (there needs to be tangible benefits due to the installation of a computing system), ALEMPINC (all involved employees being included in the project) and NOUNNEDS (no need for either the client or the consultant to understand the needs of the other for there to be a successful project outcome). The scree plot indicated the likelihood of a four-factor model (see Figure 4.3). The factors obtained were *BENEFITS* {CLEMPSAT, CEOSAT, COMPET, CEOBENUN, EFFECOMM, INTANBEN}, *OWNERSHIP* {FEEPAIDP, FULLFEE, CEOOWN}, *CLASSIC MEASURES* {ONTIME, BUDGET} and *ROLES* {CLUNBROL, UNROLES} (see Table 4.27).

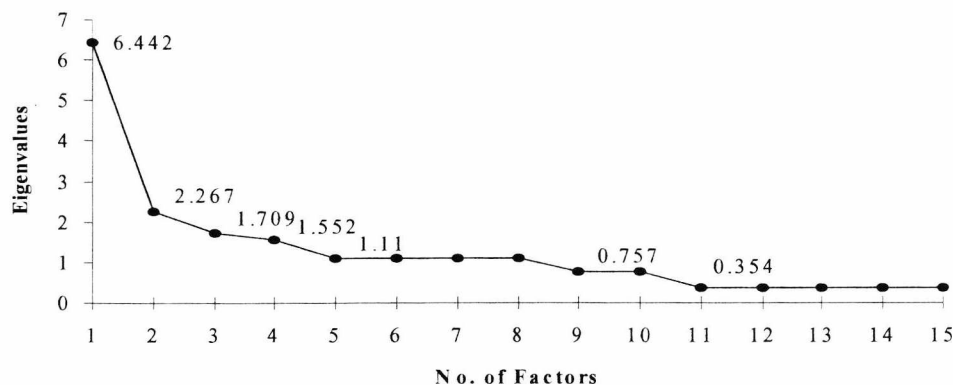
The *BENEFITS* factor contained two variables which did not appear to fit well into the structure, i.e. there being effective communication between the client and consultant {EFFECOMM} and the necessity of the client trusting the competency of the consultant to make recommendations {COMPET}. These two variables may have been better placed in the client consultant interaction section of the questionnaire. However, the reason for including them in this section was that they are variables which have a high degree of credence properties, as reported by Darby and Karni (1973). These are difficult to assess beforehand and an assessment is more likely to be made during and after the time that a service has been delivered.

Table 4.27 Factor Loadings: Outcome Measures

Variable Names	Item Descriptions	Factor Names			
		BENEFITS	OWNERSHIP	CLASSIC MEASURES	ROLES
CLEMPSAT	Client employees satisfied with the system	.71180			
CEOSAT	CEO satisfied with the system	.66739			
COMPET	Consultant's competency (trusted)	.60351			
CEOBENUN	CEO understands benefits of the system	.57621			
EFFECOMM	Mutual effective communication	.54109			
INTANBEN	Intangible benefits	.50350			
FEEPAIDP	Fee paid promptly		.98353		
FULLFEE	Fee paid in full		.67800		
CEOOWN	CEO takes ownership of the system		.52484		
ONTIME	Project comes in on time			.98677	
BUDGET	Project comes in within budget			.76601	
CLUNBROL	Client understanding of each party's role				.96794
UNROLES	Mutual appreciation of roles				.59436

Factor Names	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var.	Cum Pct
BENEFITS	3.64838	16.6	16.6
OWNERSHIP	2.19370	10.0	26.6
CLASSIC MEASURES	1.74436	7.9	34.5
ROLES	2.83998	12.9	47.4

Figure 4.3 Scree Plot Of Outcome Measures



ML Extracted 4 factors. 7 Iterations required.
Chi-Square Statistic: 188.6886, D.F.: 149, Significance: .0154

These might not be benefits arising from the consultancy relationship but may be a cause of these benefits. In terms of communication, the clients might express their satisfaction to other parties, e.g. by acting as a consultant referee site or discussing the success of the project in the media etc. In the *OWNERSHIP* factor there appears to be two variables {FEEPAIDP and FULLFEE}, which reflect that the CEO has taken ownership of the system and is most likely to be satisfied with it. The *CLASSIC MEASURES* are those measures that clients, consultants and the literature (Cleland, 1990; Turner, 1993) suggest are most often used to

measure the success of the relationships. Finally, the *ROLES* factor suggests that understanding of roles may be a means of leading to a successful outcome.

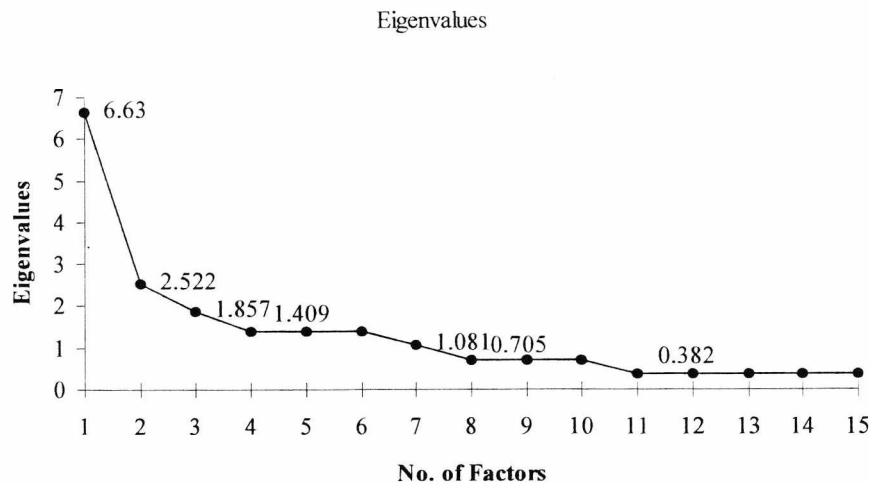
4.11.2 CLIENT CONSULTANT INTERACTION

From the scree plot of client consultant interaction (see Figure 4.4), there were between four to six factors suggested. However, after undertaking a number of analyses for three to five factors it was concluded that the four factor solution accounting for 47.0% of the variance was the most satisfactory to interpret. It accounted for 47.0% of the variance. These factors are *WORKING RELATIONSHIP*, *CEO INVOLVEMENT*, *INTERACTIONS*, and *COMMUNICATIONS* (see Table 4.28).

Table 4.28 Factor Loadings: Client Consultant Interaction

Variable Names	Item Descriptions	Factor Names	
		WORKING RELATIONSHIP	INTERACTIONS
		CEO INVOLVEMENT	COMMUNICATION
CNATCOOP	Consultant is cooperative with client	.74850	
CNATUSOR	Consultant is user-oriented	.70524	
CLATCOOP	Client is cooperative with consultant	.68808	
CLATCOUR	Client is courteous to consultant	.67181	
DESCRECL	Consultant client relationship	.60231	
COMCLPRD	Productive communication with client	.58778	
DESRELF	Consultancy client relationship	.57427	
COMCLMN	Meaningfulness of communications	-.56579	
COMCLVG	Precision of communications	-.50653	
CEOINVG	Good CEO involvement	.86428	
CEOINCON	Consistent CEO involvement	.79309	
CEOINSIG	Significance of CEO involvement	.61234	
RELCAND	Candid interactions		.98131
REOPEN	Open interactions		.72096
CLCOMWRT	Written communications to client		.79492
CLCOMVRB	Verbal communications with client		.62522
Factor Names	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var.	Cum Pct
WORKING RELATIONSHIP	2.81285	12.2	12.2
CEO INVOLVEMENT	4.68424	20.4	32.6
INTERACTION	1.97903	8.6	41.2
COMMUNICATION	1.32615	5.8	47.0

Figure 4.4 Scree Plot Of Client Consultant Interaction



ML Extracted 4 factors. 10 Iterations required.
Chi-Square Statistic: 230.0702, D.F.: 167, Significance: .0009

The signs for {CUMCLMN} and {COMCLVG} are negative, as these items were coded in the original questionnaire so that the positive responses were coded 5 and the negative 1, which was opposite to the majority of items.

Earlier in this chapter (Section 4.6), CEO involvement was recognised as important and again the variables in {CEO INVOLVEMENT} suggest that this is so. However, the author expected that the CEO's attitude to the project {CEOATPRJ} might have loaded with this factor. There may be several reasons why CEOs/Head of departments are involved with the project: 1) they are interested in promoting the success of the project because they may or may not have a personal vested interest in its success; 2) they may wish to see the project succeed because it may make the company appear more attractive to investors or potential investors; and, 3) the project may have to succeed in a public service environment to comply with the department's ministerial objectives.

If CEOs/heads of departments are not involved in the project it may be because: 1) the success of the project may not be in their personal interests; 2) the department in which the project is taking place is not one that has high internal political significance and thus any impacts resulting from the project will not cause the internal political situation to be exacerbated; and, 3) it is not part of their managerial style to become involved with the work of their junior managers. Buchanan and Boddy (1992), as discussed in Section 2.8.2, suggest that situations of low vulnerability that occur when the management are supportive of the

project require change agents who have sound technical knowledge and limited process skills. However in high vulnerability situations the change agents required are those who combine a limited technical background with strong process skills. Therefore, for the case studies, the type of CEOs/heads of department involvement and the skills of the change agent were investigated in relation to the success of the project.

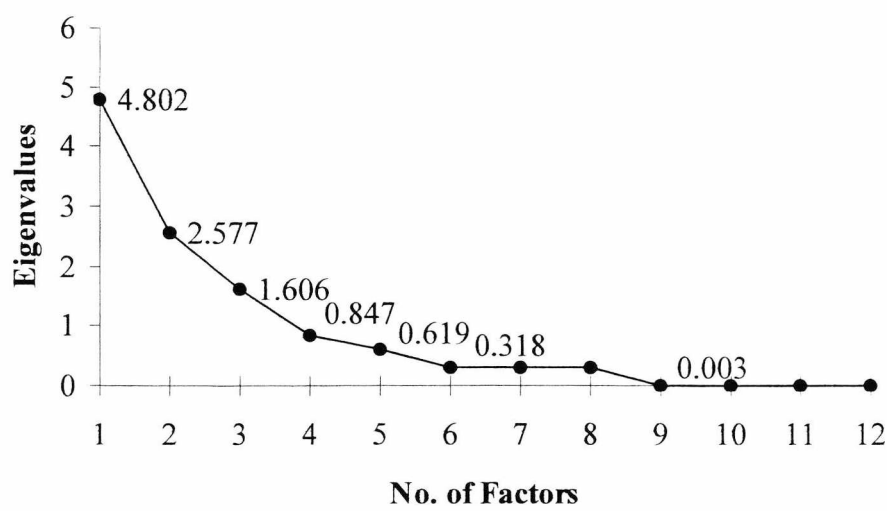
The variables found in the *INTERACTIONS* factor might have been expected to load highly into the *WORKING RELATIONSHIP* factor. This may not have occurred because the consultants may have made a distinction between attitude and interaction. The *COMMUNICATION* factor isolates the factors that deal with the form taken by communications with the client. One might have expected that the other variables related to communication {COMCLPRD, COMCLVG, COMCLMN}, i.e. the productiveness, precision and meaningfulness of the communications with the client, might have loaded highly on this factor. These variables may have loaded on the *WORKING RELATIONSHIP* factor because the consultants may have viewed the quality of the communication as an integral part of their attitude, i.e. the manner in which one party treated the other. All the variables that loaded on the *WORKING RELATIONSHIP* factor are also attitudinal rather than factual variables.

4.11.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

The second half of the project results section was aimed at those consultants who implement IT/IS systems. The scree plot suggested up to four factors (see Figure 4.5). Once the factor analysis was run only one factor resulted which accounted for a third of the variance, i.e. *SYSTEM OUTPUT* (see Table 4.29). This factor dealt with how the consultants believed that clients felt about the outputs received from the implemented system. This factor would likely be associated with Goodhue and Thompson's (1995) identification of those facets of the technology which could enhance or detract from the task technology fit and therefore have a pivotal effect on how the users perform their tasks. Additional considerations when viewing the output of the projects are that both the clients and the consultants are responsible for their delivery and Gilb (1989) suggested that such outputs should be phased. Therefore, when considering the output, the clients may not always be sure at the beginning of the project what

they want to achieve, as some improvements may only be identified when the implemented solution is in use.

Figure 4.5 Scree Plot Of The Implementation Results



ML Extracted 1 factors. 7 Iterations required.
Chi-Square Statistic: 134.9632, D.F.: 54, Significance: .0000

Table 4.29 Factor Loadings: The Implementation Results

Variable Names	Item Descriptions	Factor Name
SYSTEM OUTPUT		
SYOUTPT3	Relevance of output	.99751
SYOUTPT4	Clarity of output	.86385
SYOUTPT1	Reasonableness of output	.80236
SYOUTPT2	Consistency of output	.64825
SYOUTPT5	Accuracy of output	.63867
DEALPROB	Response time to solve system problems	.50659
Factor Name	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var.
SYSTEM OUTPUT	3.99578	33.3
		Cum Pct
		33.3

4.12 FINDINGS AND FURTHER RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section discusses the subjects that were identified as requiring further research and the questions that were formulated as a result of the findings from this chapter. The first issue that was felt to need further investigation was whether there was a skills transfer (see Section 4.3). This issue is important because consultants often advertise this as one of their practices’ selling points but the consultant respondents did not feel that it was an important success outcome measure. The author therefore posed the following research questions. The item beside each in brackets indicates which research aim it addresses:

1. Is it in the consultants' interest that the clients are only provided with a limited amount of information concerning how the IT/IS systems operate as this facilitates the need for the consultants to be brought in again to undertake further work (repeat business)? (research aim 3)

An additional point was that payment of consultants' fees was not rated as an important outcome success measure (see Section 4.3). This is interesting because as consultants operate in the private sector the consultants need to make a profit and if fees are not paid then the practices cannot meet their financial obligations. As suggested earlier the author would have expected that as the payment of fees might have figured more prominently as an outcome success measure. The consultants' response may be reflective of what Ram (1999) reported in his study; i.e. that fees do not necessarily reflect the importance of a job, in that consultants will undertake 'unprofitable' work for preferred clients or perhaps that, in practice, fees are always paid.

Another issue requiring further investigation, discussed in Section 4.3, was that a number of consultants felt that an important outcome success measure was that clients' needs were met. However, they did not specify whether they meant the clients' practical or their emotional needs. This was an issue that was discussed in the case study instrument. Other findings that required further investigation were that of the receipt of VFM and the completion of a satisfaction survey (see Section 4.4). When discussing VFM it was felt important to determine whether it was in relation to the advice that the clients were given or the system that they had received. Consideration of what should be one of the principal concerns of the consultants gave rise to the following research question:

2. If more consultants considered making VFM one of the main project objectives, would there be an improvement in project success outcomes? (research aim 4)

As was suggested in Chapter 2, the completion of a satisfaction survey is a means by which consultants can determine the service quality that they have provided to the client. In the case studies an attempt was made to identify the means by which quality assurance data was collected.

How the consultants' work reflected the organisation's culture and its internal political situation was felt to need further investigation (see Section 4.7.6). The findings of that section gave rise to the following question:

3. Are clients who do not discuss their organisational strengths and weaknesses with the consultants more likely to have a greater number of problems with the consultants? (research aim 4)

An additional issue that it was considered needed further investigation was to determine what the consultants felt were the intangible and tangible benefits of the projects and how these were related to what the literature identified as added value or customer value (see Section 4.5).

Two of the system related measures discussed in Section 4.4 were additionally researched in the case studies. They were related to the manner in which the implemented system performed. Reliability in terms of how the IT/IS systems performed would be expected to be an important measure for all the organisations for which the consultants worked. One would also suspect that having paid for at least the consultant's advice a client would require that the output of a project was better than what had been in place previously.

When considering the key measures of success only two consultants concerned themselves with the operating capability and the user-friendliness of the system (see Section 4.5). Again these variables would be expected to be important to the client and hence should be of importance to the consultants. These issues were further investigated through the case study instruments.

When looking at the findings concerning the interactions between the client and the consultant it became apparent that further investigation was required to identify the level of involvement that individuals from the client organisation had in the project.

As the majority of consultants, in Section 4.7.2, were involved in the formulation of planning mechanisms for computerisation the case study respondents were requested to provide information on the type of planning mechanism that was used, if at all. Further, an attempt was made to determine who was responsible for development of the planning mechanism.

The consultants were also questioned about the importance of having a planning mechanism and its effect on the project. Similar findings were obtained from the responses to questions concerning the existence, nature and responsibility for the formulating of policies for controlling computerisation (see Section 4.7.2). Therefore, a series of questions were asked in the case study interview schedules relating to these points and linkages between the two topics were sought.

The author believed that the creation of a business advantage was just as relevant in the modern public sector as in the private sector (see Section 4.7.3). Therefore, a number of questions addressed whether the system was meant to create a business advantage, whether it actually did so unintentionally and how this affected the client's view of the success of the project. A number of items were devised in the case study interview schedules to obtain additional information concerning these issues.

Of particular interest in this thesis are the management and emotional dynamics operating in the projects. To investigate these issues questions were asked in the outcome measures, project relations and inter-departmental relations sections of the case study instruments. To try to overcome biased responses given by the consultants to the success of the projects, paired responses were sought. The author believed that any differences between the client and consultant responses would be highlighted, as Butler et al. (1993) found that often client respondents took part in this kind of study so that they could air any grievances rather than to provide the consultants with good references. Raimond and Eden's (1990) belief that clients who show a strong positive emotional commitment to the implementation of IT management consultants' recommendations are more likely to implement them led to the following question:

4. Are the clients more likely to take ownership of the outputs if they demonstrate strong positive commitment to the project? (research aim 5)

As a consequence of the data collected on the monitoring of the consultancy profession the author felt that it was necessary to compare the views of the clients with those of the consultants. The author included items in the case study interview schedules to analyse the type of problems that might occur during an IT/IS consultancy project.

4.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This section summarises the findings of this Chapter. The first analytical tool employed was a frequency analysis. The initial results from the section dealing with outcome measures showed that there was agreement with the necessity for there to be a contract and that there should be mutual understanding of the client and consultant roles. However, the consultants did not strongly agree with Covin and Fisher's (1991) suggestion that all affected employees should be involved in the project.

Other important outcome measures of success that the consultants identified were repeat business, the client's needs being met and the client's willingness to act as a reference site. An interesting comment that was not identified in the literature is the importance of clients discussing their organisational strengths and weaknesses with the consultants. One might suspect that to help the consultants effectively perform their task clients need to provide them with as clear a picture as possible of how the organisation operates.

Covin and Fisher (1991) identified lack of involvement as being one of the contributing factors to a project's failure. The consultants believed that the senior executives in client organisations were not as involved in projects as they ought to have been.

When considering the planning of computerisation products, the majority of respondents stated that there were mechanisms employed to help plan computerisation. There was some question as to whose responsibility it was to have a mechanism in place. Most of the respondents stated that there was also a policy for controlling computerisation. However, there was no clear picture discernible as to what this policy should entail.

More than seventy percent of the consultants believed the systems that they created were used to give their clients a competitive advantage. One of the problems that was perceived by the consultants was the difficulty in quantifying the advantage provided by the system relative to clients' competitors. This again highlights the problems faced in developing a measurement system that attempts to isolate one element of a company's business strategy from another. The business advantage created by possessing a new IT/IS system cannot always be isolated from other aspects of the business that make one company 'better' than another, e.g. the quality of the products produced, the effectiveness of its debt collection system etc. The

principal business advantages created were improvements in service and costs. Unfortunately, the respondents did not provide many specific examples of the type of business advantages.

The predominant types of system found were financial accounting systems. The second and third most common were office support systems and manufacturing systems, respectively. These categories add to Basil et al.'s list (1997) and they make a further contribution to the understanding of this subject as they identified additional types of work conducted by IT management consultants.

As expected, the consultants felt that the majority of projects were a success. When asked to discuss whether the clients understood their own IT requirements the consultants' responses did not provide a conclusive answer. They also felt that in most cases six months and over was a reasonable time for developing a system.

The relationships in projects were not felt to be particularly productive or harmonious. Where there were interdepartmental problems on the project the consultants felt that this was often due to internal politics. They did feel that the relationships should be managed.

Approximately half the respondents indicated that they were involved with implementation of the recommended systems. Whilst they found no major problems with the operation of the systems they reported that there could be improvements in their flexibility and versatility.

The consultants believed that the projects would be more successful if clients knew what to expect at all stages of an assignment. There was not as uniform a response when asked about the type of information that should be held on a database to help clients understand the stages of the project. In essence, what the consultants preferred was a contact name, the type of organisations worked for and the type of work that they conducted. They did not want any assessment made of their proficiency as individuals or of their practices.

The relationships that were found in the crosstabulations demonstrate that the consultants believed that the clients trusting their competency facilitated a good relationship. Further analysis of the relationships indicated that when the clients were cooperative the relationship was good. Similarly, when the consultants were user-oriented and co-operative this was also

true. This supports the literature discussed in Section 2.8.2 that describes the characteristics that are needed for a good working relationship.

The third and final analytical technique used on the data was a factor analysis. There were nine factors identified: In the analysis of the Outcome Measures section of the survey instrument *BENEFITS*, *OWNERSHIP*, *CLASSIC MEASURES* and the *ROLES* factors were identified. The factors identified in the Client and Consultant Interaction section were *WORKING RELATIONSHIP*, *CEO INVOLVEMENT*, *INTERACTIONS*, and *COMMUNICATION*. Finally in the Implementation of Project Recommendation section only the *SYSTEM OUTPUT* factor was identified.

The following are a list of issues arising from the analysis in this chapter that were further investigated in the case studies through the questions asked in the client and consultant interview schedules:

1. The type of senior management and employee involvement in the projects (see Sections 4.3 and 4.11.3)
2. The requirement for a skills transfer (see Section 4.3).
3. How were value for money assessments made in the projects (see Section 4.4).
4. The management of the project, e.g. whether the project was kept under control or whether there was flexibility built into the project (see Section 4.4).
5. Whether the new IT/IS system was an improvement on the old IT/IS system (see Section 4.4).
6. How clients indicated that they were satisfied with the IT project's outputs and outcomes, e.g. by offering the IT consultants repeat contracts and/or by having tangible benefits (see Section 4.5).
7. How clients indicated that they had taken ownership of the system (see Section 4.2.3).
8. Whether there were indicators of the project's success shown by employees, e.g. improvement in staff morale (see Sections 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.9.1, 4.9.2 and 4.9.3)
9. Whether the case study respondents' practical and emotional needs were met and how meeting those needs affected their assessment of the success of the projects (see Section 4.5).
10. Whether effective communication was demonstrated (see Section 4.2.4).
11. Whether company size affected the planning for computerisation that occurred in organisations (see Section 4.7).

12. The types of interdepartmental client relationships and how, if at all, were they managed (see Section 4.7.6)
13. How the internal political situation manifest itself and how it was managed (see Section 4.7.6).
14. How the project budgets were allocated (see Section 4.7.7).
15. Whether the success of projects was measured and if so, what measures were used (see Section 4.7.8).
16. Whether the client respondents believed that having a database to monitor the performance of IT management consultants would be useful (see Section 4.8).

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5 THE CASE STUDY DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The case studies were carried out as described in the methodology description (see Chapter 3). This chapter outlines the case study descriptions whose analysis will be presented in Chapter 6. A grounded theory approach was used for this stage of the study. The details presented for case studies includes: 1) a description of each consultancy organisation; 2) a profile of the consultant respondent; 3) a brief narrative concerning the client organisation; 4) a profile of the client respondent; and, 5) the details of the project.

The summaries and descriptions have been compiled from:

1. the case study interview transcripts, with the respondents
2. the case study organisation's internal documents which include project final reports and strategy documents, marketing and organisational information literature, newsletters, organisational briefing packs, financial accounts, capital investment manual (providing IM&T guidance), notes from presentation to Steering Group, documentation for stakeholders, curricula vitae and information from other members of staff who worked within the client organisation, e.g. correspondence.
3. published speeches from the Secretary of State from the Central Government Department
4. independent archival sources, which include information about the CCTA
5. newspapers, such as the Times and the Guardian.

Where possible interviewees' factual statements were verified against the documentation listed above.

In certain instances, details have not been included because of confidentiality or because respondents were no longer in a position to be contacted to clarify any queries. However, the author has attempted to supply as full an account of the projects as was possible based on the information obtained from all these sources. Three summary tables of the project details have been included at the end of this chapter.

The following names have been assigned to the projects (certain names have been anonymised to comply with the wishes of the respondents) and throughout the course of the

Chapter the organisations will be identified by the name typed in brackets, i.e. the Central Government Department (CGD), Preston Acute Hospitals (Trust), the Law Society (LS), London Borough of Waltham Forest Library Service (Library), Companies House (CH), NHS Executive (NHSE), BACS (BACS) and the Department of Transport (DOT).

5.2 THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (CGD) PROJECT - A MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION NEEDS AND SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT FOR A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

5.2.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: HEDRA

Hedra's principal source of employment was at the strategic level within the public sector. Its client base included central government departments, large Executive Agencies and other public bodies. The consultants' capabilities ranged from the development of new IS/IT strategies through to providing assistance in the implementation of previously developed IS/IT strategies. Hedra did not sell software or other IT services and its promotional literature stated that it has no other interests than those of its clients.

5.2.2 THE CGD CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

David Millard was the director for business development within Hedra. His role was to work on the proposals for making bids for assignments. Although not personally involved in the Central Government Department (CGD) project he was the assignment director who initially bid for the project. Once the contract was won, he was responsible for the quality control of the assignment.

5.2.3 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

5.2.4 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The following details were correct at the time of the interview, but since 1 January 1997 the organisation has been divided into smaller departments as part of the reorganisation that took place. The department was an Executive government agency, which was under the auspices of the Department of National Heritage (DNH). It had a strategic role in the development of sport throughout the UK. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland had autonomous bodies that carried out a similar role, but the CGD acts in a co-ordination role for International events.

5.2.5 THE CGD CLIENT RESPONDENT

The respondent was a strategic planner within the CGD. He was the project manager and responsible for liaising with the lead consultant and disseminating information throughout the CGD to the Steering Group, senior management and end-users. He had had no previous experience of purchasing or using IT management consultants. He was also in charge of one of the management portfolios, i.e. Sports Development and Partners, which was formed as a result of the project.

5.2.6 THE CGD PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The first stage of the project was conducted in five distinct phases, i.e. *preparation, business analysis, review of existing systems, identifying opportunities* and *documenting the IS strategy*. Completion of each phase had to occur before the next phase could begin. The preparation phase involved the consultants reading about and becoming familiar with the work of the organisation. They then conducted approximately 160 interviews with the Chairman, the CEO, managers, users and the IT provider of the CGD to help them scope the remainder of the work. The consultants next produced a project plan to identify: 1) expected activities and their timescales, 2) what deliverables would be produced and how they would be assessed, and 3) an outline of the remainder of the project, in terms of interview schedules and other administrative details. The consultants had difficulty understanding that as the CGD's services were delivered through intermediaries the CGD had to consult other organisations when developing its IS. The CGD project manager had to guide the consultants through the process of understanding how this area of the public sector operated. This involved explaining that due to the CGD's accountability to its stakeholders, the CGD spent a long time deliberating before any decisions were made.

The second phase, i.e. business analysis, involved conducting a strengths and weaknesses analysis. The consultant noted that the CGD progressively found it easier to discuss their organisational strengths and weaknesses as the project progressed. The client respondent felt that this was a measure of success of the project. From the strengths and weaknesses analysis potential areas for savings were identified and the strategic framework was

developed so that these could be realised. In the review phase the current systems were audited. The phases were monitored closely to ensure the project timetable was met.

The consultation process in the identifying opportunities phase, between Hedra and the Steering Group, allowed time to explore options within the project so as to develop a solution that both parties, the client and the consultants, felt was right for the organisation. In this phase the project timetable permitted flexibility to explore the various options proposed by the consultants.

This process of negotiation finally resulted in the CGD's CEO and senior management group agreeing an IS strategy document that detailed the single option of an office wide network. The strategy developed covered both IS and IT and the proposed network offered:

1. Improved speed of data transfer.
2. Improved availability of information to employees.
3. Cost savings resulting from reduction in overlaps and duplication of data.

The implementation of the IS framework was initially envisaged to be based on a number of "portfolios" (departments). The portfolios were as follows: Standard Administrative and Office Systems, Finance Services, Sports Development and Partners Portfolio, Human Resources and Information Services. The portfolios had a number of functions:

1. co-ordinating the plans and systems development and providing an overview of what was happening in each area of the CGD.
2. making each portfolio project manager accountable for recommendations to senior managers regarding the portfolio's: 1) requirements including conflicting requests; 2) priorities; and 3) expenditure.
3. liaising with the key programme groups (policy departments) to assist them in determining the feasibility of their requirements.

For example, the client respondent was the manager for the sports development and partners portfolio. His areas of responsibility covered sports facilities, grants, sports information, storing contract details for partner organisations and bibliographic information, IT/IS development, including development of new media such as the Internet and CD ROMs.

At the implementation stage of the network, the client respondent acted as an intermediary between the project development team and the intermediate users. The CGD implementation team was enthusiastic about the project and it was the client respondent's task to transmit the enthusiasm about the implementation throughout the CGD. The implementation involved sending each portfolio team for a 2-day training course. While they were away the new IT system was installed and on their return the team was able to begin to use their systems. At the time of the interview the program of implementation and training was underway.

PROJECT BUDGET

The budget for the project was £33,750, which was for 49 days of consultants' fees and expenses. The consultant respondent stated that it was £35,000. The difference in fee rates appears to have been due to the consultant respondent not being aware of the exact cost of the project and providing a rounded figure.

5.2.7 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The client was sufficiently impressed by the experience demonstrated by the lead consultant to commission a further study from Hedra to undertake a pay and grading review in more detail.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The client respondent identified his needs as arranging meetings and promoting the need to make attendance at these meetings a priority for his colleagues. The consultant respondent felt that not disrupting the client's working environment too much when collecting data was the client's practical need. The client respondent reported that he had two emotional needs. The first of which was that he believed that he was perceived as 'treading on peoples toes' because he was a strategic planner responsible for an IT/IS project and not a member of the IT team. He did feel that he was the best person to undertake the role of project manager because he had a) project management skills and b) did not have an allegiance to any faction within the organisation. His second emotional need was that he

wanted all those involved in the project to possess the same level of knowledge and demonstrate enthusiasm. He did not feel that he achieved this aim. The consultant respondent reported that the IS/IT strategy threatened vested interests from various departments which resulted in fears and reservations becoming evident: the consultants had to be sensitive to these concerns.

The client respondent believed that the consultants' practical needs were to develop a good working relationship with the CGD and ensure that the client was also happy with the outputs of the project. Having an appropriately equipped place to work, access to documents, an easily obtainable contact person within the client organisation and people attending meetings were the consultants needs. The client respondent reported that he did not consider what the consultants' emotional needs were. The consultant respondent identified the consultants' emotional needs as undertaking interesting work and making a difference to the client organisation's operations. He did feel that his needs as a consultant were subordinate to those of the client.

5.2.8 VALUE FOR MONEY

There were no formal measures used to assess the success of the project, although the client respondent intuitively felt that the CGD had received value for money because the output had: 1) been delivered on time and to specification and 2) met the CGD's requirements and was being implemented. In addition, the CGD's customers throughout the organisation felt that the strategy was useful.

The newly implemented IS/IT system was due to be reviewed in April 1997 and at that time the CGD would decide: 1) whether the system had brought about a business advantage and 2) whether all end-users were satisfied with the framework and network. The client respondent reported that it would be difficult for them to attribute improvements solely to the IT/IS system, as there had been other organisational changes occurring before and during its implementation.

5.3 THE PRESTON ACUTE HOSPITAL (TRUST) PROJECT -INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY (IM&T) STRATEGY

5.3.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: THE HEALTH CONSULTANCY

5.3.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The Health Consultancy, founded in 1989, specialised in providing consultancy services to the National Health Service (NHS). At the time of the interview in 1996 it had carried out more than 350 engagements for over 100 NHS organisations across all parts of the Department of Health. It had offices in London, the Midlands and the North East. The Health Consultancy provided services in the following areas: strategy development, change management, action planning, organisational development, feasibility studies, performance improvement, project management and business case development.

5.3.3 THE TRUST CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

The respondent was a Director and headed the firm in the section which was called 'Acute Practice'. This section undertook work principally within NHS trusts. Before joining the consultancy, he had been a Project Manager/Director and consultant at Landcorp Healthcare Management Systems and a Senior Project Manager for a leading European systems integrator and a major UK software house. He had had experience of planning, managing, designing and implementing large complex NHS information systems and information management and technology (IM&T) strategies for providers within the NHS. As the lead consultant, he worked with another senior consultant on the project.

5.3.4 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: THE PRESTON ACUTE HOSPITALS

5.3.5 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The Department of Health and the NHS Executive which was responsible for information management and technology (IM&T) strategies and policies within the NHS, insisted in 1989 that all hospitals have an IM&T strategy. The NHS Executive also provided guidelines on the sort of issues that the strategy should address and its content.

The aim of the project was to develop a long-term Trust-wide comprehensive strategic framework to guide the hospital's development and investments in IM&T that supported its business needs. The Trust's Board was the end user of the strategy.

5.3.6 THE TRUST CLIENT RESPONDENT

The client respondent was the Assistant Development Director responsible for IM&T for the Trust. Her role was that of Project Manager.

5.3.7 THE TRUST PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The stages of the project were *outline specification, initiation and data collection, analysis, options appraisal and writing*. The first action of the consultants in February 1996 was to produce an outline specification of what they were going to do and present it to the steering group for consideration. Some minor amendments were made to the outline specification document and the assignment commencement date was agreed. The consultants believed that an additional benefit of this meeting was gaining senior management support.

The initiation and data collection stage involved the consultants identifying the Trust's current IS/IT status and its future needs. The client respondent believed that the consultants were able to make suggestions more quickly than another consultancy practice would have because of the consultants' familiarity with local and national IM&T developments. The consultants suggested undertaking the strategy differently from how the Trust had envisaged that it should be done and the client respondent felt that this had been beneficial.

The consultants and members of the Trust conducted the initial interviews with staff to gain their commitment to the project and ensure that concerns across the Trust could be identified and addressed. The consultants provided the Trust's staff with guidance about the type of information that should be collected during the interviews. The client respondent felt that the consultants sometimes had too great expectations about the number

of interviews that they could conduct with the Trust's senior clinical staff, who still had their normal duties to perform.

The interview information together with other background material, e.g. the Trust business strategy was used to form working papers for the next stage. The analysis stage began by defining the Trust's current situation in terms of IT, continued by defining its business objectives and then highlighted the issues and finally defined the challenges in bridging the gap between the two. This process included highlighting the areas that needed improvement and recognising the Trust's strengths.

A number of options were identified in early March 1996, as part of the *options appraisal stage* and these were presented in workshops to the Strategy Steering Group. The group gave feedback to the consultants in early April 1996.

Three strategy documents were produced, in April 1996, at the *writing stage*: The documents that were presented to the steering group were: 1) an IM&T strategy to support the Trust's business management, 2) an IM&T strategy to support patient care and 3) a document that outlined the IM&T implementation plan. The plan was developed to be used as a starting point from which the hospital could purchase and develop the IM&T systems. The strategy covered all the Trust's functional areas and showed how all of these areas would be integrated. The implementation plan, the consultant stated, was important because it allowed staff to visualise what was to be delivered by their new IM&T systems.

The strategy documentation was then sent to the members of the Steering Group for review. A number of people did not understand it and so they were supplied with supplementary documentation, which explained the technical information contained in the strategy. The project ended when the Trust's Board signed-off the final drafts of the IM&T strategy documentation at the end of April 1996.

PROJECT BUDGET

The client respondent reported that the project budget was £19,500. It was based on the number of man days per consultant working on each area of the project, e.g. research, interviews, workshops and preparation time. The Development Director was responsible

for deciding the budget. The Trust had limited resources available and therefore had to limit the input of the consultants to that given amount. Due to the Health Consultancy's knowledge of the Trust they offered to undertake the work at a rate that was lower than normal. The client respondent was aware that other Trusts had paid considerably more to achieve the same objectives and so agreed that the members of the Trust would assist the consultants to conduct some aspects of the work in order to keep the project within budget.

The consultant stated that the budget was approximately £15,000. This amount was allocated as follows:

- £3,000 for data collection and interviews
- £4,000 for identifying the current situation and strategic goals
- £4,000 for preparing the options
- £4,000 for writing the report.

The difference between the two amounts can be accounted for because the Health Consultancy produced additional explanatory documentation for the Trust, once the IM&T strategy had been delivered.

5.3.8 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The client respondent reported that the consultants continually sought the opinion of the client staff involved in the project to ensure that they were happy that the project was going well. The client respondent felt that it "proved their [the consultants] caring element" and contributed to their success working on the project.

The consultant stated that the Trust was a good client in comparison with many other Trusts. They were also advanced in their ability to implement IT.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The client's practical needs were for there to be the minimum amount of disruption to the normal working lives of those being interviewed and attending workshops. This she did feel was mostly accomplished. Her fears were that the IM&T strategy that would be delivered would not be achievable and that especially the senior clinical staff would not see the necessity for the IM&T requirements for the Trust and not support the implementation

of the strategy once it had been delivered. She felt that her fears had not been realised as the IM&T strategy had been accepted. The consultant stated that the client's practical need was to have the interviews and workshops undertaken. This he noted had been accomplished because the client had been given responsibility for making the administrative arrangements and the consultants had then conducted the interview or workshops. The consultant believed that the client senior staffs' emotional needs were mainly about having their opinions and concerns listened to, acknowledged and addressed.

The client respondent believed that the consultants' practical needs were to keep within the agreed timescale. Some of the administrative arrangements had to be undertaken by Trust staff and the client respondent believed that they had managed to overcome any difficulties that had been due to staff not attending workshop sessions or interviews when they had been scheduled to do so. The client respondent stated that she did not believe that the consultants had any emotional needs. The consultant respondent felt that his practical needs were to have his personal objectives, which had been set at the beginning of the project, met. His emotional needs he felt were to have a project successfully completed and be happy and enjoy working on the project. The consultant respondent felt that this project had been completed satisfactorily because 1) they had produced outputs which were slightly different from those that they had produced in the past on other projects and 2) at each stage the project the outputs had been signed off by the Steering Group.

5.3.9 VALUE FOR MONEY

The client respondent believed that the Trust had received value for money because the consultants had undertaken the work for a much lower fee than they normally charged and had met all the agreed objectives for the project. The consultant felt that the Trust had received value for money because the consultancy had undertaken the project for less than their normal fee rates per day and had conducted one day's work for free.

5.4 THE LAW SOCIETY (LS) PROJECT: PROJECT TITLE - REVIEW OF THE REGULATION INFORMATION SYSTEM

5.4.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: ABC ASSOCIATES LTD

5.4.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

At the time of the interview, ABC Associates Ltd was an IS/IT management consultancy, specialising in management and strategic information technology consulting to central government and the Ministry of Defence (ABC Annual Report and Accounts, 1995). Its services included IS strategies, IT architecture studies, risk management, market testing, feasibility studies, security studies, management of change, technical support and PRINCE project management and training. The consultancy had been founded in 1984 by its current Chairman and had grown each year to its turnover of £3 million per annum in 1995. ABC at the time of the interview had 16 permanent staff and used up to 30 associate consultants, at any one time, from a panel of more than 600 senior or principal consultants.

5.4.3 THE LS CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

The respondent was the Chairman of ABC Associates. He had had more than fifteen years experience as a senior consultant in the public sector. He led the consultancy team that reviewed the multi-million pound project for the Law Society. Other roles he has held within ABC Associates were Policy / Strategy Director and Manager of the Central Government Operations department.

5.4.4 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: THE LAW SOCIETY

5.4.5 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The Law Society (LS) was founded in 1825 and was granted a royal charter in 1845. It has 3 functions:

1. acting as a registrar for solicitors
2. regulating the legal profession, i.e. upholding standards of professional conduct
3. dealing with customer complaints.

The Society served 65,000 practising and 20,000 non-practising solicitors as well as 40,000 students at the time of the interview. Central to its administrative processes was a large information database. Its function was to ensure that all the solicitors had paid for and received their practising certificates. The information that the database held was required to be complete, accurate, consistent and available to users in all parts of the organisation.

5.4.6 THE LS CLIENT RESPONDENT

The client respondent headed the Research and Policy Planning Unit (RPPU). As the client respondent had been used to commissioning research projects, she had an established tendering procedure and was used to managing external supplier contracts. She was therefore chosen to manage the project. The client respondent was also secretary to the Regulation Information System (REGIS) Review Sub-Committee, discussed below, which was comprised of members of the Law Society's Council.

5.4.7 THE LS PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The stages of the project were as follows:

1. The ABC team of consultants reviewed over 70 documents related to this project, which spanned the previous five years.
2. More than 30 of the members of the LS' staff who were or had been associated with the REGIS project were interviewed.
3. Subsequently the ABC team visited the three LS' locations and viewed the ORACLE system whilst in operation and discussed it with the users.
4. The ABC team presented interim findings to the RRSC.
5. The findings were analysed.
6. The final report was written and signed-off in June 1996.

PROJECT BUDGET

The client respondent stated that the budget was £25,000. The majority of the budget was spent on the consultants' fees. A fifth of the budget (approximately £5,000) was allocated to travelling and administrative costs.

The consultant respondent stated that their fees were £27,000. A further £1,275 was spent to develop further guidance material on how to carry the project forward.

In this case the client respondent appears to have provided the rounded figure.

5.4.8 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The consultant reported that there had been attempts made to draw them into the LS' internal politics. The client respondent stated, "I don't think during the course of the review there were many times when he [the consultant respondent] was 'rattled' by some fairly tough baiting by the then President". The client respondent did, however, expect that consultants should cope with this treatment.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

Both respondents reported that the primary need for the client organisation was for the project not to exacerbate the internal political environment. In addition, the client respondent felt that there was a need to keep the internal political situation confidential and not leak it to the media.

The consultant respondent wanted to permit as many of his colleagues to participate in the project as possible to raise the profile of his organisation within the LS. He succeeded in doing this by increasing the size of the consultancy team when conducting interviews.

5.4.9 VALUE FOR MONEY

Both respondents stated that the LS received value for money. They based their assessment on the competitive price of the consultants' fee rates. The client also noted that her assessment also included the fact that the consultants had kept to the terms of reference, undertook additional work at no additional costs and altered their working timetable in order to ensure that presentations fitted into the LS' staff schedules.

5.5 THE BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST (LIBRARY) PROJECT - SPECIFICATION OF REPLACEMENT LIBRARY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

5.5.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: BDO STOY HAYWARD

5.5.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

BDO Stoy Hayward (BDO) was the UK member arm of BDO International at the time of the interview. The management consultancy had been employed in the private sector for over twenty years but BDO had only been operating in the public sector marketplace for just over a decade. The Public Sector Consultancy Services Division provided a variety of services to both central and local government.

5.5.3 THE LIBRARY CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

John Dickinson worked as a senior consultant for BDO. He was the project manager for this project. Shortly after this interview he resigned from BDO and took up employment with another consultancy practice.

5.5.4 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: THE BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST LIBRARY SERVICE

5.5.5 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The project took place within the Waltham Forest Library Service (Library). The primary functions of its libraries were the provision of books, information and education. They did this using a variety of media, e.g. books, tapes, CDs, videos, journals, magazines and IT.

5.5.6 THE LIBRARY CLIENT RESPONDENT

The respondent was Head of IT in the Arts and Leisure department in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. She had worked for the department for over seven years and had over five years' experience of managing both consultants and IT projects. She also worked as a consultant for her own and other departments within the Borough. At the time of the

interview, the respondent was managing nineteen different IT projects. The original specification for the Library's IT system had been written in 1990 by the respondent and a group of her colleagues.

A few months after the interview the respondent resigned from her post with the department and took up an IT placement in another organisation.

5.5.7 THE LIBRARY PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The project began in November 1994. The consultants were provided with the original specification as the basis on which to begin work. Initially, the consultants had meetings with the Library's staff.

In March 1995, the project was stopped because of some internal political problems within the Library Service. The two consultants were provided with the original specification as the basis from which to begin work. Once the project started one member of the Library's staff who had wanted the specification to be written by the Library Service's IT department began to openly object to the presence of the IT management consultants. This came to a head at the beginning of March 1995. The consultants could not deal with the problem themselves and had to wait for the client respondent to deal with the resistance. This took some time and meant the project had to be stopped for approximately a month. The client respondent took direct control of managing the project in April 1995. She then worked to resolve the internal organisational problems. By this time the consultants had begun working for another client firm and could not begin again for some time because of the difficulty in trying to rearrange the timetable and resetting the meeting dates. The project actually began again in July 1995 when the client respondent took direct control of its management and its problems were resolved.

A series of workshops and interviews were conducted within the Library departments and the consultants produced a draft specification. The library team working on the project reviewed the draft specification. They had to ensure that it met the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy requirements. No work was conducted in August as the

teams took their holidays. The final report was signed-off by the Senior Management team in September 1995. The project had overrun by seven months, which included the period of the delay and one month taken for holidays.

PROJECT BUDGET

The client respondent was reluctant to provide the actual budget for the project when asked because she was currently at the tender stage for the next stage of the project and felt that it was inappropriate to do so. However, whilst discussing the project earlier in the interview she stated that her time had been worth more than £13,000.

The consultant respondent also reported that same sum and stated their fee had only been approximately £13,000 but he did not know what had been the budget for the whole project.

5.5.8 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The client respondent felt that the consultants had been frustrated at points throughout the course of the project as they were not permitted to attend project related staff meetings where politically sensitive issues were being discussed.

The client was satisfied with the progress of this project even though there had been delays because it meant that the Library was still operating within the overall timescale of the larger procurement schedule. (Discussing the larger project is beyond the scope of this study). As the Library project was part of a larger project the client respondent did not feel justified in making an assessment about the success of the Library project and would only have been prepared to make a judgement after the new contractors were selected and the final system was implemented. The client respondent also reported that she and the consultant were friends by the end of the project. In addition, the wider department benefited from the project because it changed Waltham Forest's perspective to the use of the Internet and influenced the direction of another project being run by the Library.

The client respondent also felt that it was the consultants' fault that flexibility to extend the project was not written into the contract. The consultant maintained that they had kept the

project under control from their side but it had been the Library staff who had lost control of the project. The consultants had not charged any extra for the delay or the additional time they had worked on the project. The client respondent also noted that one of the consultants had become unintentionally involved in the Library's internal politics but she had not reported this to BDO. In line with this, the consultant respondent stated that BDO had not become involved in the internal politics.

In addition some of the Library staff did not like having the consultants requesting them to participate in the project

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The client respondent noted that her need was for the consultants to be flexible in the way that they worked. She reported that they had been so. The consultant respondent felt that not having too much disruption to the working arrangements of the library assistants was their practical need. The client respondent did not report any emotional needs but noted that she had become friends with the consultant and had learned a lot from him. The consultant respondent reported that some of the Library staff's fears about the new system had been alleviated. However, there had been people who had liked the previous system and did not want to change it.

The client respondent commented that the consultants could have charged the Library a great deal of money because the project had overrun but had not. The consultant respondent identified his practical needs as having the Library staff available for meetings and workgroups. However, he did not feel that this need was met because the consultants and the Library staff often had to reschedule second and third meetings so that all the system's users could attend. The client respondent reported that the consultants' emotional needs were a desire to attend Library staff meetings. These were frustrated because they were not permitted to attend. She also recognised that they had the same basic requirements, e.g. a place to work as any person who was working and that these needs should be catered for. The consultant reported that his emotional needs were to ensure that the completion of the Library project fitted into the wider schedule of projects. He stated that to have been able to do so was a measure of success for him but not for the client.

5.5.9 VALUE FOR MONEY

The client respondent felt that she had only partially received value for money. She had not completely received value for money because of the slippage in the project timetable. However, she had received value from this project because she had not had to spend time writing the specification herself and the Library were still able to put out the tender for the next stage of the project within their original deadline. New computers were installed in the libraries in 1996. The libraries were then able to provide access to computerised information about community organisations and services, as well as to offer access to the Internet.

The consultants felt that the client had received value for money because they had received more consultancy days than they had actually paid for due to the slippage in the project timetable.

5.6 THE COMPANIES HOUSE (CH) PROJECT - DATA DISTRIBUTION

5.6.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: ICL

5.6.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

At the time of the interview ICL was part of the international conglomerate Fujitsu. The Enterprise consultancy was one of ICL's arms specialising in information technology. They provided clients with help in selecting appropriate system architectures for both networks and distributed systems.

5.6.3 THE CH CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

At the time of the interview Richard Banks, the consultant respondent, was the managing consultant on the project and worked in conjunction with Bob Gurney, a colleague from ICL, who had been the original consultant allocated to the assignment. Richard Banks had been employed because he had expertise in the development of systems architecture.

5.6.4 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: COMPANIES HOUSE

5.6.5 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The role of Companies House (CH) is to support the concept of limited liability. This is done in accordance with the Companies Acts, by maintaining certain basic information about companies and making it available to the wider public. Its parent department is the Department for Trade and Industry. All companies in England, Scotland and Wales deliver to Companies House:

1. An annual report which provides basic information about a company such as its registered address and the name of its directors.
2. Annual accounts.
3. Incorporation documents that register new companies or changes of company name. (In the 1995/96 period there were 1.05 million operating companies registered).
4. Mortgage documents.
5. Liquidation documents that register those companies that have gone into liquidation.

If a company does not make its annual returns, it is struck off the register.

Companies House has two types of customers, the first of these is the providers of company information and the second is those that use this information. Providers of information are usually officers of the companies themselves or other parties acting on their behalf such as accountants, solicitors or company registration services. At the time of the study, documents were submitted to Companies House either electronically, e.g. on magnetic media or, more commonly, in paper form, e.g. the annual accounts. These were then photographed and developed as microfiches.

The second set of customers, those who requested company information, are as diverse as the providers. These people include individual users, search agents acting for end-users, major business information firms, and the biggest credit reference agencies. At the time of the study, customers could make enquiries and orders in person at the search rooms or send their requests to satellite offices by fax, telephone, post or via the on-line network - Companies House Direct (CH Direct). Once this order was placed it was sent to the search rooms and searchers found the particular company's microfiche record on large carousels of microfiches and sent the microfiche to be copied and delivered to the customer.

5.6.6 THE CH CLIENT RESPONDENT

The respondent was the Assistant Director of Development for Companies House and the project manager. He was responsible for the day to day management of the project.

5.6.7 THE CH PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

When the first consultant, Bob Gurney, arrived it was his expectation that ICL was going to help CH find a replacement service provider for Mercury which managed CH Direct. At this time, the client respondent was concerned only with selecting a new provider for the CH Direct Mercury contract and the time constraint was one of the main drivers of the project. The CCTA, discussed in Section 5.2.6 above, facilitated the procurement of the

new contractors for the CH Direct. CH was also at that time in the process of building other IT systems to store companies' records which were currently stored on microfiches and to manage the financial transactions associated with user requests. It was envisaged by CH that these microfiched records would use the same mainframe system that the CH Direct replacement service supplier would employ and compatible software. Bob Gurney realised that nobody within CH was actually concerned with how to integrate all of the systems that were being considered. He approached the Project Board with his concerns. The Project Board agreed that CH did not have sufficient expertise within the organisation to determine the necessary IT architecture. They would need software and hardware that could be used to integrate and operate their mainframes and a variety of other packages, some of which would not be bespoke but generic software.

This was the point at which the consultant respondent, Richard Banks, became involved in the project, as the integration process was his area of expertise. The Project Board became concerned about the cost of what was going to be a bigger project than had been originally planned. The CH Board's focus was still on the selection of the CH Direct replacement service supplier and not on the integration of the other systems. This was the point at which a new dimension, i.e. the integration of all the proposed IT/IS systems, was added to the original proposed replacement of the CH Direct service. The consultants proposed a scoping study to investigate the IS/IT system requirements. For three days they conducted interviews with the project managers responsible for the procurement and in-house development of the IT systems.

The report that was produced outlined the background to the issues and summarised the interviews. Once it had been agreed that the consultants understood CH's problems, the consultants proposed that an architecture study be done. This study looked at the sort of IS/IT computerisation approach that CH should take to enable subscribers to have more efficient access to the companies' information. The consultants worked on the architecture study on a part-time basis; it started in May 1996 and involved 20 man-days of work.

When the architecture study was completed, it was presented to the CH Project Board who reviewed the investment that CH needed to make for all the systems. Although, the Board liked the proposal ICL presented to them it involved the paying of unforeseen training costs as the IT staff would have to be retrained before they could use the new IT systems. The Board then requested ICL to carry out a feasibility study. This involved conducting

case study research in a number of companies that had changed the manner in which they had stored data. (The specific details of the case studies were not provided.) As a result of the feasibility study CH's Project Board hoped to identify the skills that they would need to develop the new IT systems and assess what was considered a reasonable project development and implementation timescale for such systems. The feasibility study ran from June to August 1996 and took 40 man-days to complete. Because the consultants had not been involved in implementing similar systems, (although they had designed them) in order to determine implementation costs the consultants consulted other parts of ICL that were able to provide additional advice.

Meanwhile CH was still going through further stages of the procurement cycle for the CH Direct service provider. The client respondent was working to a tight timescale and he sent out an invitation to tender for the CH Direct contract.

At the time of interview, the consultants were still in the process of working on internal IT/IS systems that would have to interface with the CH Direct software. The consultant respondent felt this needed to be his main consideration as nobody within CH was overseeing the integration work, because the client respondent's time was mainly invested in overseeing the CH Direct tendering process.

The consultant respondent felt that there was opposition to some of his proposals from a number of the other IT vendors used by CH. However, CH's Project Board decided ICL's proposals were the most suitable and took their advice. On completion of the feasibility study, CH decided to go ahead with the integration programme and at that point, they asked if ICL could provide someone to lead the design phase. At the time of the interview, CH was in the position of agreeing their internal requirements before completing the design of the interface systems. The design and implementation stages of the project began in September 1996 and were due to run for a further two years.

PROJECT BUDGET

The client respondent stated that budget for the project was £1.6 million per year and £8 million had been allocated for the entire project.

The consultant reported that £60, 000 had been paid to the consultants by the time of the interview and the implementation phase was going to cost in excess of £100,000. The increased costs would cover the fees of the systems designer working on the project and the purchase of hardware, software and training packages.

5.6.8 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The discrete stages of the project made it possible for the changes in requirements to be easily accommodated. One challenge faced in the project was the complexity of the technical language that was used by the consultants and in the early days of the project this presented a problem in communication between the client and the consultant, as the client staff working on the project did not understand the meaning of the terms being used. However, the client respondent believed that they had resolved earlier difficulties and that there was a common understanding of the language being used. The client respondent did not feel that the earlier communication problems would affect the final implementation of the systems.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The client respondent's practical need was to have the consultants integrate the IT/IS networked systems. Uninterrupted service to CH's customers was the practical need that the consultant respondent reported that he was aware of. The client respondent's emotional needs were to have his fears about the project achieving its aims alleviated.

The consultant's practical need was to have the client organisation consider his firm in the future as a possible source of consultancy support. The client respondent reported that the consultant's practical need was to make a profit from his work and to sell additional hardware and software products to ICL and other companies. The consultant identified his emotional need as having felt at the end of the week that he had achieved 'something' and that he had not fought with the client organisation. The client respondent reported that he had not thought about the consultants' emotional needs. After some consideration he felt that their needs were to possess marketable skills, to fulfil the aspirations of the client organisation and to develop a positive working relationship with the client firm.

5.6.9 VALUE FOR MONEY

Given the relatively expensive charges of ICL and the consultants' initial lack of understanding of what the client believed were his requirements at the start of the project he believed that CH had received only limited value for money.

However, the consultant felt that CH had received value for money. His assessment was based on ICL's ability to provide CH with a solution that CH could afford within the timescale that had been specified.

5.7 THE NHS EXECUTIVE (NHSE) PROJECT - NHS ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER PROJECT

5.7.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: EASAMS

5.7.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

At the time of the interview EASAMS had been established over thirty years and was one of Britain's first system houses and one of the largest systems integration companies in Europe. It was a subsidiary of GEC Marconi. EASAMS had obtained ISO 9001 and TICKIT accreditation (a Department of Trade and Industry sponsored standard to achieve improvements in the quality of software products and information systems for IT supply and in-house developments).

EASAMS' marketing literature states that it believes partnership with the client company is central to EASAMS' work philosophy (EASAMS' internal document). It believes its associations with a range of hardware and software suppliers distinguish it from other management consultancies. The document also indicates that they work with other management consultancies to produce effective solutions to clients' needs.

EASAMS claims that its services cover the life cycle of a project. Their services range from taking an advisory role and using in-house methodologies, through to identifying the client's requirements and the implementation of the system (EASAMS' internal document). When the system is finally built, EASAMS claims to offer 'extensive in-house development facilities in a wide range of environments allowing design and prototyping of custom software to be perfected long before a system is installed' (EASAMS' internal document). On completion of development of the system, they offer training for users.

5.7.3 THE NHSE CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

Alan Wilson, the consultant respondent, was the Group Manager for Software Services a division within EASAMS. Although not personally involved in working on the project, he had had weekly meetings with the consultants working on the assignment and he had also met with the client project manager.

5.7.4 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: THE NHS EXECUTIVE

5.7.5 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The NHS Executive (NHSE) was the head office of the NHS and provided central directions for the way that the NHS should operate. The NHS Executive negotiated with the Treasury for the NHS' annual budget and then redistributed it (NHS Executive internal document).

Historically, individual parts of the NHS had had their own separate IT systems. The Family Health Services Authorities' registers covered the whole population in England but the primary operational purpose of those registers was paying doctors and dentists and transferring medical records between departments / organisations. Each hospital had its own patient master index and its Patient Administrative System (PAS) and a single hospital could have up to eight separate patient registers. Each time a patient visited a different part of the hospital they would be asked for the same information that had already been provided to other departments of the same hospital. The practice was wasteful, inaccurate and out of date. Moreover, the IT systems that supported these registers differed between departments. It was not readily apparent how the IT systems could be made to 'talk to each other'. The first proposal was to have a register to provide a database that would hold administrative and clinical data, which would be shared amongst all the various NHS institutions. The database information would be transmitted across the NHS via the NHS-wide network.

5.7.6 THE NHSE CLIENT RESPONDENT

The client respondent had been the Administrative Register (AR) project manager who worked on the project from its inception until June 1996.

5.7.7 THE NHSE PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The project was implemented in phases. The phases were divided as follows:

1. Phase I - Part 1 - to determine the scope of the Population Health Index (PHI).

Part 2 - to determine the actual specification.

These two parts were conducted by a series of management consultants.

2. Phase II - Part 1 – to write the software for the Administrative Register.

Part 2 – to pilot test the software at five pilot sites.

The deliverables of phase II were:

1. The NHS Administrative Register software that enabled the register to interface with the patient registers of the health authority systems.
2. The interface software to allow the NHS Administrative Register to interact with management information systems, healthcare purchaser systems and child health systems.
3. The policies and procedures which set out how the NHS Administrative Register should be used. These covered aspects such as system security, data administration, training and system administration.

EASAMS had worked on several stages of the NHS administration register project which is discussed below. During the interview the consultant respondent discussed the phase II requirement. For the purposes of the research only the information gleaned from phase II of the project will be analysed. However, a brief outline of what occurred in phase I (parts 1 and 2) is included to set the project in context.

Phase I, Part 1

A consultancy firm called BIS, part of the Nimex Corporation, did a scoping study of the Population Health Index (PHI). The client described this part of the study as problematic; partly due to the lead consultant's inability to write what the NHSE felt was a suitable report. They made the consultant bring in a technical writer to re-write the report. At the end of this process, the NHSE Board still had concerns about what had been scoped as the Population Health Index. These problems concerned the lack of boundaries to the proposed index and the fact that the index seemed to include every possible information system found in the NHS. If implemented in this manner PHI would need to have a vast

quantity of processing power. The scoping study did however map out the type IT/IS systems found in the NHS.

Phase I, Part 2

The NHSE took the proposals from the scoping study and requested tenders from consultants to develop a user requirement, a confidentiality and security framework, software and an operational requirements document to be given to other consultants who would write the bespoke software. The majority of the bids they received took the BIS scoping study and tried to develop in practical detail all the systems that were covered. This meant that the cost of these bids were very high. Coopers & Lybrand, who had previously worked for the IMG, put forward a proposal for an Administrative Register (AR). They rejected the original BIS proposal as they felt that the wide scope of the original was neither practical nor achievable. The Coopers & Lybrand proposal identified the core administrative data that every NHS organisation needed to hold, i.e. about people, places and demographic links and proposed to use these variables to link with clinical data. The client respondent persuaded Coopers & Lybrand that the list should also include NHS organisations' names. The Coopers & Lybrand bid was accepted as it provided IMG with a project that was achievable and could be developed in phases. The team from Coopers & Lybrand conducted workshops to collect information about the user requirements for the PHI.

In 1992, Ray Rogers the Executive Director of the NHSE, in one of the monthly review meetings suggested that the IMG was leading the project in the wrong direction. He requested that they drop or postpone the clinical data dimension and concentrate on the administrative data element because he was not satisfied with the requirements that had been identified for the clinical data. He felt that the PHI could not be achieved or supported, as the necessary security arrangements were not yet in place. This was an important consideration, as it could not be guaranteed that the PHI register would be properly supported by the inclusion of reliable audited clinical data. Therefore, the addition of the clinical data to the PHI was postponed indefinitely. Consequently, the Administrative Register (AR) had to be rescoped. The consultants then developed a user requirement, and a confidentiality and security framework for the AR. They also conducted an information systems baseline study which documented all the IT/IS systems in the NHS.

Phase II, Part 1

EASAMS was involved in phase II, i.e. writing the software code and helping the NHS to identify their operational requirements at the end of the piloting phase. The following narrative discusses what occurred in this phase of the project.

The NHSE Board decided to obtain tenders to identify the system requirement specification (SRS) of the AR. Proposals of varying quality were made by consultancies and software houses in response to the invitation to tender. EASAMS had worked within the defence industry and had seen the potential for expanding its business into the health market. Therefore, it made a bid for the phase II contract. EASAMS produced a detailed proposal for the AR. It won the contract. The Project Board was responsible for making the decision to select EASAMS. The client respondent was promoted to the position of Project Director. John Farrington, from Coopers & Lybrand, was then made Project Manager under the direction of the client respondent. EASAMS was employed as subcontractors under the leadership of John Farrington and Brian Collier, both of whom were consultants from Coopers & Lybrand.

The process of writing the SRS involved approximately 24 workshops over a period of six months, which culminated in February 1993 in a user requirement and a security framework. The Project Board then went through another decision making process in which they eliminated some options that were 'nice to have's', but were too expensive. EASAMS also wrote another document called a Detailed Definition of Functions (DDF) which could be given to a programmer as a definition of the functions and the error codes of particular modules of the AR.

EASAMS discussed the merits of writing the code using different relational database management systems (RDBMS). This was important because the debate in IMG concerned the relative virtue of producing a single version of the AR for one of these RDBMS or of producing an interface with both the Oracle and Ingres RDBMS. It was decided that the programs were to be written in C code because as a third generation language (3GL) it was far less processor intensive than a fourth generational language. The C code would then interface with the Oracle and the Ingres packages.

At this point, which was also in February 1993, the project encountered a major problem due to the outputs of another strategic project, called the Common Administrative Data Set (CADS). The situation occurred because the Information Management Centre, which was part of IMG and was based in Birmingham, was responsible for promulgating standards in the NHS. For the Administrative Register to be successful and exchange administrative data successfully it needed common standards for administrative data sets (CADS) which had not previously existed. All the systems would need to hold the same length of field and definition for name, address, gender and basic administrative details. The IMG searched the UK and International standards pertaining to the areas for which they did not have any standards. In agreement with various people on the Project Board it proposed standards that consisted of RDBMS flat files (a related collection of textual records, contained in a file, that have no structured interrelationships from which all word processing or other structure characters or have been removed (Hubbert, 2003)) and field lengths that were 35 characters long, in line with the UN/EDIFACT (electronic data interchange for administration, commerce and transport) standards (United Nations, no date). The document had been sent to the Information Management Centre for review the previous year, in 1992.

The Information Management Centre decided to revise the standards, without consulting the IMG, based on their experience and in consultation with users of administrative data within the NHS. They re-emerged in February 1993 with a completely different set of standards from those that had been agreed by the IMG. For addresses they had identified six or seven options, for gender there were three variants, and for name there were a number of acceptable alternatives. IMG could not build a pilot system that catered for such diversity. In addition, the AR, which was a major strategic project and part of the NHS' Information Management and Technology (IM&T) strategy did not comply with the standards that the NHSE itself was demanding that other NHS organisations comply with.

The IMG stopped the project in order to agree a common position with the Information Management Centre. EASAMS was paid a retainer to keep three or four people attached to the project for six months while the issue was resolved. At the end of the negotiation process, in early 1994, EASAMS resumed working and redefining a second SRS and then DDF. The process of deciding what were the requirements was fed back to EASAMS by IMG so that it could produce the final document, which reflected all the requirements. EASAMS produced a document, which gave IMG the description and prioritised list of the

user requirements for the administrative data, with an indication of what they believed it would take to execute the user requirements. (For reasons of confidentiality the exact details of these requirements were not provided.) The SRS and DDF were signed off by the NHSE Project Board. EASAMS delivered the AR pilot software in May 1994, a few months late. A second team, not the original EASAMS team that had been working with the NHSE before the project had been stopped, then developed the pilot AR software. Due to the six-month project delay, as a result of incorporating the CADS standards, IMG had lost time and money on the project because they had had to pay the retainer to the consultants.

Phase II, Part 2

The AR software was then given to five NHS pilot sites (South Tyne and Durham, Birmingham, Berkshire, East Anglia and Wales), for periods of between eighteen months to two years. These pilot sites were used to understand how the database would be used in practice. One of the important unstated requirements that the consultants identified was that all the NHS pilot sites should support the use of the AR.

The client respondent felt the relationship with EASAMS was good during the beginning of the discussions with the pilot sites, as EASAMS imposed discipline on the NHS staff. He believed that the NHS pilot site users were prepared to support EASAMS and the IMG because: a) ultimately it was in the users' interest that the project should be managed in an orderly manner; and, b) they would be provided with the AR that would provide the most benefit to the users. It became increasingly apparent that the NHS group was not as decisive as the organisations with which EASAMS were used to dealing. To impose discipline and ensure that the project kept to time and cost, a chairman / facilitator was selected from the NHSE and he replaced the EASAMS chairman / facilitator working with the group.

At this time it became apparent that the pilot system that had been delivered was not performing adequately. In the actual operational requirement IMG had specified the components of each screen, and the required functionality and expectations of performance. For example, if a particular person's details were called up from a database of up to eight million entries the response should come back in less than 3 seconds. In practice, however, these simple queries took 3-4 minutes. The second set of EASAMS

consultants had built the AR without proper regard to performance, even though the IMG had specified the importance of the AR meeting operational performance criteria.

The client respondent had a very difficult time attempting to make EASAMS accept responsibility for poor performance of the AR. EASAMS suggested that if the client respondent wanted to obtain improved performance then the NHSE would have to pay for the additional work. It was difficult for the client respondent to see what options he had in these circumstances as the NHSE had limited leverage over EASAMS. The contract specified that if the NHSE were not satisfied they could only withhold a certain amount of the consultants' fees at the end of the project. One of the casualties of this conflict was the Coopers & Lybrand Technical Adviser who had been sacked because he had failed to ensure that the NHSE's interests were maintained and the AR that was delivered met the performance standards required.

The client respondent then had to put together a strategy that persuaded EASAMS that the problem was due to faults in their work and that they had failed to deliver a system that performed adequately. The first step of IMG's strategy was to raise the profile of IMG's dissatisfaction within EASAMS by organising a meeting with one of EASAMS' senior management teams. However, EASAMS would not accept liability for the performance problems and argued that either the system was performing satisfactorily or where it was not so performing that it was either IMG's fault or that IMG had been warned that this would be the case. In particular, EASAMS attempted to argue that what the client respondent had believed to be simple enquiries were in fact complex enquiries.

The client respondent had to persuade senior managers within the NHSE that this was a 'fight' that they had to see through. Once the NHSE Project Board had given approval, the client respondent resorted to several tactics to counter EASAMS. Firstly, he continued to withhold all payments, which was a tactic that he had started to use when he realised that the system was not performing to the required standards. EASAMS reacted coolly to this, giving the message that it was a company with rich capital reserves that would not be unduly bothered about IMG holding on to this money. Secondly, EASAMS believed that as a government organisation, the NHSE would anyway have to pay at the end of the financial year because there was no facility to carry the debt on to the next year. However, the IMG managed to find a way around this by paying the money into escrow. Thirdly, on

the publicity front, IMG persuaded EASAMS' senior management team that the IMG were capable of damaging EASAMS' reputation.

The next stage was to escalate the NHSE's complaint up to EASAMS' parent company GEC Marconi, which had a very large contract with the Ministry of Defence. One of the directors of GEC Marconi was then appointed to act as arbitrator in the dispute. To persuade him that EASAMS had not performed its task well, the client respondent brought in independent experts to audit the Oracle and Ingres software. The experts were instructed to go through the codes and look for those things that were patently bad practice and were leading to performance problems. An analyst from GEC Marconi also went through the C code, because as explained earlier, underlying both Oracle and Ingres versions were certain common routines in C.

When the C code was audited, it was found that EASAMS had not written the AR programs very well. The independent Oracle and Ingres experts also found problems with the AR software. EASAMS then began to accept responsibility for the system's poor performance. In their defence EASAMS stated that the NHSE was being unreasonable. The consultants from EASAMS cited examples of instances of where the NHS' pilot participants had demanded unrealistic specifications. However, over a period of time, EASAMS accepted responsibility for the problems and they put them right with the result that they made no profit. The NHSE had lost time in working to resolve this problem.

At the time of interview, in November 1996, EASAMS was currently involved in actually writing the software for the system that was to be devolved throughout the NHS. However, at the time of the interview the AR was again not performing to the required standards.

PROJECT BUDGET

The client stated that the total budget for the entire project was £8 million. This was to be allocated as follows:

£2.5 million for supporting the pilot sites to implement the AR

£2 million for the development of the software including EASAMS' fee

£2 million to be spent on other contractors, including management consultancy firms

£1 million for the implementation of the Common Administrative Data Sets
£0.5 million to be spent on additional software to permit the AR to interface with patient records software of Health Authority systems and contract management information system

The consultant respondent stated that EASAMS' fee for the project was £120,000.

5.7.8 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

Within this project there were multiple relationships operating which complicates the understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between the IMG and EASAMS. It is not clear from the interviews and the project documentation received from the IMG the areas of specific responsibility the Coopers & Lybrand consultants played in this project but it is clear that they acted as an intermediary between the IMG and EASAMS. The client respondent had indicated that when EASAMS had first been employed the relationship between the IMG and EASAMS had been good. It soured however after the problems with the Information Management Centre and the reintroduction of the second set of EASAMS consultants because the software that had been delivered had not performed to the required specification. There was also either inadequate communication of requirements between the IMG and EASAMS or EASAMS had not implemented requirements that had been clearly stated by IMG. It was not possible to verify the situation with the consultant respondent because he had left the organisation soon after the interview was undertaken.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The client respondent identified his needs as having access to information about the project's status or issues affecting its outputs at any point in time and for those involved in the project to be undertaking work that they had promised to do within the agreed timescale. The consultant respondent identified the client's practical needs as being able to bring the pilot site representatives together and have them agree on their requirements. The client stated that his emotional needs were met when the project timescales were met. The client respondent did not feel that the consultants working on the project had any practical or emotional needs. He believed that they were there to deliver the outputs or

leave. The consultant felt that his practical needs were to get paid and to make a profit (unless the work was being undertaken as a loss leader), develop a good relationship with the client in order to obtain repeat business and improve the consultancy's knowledge of the client organisation. The emotional needs the consultant felt were to feel successful and to believe they had done a worthwhile job. He did feel that meeting the consultants' needs was not a success factor of the project but it was important to EASAMS that their consultants felt that they had done a good job because then staff were happy and therefore less likely to leave EASAMS.

5.7.9 VALUE FOR MONEY

The client respondent did not believe that he had received value for money. This was because although GEC Marconi had arbitrated in a dispute and EASAMS had rectified the problems in the AR, at the time of the interview, the NHSE was again having problems with the database not functioning as specified.

The consultant respondent did feel that that EASAMS had provided the NHSE with value for money. His assessment was based on: 1) the fees that were being charged in relation to the fees that would have been charged by other consultancies offering a similar range of skill sets; 2) the number of man days of work that had gone into producing the AR; and, 3) the fact that both parties had agreed on an arrangement whereby the project was undertaken on a variable fee rather than a fixed fee basis which would have been more expensive. The latter point the consultant believed was achieved because of the relationship that EASAMS had with the NHSE.

5.8 THE BACS PROJECT - REPLACEMENT ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER SYSTEM (REFT)

5.8.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: OSI

At the time of the interview OSI was an independent management support and project management company that worked within the IT, telecommunication, public and financial services sectors in Europe. Unlike the large generalist consultancies, it concentrated on programme implementation rather than Board-level strategic services.

In the financial period 1995/1996 there was a management buy-in (MBI) by three ex-KPMG partners, the formation of the new company called OSI group holdings and a financial restructuring of the company with the backing of ECI venture, part of N. M. Rothchild and Lloyds bank (OSI group reports & summary accounts, 1995/1996). During this period the company's turnover climbed to £15 million, a rise of 58%. This percentage growth exceeded the overall expansion of the consultancy market (15%) in the same period (Abbott, 1996). The increase in turnover was brought about by: 1) the solidification of old relationships and the acquisition of 30 new clients; and, 2) the recruitment of a number of high profile industry leading experts e.g. Bruce Daniels, a former Coopers & Lybrand partner, Mark Tilley, who formerly led KPMG's SAP practice and others such as Richard Hartley, who had been a partner in Coopers & Lybrand and Divisional Director with CAP Gemini. Major business had been obtained from significant clients both in the IT vendor and user community, e.g. Barclays Bank, The Eastern Group, J. Sainsbury and the Inland Revenue.

OSI at the time of interview was one of the top five consultancies working for utilities and amongst the top ten companies working in the financial services and public sector markets (Abbott, 1996). The consultant respondent stated that they employed staff who were mainly in the middle or at the end of their careers. Their roles were normally that of professional project managers and programme directors.

5.8.2 THE BACS CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

Harvey Parr was the Business Development Director and had responsibility for corporate marketing, business development and third party relationships (OSI group plc, reports & summary accounts, 1994/1995). He did not work on the project but his role was to oversee it.

5.8.3 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: BACS

5.8.4 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

Bankers' Automated Clearing Services limited (B.A.C.S) started in 1968 under the aegis of the Interbank Computer Bureau. B.A.C.S.' initial objective was to automate the exchange of standing orders between banks. However, there was a rapid extension of their remit into the field of Direct Credits and Direct Debits. In 1971 these services were transferred to a separate company, B.A.C.S. They moved in 1972 to their current main site in Edgware. In 1985, the Association for Payment Clearing Services (A.P.A.C.S.) was created. This body represented the major banks and building societies. B.A.C.S became one of the three main clearings bodies under its umbrella and was renamed simply BACS limited. BACS is owned by, and its membership consists of the major clearing banks and building societies and other similar concerns. BACS' membership at the time of interview stood at eighteen.

BACS was the world's largest automated clearing house and processed an average of 10 million payments a day, with peak volumes which exceeded 30 million a day (Graham, 1997). The importance of the system was exhibited on the Tuesday before the 1997 Easter week-end, as a telecommunications error caused the transfer system for salary payments for 40,000 companies and Direct Debits to run slowly. Tens of thousands of workers could have been affected but for the actions of BACS (Graham, 1997; Saigol, 1997).

5.8.5 THE BACS CLIENT RESPONDENT

John Phimester worked for Lloyds bank for a period of 37 years. When he left the bank, he was Assistant General Manager. He then took the post of Deputy Chief Executive at BACS and was Project Director on the replacement electronic funds transfer (REFT)

system project for its three year duration. At the time of the interview he was employed by OSI as a consultant.

5.8.6 THE BACS PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

By 1995, BACS was processing a total of 2,250 million items per year and had the potential to handle 35 million items per day at peak times. The C.E.F.T. (current electronic funds transfer) system processed the transactions. The REFT (replacement electronic funds transfer) system was going to replace C.E.F.T. which had originally been introduced in the late 1960s. C.E.F.T. needed to be updated, as it could no longer cope with increased volumes and new applications. The vision for REFT was to provide the increased transfer capacity and the potential to cope with increases into the next century. The requirement was for new hardware, software, networks and application systems. Amongst the expected results of REFT's implementation were that: 1) it would lead to reduced costs per transaction; 2) it would enable higher volumes to be transacted; and, 3) new applications could be added enabling the introduction of faster cheque processing across a network of banks nationally and internationally.

When the client respondent joined the replacement project in 1989 it had already failed once under the oversight of a firm called Dataskil. BACS' employees were again attempting to replace the system and were not having much success and the project was again failing. The project had run for 4 years in total and £30 Million had already been spent on it. If REFT could not be implemented successfully then BACS Board were prepared to shut down the organisation. After the client respondent had been employed for a few months, he realised that there were all the classic signs of "fudge, imposition and missed dates". He decided that BACS needed to employ a project manager, as he could not do the job himself and there was nobody within BACS capable of undertaking the role.

With the help of executive recruitment consultants within Touche Ross, who were also BACS' auditors, BACS advertised for a project manager. Five people were interviewed for the job. John Bragg was employed as the Project Manager and was given a three-year contract. He had taken a sabbatical leave from OSI for this period.

John Bragg realised that the requirements were not clear: there was no appropriate programme management structure in place, and not enough appropriately qualified staff were working on the project. The BACS Board did not want to admit that their second attempt to replace the C.E.F.T. system was again failing. To persuade the Board that this was so, John Bragg suggested that a project audit be done. Its aims were to determine the current status of REFT's implementation and to agree what BACS were trying to achieve and formalise it. John Bragg brought in four people from OSI who examined the design, the types of skills required and the finance required to replace C.E.F.T. They conducted the audit, which resulted in clear statements of the financial resources required, and a flexible phased work plan for the REFT project. Some implementation would need to be done over the weekends when traffic on the system was lower but there would be a point at which final implementation would need to occur on one occasion.

BACS' CEO spent six months trying to negotiate a contract with OSI, which would force OSI to pay penalties if the project came in behind time and rewards if it came in early. BACS and OSI could not formally agree on the type of contract that would be used if OSI were to be employed to undertake the project. It was agreed that the OSI would be BACS' preferred supplier for any IT management consultancy work during the duration of the project. The client respondent then set up a contract that committed BACS' to employing John Bragg for the duration of the project.

Once the audit was completed, a number of consultants from OSI were also seconded to lead in important areas, e.g. design and development, system testing and implementation, managing the project office. At the peak of the project there were 12 OSI consultants working on it. As part of the project, the consultants set up a programme support office. It was the place where strategic management of the project was managed and their work included monitoring quality, performance reliability and information management risk. Whenever John Bragg felt that additional consultancy support was needed he requested that his colleagues from OSI be temporarily employed. OSI specified the consultants' fee rates per day and John Bragg would estimate how long BACS would need them. Some OSI consultants worked on the project on a long-term basis, whereas others were employed for a period of three months or for a particular phase. When the OSI consultants began working initially they had advised BACS to sack all its external contractors because they did not feel that they had the appropriate skills. Once they were clear on their

requirements, 150 programmers were employed on short-term contracts and were managed by OSI.

The implementation of the ICL systems was completed in 1992. It had taken 670 man-years of effort and several hundred people had worked on the project at its peak.

PROJECT BUDGET

The REFT system had cost £60 million to implement. The budget was divided as follows:

- 40% was spent on hardware.
- slightly less than 40% was spent on software development including design and implementation.
- 7-8% was spent on developing the network.
- The remainder was spent on implementation management (which included OSI's fees).

Before John Bragg had been employed £30 million had been spent on the project without, the client respondent felt, much return on BACS' investment.

5.8.7 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship between the client respondent and John Bragg, both respondents suggested had been good and they had become friends. The client respondent noted that they had worked together to resolve problems and prepare for senior management meetings. Once the project was completed successfully OSI was offered other opportunities to work within the financial services industry because of the references received from BACS. The consultant respondent felt that the OSI consultants had had to work closely with BACS' staff and were aware of their career aspirations and fears and been able to direct/guide them appropriately because they knew them well.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

Both respondents reported that BACS had to remain operational with no interruption to service throughout the entire period of the implementation. This had meant that the project had to be implemented in phases. The client respondent suggested that his emotional

needs had been to stop worrying at nights about the status of the project. Once the REFT system was implemented his fears were alleviated. The consultant respondent also identified alleviating fear of failure as the emotional needs of BACS' staff.

The client respondent felt the OSI's practical needs were to make a success of the project, to establish themselves as consultants working within the financial services industry, to make a profit and to further increase their standing in the consultancy industry in general. Feeling needed and liked the client respondent felt were the emotional needs of the consultants. The consultant respondent added that the OSI consultants were at the middle and end of their careers and wanted to succeed in every project and did not like to fail and he felt that OSI supported the consultants in achieving successful outcomes to their projects.

5.8.8 VALUE FOR MONEY

Both respondents reported that BACS had received value for money because the project had been completed successfully and the company had not gone into bankruptcy. The consultant respondent felt that OSI had achieved the implementation with the minimum possible number of consultants involved in the project. The successful introduction of the new IT system resulted in approximately 50% reduction in BACS' staff.

The client respondent felt that other intangible benefits resulting from the completion of the project were that: 1) the senior executives had been convinced, after the completion of the project, that BACS was capable of managing an IT project; and, 2) BACS' staff learnt how to manage this kind of project.

5.9 THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT (DOT) PROJECT - THE SYSTEMS PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATION OFFICE (SPCO)

5.9.1 THE IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION: ERNST & YOUNG

5.9.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

At the time of the study, Ernst & Young (E&Y) International was one of the world's largest consultancy practices with 125 offices and 6,000 consultants (Ernst & Young's Report and Accounts, 1996). Twenty-six of its offices were in the UK. The UK arm of the company was operated as a partnership with unlimited liability under English law.

The Executive body of the UK arm developed and implemented strategies and handled the day-to-day running of the firm. The Executive was composed of four individuals elected by all the partners and the senior partner chaired its meetings. The Council consisted of twelve members: the four Executive members and in addition eight partners selected on a regional basis. The regions were: 1) Scotland and Northern Ireland, 2) North, 3) Midlands, 4) South and 5) London. London was the largest office and its operations were reorganised in July 1995 into five market-focused offices. These were financial services, industrial consumer and public services, media and resources, employer and private client services and entrepreneurial services (Ernst & Young's Report and Accounts, 1996). The role of the Council was to: 1) monitor the performance of the Executive and 2) approve significant partnership matters, e.g. the admission of new partners, to approve the firm's accounts before distribution to all partners, and agree changes to the partnership regulations.

5.9.3 THE DOT CONSULTANT RESPONDENT

At the time of interview, Gareth Bunn was a partner within Ernst & Young with prime responsibility for Business Systems and Strategy Services to the public sector market. Before joining Ernst & Young in 1990, he had worked within central government latterly heading the strategic issues group in the CCTA. His experience spanned over 20 years as both a buyer and provider of consultancy services within the public sector. He was E&Y's Project Director.

5.9.4 THE CLIENT ORGANISATION: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT (DOT)

5.9.5 THE ORGANISATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

Under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, in the 1980s, the Government decided to privatise the rail industry, in a bid to make not only freight but also passenger rail more competitive by improving quality and efficiency (Mawhinney, 1995).

The creation of a new railway structure began by the founding of new companies at the beginning of April 1994 (Department of Transport, 1994). As with earlier stages of the privatisation process, the 25 new train operating companies (TOCs) were bought by private sector companies and management and employee buy outs (MEBOs). These domestic services were to be operated on a franchise basis. Railtrack, which was to own all the tracks, signalling and the other operational infrastructure, was founded on 1st April 1994. The Government, which planned to privatise Railtrack in the future, was its sole owner. Three rolling stock leasing companies (ROSCOs) were also set up in April 1994. The government initially owned these too. They were responsible for leasing domestic passenger trains to the TOCs. The private sector also had the opportunity to buy the domestic freight business (freightliner), the International service (which operated via the Channel Tunnel) and Red Star (the express parcels business). Other diversified businesses owned by BR were also to be disposed of from April 1994.

The systems programme co-ordination office (SPCO), located within DOT, was established at the outset of the project and between five to six consultants worked in it during the course of the project. At the time of the interview there had only been one consultant who had worked in the SPCO from the start of the project. Part of the SPCO's mission was to help the DOT to more rapidly up the learning curve of the implementation of the new IS/IT systems and to oversee the development of the complicated IT/IS infrastructure, comprise over 1600 IS/IT systems, that was going to be required with the privatisation of the railways. The SPCO was responsible for the development and co-ordination of the implementation of the IS/IT systems, i.e. distributed and client-server based systems. British Rail Business Systems had previously owned the vast majority of these systems. During the privatisation process each new information system had to be assigned an intellectual property rights owner and an exploitation rights owner within each of the new companies. The SPCO also produced a report that was distributed throughout the rail industry that discussed the progress of the project.

5.9.6 THE DOT CLIENT RESPONDENT

The client respondent was the Grade 7 Civil Servant responsible for managing the project, who had responsibility for agreeing quarterly objectives with Gareth Bunn. He had not been in position at the project's inception, but had managed the project for 2 years. His background was that of an information systems consultant. The department that he managed was responsible for employee issues, insurance, accountancy, taxation, residual liabilities, pensions, systems, heritage and consequential legislation.

The client respondent indirectly reported to a Grade 5 (a department head), who in turn reported to a Grade 2 (a Permanent Under Secretary) who worked for the Grade 1, the Permanent Secretary of the Department. Within the systems programme co-ordination office (SPCO) he liaised with the managing consultant, who acted also as the consultancy project staff's team leader. His role was to meet with the managing consultant weekly and discuss the progress of the work done by the SPCO.

Shortly after conducting the interview the client respondent changed jobs in the DOT.

5.9.7 THE DOT PROJECT DETAILS

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The DOT did not have a very clear view of how long the privatisation process was going to take. Once E&Y had been selected they undertook a scoping review and recommended that the SPCO be set up. Once the SPCO had been established the consultants put in place various procedure for risk management and issue management. They also established contacts with up to 90 bodies working in the industry. These included passenger services, freight services, track, signalling, stations and other property and support operations which comprised maintenance, engineering, telecommunications and other specialised services. They then presented a document called 'Vesting Critical Systems' to the DOT with an assessment of risks and the type of core systems, e.g. financial systems which needed to be in place for the privatisation to successfully take place. The consultants then promoted the need for these systems throughout the industry. Work plans were then drawn up on a quarterly basis which set out the activities that needed to occur to take the project forward.

However, these plans had to be flexible because there were unforeseen events which had to be dealt with.

After the negative press coverage of the inadequate provision of train services in December 1995, the SPCO had also been required to review and help the TOCs to look at their business process for access planning which was part of the new timetabling procedures, that would be implemented during the privatisation.

At the time the interview took place there was approximately six months left until the end of E&Y's contract with the DOT and SPCO's role in the project.

PROJECT BUDGET

At the time of the interview the E&Y were being paid between £750,000 to £1,000,000 per annum. The reason this amount varied was because the budget was decided on a quarterly basis and was dependent on the work to be undertaken by the consultants during the next period.

5.9.8 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The client respondent commended the consultants that had worked in the SPCO because they could always be relied upon to conduct the required work and deliver the outputs by the date requested even though they were dealing with a huge variety of issues at the same time. Having the consultants dealing with the IT/IS requirements of the privatisation meant that the people responsible for them within the DOT had fewer concerns. There also appear to have been other informal meeting arrangements and also other forms of contact between the senior staff in E&Y and the DOT working on the project where they discussed how the project was progressing and the more sensitive issues such as staff performance, managing relationships and tactics for handling particular situations.

There was only one instance in which the client respondent reported that one of the junior consultants had challenged a decision that had been made by a senior manager.

RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The client respondent stated that his practical need was to have the consultants deliver the outputs to the agreed timetable without prompting from him. Being able to rely on the consultants working in the SPCO to provide the additional management support concerning IS issues was how the consultant respondent described the practical needs of the client respondent. The client respondent noted that it had been reassuring to have consultants who knew the industry well to answer questions and address his issues of concern when he entered the project and throughout the course of its management.

The client respondent believed that the consultants' practical need was to have a clear steer concerning what was expected of them, including where they were supposed to be and when. The consultant respondent reported that the consultants' practical needs had been to have a work programme which meant that E&Y could manage their own and client's risks of project failure. When working on a project for a long time the consultants, the client respondent believed, needed to receive encouragement and be informed when they were performing well. The consultant reported that the consultants' emotional needs were to feel like a successful member of the team and that the client and the consultants had a good relationship and that the client was open and responsive.

5.9.9 VALUE FOR MONEY

The client respondent believed that he had received value for money because within the DOT they did not have the skills brought by E&Y consultants to manage the process of organising the contractual arrangements, delivering the appropriate IS/IT systems and therefore generating the revenue from the sale of the various railway companies. The consultant respondent suggested that the DOT had received value for money because they had been offered consultancy fee rates at a substantial discount and that the consultants that had been working on the project were of a high calibre.

5.10 SUMMARY INFORMATION OF THE CASE STUDY PROJECTS

Summary details of the case study projects are presented in Tables 5.1-5.3. Table 5.1 identifies the reasons for the projects, the business advantage for undertaking the projects, why the consultants were used and the method of the consultancy firms' selection. Table 5.2 identifies the terms of reference for the projects, the projects' duration, the activities undertaken by the client organisations to demonstrate ownership of the outputs, who was responsible for project management within the client organisations, and who were the decision makers in the organisations. Table 5.3 summaries the client staff's involvement in the projects, the type of project relationships and communication and how the internal consultancy organisations' relationships operated.

Table 5.1 Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details and Selection of the Consultants

Case Study Project	Reasons for the Project	Business Advantage	Why consultants were used	Selection of Consultants
CGD	<p>1. To build management information systems to assist managers in providing the DNH and NAO with accurate information.</p> <p>2. To provide staff with accurate and efficient information accessible from their workstations.</p>	Implementation of the IS framework developed from the IS strategy would allow employees to make effective and efficient use of information.	The CCTA recommended that consultants be brought in to provide technical support to improve the current systems.	Multiple Tender - 6 consultancy companies were approached.
Trust	The Trust needed to develop an Information Management and Technology strategy to comply with the NHS Executive requirement to possess one.	The strategy was developed so that when implemented it should improve the ability of the Trust to manage its business.	<p>1. The consultants were used because the Trust's Project Manager did not have the time nor staff available to do the project.</p> <p>2. The consultants were familiar with the Trust's IS and their recommendations were more likely to be accepted than if they had been made by internal staff.</p>	Single Tender

Table 5.1 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details and Selection of the Consultants

Case Study Project	Reasons for the Project	Business Advantage	Why consultants were used	Selection of Consultants
LS	The REGIS Oracle database that had been implemented was functioning inefficiently and the President of the LS believed that there needed to be a review of the REGIS programme of work.	Indirect savings were envisaged due to the more efficient running of the remainder of the REGIS programme.	It was believed that the consultants would provide an objective report on the progress of the REGIS programme and recommend how the remaining stages of the project should be conducted.	Multiple Tender - 5 consultancy companies were approached.
Library	The Library wanted to generate additional income and to improve the efficiency of back office operations.	There was the potential to reduce the Library's overheads and manpower and improve quality and flexibility of service provision.	The Project Manager did not have the time to write the new specification and there were no members of staff who were appropriately skilled to undertake the task.	Multiple Tender - 3 consultancies were approached but only BDO Stoy Hayward tendered.
CH	Initially the replacement of the Mercury Communications contract for CH Direct. Part-way through the project was extended to cover the integration of all systems being implemented.	The project was not intended to create a business advantage but to provide better service for CH's customers.	1. Technical assistance in the replacement of the contract and for the integration of the business systems was required by the Project Manager. 2. The Project Manager needed additional management support to oversee various aspects of the project.	It is unclear whether there was a single or multiple tender.

Table 5.1 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details and Selection of the Consultants

Case Study Project	Reasons for the Project	Business Advantage	Why consultants were used	Selection of Consultants
NHSE	The project began because of the recommendations of two White Papers which recommended that a population health index register (Administrative Register) be developed across the NHS.	NHS' departments would be more efficient because the time spent to create new patient records would be reduced.	Consultants were used for this project because there was not sufficient expertise in-house to write the Administrative Register Programme.	Multiple Tender - a number of consultancies tendered for the project.
BACS	The current electronic funds transfer (C.E.F.T.) system was becoming outdated and needed to be replaced. The project had failed twice before and a final attempt was being made to implement its new IT system before BACS was closed down due to its failure to update its technology.	Survival - the continued running of BACS.	Consultants were used because BACS' staff needed assistance to help with the implementation of replacement electronic funds transfer (REFT) system.	Five people were interviewed for the post of Project Manager. The Project Manager selected then employed consultants from OSI to help with the work.
DOT	In November 1993 the Railways Bill on privatisation received royal assent. With the privatisation there came the need to design the new IT/IS systems that would be required by the TOCs and Railtrack so that the Rail Industry could function as a cohesive organisation rather than the many single businesses of which it was comprised.	Privatisation of BR would raise funds for the Conservative Government.	Consultants were used as additional management support and also provided technical expertise.	Multiple Tender - a number of consultants tendered. Ernst & Young put forward a non-compliant tender that suggested the development of the systems programme co-ordination office (SPCO).

Table 5.2 Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details

Case Study Project	Terms of Reference	Project Duration	Activities of the Client Organisation to Demonstrate Ownership of the Output	Project Management	Project Decision Makers and their Roles
CGD	To develop an IT/IS framework.	7 months	Changes were made to the IS framework.	Project Manager Steering Group Project Team	The senior management knew that there needed to be a change in the IS/IT systems but did not have a clear idea of the required organisational structure. The Steering Group signed-off the reports.
Trust	To develop an IM&T strategy document.	2.5 months	Implementation of the IT systems specified in the IM&T strategy.	Project Manager Development Director Steering Group	The Development Director agreed the Project Manager's decisions. The Development Director chaired the Steering Group that signed-off the final reports.

Table 5.2 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details

Case Study Project	Terms of Reference	Project Duration	Activities to Demonstrate Ownership of the Output	Project Management	Project Decision Makers and their Roles
LS	<p>1. To review whether the REGIS project had been properly set up, in terms of achieving its objectives in replacing the REGIS system.</p> <p>2. To determine whether REGIS was capable of producing what was specified in the corporate information systems strategy.</p> <p>3. To determine whether the IT aspects of the project had been managed properly.</p> <p>4. To identify any problems and possible solutions.</p> <p>5. To estimate what the project had cost.</p>	7 weeks	The Project Manager had taken ownership of the output. A series of recommendations for project management had been agreed by the Finance Department.	Project Manager REGIS Review Sub-Committee (RRSC)	The Project Manager made many of the decisions and worked in conjunction with the RRSC. The Head of Finance Department had overall responsibility for the REGIS Programme.
Library	To write an IS/IT specification for Library Systems.	11 months which included a 7 months overrun when no work was done.	The Project Manager did not feel that she owned the specification.	Project Manger Project Team	The Project Manager made the majority of decisions but there was input from senior managers. The report was signed-off by senior managers.

Table 5.2 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details

Case Project	Study	Terms of Reference	Project Duration	Activities to Demonstrate Ownership of the Output	Project Management	Project Decision Makers and their Roles
NHSE		To develop an administrative register to be used throughout the NHS.	3.5 years. The project was still running and there was no definite end date at the time of interview.	The Project Manager had not formally measured the type of activities that were used to indicate ownership of the administrative register but he felt that the time the team had spent on implementing the Administrative Register showed that they had taken ownership of it.	Project Manager Project Board Project Team Pilot Site Representatives	Various teams managed different aspects of the work. The IMG and the Information Management Centre were the two departments that were most involved in the project.
BACS		To implement the REFT system.	3 years.	The REFT system was implemented and companies were using it to transfer money.	CEO Deputy CEO Steering Group Project Team Technical Development Committee	The Steering Group made the important decisions connected with the running of the project.

Table 5.2 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Project Details

Case Project	Study	Terms of Reference	Project Duration	Activities to Demonstrate Ownership of the Output	Project Management	Project Decision Makers and their Roles
DOT		The purposes of the project were to: a) allocate the 1600 IT/IS systems which were owned by BRB and clarify issues of ownership; b) put in place the appropriate contractual arrangements to specify who were the owners, supplier and customers of these systems; c) test the system management arrangements to ensure they operated smoothly; d) develop new or revise the service level agreements; e) manage the process of transferring the intellectual property rights of IS/IT systems from BRB to Railtrack and other railway companies.	Approximately 3 years. The project was due to be completed 6 months after the interview.	Ownership of the project was demonstrated by the ability of the DOT to privatise BR's businesses.	Project Manager Project Team Steering Group SPCO Team	Both the Client Project Manager and the SPCO were involved in decision-making. In addition, there was a Permanent Under-Secretary of State who was also a key decision maker. Directors of BR businesses were also responsible for taking decisions in their areas of responsibility.

Table 5.3 Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects: Client and Consultant Organisational Dynamics and Relationships

Case Study Project	Client Staff Involvement	Project Relationships and Communications			Within Consultancy Organisation Relationships
		Internal Politics	Internal and External Resistance	Skills Transfer	
CGD	Occasional involvement of senior managers, intermediate users, end users and those pilot testing the systems.	There was concern by members of staff about the suitability of the skills possessed by the Project Manager. He had to prove that he was capable of undertaking the function.	Senior Managers felt threatened because of the questions being asked by the consultants and became resistant.	The Project Manager acquired project management skills from the lead consultant.	The lead consultant did the majority of the work; his two associates did much less.

Table 5.3 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects Client and Consultant Organisational Dynamics and Relationships

Case Study Project	Client Staff Involvement	Project Relationships and Communications			Within Consultancy Organisation Relationships
		Internal Politics	Internal and External Resistance	Skills Transfer	
Trust	Occasionally the Trust's management and staff were interviewed by the consultants and undertook administrative work, e.g. assisting with arranging and conducting interviews.	The IM&T strategy was considered a low priority by the Trust's Board prior to the project and therefore the Project Manager had to attempt to raise the profile of IM&T in the Trust as one of the outputs of the strategy project being conducted by the management consultants. Clinical staff did not always attend the scheduled workshops and the reason given for this was that they had their clinical duties to attend to. The Project Manager indicated that some of them, at the start of the project, could not see the necessity to improve the IM&T infrastructure of the Trust.	There was some defensive behaviour exhibited by the Trust's Board when they were questioned by the consultants.	No skills were transferred to the consultant by the Project Manager. However the Project Manager provided the consultant with information about the Trust's operations. The consultants helped the Project Manager in understanding how to develop an IM&T strategy and then how to promote it to senior managers.	The consultants worked well together.

Table 5.3 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects Client and Consultant Organisational Dynamics and Relationships

Case Study Project	Client Staff Involvement	Project Relationships and Communications			Within Consultancy Organisation Relationships
		Internal Politics	Internal and External Resistance	Skills Transfer	
LS	Senior management involvement was limited to being interviewed and signing off reports. Employees were only interviewed by the consultants.	The president of the LS wanted the project to be undertaken as it would provide support for his re-election.	There was a great deal of resistance from members of the LS' Council who believed that they did not need to use the consultants' recommendations in their decision making.	The project manager learned from the consultants how to systematically review documentation. The consultants did not learn any new skills from the Project Manager but did receive information about the client organisation.	The consultants worked well together.
Library	Senior managers were involved in decision making. Other members of staff assisted with writing the specification.	One member of the Library's staff wanted to write the specification in-house but the Project Manager did not believe that the team had the skill to do so. This caused some problems on the project and was a likely cause of the consultants having to stop part way through the project.	There was some resistance to the project because one member of staff wanted to write the specification in-house.	The consultant taught the Project Manager how to write an IT/IS specification. The client provided the consultants with information about the Library.	This was not an issue in this project since only one consultant was involved.

Table 5.3 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects Client and Consultant Organisational Dynamics and Relationships

Case Study Project	Client Staff Involvement	Project Relationships and Communications			Within Consultancy Organisation Relationships
		Internal Politics	Internal and External Resistance	Skills Transfer	
CH	The Project Board was involved only in decision making and signing -off reports. In-house users were rarely involved in the project.	Some staff were sceptical about how much the new IT/IS systems could improve the CH processes. No apparent action was taken by them to hamper the work of the consultants or delay the project.	There was no resistance to the project.	There were no skills transferred between the Project Manager and the consultants.	The consultants who worked on the project were not used to implementing IT/IS systems but recommended the use of other members of ICL to assist with the project.

Table 5.3 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects Client and Consultant Organisational Dynamics and Relationships

Case Study Project	Client Staff Involvement	Project Relationships and Communications			Within Consultancy Organisation Relationships
		Internal Politics	Internal and External Resistance	Skills Transfer	
NHSE	As specialist skills were required to write the programme for the Administrative Register there was minimal involvement of NHS staff.	There were disagreements between the NHS pilot site representatives concerning the system requirements. In addition, there was a dispute between the Information Management Group and the Information Management Centre concerning an important aspect of the system specification.	There was some resistance from some of the NHS bodies involved in a project because they did not want EASAMS, the consultants, to look at their IT systems.	There were no skills transferred between the Project Manager and the consultants.	This was not an issue in this project.
BACS	Senior managers were involved in decision making and signing -off reports. Staff were involved in the development and implementation of REFT.	There were objections to proposals from members of the Steering Group at meetings.	There was some resistance from members of BACS who felt that they did not need the assistance of consultants to implement REFT.	Project management skills were transferred from the consultant to the Client Project Manager. The Client Project Manager transferred knowledge of how BACS operated to the consultants.	There was one consultant who did not perform to the required standard and he left the project.

Table 5.3 continued. Summary of Case Studies of IT Management Consultancy Facilitated Projects Client and Consultant Organisational Dynamics and Relationships

Case Study Project	Client Staff Involvement	Project Relationships and Communications			Within Consultancy Organisation Relationships
		Internal Politics	Internal and External Resistance	Skills Transfer	
DOT	Senior managers were involved in the project but there was some disagreement between the Project Manager and the consultant over the degree of involvement and who were identified as senior managers.	Opinions concerning the necessity for a privatisation varied across the rail industry but there was a great deal of opposition from many quarters.	There was considerable resistance to the whole restructuring of the railway industry from various organisations. The SPCO spent much of their time dealing with issues that arose and produced reports to inform the industry of the work they were undertaking in order to help reduce the resistance to the changes that they were making.	The Project Manager did not feel that skills had been transferred to him but there had been skills transferred to the generalist civil servants working on the project. In addition, the member of DOT staff that worked in the SPCO also learnt skills from the consultants.	There was a good working relationship between the consultants working in the SPCO.

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6. ANALYSIS OF THE CASE STUDIES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the case studies that are presented in Chapter 5. As suggested by Hislop (2002) the reason client and consultant data will be analysed in this chapter is because “accounts which focus solely on the role of the consultant provide only a limited and partial explanation for the character of these relations” (p669). An immense amount of data was collected from the interviews, internal company documentation, the literature reviewed, final reports and newspapers concerning each of the case study organisations. This has meant that the author has selected only those areas in which this study makes a contribution to the current body of knowledge. The projects have not been analysed on a case by case basis because the analysis is focused on developing an understanding of the dynamics of the projects and relationships which includes how the clients had selected and used the consultants, how the projects were assessed/monitored and what form the relationships took.

This chapter has been divided into a number of sections, reasons for the projects (Section 6.2), political significance of IT and IS (Section 6.3), Vulnerability (Section 6.4), project budgets (Section 6.5), project duration (Section 6.6), selection of the consultants (Section 6.), project management (Section 6.8), decision making (Section 6.9), client involvement in the project (Section 6.10), information technology and information systems issues (Section 6.11), project relationships (Section 6.12), intra-client organisation relationships (Section 6.13), client and consultant relationships (Section 6.14), inter-consultancy organisation relationships (Section 6.15), intra-consultancy organisation relationships (Section 6.16), respondents’ needs (Section 6.17), monitoring of the consultancy profession (Section 6.18), value for money (Section 6.19), measuring success based on the literature criteria (Section 6.20), a project measurement system based on the entire finding of the study (Section 6.21) and a summary of the issues covered in Chapter 6 that required further investigation in Chapter 4 (Section 6.22).

6.2 REASONS FOR THE PROJECTS

The following section describes the reasons for conducting the projects. From the case study data it became apparent that there were two principal reasons why the projects were undertaken, i.e. 1) as a directive from a Central Government department, e.g. the CGD and Trust projects or a ministerial directive, e.g. the NHSE and DOT projects, or 2) the IT/IS systems needed to be replaced because it was out of date, e.g. LS, Library, CH and BACS projects.

There were also additional case specific reasons which promoted the need for the project. In addition to the main reason reported above, e.g. the Library client felt that the Borough of Waltham Forest Library department wanted to obtain a leading edge system so that they would have an advantage over other boroughs. The LS project was unusual in that it was not the IT system that reviewed but the entire REGIS project. Thus, the actual event that prompted the review was the missed deadline for delivery of the solicitors' registration forms.

Using Morris and Hough's (1987) definition of the role that the Government can take in projects it was found that the Government acted as the owner of some of the projects, e.g. the NHSE and DOT projects; its sponsor in others, e.g. the NHSE, CGD, DOT in that the projects were paid for from the funds allocated to the department by the Treasury; and its Champion in a third group, e.g. the DOT project. The Government did not have an overtly regulatory role in any of the projects.

6.2.1 McIVER CLASSIFICATION

The following section further attempts to categorise the reasons for the case study projects using McIver's (1986) classification system. In Section 2.7.1 McIver's (1986) list of nine reasons why consultants are used was discussed, i.e. help, whitewash, company politics, technical assistance, learning, the air freshener, the hired assassin, the messenger to the gods and the temps. The author realises that the complexity of the projects meant that often there was more than one reason that consultants could be used. However, only the principal reason the author identified for each project will be discussed in this section. The following

categories were found to be applicable to the case study projects: technical assistance, company politics, learning, air freshener and whitewash.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance, McIver stated, is the situation when the client organisation obtains technical advice from a specialist. Those projects that were characterised as being undertaken for technical assistance were the CGD, NHSE, BACS and DOT projects. There were certain characteristics that were common to these cases, e.g. 1) the client project managers did not understand exactly what they were going to need in terms of their new software and hardware platforms, and the outputs of the project as defined in the technical documents were harder to deliver with the level of in-house expertise than was initially envisaged; 2) the client organisation had established a pattern of seeking external expertise; and, 3) the improvement in service performance was generally for the benefit of an external organisation.

The client project managers chosen to manage the projects were new to the task of managing this type of project. This aspect of the project will be discussed further in Section 6.3.1. A further complicating factor of these projects was that the theoretically planned change was often not entirely feasible when the practical implementation of these projects were being undertaken, e.g. the CGD had to amalgamate two of the departmental sections, the NHSE had to restrict the Administrative Register to holding only administrative data rather than clinical data, the OSI wanted to achieve a smooth changeover from the C.E.F.T. to the REFT system but were on their second attempt and the DOT management did not know where to start the process of privatisation.

Each of the organisations had established a pattern of using external service providers, e.g. the CGD had used the CCTA, the NHSE had used BSI and Coopers and Lybrand, BACS had used external programmers and the DOT had used Ernst and Young, a variety of lawyers and programmers.

Finally, external stakeholders, e.g. organisations or users of the service, that were not part of the department undertaking the project were to benefit from service improvements made as a result of the project, i.e. for the NHSE project it was NHS staff and patients, for BACS it was the customers who used its clearing services and for the DOT it was supposed to be the rail

users, shareholders and the Government. In this instance CGD's staff were the internal rather than external customers.

Company Politics

Company politics applied only to the Trust project. The reason why the consultants were brought into the Trust was because of company politics. McIver (1986) states that the consultants are brought into this type of project to support the case for one person/group so that they can win their particular internal company argument. From the interviews it became apparent that the consultants had previously worked with the Trust client respondent on other occasions. The consultants were therefore fully conversant with the IT/IS systems of the hospital. The client respondent needed to raise the profile of the Information Management and Technology (IM&T) strategy within the Hospital Management Board so that she would in future be able to secure additional funds for the implementation of the IM&T strategy. To further this aim the client utilised funds which had been allocated to pay for her salary on another project, to secure the services of the consultants who she knew had a similar philosophy to her own and whom she trusted to professionally promote her cause.

Air Freshener

McIver (1986) states that consultants act as an air freshener in an organisation when they identify certain issues which the company's management do not notice. The LS project was another highly political consultancy project but the most important characteristic of this project was that the consultants provided a new perspective. ABC's consultants acted as air fresheners as they brought clarity to the project. The consultants provided the necessary manpower and objectivity required to answer the questions posed by the LS' senior management. As has been explained in Chapter 5 this project was principally undertaken as a ploy to increase the chances of re-election of the President of the Council. One of the primary reasons the consultants were praised by the client respondent was that they did not aggravate a highly charged political situation.

Learning

What became apparent from the initial stages of the Library project was that it was concerned with learning. McIver (1986) explained that consultants used for this purpose

provide the client with information concerning what is occurring in the wider marketplace. One of the key reasons, according to the Library client respondent, for this project was that the Borough of Waltham Forest's library service wanted to be technologically ahead of the library services of neighbouring boroughs. The Library client respondent reported that the consultant respondent brought knowledge of the IT/IS private sector market to the project. He had to be 'taught' how to mould his knowledge of the private sector's use of IT/IS to the library services [public sector] strategy requirements. The combination of the consultant's knowledge with the client respondent's understanding of the library service's IT/IS environments led to the development of the new strategy document.

Whitewash

Perhaps controversially, the author would suggest that the CH project was one that could be characterised as a whitewash, as the CH client respondent was preoccupied with the selection of a new LAN network supplier for CH Direct. The consultant noted there was nobody within CH who was responsible for the integration of the IT/IS systems. Having the consultants working on the integration of the system allowed the CH's senior management to provide evidence that they were concerned with the integration of all the new systems whilst leaving the consultant respondent to oversee the project as best he could.

6.3 POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF IT AND IS

Peled (2001) citing the power politics literature suggested senior non-technically skilled members of an organisation could manipulate the procurement and implementation of IT and therefore use consultants as weapons in their internal organisational struggles. The consultants in these situations have no political power in their own right. There was no evidence found to support the belief that manipulation of IT/IS occurred in the CGD, Library, NHSE, CH, BACS or DOT projects. However, in all the projects the final decisions concerning IT/IS was made by a body that was non-technical and therefore were perhaps not the most informed people to make such decisions as they would not always be aware of the ramifications of their selection on the wider organisation.

Only, in the Trust and Library projects does there seem to have been technically skilled members of staff who were advisers to the senior decision makers. Perhaps of more interest

are those organisations where Peled's statement is fulfilled, e.g. in the LS and Trust projects. In the LS project the picture of what has occurred is not totally clear but manipulation of IT/IS appears to have been a 'lever' that was employed in LS Presidential elections, at least during the period immediately before the start of the LS project. Much more overt control of IM&T by clinical members of the Trust Board appears to have occurred, in what was described by the Trust client respondent as the clinical staff's primary focus being that of patient care. There was insufficient evidence here to fully support Leys' (1999) belief about clinician's participation in projects (see Section 2.4.5.2) but it does appear that clinicians may play a role in some of the problems found within NHS trusts. Secondly, the apparent challenge to the Trust's Board decision making in relation to IM&T in the past provided a point around which this group of staff shared opinions and this is why they were perhaps were not as supportive initially of the project. This issue was also reported by Kets de Vries (1991).

As reported above, both the LS and Trust projects were considered political, although only in the Trust project were the consultants brought in for primarily political reasons. The DOT was another project that had a political component, although the machinations seemed to be outside of the DOT department, within the Government, before the project began. In terms of possessing political power, only in the Trust, BACS and DOT projects did the consultants seem to exert any power. In the BACS and Trust project, the power that they exerted would have been due to the closeness of the relationship between the client and consultant project managers and the influence the consultants had on the project managers because they were allies working towards a common goal and 'told' the agreed stories to senior managers, e.g. the need for better IM&T in the Trust and the time spent with the consultant preparing for Board meetings in the BACS project. The consultants working in these two projects did not appear to have power in their own right but were co-conspirators rather than weapons, as Peled (2001) would suggest. Bloomfield and Danieli (1995) also reported that consultants were important actors and often part of the change process themselves. The consultants working in the SPCO were more overtly politically influential because they were responsible for the dissemination of information not only within the DOT but also to the wider rail industry and therefore were influential in their own right but only to a limited extent. The consultant respondent noted there were elements of the transport policy that he had wanted to become involved in but had not been allowed to do so.

6.3.1 WHY WERE THE CONSULTANTS USED?

It was found that the need to use the consultants for undertaking the projects was for both internal and external reasons. The internal stimuli were as follows:

- 1) the department had an under resourced IT department, e.g. the CGD, Library, CH and DOT projects;
- 2) the output of the projects would be more acceptable to senior management if it was produced externally, e.g. CGD and Trust projects;
- 3) the staff were not appropriately skilled to undertake the projects in-house, e.g., Trust, CH, NHSE, BACS and DOT;
- 4) the output from the REGIS project promoted the need for the current project, e.g. LS (slow production of the RF forms);
- 5) the sub-project needed to be undertaken as part of a wider project timescale, e.g. the Library project;
- 6) the consultants were needed as additional management support, e.g. the CH project; and,
- 7) the replacement of the IT/IS system, e.g. CGD, BACS and Trust projects.

The external stimuli such as governmental and ministerial requirements to undertake the project were identified in the CGD, Trust, NHSE and DOT projects. There were instances in which there was more than one stimulus, e.g. the CH and Library projects.

This research agreed with Clark et al.'s (1995) findings, i.e. it was a common strategy to find consultants being hired to advise clients in both their contractual negotiations with vendors and their management of the insourcing arrangement once it had commenced. This occurred in the CH, NHSE, BACS and DOT projects. De Looff's (1995) work suggested that if dependency is minimised, by employing strategies such as the use of multiple suppliers or using different suppliers at each consecutive phase, then one receives the best results. This strategy was employed in the LS, CH, NHSE, BACS and DOT projects. Only in the DOT project did there seem to be dependency on the consultants. This was because in the DOT project the client organisation had to privatise BR and did not know how this was going to be achieved. They employed E&Y to manage the process and without them the sale of BR could not have taken place because the generalist civil servants and the industry lead bodies did not know how to achieve it. E&Y provided the lead for the way to progress the project,

oversaw the contracts, disseminated information and provided guidance on the privatisation IT/IS issues. Bloomfield and Danieli (1995) identified in their research that clients can become dependent on IT management consultants to assist them with their IT issues. Neither respondent from the DOT project reported that this dependence had any adverse effects on the project.

6.4 VULNERABILITY

Vulnerability was discussed in Section 2.8.2. There are high and low vulnerability contexts in which consultants operate. Using the categories reported by Buchanan and Boddy (1992) the contexts that the projects were conducted in are shown in Table 6.1 below.

There were two projects that were characterised as operating solely in high vulnerability contexts: the NHSE and DOT projects. The consultants who operated in the DOT projects appeared to have demonstrated a high degree of process skills and had few problems conducting the project. Again, the first set of NHSE consultants demonstrated high process skills and a sound understanding of IT and the project had been considered good by the client respondent. However, the client respondent believed those that worked on the project after it had been stopped, had limited IT skills and therefore caused the project to manifest problems which perhaps would not have occurred if it had not been temporarily halted.

The majority of projects (Trust, LS, Library, CH and BACS projects) operated in a medium vulnerability context, i.e. there was a combination of high and low vulnerability characteristics demonstrated in the same projects. There was no pattern of characteristics to be found in either the strategy or IT/IS system implementation projects.

Only the CGD project possessed the characteristics of a low vulnerability project. There is insufficient evidence that the consultants who worked on this project had low process skills.

There is insufficient evidence in this study to draw conclusions about the level of process skills demonstrated by the consultants and additional investigation over a longer period would be required to obtain this information.

Table 6.1 Vulnerability Contexts of the Projects

Name of the Client Company	CG	CID	ACR	HSM	SGP	LID	UGSC
Central Government Department					-	-	-
Preston Acute Hospitals		*		*	-		-
Law Society		*			-		-
London Borough of Waltham Forest			*	*	-	-	
Companies House			*	*		-	
NHS Executive	*	*	*	*			
BACS	*				-		-
Department of Transport	*	*	*	*			

Key

*	High vulnerability characteristics
-	Low vulnerability characteristics
CG	The project exhibits frequently changing goals and priorities
CID	There are complex organisational interdependencies
ACR	The change responsibilities are ambiguous
HSM	Senior management are either hostile or indifferent with respect to the change
SGP	There are stable goals and priorities in the project
LID	There are limited simple interdependencies
UGSC	There are clearly understood goals, top management care and are supportive of the change.

6.5 PROJECT BUDGETS

The budgeting for projects and issues related to the projects were discussed in the literature in Sections 2.3, 2.4.3, 2.7.2 and 2.9.4. In addition the project coming in within budget was found to be an important success measure (see Section 4.2.1). Other issues relating to the budget were discussed in Sections 4.7.7 and 4.11.1. In Section 3.8 it was shown that fee income was used to select the consultancy firms that would participate in the study. The three categories were as follows: 1) consultancies that had annual fee incomes of up to £1 Million (M), i.e. the CGD and Trust consultants; 2) consultancies that had annual fee incomes of between £1M - £5M, i.e. the LS and Library consultants; and, 3) consultancies with annual fee incomes over £5M, i.e. the CH, NHSE, DOT and BACS consultants.

Table 6.2 presents the amounts that the respondents reported as the budgets for their projects. There are two sets of figures for most of the cases, i.e. the sum specified by the consultant

and the other by the client. The two figures often do not correspond for the following possible reasons: 1) The respondents showed a reluctance to specify in some cases what the actual consultants' fees were, e.g. the BACS and DOT consultants and the Library client respondent, and 2) the client respondents in some cases specified the cost of the entire project which included the price for the purchase of hardware and software platforms and also the fees of other contractors working on the project, e.g. in the CH, NHSE, BACS and DOT projects.

The DOT consultant refused to provide a figure for the budget, but this may have been related to the government not providing Parliament with a breakdown of the payments for the rail privatisation as John Watts, the Roads and Railways Minister, stated that the details of payments were "commercially confidential" (Smithers, 1995).

Table 6.2 Budgeting For The Projects

Client Company	Consultant Response	Client Response
CGD	The consultants' fees were £35, 000	The consultants' fees were £33,750
Trust	The consultants' fees were £15,000	The consultants' fees were £19,5000
LS	The consultants' fees were £27,000 which was increased by a further £1,275	The consultants' fees were £25,000
Library	The consultants' fees were £13, 000	The consultants' fees were £13, 000
CH	The consultants' fees were £60,000. A further £100,000 would be required for the implementation phase.	The budget for the project £1.8 million per year and £8 million had already been spent.
NHSE	For the phase II part of the project the consultants' fees were £120,000	The entire project had cost £9 million.
BACS	The entire budget for the project was £60 Million	The entire budget for the project was £60 Million
DOT	-	The original budget for the project was approximately £500,000 per annum. However, it increased to between £750,000 - £1,000 000

In addition, Smithers suggested that the consultants had strong links with the Conservative Party and she goes on to quote Glenda Jackson, the then Labour MP for Hampstead and Highgate, who speculated on the percentage of the money that would become donations to the coffers of the Conservative Party.

The reason that the Library client gave for not wanting to disclose this amount was that she was in the process of putting the next stage of the project out to tender and would disclose this information if it became necessary to do so.

For the projects conducted by consultancies with annual fee incomes below £5M, the budgeted figures quoted were used to pay the fees for the consultants undertaking the project. For those companies with fee incomes over £5M the budgets varied from £3.5

million to £60M. The consultants' fees and expenses accounted for a percentage of this figure and the remaining sum was used to purchase the software and hardware platforms, as reported above.

In no case did the budget seem to be a constraint. In at least some of the cases, e.g. the LS, Trust and Library projects, additional work was done by the consultants at no extra cost to the clients. For the LS project the nature of the relationship seemed to foster an attitude of compromise and thus the provision of extra work without payment would have been consistent with that. For the Trust project, the nature of the relationship that the client respondent and the consultants had, made it possible for the consultants to perform extra work with no extra charge. The Trust consultants may have realised that helping the client stay within budget would have been a means of assisting their own consultancy practice because any additional work that the client would require for the IM&T strategy, as a result of the project's raised profile within the organisation, would likely be offered to the Trust consultants and their firm.

The following are the reasons why there were additional charges incurred: 1) additional copies of the report were ordered, e.g. the LS project, 2) an implementation plan which had not been part of the original specification was requested, e.g. the LS project; 3) additional workshops were conducted, e.g. the Trust project; and, 4) additional consultancy was performed to correct mistakes, e.g. the NHSE project.

This research does not support Morris and Hough's (1987) and Ward and Peppard's (1996) claim that projects often come in over the consultant's estimates. The Trust project was the only project in which the additional work done was instigated by the consultants but the consultants also performed additional tasks and did not request to be paid any supplementary fee. In the other instance where there was an increase in the fee, i.e. for the LS project, the increase in the fee was instigated because the client organisation requested that additional work be done which had not been identified in the original terms of reference.

The second issue that was identified in Section 4.7.8 above was that large budgets encouraged the use of over-complicated systems. There were four projects that had budgets over £1M. In each case to say that large budgets encouraged the use of over-complicated systems is to simplify the nature of the projects. The types of issues under consideration are as follows:

1. In the CH project there was uncertainty about what actually had to be done, as the client senior management concentrated on the details but neglected to take into consideration the overview of the entire project.
2. The NHSE project on paper looked to be 'straightforward' however the client organisation's dynamics and the client consultant relationship were forces acting to oppose the development of the Administrative Register.
3. For the BACS project to be completed a skilled project manager had to enter the organisation and co-ordinate the project so that BACS' IT goals could be achieved.
4. The DOT project was a highly political project that could and would have had disastrous consequences for the government if the SPCO had not worked on the industry's IT/IS systems.

None of the projects appeared to have been under resourced. In Section 6.9 below, the projects will be characterised by the types of decisions that were made.

6.6 PROJECT DURATION

The duration of the projects ranged between a few months through to three and a half years. In certain cases, e.g. the Library and NHSE, this was not always the actual time that the consultants spent conducting the project. Every project overran its originally specified timescale somewhat. For the CGD, Trust and LS projects the project duration times were only a matter of days longer than had been expected. Due to the projects' inherent complexity, e.g. for the CH, DOT and BACS projects, the client or consultant project managers did not have fixed project timetables but reviewed the timetable of the consultants periodically, e.g. quarterly. As each phase of the project was completed then the next period's work began. Gilb (1989) would support this manner of working because he suggests, in Section 2.9.4, that an uncontrolled attribute becomes a weak point in a project.

The NHSE and Library projects' predicted project time increased by six and seven months, respectively. The Library project's extension was either due to: a) an officer not agreeing with what had been decided; or b) the project not being able to be completed in a single financial year because there was a lack of funds. The project was stopped for a month, which resulted in a five-month delay before the project could recommence. The Library client respondent felt that this was not as significant as it might seem because she believed

that had she had to write the specification it would have taken longer as she was also responsible for nineteen other projects. Secondly, the client respondent felt that the project was cost effective as the specification was distributed to the prospective system vendors and the Library's management within the agreed timescale that would have allowed the Library service to change its IT system by June 1997.

The NHSE project timescale overrun was due to organisational politics and what Morris and Hough (1987) described as technical uncertainty. The project had to be stopped for six months while two departments within the NHSE, i.e. the Information Management Centre and the Information Management Group, had to agree the standard format in which the administrative data was to be coded into the Administrative Register (AR). Another consequence of this cessation was that the original team of the project developer was removed and other members of their staff began to work on the project. The client respondent identified the replacement of the original team of developers as the primary cause of the AR's non-compliance with the agreed specification. These results seem to substantiate Morris and Hough's (1987) and Ward and Peppard's (1996) argument that IT projects run over time.

6.7 SELECTION OF THE CONSULTANTS

When attempting to make judgements concerning the implications of the selection of the IT management consultants there were four types of literature that have been used:

1. The professional service literature identified services that have different properties, i.e. search, experience and credence properties (see Section 1.1).
2. The purchase decision literature identifies three types of purchase decisions, i.e. new task, modified rebuy and straight rebuy (see Section 2.7.2).
3. Morgan (1991) suggests that consultant selection will be associated with: 1) the size of the client firm, 2) the client's aversion to risk, 3) the complexity and 4) the timescale of the project (see Sections 1.1 and 2.7.2).
4. The outsourcing literature identified nine categories of selection criteria (see Section 2.4.1), i.e. 1) cultural fit between the client and vendor, 2) provision of value added, 3) vendors adding value to in-house capabilities, 4) the treatment of staff transferred to the vendor, 5) the client feeling the vendor was of high quality, 6) the vendor's track record, 7) the vendor's financial stability, 8) additional costs associated with consultant

selection, and 9) independence from hardware and software suppliers. Criteria 1 and 5 have been amalgamated and criterion 4, i.e. the treatment of staff transferred to the vendor has been dropped as it was not relevant to this study. In Section 2.9.1, the added value term was considered an insufficient definition of the value concepts and Bounds et al. (1994) introduced the term customer value. This term takes into consideration the benefits, sacrifices and the relationship when making value judgements on the service provision and will be used instead of criterion 4.

The following sections discuss the type of purchase decision used to select the consultants (Section 6.7.1) and the selection criteria (Section 6.7.2).

6.7.1 TYPES OF PURCHASE DECISION

The findings were that the new task purchaser, e.g. the CGD client respondent, did not require any more information in selecting the consultants than did the modified rebuy purchasers, e.g. the LS client respondent, as was suggested by Morgan (1991). This may have been because: 1) the CGD had had a scoping study done and the CCTA had recommended that consultants should be used to help with the reorganisation; or, 2) within the public sector compulsory competitive tendering requires that multiple tenders be sought and thus the CGD client respondent was adhering to the same guidelines as the other public sector departments. This would also imply that the CGD purchase decision was no higher in search properties but exhibited lower experience and credence properties than the other two types of purchase decision. This was because the client project manager had no prior experience of using IT management consultants and therefore had no evidence on which to make his judgements. He obtained pseudo experience and thus developed some level of credence because the head of IT provided him with the names of potential consultancy practices to invite to bid for the project. As with the LS project, which is discussed below, the client organisations quickly trusted the consultants because of the positive references given to them by other experienced members of their organisations. This supports Hislop's (2002) belief that when clients select consultants they employ embedded social networks. There was not enough evidence to indicate whether the clients' organisational stories and myths had shaped their general perspective about consultants and therefore their choice of who was selected.

It was found that the modified rebuy was the most common type of purchase decision used when selecting IT management consultants, e.g. for the LS, CH, NHSE, DOT and BACS projects. From the interviews with the client respondents, who had made modified rebuys, their experience of purchasing services varied. The most experienced purchaser of IT consultants were the NHSE, then BACS, DOT, CH and the least experienced was the LS. However, as will be discussed below in Section 6.8, this does not appear to have played a significant role in how well the projects were managed nor how they approached purchasing.

Some of the public sector client respondents, e.g. the NHSE, DOT and CH went through a process of compulsory competitive tendering. The LS project also followed a multiple tender scenario. There is some doubt whether the process was as clear cut in the case of the CH as in the NHSE and DOT, as the consultants were possibly selected before the contract was put out to tender. BACS' management did not adhere to the normal tendering process for the selection of the consultancy firm. The recruiters from Touche Ross, who identified candidates for the project manager role, would possibly have interviewed several candidates before approaching BACS' management with their preferred candidates. Thus, all these projects would have rated highly on search behaviours. These five projects would have had a higher rating for experience behaviours than those of the new task purchases. For example, organisations such as the NHSE, DOT and CH who had used consultants for earlier stages of the projects were likely to have known what to expect from a project but not necessarily exactly what would occur during the specific project examined, e.g. with the change of consultants in the NHSE at the system prototype building stage of the project, the NHSE were presented with individuals who did not perform as well as had the original consultants assigned to the project.

Therefore, the findings show that the experience properties were dependent on factors such as: 1) the heterogeneous nature of the service deliverers, 2) the quality of the relationship, 3) the quality of the input and output, and 4) the consultants' adherence to the accepted norms of the organisation by which they were employed. In addition, these projects were likely to have been higher on credence properties than a new task purchase, as the client respondents had a comparison norm that a new task purchaser would not have had, i.e. the client respondent had a previous standard of service delivery with which to compare the service provided by the IT management consultants.

The Library and the Trust clients made straight rebuy decisions. Both organisations seem to have adhered to the characteristics of this type of purchase decision. The straight rebuy purchases had a low degree of search although, in the Library project a compulsory competitive tender was required as part of the public sector requirement for the use of external suppliers: although other IT practices had been approached they had not been used (see Section 5.5.7). The purchase decisions were characterised by greater experience and credence in the consultants than the other projects. This was especially true for the Trust project as the client respondent had not only used the services of the consultancy firm before but had previously worked with both the consultants and thus knew exactly why she wanted to use them for another IT project. Generally straight rebuys occur when the client has had a positive experience of using a particular consultancy firm.

6.7.2 SELECTION CRITERIA

Rather than commenting on all the projects for the nine categories that the outsourcing literature provides for consultant selection, referred to in Section 2.4.1, only where a particular element was important will comments be made. Highlighting these criteria does not negate the importance of them as part of the selection criteria for other projects but selectivity of the material included in the thesis was adhered to and therefore the author attempted to include in the findings issues that were considered to having made a contribution to the current literature.

Cultural Fit Between The Client And Vendor And The Quality Of The Vendor

Both cultural fit and the quality of the vendor were considered important in the selection process for all the client respondents interviewed and these were possibly two aspects of the credence placed on the consultants, as they are hard to define and are intuitive and sensed rather than being susceptible to measurement. Thus this study seems to agree with Frohman's (1968) belief that it is at the selection stage that goals are agreed for the project. The client and consultants begin to establish the framework around which the project will develop its cultural identity, which may be very different from the client organisation's ways of operating. The study seems to have highlighted an aspect of the client IT management consultancy relationship, i.e. the necessity for a cultural fit between the client and consultants that does not appear to have been emphasised in the management consultancy literature

reviewed. Although Ford (1974) does suggest the client should find out how the consultants work this would be a limited interpretation of the client organisation's culture, as culture is more about the shared values and beliefs (Ward and Peppard, 1996).

Provision Of Customer Value

Customer value was particularly important in the LS project because the LS were not having a system delivered but a review of work that had already been conducted. The benefits to the clients were: 1) the report which was produced provided the LS with a means of defining what had actually been done, spent and what the LS still needed to do in order for the project to be a success; and 2) the consultants were working in a highly political situation that could have been exacerbated if they had not been diplomatic or had leaked information. Perhaps one of the most significant sacrifices, made by the LS, that had to be made was to allow the consultants to enter the organisation and by doing so clearly indicating that the LS had failed to effectively manage the project themselves. The LS, however, managed to temper this admission by allowing the consultants to enter the organisation on the LS' terms by providing the consultants with a very structured brief.

Adding Value To In-House Capabilities

In this context, in-house capabilities have been identified as the existing IT department within the client organisation. In the LS, Trust and Library projects there were already experienced in-house IT professionals who required the provision of additional expertise. The 'superior knowledge' brought to the project by the consultants was one of the main attractions of the consultants in all these projects. In the case of the Library client, the private sector IT knowledge that the consultant brought meant that the consultant respondent provided her with an additional perspective to which she had not previously been exposed. Again, this element is one that the management consultancy literature does not promote but is found in the outsourcing literature and was discussed by Michell and Fitzgerald (1997).

The Vendors Having A Good Track Record

The vendors having a good track record was identified mainly by the public sector client respondents, i.e. those that were employed by the CGD, CH, DOT and Trust. These respondents suggested that by using external IT management consultants rather than internal

staff the consultants' recommendations were more likely to be implemented because the consultants were viewed as being more professional and were not operating under the same organisational constraints. The Trust client stated, "If you ever produce a strategy in-house then internal people tend to take it for granted, whereas if an outside consultant comes in to develop a strategy, internal people tend to find it more believable because they regard the consultants as experts in that area and so they will recommend good proposals. This is not something you can directly measure but it makes the project more successful than had we done it ourselves."

This seems to confirm Karmarkar and Pitbladdo's (1997) suggestion, in Section 2.9.2, that third party sources of information or marketing may affect a consumer's perceptions. As suggested in Section 2.5.2.1 the change agents need to manage the flow of information through the project (Kubr, 1980) and if the change agents have a good reputation then they have greater power to influence the process than if they are viewed as inconsequential. Thus factors such as size of the organisation, positive media exposure and international spheres of influence are likely to be viewed by client organisations as signs of a good track record and therefore are forces which operate in the consultancy practice's favour when influencing the change process. This factor is also likely to be another aspect of credence.

The Vendors' Financial Stability

Only the NHSE client mentioned financial stability but this was in the context of them wishing to pay the consultants a fair fee as it was to the NHSE's benefit to have the consultants work in the interests of the NHSE and not only those of the consultants. If they are financially stable the consultants are perhaps more likely to work in the interests of the client, as would occur in the Douma and Schreuder's (1992) forcing contract situation (see Section 2.4.4), because the consultancy will have incentives other than money to consider, e.g. providing their clients with a high quality service. This factor is likely to be one that is taken into consideration as one of the search criteria, as it is measurable and may be employed as a comparator when the respondents are selecting a consultancy practice. However, this factor is one that would require further investigation before any conclusions can be drawn concerning whether it had been used in consultant selection.

Additional Costs Associated With Consultant Selection

In some of the projects there were additional costs that had not been envisaged at the outset of the project. For example once the first consultant arrived at CH, it was realised that the project was going to require more staff than was originally envisaged. The client project manager realised that this would have additional cost implications for the subsequent stages of the CH project and this led to the scoping study being done. As a result of this study the consultants had a better idea of the problem and therefore what they were likely to recommend in the architecture study to be undertaken at the next stage. Ford (1974) suggested that by doing a scoping study the client eliminates one of the variables that are likely to contribute to a project's failure. However, the CH consultant suggested that even though the scoping study had been done the actual core problems had still been overlooked. Therefore for this project additional costs were incurred because CH had additional work done, but not because they were addressing the root of their actual problems, i.e. how all the IT/IS systems would be integrated.

The raising, by consultants, of the need for additional expenditure to scope the project at the beginning of the project may have components of both credence and search behaviour. The client organisation may have a number of reactions to the proposal of a scoping study, i.e. 1) it is a necessary requirement of the project if they are going to get the project right and are therefore thankful to the consultants for pointing out the necessity of the study; 2) the client may not see the requirement for the study and see the issue of additional cost being raised as a means by which the consultants want to obtain more money for the project; 3) the client may see the need for additional costs and pay the additional costs willingly; and, 4) the client may agree to have the study undertaken but still not deal with the issues that lie at the root of the problems. The reactions may affect the outcome of the project. In the case of the CH project the fourth option appeared to have been selected and this meant the CH client project manager became more embroiled in the details rather than developing a clearer overview of the IT/IS infrastructure. This finding seems to suggest that Morris and Hough's (1987) recommendations were not followed. These recommendations were that projects should be comprehensively investigated, the definitions be clearly communicated and all future courses of actions be agreed by both parties. In the case of the CH, the consultants did not clearly and effectively emphasise the need for integration of the systems' importance to the client early on in the project but the senior managements' awareness of this had been raised throughout the course of the project.

Independence From Hardware And Software Suppliers

This study showed that independence from hardware and software suppliers was not always beneficial to a project. Again, in the CH project if the consultants had not had links with software and hardware vendors they would not have been able to supply CH with expertise or software and hardware platforms in the latter stages of the implementation. Circumstances in which independence may be beneficial are when the consultants recommend software or hardware platform that can only be supplied by their organisation and thus the upgrades and maintenance are more likely to be expensive as they can only be purchased from a single supplier. The relationship between CH and ICL in this project seems to have been beneficial for both parties, e.g. ICL derived revenue not only from selling CH products but also from the sale of consultancy services and ICL worked on CH's IT/IS systems.

6.7.3 SELECTION CRITERIA FINDINGS

Eight of the nine categories, i.e. 1) cultural fit between the client and vendor, 2) provision of value added, 3) vendors adding value to in-house capabilities, 4) the client feeling the vendor was of high quality, 5) the vendor's track record, 6) the vendor's financial stability, 7) additional costs associated with consultant selection, and 8) independence from hardware and software suppliers, were found to influence the selection of IT management consultants. Only the cultural fit between the client and the IT management consultants and the quality of the consultants were identified by all the clients as affecting their selection of the consultants. In making the selection decision of the consultants the factors that Morgan (1991) discusses, e.g. client organisation size, aversion to risk, complexity and timescale of the projects appear to have been taken into consideration.

In the cases of the CGD, LS, Library, CH, NHSE and DOT projects the client respondents stated that they sent out invitations for multiple tenderers. However, it was not clear from the supporting information provided by the consultant respondents whether this was completely factual for the Library and CH projects, as these organisations had outsourcing contracts with the firms that undertook the project and which were also the preferred supplier for IT resourcing. The IT consultants were selected on the basis of a single tender only in the Trust project. Selection of the IT consultants was different for the BACS project, in that

only the project manager was selected, most likely on the basis of a multiple tender and then the contract with OSI was negotiated on the basis that they would be the preferred supplier of consultancy services. This “cascade engagement” arrangement adds to the current body of literature concerning how IT management consultants are selected.

Client organisational size influenced the purchase decision as larger client organisations tended to select large IT management consultancy firms, e.g. the DOT and NHSE projects. Risk aversion was also demonstrated in the CGD, Trust, CH, DOT and BACS projects in the selection of IT consultancies that had previously demonstrated good track records. A second aspect of risk aversion was found in the LS project, as the LS consultants that were selected offered the LS additional customer value by ensuring that the risk of internal conflicts would not cause undue damage to the LS’ internal political infrastructure. Thirdly, risk aversion was also demonstrated by organisations such as the CGD, CH and NHSE that had scoping studies performed, either by the IT management consultancies or other agencies. In the case of the CH the scoping study was an attempt to ensure that CH minimised its financial outlay. Turner (1993) would describe this type of risk as business risk.

Consultant selection was influenced by the complexity of the project in the LS, Trust and Library projects, e.g. 1) the client organisations selected IT management consultancies which added value to their in-house IT capabilities, e.g. the LS and Trust projects or 2) were dependent on the software and hardware vendor to be able to provide a completely implementable service, i.e. the CH project. Thus the study provided evidence to support three of Morgan’s (1991) ideas about the influencers of the project. The timescale issue may also have been a factor in the Trust, LS and DOT projects. However, there were other more important influences on the consultancies’ selection, as identified above.

6.8 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This section analyses the issues concerning the management of the IT projects. In section 2.9.4 the role and effect of the client project manager were discussed. There are three sections in the literature review where team involvement in the project was discussed, i.e. in relation to outsourcing contract negotiation (Section 2.4.4.1), outsourcing project success (Section 2.4.6) and project performance measurement (Section 2.9.4). Project teams were also considered in Sections 4.7.6. Although not directly related to this study the contract

negotiation literature has been included because it raises the issue of the diversity of opinions about who should be incorporated in a project management hierarchy.

Client Project Managers

For each project there were issues related to the power to influence decision-making. In every case, with the exception of BACS, the client project managers were at approximately middle management level. The deputy CEO of the organisation managed the BACS project. In his position he had particular authority to influence the decisions and information that were presented to the BACS Board but was still answerable to its members. The projects in which the client project manager appeared to have little influencing power were the NHSE and CH projects, because virtually all decisions appeared to be made by committee or senior management, respectively. In the case of their NHS case study project, Bloomfield and Danieli (1995) also found that a committee made even simple decisions.

Ward and Peppard (1996) suggested, in Section 2.3, that inexperienced clients are unlikely to question consultants concerning the project scheduling and that both parties may underestimate the time and resources involved in implementation. Project overruns were also apparent in projects that were managed by experienced clients, e.g. the Library project in which the strategy document was delivered seven months late. The CGD project, which was managed by an inexperienced project manager, did not overrun to the same extent as the Library project and the portfolio framework and the information and systems needs assessment documents were only a couple of days late.

Peled (2001) suggested two project management related reasons why projects failed. The first reason was due to project managers not taking more direct control of the project because their senior managers showed a lack of interest in the outcomes of the projects. Secondly project managers were operating with a limited skills base, as they had 'outsourced' their technical skills to vendors and their management skills to consultants. Only in the BACS project was one of the most senior members of the organisation involved in the project on a regular basis. In the other projects the senior managers were either interviewees, decision makers who attended period update meetings or they signed-off the outputs of the projects. However, in the BACS project if the REFT project had not failed twice before at a cost of £30 million, then perhaps there would not have been such a senior member of the organisation so closely involved in the project. Reasons why the other projects' senior

managers were not more closely involved may have been: 1) the size of department that they managed which meant that they had limited time to spend on non-strategic matters (e.g. NHSE and DOT); 2) their lack of expertise in IT/IS related subjects and therefore their unwillingness to make this apparent (e.g. the Trust's clinical staff and NHSE); 3) their unwillingness to become too closely involved with a project that would mean a great deal of money being spent after job losses had occurred (e.g. CGD); and, 4) they did not have to directly use the IT being developed (e.g. the Trust's clinical staff). However, in order to validate any of these suggestions further research is required.

There were two projects that showed signs of failing. These were the Library and NHSE projects. The former due to an internal political problem with a member of staff and the latter possibly due in part to miscommunication between an internal organisation, i.e. the Information Management Centre and external organisations, e.g. EASAMS and also probably the Coopers & Lybrand consultants, as they were responsible for managing EASAMS' work. In both these projects the management of the project did appear to have been undertaken very closely by the client project manager and the consultants were left to undertake the project without close 'supervision' on a regular basis.

In the Library project there appeared to be a choice made by the client respondent to behave in what Douma and Schreuder (1992), in Agency Theory terms, would describe as an asymmetrical manner and therefore she did not observe the work of the consultants at the start of the project. However, the project was only completed when she took charge of the project, resolved the issue with the member of staff who had objected to the consultants undertaking the work and worked more closely with the consultants.

Behaving in an asymmetrical manner does not appear to have been a matter of choice in the case of the NHSE client, as EASAMS were doing specialist work, e.g. writing code for the Administrative Register. However, what the NHSE client did to reduce this uncertainty due to an inability to measure the consultants' performance directly was to employ a Coopers & Lybrand consultant to oversee EASAMS' work. There is no clear evidence to suggest why this 'quasi symmetrical state' was not successful, i.e. Coopers & Lybrand consultants were supposed to directly oversee the work of EASAMS in place of the NHSE staff doing it themselves. But this working arrangement seems to support Peled's (2001) assertion that at least in some instances client project managers do 'outsource' their management skills to

consultants, albeit in an attempt to ensure that technically skilled consultants oversee the work of 'vendors', to reduce the risk of project failure.

Project Teams

From the responses to the items concerning the project teams it became apparent that the respondents had varying definitions of what constituted the project team but they all were maintained within Lacity et al.'s (1995) recommended size of 20 members (Section 2.4.4.1).

The experienced clients did not appear to exhibit any more skill in agreeing the structure of the project team(s) than did the inexperienced clients. The responses ranged from the respondents suggesting: 1) only the members of their organisation belonged to a project team, e.g. the LS, Library and CGD clients and the LS and CH consultants; 2) only the consultancy firm had a team but there was no client team, e.g. the CH client; 3) only the client and consultant project managers formed the team, e.g. the BACS and DOT clients and the Trust consultant; 4) there were separate client and consultant teams, e.g. the CGD and Library consultants; 5) the client and consultant project managers comprised one team and there was at least one other team, e.g. the NHSE and DOT consultants; 6) the team's composition constantly changed depending on the stage of the project, e.g. the NHSE client and the BACS consultant; through to, 7) there was not a project team but a strategy steering group, e.g. the Trust client.

Differing views of the composition of the project teams may have been due to: 1) differing interpretations of the items on the instrument, or 2) differing perspectives of the respondents, i.e. how the respondents defined a project team. There was also a necessity for flexibility in the teams' compositions depending on the various stage of the assignment, e.g. the DOT, NHSE, CGD, BACS and Library projects. One can see that there is a much more complex picture presented here than the literature would suggest. Of interest to this project is the finding that the client and consultant respondents did not necessarily agree on the composition of the project teams. This finding seems to support the suggestion in Section 4.7.6 that the teams that were overseeing projects were likely to be diverse.

Of the eight projects studied three had fixed client teams, i.e. the LS, Library and CH and the remaining client teams' structures changed. Those client teams that changed did so because of: 1) medical reasons, e.g. in the CGD project a member of staff went on maternity leave

and in BACS a member of the team left because he had a nervous breakdown, 2) job changes, e.g. in the DOT and NHSE, or 3) temporary programmers' contracts had expired, e.g. in the NHSE project. The consultants' team structures remained fixed for the CGD, Library, Trust and LS projects. The consultant teams' structures changed for the CH, BACS, NHSE and DOT projects. Changing consultant team structures were due to: 1) the requirement for additional expertise on the project, e.g. in the CH and BACS projects, 2) individuals from the team leaving for various personal reasons, e.g. in the DOT project, and 3) the project was stopped and the project team was replaced, e.g. in the NHSE project.

In Gilb's (1989) assessment of factors that help consultants meet performance targets he does not include a category for managing the movement of team members into and out of the project or when the project is restarted after having been halted but retain the same consultants (see Section 2.9.4 above). In the projects where the consultants' movement into and out of the project was not managed, i.e. the NHSE and Library projects then the consequences for the project appeared to have been less than ideal. The need for management of movement of consultants into and out of a project adds another component to the current body of literature.

Managing the movement of consultants into and out of a project was reported by Ram (1999) as a means of bringing in new information and skills. This movement of consultants into and out of project when skills were required and were no longer required was seen in the CGD, LS, Library, CH, BACS and DOT projects. This movement does not appear to have had any direct impact on the outcome of the projects reported by the consultant and client respondents.

The senior management teams met with the consultants either on a monthly basis or when project milestones had been reached. Their function was primarily to provide the consultants with support to achieve the project's goals. This was achieved by: 1) carrying out interviews, e.g. in the Trust project; and, 2) agreeing the resources and signing-off the outputs for each of their respective projects. The senior management teams' functioning seems to support Bentley's (1997) recommended project management teams' activities, as outlined in Section 2.9.4.

The majority of respondents did not feel that there was a need to change how they measured the teams' effectiveness. The teams' effectiveness was measured by: 1) whether the project

met its timetable or output deadlines (reported by the CGD, Library, NHSE and BACS consultant respondents and the CGD, CH, NHSE, BACS and DOT client respondents). This measure agrees with Turner's (1993) standard project performance measures and was a constituent of the *CLASSIC MEASURES* factor identified in Chapter 4; 2) client feedback (reported by the CH and DOT consultant respondents and the Trust, LS and Library client respondents); 3) the score obtained on an annual appraisal (the CGD client respondent); and, 4) being able to adapt his normal methodology to work on a slightly different project from the usual type (the Trust consultant respondent).

Ford (1974) and Covin and Fisher (1991) discussed the need for consultant adaptability and competence to actually conduct the project and the Trust consultant provides an example of the necessity for consultants to be able to modify their current knowledge in order to deal with new situations/challenges. However, the personal motivations for the consultants to undertake the project were variables that were not discussed in the project management literature in Section 2.9.4. This finding therefore adds another aspect to the current literature.

The client respondent from the Library project stated that she had not developed any measurement for the teams' effectiveness because the wider project that the strategy project was part of had not been signed-off. Her reason for not doing so may have been because she may have known that she was not going to be in post at the time of the implementation of the new system. She left the Council soon after the interview.

Only two consultants would have made changes to the way they measured the teams' effectiveness, e.g. the CH and DOT consultant respondents. These changes would have been to: 1) make use of a satisfaction survey (the CH consultant) and 2) become more politically sensitive to issues that were discussed and the potential repercussions to the project (the DOT consultant).

Senior Consultants

In Section 2.9.2 Donaldson and O'Toole's (2002) gap model of how customer relationships should be handled was discussed. GAP A was concerned with the role senior consultants played in managing projects. In the CGD, Trust, LS, NHSE and DOT projects senior members, e.g. Directors or Principals of the IT management consultancy organisation were involved with the project either in the area of quality control or direct consultancy.

However, due to client confidentiality it was not possible to further investigate whether the case study organisations were key clients and is an area worthy of further discussion.

6.9 DECISION MAKING

In section 2.6.2, the decision making literature was reviewed. The case study projects have been characterised using Butler et al.'s (1993) framework based on the decision making processes of the project managers rather than that of senior managers who were rarely involved with the daily decision making in the projects. (Senior managers involvement in projects is discussed in Section 6.10.1 below.)

Rational/Computation Decisions: certain ends and certain means

The Library project was the only one in which true computational decisions were made. The client respondent knew that she needed to update the IT/IS strategy document before she could proceed with the identification of the IT system that she would use to update the library's technical infrastructure. It was an internal stimulus that promoted the need for the project. The client respondent was clearly in charge of the project, although she was remote from the daily management of it. For example, she knew what she required from the start of the project and had rejected proposals to have the strategy document written in-house. When the consultants were employed she knew what she wanted to achieve and left the consultants to achieve her requirements.

Bounded-Rational/Judgement Decisions: certain ends but uncertain means

There were three projects that exhibited this type of decision structure, i.e. the LS, CH and DOT projects.

The reason the LS project was characterised under this heading was because: 1) The LS client respondent knew that what she needed to achieve at the end of the project was a review document that answered the five questions set by the Sub-Committee; 2) whoever was selected for the project had to act as a diplomat and not exacerbate the political situation; 3) the initial stimulus for the project was a time pressure and an internal stimulus, i.e. the slow running of the new Oracle system; and, 4) the uncertainty for this project was in the

findings of the report and whether the report would judge that the decision to undertake the project in-house had been the best possible decision. Therefore, the LS' technical review reported in Chapter 5 was only the first stage of a two-part review. The second stage, i.e. a review of the financing for the project was undertaken by another consultancy firm.

The DOT project, exhibited the classic signs of bounded rational decision making. These were: 1) the DOT and the consultants were sure that they wanted to sell off the various BR businesses and that they needed to obtain a fully functional rail infrastructure at the end of the process; and, 2) the uncertainties of the process were in the cost and time implications of the privatisation process and how to integrate all the IT/IS systems that needed to be considered. If anyone could have planned the entire privatisation process, including foreseeing and planning for all potential 'challenges' faced, then this would have been the best solution. However, as the consultant and the client respondents stated the project often involved 'fire-fighting' and dealing with unforeseen and therefore potentially unplannable issues. This meant that problemistic search and cognitive limits behaviours were being exhibited, which resulted in satisficing as the solution that was selected would perhaps have been different if a fully rational decision had been made. The consultant respondent stated that he knew how systems operated and how to integrate them but what he was unsure about was how to integrate that knowledge into the privatisation process at the start of the project. This would suggest that during the project he and his colleagues working in the SPCO would have had to use both judgement and intuition to make decisions.

The third project that fulfilled some of the defining characteristics of this type of decision making was the CH project. This project was quite complex in that a variety of activities were being conducted simultaneously. If the conditions for this project had been ideal then the CH project manager and the Board would have obtained advice on how to proceed with the integration of the IT/IS systems and the replacement of the CH Direct supplier contract before beginning the project. This would have meant that they would not have needed to bring in IT consultants partway through the project because the project was more complex than had originally been envisaged. The CH management was thus exhibiting limited cognitive ability. Again, one of the stimuli that prompted the need for the project was external, i.e. the imminent expiry of the CH Direct contract; this was a time pressure. Another was that the system for storing and searching for company data was outdated and needed to be replaced. Ultimately, the solution that was being obtained was one that was non ideal because outdated technology, i.e. the carousel microfiche system, was having to be

used in conjunction with the modern web based system rather than being totally updated. CH was therefore satisficing.

Bargaining/ Political Decisions: certain means but uncertain ends

There were three projects that exhibited bargaining decision making, i.e. the CGD, Trust and BACS projects.

The CGD project was one that was difficult to characterise. It did not at first appear to fit neatly into any category. However, on further reflection the most suitable category was bargaining. The reason for this classification is that the client respondent used guile, i.e. he did not disclose the decision to implement the portfolio (department) management structure or the delivery of new computers to other parts of the organisation until both he and the senior management team felt the time was right. Then the client respondent tried to gain support for his decision by encouraging the users to attend meetings held with the senior management and acting as an intermediary between the development team and the users.

In the Trust project the consultants knowingly supported the actions of the client respondent. The client respondent's and the consultant's task was to gain the support of the Trust's Management Board for the IM&T strategy. If they could accomplish this task then the Hospital Management Board would provide the client with additional funding for IT and this was likely to lead to additional work for the consultants. The processes that were active in this project were: 1) coalition building and biasing; 2) means uncertainty which was exhibited in the fact that the tactics used by the client could not totally be relied upon to achieve her aim, as there is always an element of risk of failure with any type of business decision because of other forces opposing the change may be operating e.g. changes in government policy. Hence she tried to minimise the risk and adopted McLellan et al.'s (1995) approach to minimise risk by using consultants who: i) knew the organisation well, ii) were experienced and iii) presented a professional manner in their appearance and the way they worked; and, 3) that the Trust client also took part in the interviewing stage of the project. This meant that both she and the consultants could influence the Board throughout the course of the project. Her manager was likely to have been a co-conspirator in these activities because he sanctioned her single tender bid to use the consultants. Leys (1999) reports that it is normal for small NHS management consultancy projects to be sent out to tender. Secondly, in support of this collusion belief, the Trust client respondent's manager

also chaired the steering group. This group consisted of the senior managers in the Trust who were the IT/IS strategic decision making body in this project. In this role the Trust client respondent's manager may have been able to influence some of the decision making. However, without further investigation it is not possible to draw conclusions.

In the BACS project there was uncertainty about how to achieve its aims, i.e. the implementation of REFT. This was shown by the two failed previous attempts at implementing the IT system. The reason that this project was categorised as political is because: 1) during the project steering group meetings at the beginning of the project the client respondent had disputes with representatives from departments such as internal audit. The client respondent therefore had to agree beforehand, with the consultant project manager, what had to be said in these meetings thus ensuring that he was supported and vice versa; and, 2) the internal disputes in these meetings had to be quelled by threats from the client respondent when bargaining tactics did not achieve the required results.

Inspiration/Garbage Can Decisions: uncertain means and uncertain ends

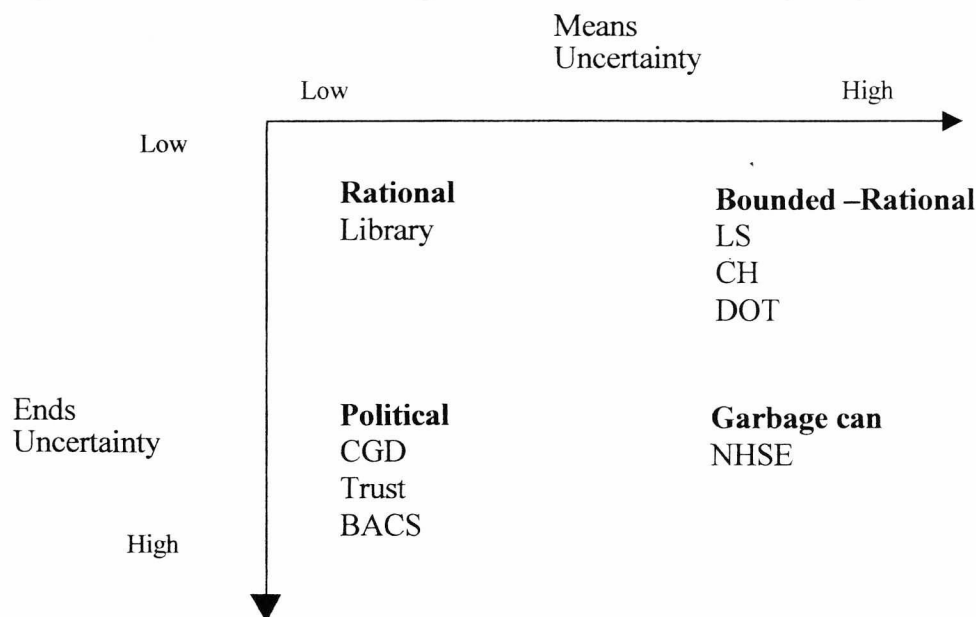
Only the NHSE project exhibited inspiration-type decision making. The streams of this type of decision making that were evident were the participants and choice opportunities. Throughout the course of the project there were different players inputting into the process, e.g. the BIS consultants, Coopers & Lybrand consultants, pilot site representatives, the EASAMS consultants etc. Secondly, the original implemented prototype did not function in the manner that the client respondent had specified. This may have been unintentional but during the interview the consultant respondent made no mention of the problems that had been experienced in the project. Within this project there was evidence of poor communication of requirements to the consultants and the Information Management Centre. What was on paper a relatively ordered project with achievable outputs did not appear to be so straightforward during the course of the project.

6.9.1 SUMMARY OF DECISION MAKING FINDINGS

Figure 6.1 presents the types of decisions that were characterised in the IT case study projects. The manner in which decision making undertaken was influenced by the following factors:

1. the client organisations' understanding of what the organisation needed, i.e. high ends certainty, e.g. the CGD, Trust, BACS and NHSE projects and low ends certainty, e.g. the Library, LS, CH and DOT projects;
2. how the client organisations would achieve their aims and objectives, i.e. high means certainty, e.g. the Library, CGD, Trust and BACS projects and low means uncertainty, e.g. the LS, CH, DOT and NHSE projects;
3. the type of stimulus that the client organisation used to highlight the need for change, i.e. external, e.g. the CGD, CH, and DOT projects or internal, e.g. the Library, Trust, BACS, LS, CH and NHSE projects;
4. the type of external pressures operating in the client organisations, i.e. the need for the project to be completed within a certain timescale, e.g. the BACS and DOT projects; the prospect of job losses, e.g. the BACS and LS projects; or, the need to present a picture of proactive/dynamic organisation, e.g. the CH project;
5. the personality of the client project managers and their personal agendas, i.e. the CGD, BACS, Trust, Library projects; and
6. type of organisation and its means of communication decisions, e.g. decisions made by committee, i.e. the CH and NHSE projects or decisions made by an individual, e.g. the Library project.

Figure 6.1 The Decision Making Process In The Case Study Projects



The manner in which decisions were made in IT management consultancy projects is another aspect which is not described in the reviewed Literature. The author has attempted to use a method to classify such decisions that has not been previously used to describe management consultancy projects in the literature.

6.10 CLIENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT

A further issue that was investigated in the study was that of senior management and employee involvement in the projects. Change and related issues were discussed in the literature in Sections 2.2.1, 2.5.2, 2.9.1 and 2.9.2. The consultants' responses to the survey instrument concerning the client organisation's involvement, i.e. senior management and employees, were discussed in Sections 4.3 and 4.11.2. The following sections discuss the senior management involvement (Section 6.10.1), employee involvement (Section 6.10.2) in the projects and change management (6.10.3).

6.10.1 SENIOR MANAGEMENT INVOLVEMENT

In three of the projects, both respondents agreed that senior management was always involved in the project, i.e. the Trust, NHSE and BACS projects. In each case, senior middle or senior managers were the project managers responsible for daily decision-making. Nevertheless, all the project managers had to discuss the progress of the project with a committee or board at monthly meetings or when project milestones were achieved. If the project managers wanted to undertake an activity that was beyond their normal scope then they had to refer back to the senior management team to agree the proposed course of action. For example when the NHSE project manager wanted to force EASAMS to rectify the problems with the Administrative Register, he discussed the proposed course of action with the NHSE Board. The roles of the Boards in these projects clearly supported the senior management teams' role in the PRINCE 2 methodology that was recommended by Bentley (1997) (see Section 2.9.4).

There were two projects, i.e. the DOT and LS, in which the consultants believed that there was always senior management involvement and the clients felt that involvement was only occasional or that rarely were senior management involved, respectively. In both these cases the projects were managed by senior middle managers. The differences between the consultants' and clients' responses may have been due to the client and consultant respondents interpreting the item differently. The DOT consultant, who was an Ernst & Young partner, may not have defined any manager below the contract client responsible for paying Ernst & Young's fees as senior. The LS client respondent did not appear to consider senior management being interviewed and agreeing decisions as involvement. This perhaps

indicates that her expectations, when interpreting the item, were higher than those of the consultant. Also, the LS client appeared to have felt that she took on much of the burden of managing the project with little involvement from the other members of the REGIS Review Sub-Committee. She was also involved in continuously briefing and alleviating the fears of the Head of Computing once the interim report was published. The Head of Computing's direct involvement with the consultants should probably have been greater thereby reducing the necessity for the LS client respondent to act as an intermediary. However, he was relatively new to the organisation and only joined after the project had started.

The opposite situation occurred in the Library and CH projects, i.e. the clients believed senior management were always involved and the consultants believed that they were only occasionally involved. If the consultants' view was true this is similar to Tilles' (1961) purchase analogy of consulting, where consultants are left to take full control of the project with little client management direction provided. In the case of the Library project, the contact client was a senior middle manager and her line-manager did not become too closely involved with the project. Hence, in this situation it appears that the client respondent as a senior middle manager knew that she had been involved in the project and therefore related this fact. The consultants may have felt that the contract client who was the budget holder and not the project manager was the senior manager. A second explanation may be that the Library client respondent allowed the consultants to proceed with the project and took charge only when a serious problem arose and this was viewed as being only occasionally involved. In these two cases there was no means of clarifying the situation, as both respondents had left their respective positions soon after the interviews were undertaken. For the CH project the client project manager had to defer to his senior management in making important decisions. The consultant tended to have limited daily involvement with senior management.

The only project in which both respondents agreed there was occasional involvement of the senior management was in the CGD project. The respondents did not believe this adversely affected the project.

The findings for the consultant survey instrument showed the consultants believed senior management involvement was important. In five of the projects, i.e. the LS, DOT, Library, CH and CGD projects, it was shown here that CEOs/heads of department may not have become sufficiently or openly involved in the projects as they could have been. In addition, the type of involvement is considered important (Covin and Fisher, 1991), and this study's

findings suggest that there were a variety of levels of involvement. The views of client and consultant respondents on the adequacy of the time and the quality of involvement may have been affected by the individuals' expectations. This study seems to support the belief expressed in the literature (see Section 2.8.2) and analysis of the consultant survey instrument that senior management do not become sufficiently involved in IT projects.

6.10.2 EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Only in the CH and DOT projects did consultants suggest client employees were not always involved. The explanation for this assessment was that the organisational changes that were occurring, although partly internal, were outside the boundaries of both organisations' operations as explained below.

In the case of the CH project there were a number of changes occurring, i.e. the replacement of the CH Direct network contract and the integration of the new IT systems. With the replacement of the CH Direct contract being managed by the project manager there was little necessity for the employees to become involved as the system was for external customers. The new network supplier would be responsible for designing the graphical user interface, i.e. what the customers would see on their screens. The integration of the various systems was a highly technical task and one in which generalist civil servants were unlikely to become involved.

In the DOT project, however, there was secondment of a member of the DOT staff into the SPCO, which was the only project where an employee was 'transferred' to the outsourcer, as identified by Michell and Fitzgerald (1997). This situation was not permanent, as the employee would return to his department on completion of the project.

For the CH, BACS, NHSE and DOT projects, the client respondents believed that the client organisation's employees were always involved. The CH and DOT clients who felt that employees were involved perhaps may have included themselves in their interpretation of the term employees, as both were senior middle managers. Of these projects, only in the NHSE project did the clients have an instrumental voice as specified by Hunton and Beeler (1997) (see Section 2.2.1), i.e. the pilot site employees were quite actively involved in pilot

testing the software and then in defining what the final system requirement should be for the Administrative Register (AR) that would be distributed to the whole of the NHS.

In terms of system issues, the client employees in the DOT and BACS projects exhibited a non-instrumental voice. In the DOT project, the client respondent wanted the staff to be happy with the privatisation process and therefore communicated to his staff a lot of what the SPCO were doing and the SPCO also distributed progress reports. BACS' employees were involved with the development of the system but were not likely to have been strategic level decision makers as the client and consultant project managers and BACS' Board primarily conducted this role. Finally, as stated above, in the CH project the types of decisions that were being made would not have required much input from the employees and therefore they were likely to have exhibited no voice.

The client respondents in the CGD and LS projects reported that the degree of employee involvement was occasional or rare, respectively. For the CGD, project information was disseminated on a need to know basis. This was because the client project manager did not want to upset the CGD staff who might have reacted negatively when hearing that they were to receive new computers soon after a number of their colleagues had been made redundant in an earlier stage of the reorganisation. This provides a reason why client staff involvement was limited in this project and by doing so was likely to have limited the resistance to the changes. In the LS project the REGIS database was to be used by a limited number of LS staff. The only project in which the client respondent reported that employees were not involved was the Trust. This was because only senior management had viewed the strategy document at the time of the interview. In these projects the employees had "no voice" when using Hunton and Beeler's (1997) classification of user involvement.

To summarise Covin and Fisher (1991) recommend that all involved or affected people be involved in the project. This study found that in some situations it was not necessary to involve junior employees affected by a strategy document in the earliest stages of its development. However, senior management and employee involvement was generally required for the project to be implemented successfully.

6.10.3 CHANGE MANAGEMENT

In Section 2.5.2 Orlikowski and Hofman's research concerning organisational change and the *improvisational model for change* was discussed. Three specific types of changes were found in the model, i.e. 1) *anticipated changes* – those planned for and realised, 2) *emergent changes* – those changes which arise spontaneously and 3) *opportunity-based changes* – not previously anticipated but are implemented intentionally in response to an unexpected opportunity, event or breakdown. The following sections will discuss how the changes that occurred in the case study projects fitted Orlikowski and Hofman's classification. It should be noted that because of the data collected the changes that are reported will only be those that took place within the context of the IT/IS projects. Information was not collected on the wider organisational changes occurring indirectly as a result of the projects because this was beyond the remit of this study.

Anticipated Changes

In all the projects the anticipated change was brought about by the delivery of the desired outputs. However, unlike in Orlikowski and Hofman's work it was difficult to attribute specific tasks to particular individuals because in the environment of the consultancy projects work is undertaken by the consultants in collaboration with management. Without having been present at meetings it would be difficult to assess specifically which anticipated changes were implemented and which had not.

A specific example of when anticipated change was demonstrated in a project was in the NHSE when the client organisation initiated the need for the pilot sites to input into the process of reviewing and testing the prototype for the Administrative Register. In addition, the consultants had to implement these requests wherever it was considered feasible. Therefore in this situation all involved parties participated in this anticipated change.

Emergent Changes

There were only two projects in which emergent change seemed to operate, i.e. the NHSE project and DOT. In the NHSE project when the Information Management Centre returned the Common Administrative Data Sets to the IMG and these were different from the ones that had been originally sent, it gave the IMG and the Information Management Centre the

opportunity to review the CADS and develop an alternative set. This was an issue that was settled between the members of the NHSE's management without the assistance of the consultants. For the DOT project it was seen that the SPCO provided an additional service to the rail industry which had not been part of their original remit, i.e. the SPCO disseminated information to the industry while dealing with the IT/IS issues associated with the privatisation.

Opportunity-Based Change

This type of change was the most commonly identified in the projects and was most often seen to occur as a result of the collaboration between client company management and the consultants. This is the only type of change where employee and consultant actions can be seen individually in a project, i.e. the NHSE project.

The types of changes that were viewed in the projects and were client management initiated were conducted by the client company's management: 1) the implementation of the portfolios (CGD project), 2) the client's respondent taking over management of the project (Library project), 3) developing a strategy to make management consultants take responsibility for problems with the software that had been delivered (NHSE project), 4) the client's management brought into facilitate meetings when consultants were not performing adequately (NHSE project), and 5) a Technical Adviser from a management consultancy was sacked for not performing the role effectively (NHSE project).

Opportunity-based changes that were initiated by the client management but were undertaken by consultants: 1) additional workshops conducted (Trust project), 2) delivery of implementation plans to be used on completion of that stage of the project (Trust project, CH project and LS project), 3) undertaking an audit, a scoping study, an architecture study, and/or a feasibility study (CH project and BACS project), 4) developing system requirement specification (SRS) (NHSE project), 5) independent experts brought into audit the Oracle and Ingress software (NHSE project), 6) the consultants were used as interim support for the management (CH project and BACS project), and 7) the TOCs' business processes were reviewed after negative press coverage (DOT project).

Only one project seemed to clearly demonstrate a change that was initiated by a consultant and implemented by the client company's management, i.e. when the OSI project manager

suggested that the programmers working on REFT be sacked so that an audit of what needed to be done could be taken. This seems to be a factor that would be part of Chase and Dasu (2001) Principle 2, in that this bad experience, i.e. the sacking of the programmers, was undertaken right at the start of the project.

The NHSE project was the only consultancy organisation where opportunity-based change was demonstrated within the consultancy organisation and its parent company. These are as follows: 1) the database was written in C code as opposed to a 4th generational language, 2) GEC Marconi appointed an arbitrator between EASAMS and the NHSE, 3) GEC Marconi appointed a C code specialist to review the AR, and 4) EASAMS were made to resolve the problems with the AR by GEC Marconi.

In summary, it can be seen that because of the nature of IT management consultancy projects there are few emergent changes, as decisions need to be agreed between the client officials and the consultants before changes can be made to the project. This is most likely to be so when only a report is produced, e.g. CGD project, Trust project, LS project, Library project because of the limited impact on the staff of data collection activities required to produce the report. When the reports were written they were for the use of senior management and the only involvement that employees had was being interviewed. Because of the nature of the management consultancy relationship, probing into the specific details of the wider impacts of the projects was more difficult than if one were undertaking data collection from within the client organisation and had access to various members of staff as was the case in Orlikowski's research.

Orlikowski and Hofman (1997) note that many of the changes were not discrete and this was also found in the case study projects. In addition, it can be seen that for the implementation of a change to take place there was a need for collaboration between the clients and the consultants to firstly agree what needed to be done and then for them to work together to implement the changes. This adds a further dimension into the improvisational model when viewed in the light of IT management consultancy projects. A further area of opportunity-based change is added to the IT management consultancy projects, i.e. consultancy firms or parent organisation had to implement changes.

6.11 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SYSTEM ISSUES

This section deals with the actual strategy document or IT/IS system that resulted from the projects. In Chapter 2 the emphasis was placed on the development of the IT/IS and the interaction and the management of IT management consultants developing the systems and the individuals from the client company who should be involved with the process. The types of planning mechanisms, policies for controlling the systems, types of systems that were implemented and the time for system development were discussed in Chapter 4. The following sections add to the findings from Chapter 4 as they identify the technical specifications (see Section 6.11.1), business advantages created by the system (see Section 6.11.2) and the factors involved in the client taking ownership of the case study IT/IS systems (see Section 6.11.3). Finally the findings of all three sections are summarised (see Section 6.11.4).

6.11.1 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Terms of Reference (TOR) documents outline the technical specification for the strategy or IT/IS system that was to be implemented. In at least two cases, the Trust and DOT projects, actually meeting the defined specification would possibly have not achieved the required outcome. In the DOT project the consultancy selected had not bid against the proposed requirement, i.e. a partner level programme manager, as Ernst & Young had not felt that what the DOT required was what they had actually requested in their request for tenders. The DOT consultants felt that a department (the SPCO), staffed with a number of consultants, could manage the IS/IT arrangements for the project better than one individual working on such a complex project. In the Trust project the consultants provided the clients with an outline of what they initially felt would be the product that they would deliver. However, through the course of the project the actual specification was changed and they delivered three types of IM&T strategy documents to the client, which was more than they had originally agreed. Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994) discussed flexibility in the development of a partnership relationship (see Section 2.4.2). The delivery of more than was agreed in the TOR is possibly one indicator of the flexibility of the relationship that the Trust client and consultant project managers had. By undertaking some of the interviews the client respondent saved the consultants time, so that the consultants could meet the Trust's timetable.

The CGD consultant stated that the TOR could be a static document but both parties should enter the project with the common understanding that changes in requirements were likely as they learned more about the other. Therefore, following the TOR too closely does not always provide a reasonable assessment of whether the project was a success. Ultimately, the CGD client respondent believed that having satisfaction surveys did not provide the same assessment of the project's success as the expression on the face of a satisfied or dissatisfied client.

As Klepper (1995) suggested, satisfaction will be related to the perceived outcomes and therefore one component of success is the perception of having achieved something. This statement does not mean that what was achieved was what was needed to fulfil the client's technical needs but that it perhaps fulfilled the need to achieve what the client felt was personal success. The influence of other individuals, e.g. isolates, opinion-leaders and/or senior management (see Section 2.5.2.1), suggesting that the outcome of a project was a success may affect the perception of the project's outcome. For example, in the BACS project, having achieved the implementation of the REFT system at the third attempt may have influenced those involved in the project to perceive it as more successful than it was. For the CGD project the department needed a 'feel good' factor to overcome some of the feelings of resentment because of the job losses and the effects of the reorganisation. The timing of the delivery and implementation of the new computers had to be seen positively and therefore the new computers could not have been installed immediately on completion of the IS/IT portfolio framework.

There were two projects in which the technical performance of the systems was important, i.e. the CH and NHSE projects. The CH consultant felt that having the technical specification met was a measure of success but if the business needs were not also met the project was a failure. For the NHSE client, if the system did not perform in accordance within the specified response time requirements then it was not acceptable. The NHSE senior management did not appear to understand the need for fully defining the necessary service levels and then formally expressing them to the returning EASAMS consultants.

Another option for such a complex project may have been to split it into small stages and to employ multiple providers to deliver the outputs at each stage as suggested by Lacity et al. (1995). At the end of each stage a comprehensive report could be written to explain what had been done and what was envisaged for the next stage. The advantage of so doing Lacity

et al. believed would be that if a supplier proved to be disappointing then it would be much less expensive to change suppliers. However, this does not appear to have been a feasible solution for the NHSE project as the investment that had been made in the project meant that the NHSE were less likely to want to invest both time and money in switching to another supplier.

A second problem may have been that too many users were involved in the prototype development. The NHSE may have had more success with their project if they had developed an evolutionary prototype and then employed Wu and Wu's (1994) guidelines that recommend that few users input into the process. Those involved in the prototype development would possibly need to be experienced IT professionals who had experience of working in different departments of the NHS, so that a cross section of the service could be catered for.

For the DOT project the client felt that meeting the original specifications was not important. Of greater importance was meeting the quarterly set project output/work milestones. This is a similar situation to that which occurred in the outsourcing contract for BP where performance criteria were renegotiated annually (Cross, 1995).

If considering the tasks that were performed, in light of Peled's (2001) definition of a vendor and consultant (see Section 2.3), it appears that there were no IT professionals working in the case organisation that would be identified as undertaking a 'pure' vendor role. In the CH and NHSE projects, although both sets of consultants undertook vendor tasks such as building, testing and implementing information systems, both sets of consultants also played a major rather than a minor role in defining the project's requirements (NHSE consultants) and strategy (CH consultants). The IT professionals who would have been considered as 'consultants' under Peled's definition because of the more strategic and management roles they played in the projects were those that worked on the CGD, Trust, Library, BACS and DOT projects. A role that does not fit neatly into either definition was that of the LS consultants whose role was to 'audit' the activities of the in-house developers of the REGIS system. This role was closer to that of a consultant than to a vendor but seems to be an additional role of a consultant and is another contribution that this study has made to the literature.

6.11.2 BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

The standpoint from which the literature discussed in Chapter 2 views the writing of a specification/strategy document or the implementation of an IT/IS system is that whatever the output then it will be an improvement on what already exists, if this is applicable. Business advantage and the type of systems implemented were issues discussed in Sections 4.7.4 and 4.7.5. As IT projects are principally driven by their business and not technology requirements (Michell and Fitzgerald, 1997) then it was felt that it was necessary to investigate whether the systems were improvements on their predecessors and whether a business advantage was created.

There were four respondents, i.e. both the LS and CGD respondents, who did not respond to some of the items on the interview schedules concerning the issues identified above. Only the respondents for the LS project did not provide a response to the items relating to the creation of a business advantage and improvement on the old system items because the LS project's output was indirectly related to the delivery of the IT system, as it was a technical review of the project. The CGD client and consultant respondents did not respond to the questions concerning the system being an improvement on its predecessor because the project and the strategy document respectively were the first of their type within the organisation. The CGD report was an audit of their existing IT/IS infrastructure systems and it provided recommendations for how to improve their IT/IS infrastructure.

Both sets of respondents in the Library, CH, Trust, DOT, BACS and NHSE case study projects felt that the strategy document or the IT/IS system was, or would be, an improvement on its predecessor. What was produced for the Library project was a business oriented strategy rather than the technical type of document that had previously been written by the client respondent. In both the CH and NHSE projects, the final system had not been delivered and thus it was difficult to determine whether there was any improvement. Both client and consultant respondents for these two projects felt that the system should be an improvement when it was finally delivered to the specification.

Where a system was delivered in the BACS and DOT projects, again both project respondents felt that it was an improvement on the old. In the BACS project this improvement led to the realisation of savings. In the case of the DOT project, many systems were delivered and each related to a different aspect of the industry. The systems did not

bear much comparison to those that existed pre-privatisation because the railway industry is now operating in a different business environment; i.e. as a group of discrete businesses working together.

In general the respondents believed that if the system was not yet an improvement on its precursor it was likely to be so. Therefore, these findings agree with one of McIver's (1986) beliefs that consultants are used to keep managers informed of changes in the marketplace, i.e. the consultants exposed the clients to new technology of which they were perhaps previously unaware. Kubr (1980), although placing the emphasis on change does explicitly state that consultants are used to make organisations more effective and these findings support this premise.

6.11.3 OWNERSHIP OF THE OUTPUT

The influencers of the acceptance of change were discussed in Section 2.5.2.1. The consultants' beliefs concerning the factors and influencers of the outputs of IT change projects were presented in Sections 4.5 and 4.11.1.

All the respondents, except the Library client, felt that the client organisation had taken ownership of the output of the project. The Library client did not feel she owned the new strategy document because she had not invested as much time in writing it as she had for the previous specification. However, the consultant believed that the Library client respondent felt ownership of the new document because the client respondent had contributed to its development. Overall, the findings agree with those of McKeen et al. (1994), i.e. user participation is related to user satisfaction. In the case of the Library client, she may not have viewed her involvement in the writing of the specification as comparable to that of the first document. Therefore, her response may have been affected by her interpretation of the word 'ownership'. A second possible explanation may have been that she did not want to align herself too closely with this project because she knew that she was leaving the organisation and therefore would not be able to take the work forward.

These findings suggest that the consultants' recommendations were always implemented to some extent. The CGD client description of how ownership occurs expressed the general findings of this study. He stated that there was a ripple effect of ownership. As the primary

developer, he was currently undertaking the task of spreading the notion of ownership of the system throughout the organisation. The idea of ownership in most cases appeared to be measured by the actual taking control of the document or IT/IS system and then implementing the changes, and disseminating the ideas and philosophies that resulted from its production. These ideas seem to agree with Barki and Hartwick's (1994) suggestion that users more readily take ownership of a system when they are involved in its development. The DOT consultant identified that ownership for the client was of the achievements rather than the outputs because by the nature of the privatisation process the client organisation would no longer 'own' the railway industry. The idea of ownership of achievements rather than outputs adds a new dimension to the idea of ownership presented in the literature.

6.11.4 IT/IS PROJECTS IN PERSPECTIVE

As stated in Section 6.10.1 the terms of reference record the technical specification of the IT/IS system to be implemented. Michell and Fitzgerald (1997) make it clear that the TORs have to place the IT/IS systems being developed in their business context without losing the technology focus. This study found that to do this the original client specified TOR need not be adhered to if the project specifications were not right for the project or evolved through the course of the project as occurred in the Trust and DOT projects. Being flexible about changes in such arrangements is likely to contribute to the development of a partnership and the clients and consultants are more likely to develop a better working relationship. Klepper (1995) suggested that perception and success were linked. The CGD consultant respondent supported this belief and felt that there was more learned about the project when a client provided verbal feedback than by their completing a satisfaction survey. However, this belief only takes into consideration part of the relationship element of Bounds et al.'s (1994) definition of customer value discussed in Section 2.9.1. What is provided by completing a satisfaction survey in addition to the verbal feedback is the capture of information that can be included in Porter's (1985) larger value chain. This information can be employed to add value to the assignment as suggested by Rayport and Sviokla (1995).

In the BACS project, it was implied by the client respondent that the IT system was considered more successful than it perhaps was because the organisation's goals had finally been achieved after the project had failed twice. In the CGD project, delivery of new computing systems may have made the job losses easier to deal with once the users had been

coaxed, by the client respondent, into believing that having those systems was a good thing. These two projects exemplify the concept of how client employees' jobs performance may be influenced by how they viewed the task technology fit and communication, i.e. the users are likely to be persuaded, in the initial stages of having a new IT/IS system, that their jobs are likely to improve if IT management consultants and the management are providing them with the same message. In the SERVQUAL instrument discussed in Sections 2.9.3.1 and 2.9.3.2 communication plays a part in influencing customers, e.g. by influencing their expectations. In this situation the users are internal customers rather than external and if they hear the right message often then, as with other customers, it appears they are likely to believe it and thus are less likely to resist the implementation of new changes. When the persuasion does not work then 'force' as was used in the DOT and BACS projects seems to reinforce the message.

This study seems to support Schwenk's (1986) research findings which suggested that if management were provided with consistent, anecdotal, vivid and salient information relating to a particular choice it would discourage them from seeking additional information. In addition once the clients had committed themselves to a particular course of action then it was financially difficult for them to withdraw from that course of action, e.g. the integration of the systems in the CH contract, the in-house development of the REGIS system in the LS, and the two original attempts to implement the REFT system in the BACS project. Thus, implementation of IT/IS systems seems to adhere to the same rules that other types of change project require as identified by Kubr (1980) (see Section 2.6).

A further issue in the outsourcing literature (see Section 2.4.6) was that of clearly specifying the system performance requirements. This became a difficulty in the NHSE project, the first with one of the information management group's internal departments, i.e. the information management centre and then with the second set of EASAMS consultants that arrived after the problems with the standards had been resolved. The project management and outsourcing literatures discuss the management of the technical aspects of the project but they do not deal with the management of other client departments' involvement. This study has found that it is in the client organisation's best interest to ensure that all parties involved in the project are clear about what technical specifications and performance criteria the new IT/IS system is required to meet. Moreover, the consultants should have the technical skills to comply with the requirements.

All the respondents who had either existing systems or strategy documents before the project started felt what had been provided was, or would be, an improvement on its predecessors. With the BACS project the implementation actually led to tangible cost saving. Through the privatisation of the railways the government had also managed to raise millions of pounds. When the Library and Trust projects were implemented they were also likely to lead to financial 'benefits', e.g. the Library department could divest itself of unnecessary staff and the Trust client respondent would have more money to invest in the IM&T systems. The benefits that would be derived in the CGD, CH, NHSE and LS projects were intangible. For these projects the benefits derived from either the reduction in duplication of data, e.g. the CGD and NHSE project or ensuring that the project was proceeding in the right manner, e.g. the CH (scoping and feasibility stages) and LS projects.

6.12 PROJECT RELATIONSHIPS

The group of sections below (Sections 6.13-6.17) covers a variety of aspects of the client and consultant relationships in the projects. This part of the analysis begins by reviewing the within client organisation relationships (Sections 6.13.1 and 6.13.2). Secondly, the client and consultant relationships are reviewed and issues such as power manipulation (Section 6.14.1), communication (Section 6.14.2), professionalism (6.14.3) and skills transfer (Section 6.14.3) that occurred within projects are presented. The third and fourth subsections that are analysed are the inter-consultancy organisation relationships (Section 6.15) and the intra-consultancy relationships (Section 6.16). Finally the last section analyses the respondents' reported needs (Section 6.17).

6.13 INTRA-CLIENT ORGANISATION RELATIONSHIPS

The following section deals with issues of the internal organisational politics and opposition to the projects and organisational changes taking place (Section 6.13.1). Secondly, the interdepartmental relationships occurring in the case studies (Section 6.13.2) will be discussed.

6.13.1 INTERNAL POLITICS AND RESISTANCE

Internal politics and resistance were discussed in the literature in Sections 2.5.3 and 2.8. The reason for including a discussion of these two issues is that they are both forces which act to oppose the implementation of change. The only instances where there was no resistance to the project the output, in the first instance, was for management's use only, i.e. the Trust and NHSE projects. Using Hersey and Blanchard's (1972) model this involved bringing about a change only at the knowledge level. As discussed in Section 2.5.3, this is the least difficult level at which to bring about a change. This study found that fear caused many of the negative internal political problems. This fear was often related to: 1) how the outcome of the project would reflect on the project team members, e.g. the LS and BACS projects, 2) change, e.g. in the DOT project and 3) job losses, e.g. in the CGD project. In these four projects the change was occurring at the attitudinal and individual and group behaviour levels. As Hersey and Blanchard suggest, at these times coming to terms with the change becomes increasingly difficult.

There was also resistance to the project because of the manner in which the consultants were brought in, e.g. in the Library project. In this project, as in the BACS project, there was resistance because the staff believed they were competent enough to undertake the project in-house. Davey (1971) included a category for a senior manager, other than the CEO, imposing the use of management consultants on the organisation (see Section 2.9.1), which is apparently what occurred in the Library project. Bitner (1996) indicated that the first meeting is critical to the project and imposing consultants on subordinates was a reason why consultancy projects fail. When the consultants are imposed on subordinates then client employees were, in at least the Library project, seen to resent the consultants and were more likely not to accept what the consultants recommend, as was seen when the project had to be halted. Secondly, subordinates may not develop commitment to the project if they feel threatened by the consultants. The Library project was one that had the potential to be a failure because of the client respondent's actions in bringing in the consultants. Both the client and consultant respondents working on the project discussed the necessity for the project with the individuals within the organisation who opposed the use of external IT management consultants and they managed to resolve the problems by dint of persuasion. This communication was therefore a force that acted in favour of the change.

Kubr (1980) recommended that to create a desire for the new proposal both the negative and positive sides of each option should be presented (see Section 2.5.2). Doing this weakens any future internal resistance to the favoured proposal. In the LS project the client respondent used this technique to overcome resistance from the Head of Computing by ensuring all sides of the situation were presented. In the CGD the client respondent also employed a similar technique. The CGD client dealt with issues that were raised by the system users by discussing their concerns once the final decisions had been made. This is an example of the use of Hunton and Beeler's (1997) non-instrumental voice and from the client respondent's responses, to the related items in the interview schedule, it appears to have been well received by the users. However, no clear conclusion can be drawn without having interviewed the affected individuals.

Ward and Peppard (1996) and Peled (2001) (see Section 2.3) suggested that IT professionals fail to see the political elements of organisations and believe all problems can be solved technically. The findings of this study do not support these beliefs as in the CGD, Trust, LS, BACS and DOT projects the consultants were clearly aware of the client's internal problems and their actual, or potential, effects.

However, using the McIver (1986) classification (see Section 6.2.1), it was demonstrated in the Trust, LS and CH projects that the political elements of the project were being taken into consideration and demonstrated in the consultants' actions. The consultants demonstrated: 1) complicity with the client respondents' actions, e.g. making the recommendations that the client project manager wanted made in the Trust and not clearly bringing to the attention of the CH's management the integration issues that were being neglected in the CH project, 2) a willingness to maintain client confidentiality and loyalty to a particular faction, e.g. the LS and Trust projects, and 3) they could be seen to be bringing about changes but were not actually addressing the underlying root of a problem, e.g. the CH project.

It should be noted that in certain situations there was however a lack of political awareness demonstrated by the consultants. In the case of the NHSE the consultants demonstrated this in terms of how they tried to negotiate a compromise with their clients and in how civil service loopholes can be manipulated in favour of a central government department, e.g. when the NHSE project manager could put the consultants' fees into escrow instead of paying them to the consultancy. The consultants may also have failed to manage internal organisational politics in the Library project. However, as the respondents did not agree

upon the reason for the project's delay then the consultants may have not been to blame. In the case of the DOT and BACS projects the consultants actively became involved in disseminating information and thus reducing ambiguity; which Huczynski (1993) suggests is important. These findings support Margerison's (1988) belief that consultants should be actively involved in the organisational politics and in influencing the communication network. By so doing the consultants seem to support Harrison's (1990) theory that they can reduce the risk of opposition and hence support the study or the implementation of their recommendations.

6.13.2 INTERNAL CLIENT ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

This section has been added to the analysis as the internal client organisational dynamics was a factor predicted by Harrison (1990) to potentially affect the success of the project and therefore should be considered by the consultants. Staff morale is an important element that affects the resistance to implementation. Using Hersey and Blanchard's (1972) model for the time for acceptance of organisational change (see Section 2.5.3), staff morale fits into the level of attitudinal change. Secondly, it may be an additional component of the Raimond and Eden's (1990) barometer of how successful an implementation strategy will be.

For example: 1) the CGD client respondent stated that during the project the CGD senior management group was enthusiastic about the project but the CGD's employees' enthusiasm was only manifested just before the implementation stage of the project when the staff were informed about the outputs; 2) for the BACS project, the staff's morale was an important indicator of how the project was progressing. As there was increased implementation of the IT system components the staff's morale improved; and, 3) the LS IT department's and the Council's enthusiasm were tempered because of the fear of what was going to be written in the consultants' report. Once the consultants' report was published the client respondent felt that the staff's morale improved. This may either have been because of their fears of what would be written had not been realised or it may have been due to receiving implementation plans for the next stage of the project.

In two projects (CGD and Library) the consultants, held different views to the client. For example the CGD consultant was completely unaware of the increase in staff morale. This may have been because he had not worked in the CGD on the project or secondly because, as

the quality assurance director he was only concerned with the reactions of the CGD's senior management. The Library consultant suggested that the fact that something was actually being done improved staff morale, although, the client respondent did not believe there had been any improvement in staff or management morale.

The findings of this study show that at the 'passive' strategy writing stage there did not appear to be an effect on the staff's morale but once implementation had commenced or was about to begin then the staff's reactions were likely to become apparent. When viewing this situation in light of Lewin (1958) and Kubr's (1980) change models the strategy writing stage may be the point at which anxiety arousal begins. This would probably occur at the entry, diagnosis and data feedback stages of the revised organisational change model (see Section 2.5.1). At this point the organisation's employees/users have no need to change their behaviour. This situation may then escalate into the realisation that there needs to be a change in behaviour as a result of the IT management consultants' recommendations, i.e. the unfreezing state. This state would probably span the data discussion, proposals, decision and evaluation stages of the refined model.

When the recommendations start being implemented the client organisations/users have to start behaving differently. This changing state Hersey and Blanchard (1972) suggested becomes increasingly difficult as the client employees/users move through stages 1 to 4. However, as stated by Hersey and Blanchard a combination of participatory and coercive behaviour is likely to bring about the desired change. When the employees are fully trained and are comfortable using the new IT system and there is a good task-technology fit, as described by Goodhue and Thompson (1995), then the refreezing state can be considered complete, e.g. in the BACS project this was seen. It was the only project that had the IT/IS systems totally implemented at the time of interview. Thus these states would cover the implementation and termination stages of the revised organisational change model.

6.14 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

Of great importance in the IT consultancy project is the client and consultant relationship. There were various aspects of the relationship investigated in the case studies and a selection has been made of the areas in which this study attempts to add to the current body of knowledge. This section is subdivided into: how power was managed in the case study

projects (Section 6.14.1), communication in the projects (Section 6.14.2), how professionalism was demonstrated in the projects (Section 6.14.3) and whether a skills transfer took place (Section 6.15.4).

6.14.1 HOW IS POWER MANAGED IN PROJECTS?

Power was discussed in the literature review in Sections 2.2, 2.4.2, 2.4.3 and 2.8.2. This issue was also discussed in Section 4.4. Two types of power manipulation will be discussed in this section, i.e. client initiated consultant power manipulation and consultant initiated power manipulation.

Client Initiated Power Manipulation

The review of the literature did not provide tactics that could be employed by which clients could influence/control the work of consultants. This study found that there were three methods used, i.e. knowledge of the client organisation, withholding fees and the use of the media.

Knowledge of the client organisation: There were four means by which clients, e.g. in the BACS, Library, CH and NHSE projects, used their expert knowledge of the organisation to influence or outmanoeuvre the consultants. These were: i) coaching the consultants to deliver presentations to senior management in a manner that would achieve the client project manager's aims, e.g. in the BACS project; ii) being able to leave the consultants to work on the project without close supervision because the respondent knew that senior management would not become closely involved in the daily management of the project, e.g. in the Library and CH projects; iii) directing consultants to modify their initial analysis of a scoped project and introduce new elements to consider as part of the IS, e.g. in the NHSE project; and, iv) knowing the arguments to use to convince senior management and gain their support to undertake corrective action when a project was not going well, e.g. in the NHSE project.

Withholding of fees. There was only one project in which this was done, i.e. in the NHSE project.

Use of the Media. Only in the NHSE project did the client respondent threaten to publicise the level of inappropriate work that EASAMS did. To a certain extent EASAMS may have been used as a scapegoat behind which to hide what appears to have been a problem with complex causes, some of which may have been due to the NHSE. There is however not enough evidence to support Sturdy's (1997) belief that management consultants were used as scapegoats.

Individually neither withholding fees nor use of the media perhaps would have been effective in changing the course of the NHSE project. However, when the NHSE client respondent suggested that the NHSE would publicise the poor performance of EASAMS, after withholding the fees did not work, then at least investigation of the client respondent's claims was taken more seriously by EASAMS' management.

From the interviews it became apparent that some of the client respondents, e.g. the LS, CH, Trust and DOT were manipulating the power differential in their favour in order to meet certain personal or organisation agendas. These agendas ranged from: re-election of the LS' Council president, obtaining additional funds for the Trust's IM&T strategy, appearing more proactive in the CH project, and to accomplishing Government directives in the DOT project. It was difficult to determine how transparent to the 'public' these agendas were except for the DOT project. There was considerable press coverage concerning the DOT project and its progress as the privatisation of the railways was a controversial issue, as noted in Chapter 5.

Only in the BACS project did there seem to be an attempt to use power unjustly and that was in the design of the contract that they had with OSI, after the client project manager was employed. The BACS client respondent felt that the BACS' CEO had wanted to manoeuvre BACS into a position of power over the OSI consultants and tried to write a contract which would permit this. The contract would have allowed BACS to dispense rewards and fines to OSI in relation to whether project milestones were met or not. OSI did not agree with this and after debating the issues BACS finally signed a contract and employed the other OSI consultants as and when they were needed.

Consultant Initiated Power Manipulation

In Section 1.2 it was noted that Bell and Nadler (1979) noted that the literature often warned clients to beware of the actions of consultants. Ford (1974) provided a fairly comprehensive list of problems that caused projects to fail that were attributable to the consultants (see Section 2.8.2). There does not appear to have been any academic review of the factors that consultants use to influence/control the clients in the literature reviewed. The factors identified here are those which were apparent in the case study projects. This study found that there were two methods used, i.e. the WOW factor and contracts.

The WOW factor. The author has called this the WOW factor because the clients seemed to have allowed the consultants' technical ability to influence their decision about how closely they observed the work of the consultants. This would be identified by Douma and Schreuder (1992) as an asymmetrical state (see Section 2.4.3). This factor is based on the client respondents deferring to the consultants' specialist knowledge. The phenomenon was visible in the Library, CH, NHSE and DOT projects. The WOW factor has its roots in: 1) bringing private sector knowledge to the public sector, e.g. in the Library and DOT projects, 2) developing highly technical systems integration, e.g. in the CH and DOT projects, and 3) being able to design IT/IS systems on paper, identify how the screens would fit together and write programming code, e.g. in the NHSE project.

Contracts. There were two main types of contracts used for the case study projects, i.e. fixed fee and incremental. The discussion in Section 6.5 above, more clearly explains how these were used in the respect of the payment of fees. Use of power was demonstrated in how the fees were agreed upon, the type of contract and also the degree of certainty concerning the output of the project. It should be noted that much of the evidence which was gained from the respondents about the type of contracts that were signed was inferred from the comments made during the interview rather than items on the interview schedules which specifically requested this information. Items were not included in the instrument which directly addressed this issue because from the initial discussion with the consultants it became apparent that any detailed information included in contracts was highly confidential.

In all the projects, except the Trust and Library projects, the consultants proposed the fees that they would charge for the work to be undertaken. In the Trust and Library projects the fee was arrived at using a process of negotiation and was based on the funds that these two

organisations had available. In both these projects preference appears to have been given to a single tenderer, with which the client organisations had had some previous contact and the normal process of compulsory competitive tendering did not take place. Three of the four larger projects, i.e. the NHSE, CH and DOT were phased and at the end of each phase a certain sum was paid. The BACS project was also probably developed on this basis, as explained above in Section 6.5. The purpose of phasing the project may have also been a way the consultants used of segmenting the pleasurable experiences of the project, i.e. giving the clients a feeling that something had been achieved, as would be suggested by and Chase and Dasu's (2001) Principle 3.

The findings seem to support Fitzgerald and Willcocks' (1994) belief that contracts that had low degrees of uncertainty, i.e. the contracts for Library, LS, Trust and CGD, should have tight contracts, i.e. be fixed fee. The type of contract that was used in the other four projects, i.e. NHSE, BACS, DOT and CH was more flexible and was based more on a risk reward scenario.

The power distribution appears to have been quite equal in the Trust project which seemed to have resulted from the respondents having developed a good long term working relationship. By having client employees work with the consultant team then the power differential was moved more in the client's favour. This occurs in the symmetrical information state that is used in the forcing contract as discussed in Section 2.4.3. This is also a force operating in favour of the change. Douma and Schreuder's (1992) symmetrical information state was achieved in this project as the principal [the client] could directly observe the agent's [the consultant] behaviour throughout the course of the consultancy assignment.

In the CH project the type of relationship between the client and the consultants gradually changed. It is not clear whether the contract which required assistance with the replacement of the Mercury contract was replaced by one that dealt with the uncertain nature of developing an interface between the new and old systems. The ability to quite radically change the project's requirements may be because of the 'partnering' outsourcing relationship (Fitzgerald and Willcocks, 1994) that the CH and ICL appeared to have. In this type of relationship the balance of power needs to be fairly even if the relationship is to work or one partner must derive a great deal of benefit in order to give up their hold on power. In the CH project the former reason seemed to be the case.

Due to the problems that occurred in the NHSE project it was clear that Fitzgerald and Willcocks' (1994) suggestion for the type of information that should be included in an outsourcing type contract, i.e. having clearly defined service level agreements, penalty clauses, specific arrangements for adapting to changing circumstances or early termination provisions, had not been adhered to. The contract does not appear to have been revisited in the middle stages of the project, as work that was specified in the contract was not done. This seems to have been a contributory factor to the performance problems identified in this project. Only in the final stages of the project did the power differential move away from the EASAMS' side of the relationship to the NHSE's.

The power differential in the BACS and DOT projects was weighted in the favour of the consultants. This was because the clients were unlikely to have been able to complete the projects without the support of the consultants. This may be one of the reasons why these projects had such large budgets because the consultants were taking on more of the risk of project failure. The consultants being paid to take on additional risk would also appear to be a force acting in the favour of the project's successful completion.

The distribution of power was not as clear nor imbalanced in the clients' interest in the LS, Library and CGD projects.

Insufficient evidence was found to confirm or refute Hislop's (2002) conclusion that consultants that had a significant level of autonomy could modify the organisation to fit the system being implemented.

There were two types of consultant agenda identified, i.e. organisational and individual. However, in these instances the agendas served other purposes than to manipulate the power differentiated in the projects, e.g. to secure repeat business and the consultancies' business survival. To obtain repeat business was the organisational goal of the NHSE, CH, CGD and BACS consultants. The straight rebuy projects, i.e. the Trust and Library were also repeat purchases. The reasons the consultants were used repeatedly were 1) the consultants performed well and produced a suitable solution to the problem, e.g. in the CH, NHSE, CGD and BACS projects; 2) the client and consultants developed close working relationships, e.g. in the BACS and Trust projects; 3) it was cheaper to use the same consultants because they had had previous experience of the organisation, e.g. in the Trust, Library, CH and NHSE projects; 4) the client organisation already had an outsourcing contract with the respondents,

e.g. in the CH and Library projects; 5) intervention and corrective measures taken by the consultancy's parent company impressed the client respondent, e.g. in the NHSE project; and, 6) too many resources had been committed and therefore it was not feasible to begin again with another consultancy, e.g. NHSE.

At least points 1), 2) and 4) seem to support Ram's (1999) belief that consultants will develop a 'good' working-relationship with the client in order to build a high degree of trust with the aim of securing repeat business and persuading the client of the consultant's expertise. Point 6) supports the findings of Bloomfield and Danieli (1995) (see Section 2.5.2).

The consultants in the LS and DOT projects suggested that they had personal agendas, i.e. to allow as many of the consultants employed by the firm to work on the project (the LS consultant respondent) and to work on a successful privatisation project (the DOT consultant respondent). Both the consultants achieved their agendas; this was facilitated by the close working relationship they had with the clients.

In all the projects the consultants seemed to be willing accomplices in the clients' plans to a greater or lesser extent. What becomes clear however is that there is a difficulty in separating the consultants' IT/IS reason for working with the client from any other agendas. This then appears to support Alvesson's (1992) notion that the boundaries between clients and consultants are unclear. Therefore, at least for limited periods, these projects demonstrated mutual sharing of risks, rewards and mutual incentives for success. This does not support Fitzgerald and Willcocks' (1994) assertion that partnership development in this context does not embody these characteristics. Dwyer et al. (1987) also capture this power element in their partnership development model.

6.14.2 COMMUNICATION

The following section discusses the communication between the clients and the consultants working on the projects. Communication was identified in the literature as being important for the success of the outsourcing or consultancy relationship (see Sections 2.4.2, 2.5.3, 2.6.2, 2.8.2, 2.9.3.1 and 2.9.3.2). It was also rated one of the most important success outcome measures in Section 4.2.1. Various variables related to communication loaded on

the *BENEFITS*, *COMMUNICATION* and *WORKING RELATIONSHIP* factors (see Sections 4.11.1, and 4.11.2).

In the case study projects the communication tended to be quite good in most of the projects, with the exception of the NHSE project. There were few disputes or problems between the respondents and where there were, the respondents suggested that, these were dealt with as rapidly as was feasible. In two cases, i.e. the Library and BACS projects, communication and personal chemistry led to friendships by the end of the project, which supports Dwyer et al. (1987) and Gordon's (1998) belief that if communication is good then it strengthens the client consultant relationship. When considering Donaldson and O'Toole's (2002) GAP B (see Section 2.9.2) it appears that as professional front-line staff the IT management consultants worked well with the case study organisations' staff. It appears that the second set of NHSE consultancy staff did not fully take note of all the customer's requirements and therefore did not provide a totally satisfactory service.

From the projects it seems that what is important in communication is clear explanation and understanding of the objectives on paper and in practice which supports Covin and Fisher's (1991) findings. Both the clients and the consultants need to understand what it is they are trying to achieve from the project. But they should remain open-minded about what they may find during the project and be flexible enough to identify and redefine the problem and measure the delivery of the outputs which are recommendations made by Gilb (1989). A variable that seems to be apparent in the Trust and BACS projects but is absent in the NHSE project is a sense of respect for the consultants and the client respondent having some level of 'personal' relationship developed by the end of the project. The NHSE client respondent throughout the course of the interview appeared to know what it was that the NHSE wanted to achieve as a result of the project but he did not seem able to communicate his requirements in a manner which could be easily followed (see Section 5.7.7). This may have been because as Nichol (1997) suggested that he was not sensitive to the other individuals working on the project with him, as he had problems with other consultants who had earlier worked on the project and the Information Management Centre.

6.14.3 PROFESSIONALISM

In the beginning of this study there was no definition of what constituted IT management consultancy professional behaviour. The consultants' assessment of their and the clients' professionalism was discussed in Sections 4.6 and 4.7.6 and the relationships between the clients and the consultants were investigated in Sections 4.9.1, 4.9.2 and 4.9.3.

The first finding of this section was that the general characteristics of a good consultant, i.e. being friendly, open, honest, patient, a good communicator and not being swayed by commercial considerations, engendering trust, respect and authority that were identified by Clark (1994), Ford (1974), and Covin and Fisher (1991) (see Sections 2.3 and 2.8.2) applied to these consultants also. In certain situations the necessity for one or other of these skills to be emphasised more than others is also an important skill for the consultants to master.

There was no project in which the client respondents had what could be considered strong negative feeling towards the consultants. This is most likely to be due to the manner in which the case study client respondents were selected and is one of the components of the project that was discussed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 3) and the limitations section of the conclusions (Chapter 7). A discussion of the professional characteristics of the respondents will be discussed below.

The appearance variable is one component of the Tangibles factor included in the SERVQUAL instrument (see Section 2.9.3.1). This research found that the outward appearance of the consultant and his equipment etc. make an impression on the client and contribute to the trust engendered as Parasuraman et al. (1988) suggested. For example, the Trust client respondent stated that included in her definition of professionalism the consultants should have "a good tidy appearance". This study lends some support to Parasuraman et al.'s findings that appearance was important in the assessment of service quality. When consultants were dressed in a certain manner the client respondents felt that they were professional. The Trust client felt that part of the service that the Trust was paying for was the consultant's appearance. In association with this the consultants were also required to become actively involved and committed to the projects. These two attributes make up the Assurance factor of Parasuraman et al.'s SERVQUAL model. This notion supports Covin and Fisher's (1991) findings for general consultancy.

Delivery of output by the promised due date was also felt to be important by the clients. Trying to understand the culture and the manner in which problems or solutions were developed in the public sector was an issue that both clients and consultants identified in contributing to their assessment of how professionally the consultants behaved.

When consultants were identified as being unprofessional by the client respondents it was generally because the consultants openly disagreed with a decision that had been made or continued to dispute a point that had been made when the client felt that matter had been put to rest. For example in the LS project a junior member of the consultancy team had been goaded into saying he was unhappy about one of the client's decisions and a similar occurrence was reported in the DOT project. In the Library project a consultant challenged a decision that had been made by the management. The consultants were also described by the client respondent as unprofessional in the NHSE project because they had not produced the administrative register to the required standard not taken responsibility for correcting the mistakes. In no case did the respondents believe that the consultant's behaviour affected the ultimate course of the project. Thus it seems that many of the attributes identified in terms of professional behaviour of the generalist management consultants apply to the IT management consultants. Consequently, it might be tentatively suggested that an assessment of professionalism for IT management consultants would be applicable to generalist management consultants. However, without further analysis of other IT projects no conclusion can be drawn.

In Section 2.9, Tilles' (1961) and Kubr's (1980) understanding of who the client was were presented. There was no discussion however of what was seen as professional behaviour on the part of the client in the literature reviewed. The consultants reported that they considered clients to be acting professionally when they selected the consultancy firm to undertake the project in a fair manner and provided the firm with terms of reference that clearly defined what the client organisation required of the IT/IS system. When working with the consultants the clients were expected to take ownership of the project, provide the consultants with clear and consistent directions, communicate their requirements to the consultants, and behave in a manner which made the task of the consultants easier because the clients did what they promised to do within the agreed timescales.

6.14.4 SKILLS TRANSFER

The idea of transferring skills to the client in the process of the project was of interest because of the closeness of the client consultant working relationship. However, it was not mentioned in the literature reviewed but was identified as one of the variables that was a selling feature of the IT management consultants' services. Skills transfer was not reported to be one of the most important outcome success measures recorded in Section 4.2.1. Transfer of skills in projects may be considered part of the customer value criteria that Michell and Fitzgerald (1997) found clients used to select an outsourcing vendor. For at least the CGD and Library projects it was one of the selection criteria that was used by the client organisations when choosing a consultancy firm.

Of the eight projects that were studied, both respondents in five of them identified that there had been a transfer of skills, i.e. the CGD, Trust, Library, BACS and DOT projects. Three respondents, i.e. the CH and NHSE clients and the LS consultant stated that there had been no skills transferred but the other respondent from the project believed that skills had been imparted. In those cases when the consultant identified the skills they transferred to the clients they were: 1) project management in the BACS project; 2) workshop development in the library and NHSE projects; 3) improved interviewing skills in the Trust project; 4) how to conduct presentations in the CH project; 5) maintenance and/or an understanding of how the IT system operated in the CH and BACS projects; and, 6) IS strategy development in the Library, DOT and Trust projects. In the case of the SPCO, the DOT consultant suggested there was a transfer of the knowledge concerning the IS objectives of the DOT to the whole of the railway industry. All these activities may be included in Michell and Fitzgerald's (1997) definition of IT management consultants and their tasks.

The skills that the clients suggested they passed to the consultants were: 1) insight into the decision making process in public sector organisations in the CGD project; 2) an overview of the organisation and its political dynamics in the Trust and LS projects; and, 3) how to prepare presentations that would influence senior management in the BACS project. Only 3) above could be defined as a skill. The other two suggested skills perhaps are not skills but should be defined as information, as they concern building an awareness of client organisations' internal cultural environment.

Kubr (1980) discussed how change is brought about and suggests that skills transfer, i.e. change, can only be measured by a change in behaviour which should be monitored by use of indicators, e.g. changes in speed of performance of tasks. However this study has found that in most projects it was not something that was measured. The explanation for having no measurement system for this variable was that the skills transfer in most cases was unintentional. This study also found that techniques such as feedback, reported by Kubr (1980), had been used.

6.15 INTER-CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION RELATIONSHIPS

Neither the literature reviewed nor the consultants' responses in the consultant survey instrument gave insights into the types of problems occurring in projects or how they should be dealt with during the course of the project. The outsourcing literature reviewed in Section 2.4.6 only mentioned that methods of dealing with problems between vendors should be written into the contract. This section provides a brief synopsis of the few problems that the case study respondents reported.

The NHSE client and the DOT consultant both identified situations where there were rivalries between the various groups of consultants working on the project. In the case of the NHSE, this became more of a problem in the project when EASAMS were not delivering products to the specified standard, i.e. other consultants raised the awareness of the poor work of EASAMS, and helped to alert the NHSE to the resulting performance problems of the system. The NHSE consultant did not report any problems, although this may have been because he had not actually participated in the project on a daily basis. However as the senior consultant responsible for quality then one would have expected him to have been aware of such issues.

The DOT client did not identify that there had been any problems. However, the consultant indicated that he felt that the client probably would have known that there had been some problems because of the closeness of the relationship between the client and the managing consultant. The consultant stated that members of his firm had tried to 'score points off' other consultants working on the project, i.e. openly contradicting their suggestions etc. The consultant respondent did not feel that this was good practice even if they had been justified in so doing. It is not apparent what benefit this activity had but perhaps it may be a strategy

used by the consultants to consolidate a position of power in the project, especially if the client supports the consultants' position in the dispute. This apparent conflict between consultants from different organisations has not been covered in the literature and therefore it is considered an addition to the current body of knowledge. Further investigation into inter-consultancy organisation conflicts is required before any conclusions can be drawn.

6.16 INTRA-CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION RELATIONSHIPS

In none of the cases studied were intra-consultancy problems identified as having an adverse effect on the project. Only in the CGD project had the client actually felt that the manner in which the team worked caused him any anxiety and this was not in relation to the effect on the project but more to do with the consultants not being seen to work as a team.

Another interesting situation was that only the DOT consultant was willing to discuss problems between the consultants working on the project. The client respondent did not seem to identify any problems. This might have been either because the client respondent was trying to protect the reputation of the consultants, the client was unaware of the problems, chose to ignore them or the consultant judged any minor problems more harshly than did the client respondent.

A further point of interest with the DOT consultants was the socialising that was conducted between the team members after work. There is no evidence in this study to suggest that the suggested outcomes for the organisation were the development of a sense of community or the fostering of new ideas, as noted by Alvesson (1992) but the perception of this group by the client respondent was that the consultants working in the SPCO were a 'happy group of people'. Due to the limited evidence it is therefore difficult to suggest what psychological impact their behaviour had on the client respondent and his colleagues and further study may reveal that this may have added to the client respondent's assessment of the success of the project.

Finally, as identified in Chapter 5, the BACS client respondent was taken on as a member of the OSI team after the project was completed. This gave him a relatively unique perspective on the project. His responses concerning the BACS project were judged no more or less positive or negative than other respondents that were interviewed. Another point about this

project was that the other consultants within the team were supportive of each other because they were at the middle and ends of their careers and did not want to fail. This may have been a reason why the BACS consultant project manager working on the project used other members from OSI to manage parts of the project. Without further investigation into this aspect of IT projects it is difficult to draw any conclusions as to whether it is generally a beneficial strategy.

Perhaps the reason that the respondents did not identify problems within the consultancy teams was because of the method of client selection, i.e. the consultants chose client organisations in which the projects, in general, ran fairly smoothly. This would be an element that would increase the selection bias of this study.

6.17 RESPONDENTS' NEEDS

The following section analyses the responses to the items relating to the respondents' needs. One of the more unusual key client related success measures was that a consultant identified in Section 4.5 was having the client's practical and emotional needs met. It was therefore felt necessary to investigate not only the clients' but also the consultants' needs and whether respondents felt that meeting these needs was a measure of success of the projects. The basis for this analysis was to determine whether the emotions of individuals play a part in explaining their behaviour as the discussion in Sections 2.5.3 and 2.8.1 suggest.

Both respondents' from each of the case study projects were asked what they considered were the client's needs. There were fourteen needs identified which are shown in Table 6.3 below. In six cases both respondents reported the same needs for the client, i.e. 1) clinicians perceiving the IM&T strategy to be important and meeting project deadlines (Trust project); 2) having the client's specification clarified and the client's management being satisfied with the project's outcome (CH project); 3) receipt of an implementable IT solution (NHSE project); 4) minimum disruption to the normal working environment (BACS project); 5) the SPCO taking over the management of all the IT/IS issues associated with the project (DOT project); and 6) the client needing to manage other employees' jealousies concerning their assessment of his skills to manage an IT/IS project (CGD project).

Table 6.3 Clients' Needs

Name of the Client Company	Respondents	CCS	CI	DP	DR	EP	FP	IS	MD	MJ	MS	PS	RS	SS	SWS	PMS	EMS
Central Government Department	Client Response								*	*						Y	N
	Consultant Response									+						N	Y
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response		*								*					Y	Y
	Consultant Response		+								+	+				Y	Y
Law Society	Client Response					*										Y	Y
	Consultant Response										+					-	-
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response				*		*									Y	Y
	Consultant Response								+							Y	-
Companies House	Client Response	*													*	Y	Y
	Consultant Response	+													+	Y	-
NHS Executive	Client Response							*				*				-	-
	Consultant Response							+								Y	-
BACS	Client Response								*				*			Y	Y
	Consultant Response								+							Y	Y
Department of Transport	Client Response			*										*		Y	Y
	Consultant Response													+		Y	Y

Key

CCS	The client's specifications were clarified	MD	There was minimal disruption to the normal working environment	PMS	Meeting the practical needs is a measure of project success
CI	The clinicians viewed the IM&T strategy as important	MJ	The client employees' jealousies were managed	EMS	Meeting the emotional needs is a measure of project success
DP	The ability to discuss problems with the consultants	MS	There was efficient management of the work schedule	-	No response
DR	To develop a good working relationship with the consultants	PS	The project was completed successfully		
EP	The political situation was not exacerbated	RS	The client respondent's stress was relieved		
FP	There was flexibility built into the project schedule	SS	The SPCO took over the management of all the IT/IS systems issues		
IS	The client received an implementable solution	SWS	The client's management was satisfied with the proposed solution		

Table 6.4 Consultants’ Needs

Name of the Client Company	Respondents	AP	AW	CDC	CNO	CS	CT	DC	DIS	ER	FU	GM	HM	IB	IJ	IP	KB	KT
Central Government Department	Client Response							*										
	Consultant Response	+	+												+			
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response				*								*					
	Consultant Response								+							+		
Law Society	Client Response		*											*				
	Consultant Response									+							+	+
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response																	
	Consultant Response											+						
Companies House	Client Response				*						*							
	Consultant Response																	
NHS Executive	Client Response			*														
	Consultant Response						+										+	+
BACS	Client Response					*	*											
	Consultant Response																	
Department of Transport	Client Response																	
	Consultant Response							+										

Key

APThe consultants had access to interviewees

AWThe consultants had a well equipped work area

CDCThe client did not care about the consultant’s needs

CNOThe consultant did not have any emotional needs

CSThe consultant needed to feel supported

CTThe consultant needed to feel trusted

DCThe consultant developed a good working relationship with the clients

DISThe consultants developed an implementable solution

ERA good reputation was gained by the consultants

FUThe consultant needed to feel useful

GMThe consultant being able to gather staff for meetings

HMTThe consultant aiding the client to arrange meetings and conduct interviews

IBThe consultant having interviews booked by the client

IJThe consultant performing a worthwhile but interesting job

IPThe consultant understanding the internal politics of the organisation

KBThe project being kept within the client’s budget

KTThe project being kept within the client’s timescale

Table 6.4 Continued. Consultants' Needs

Name of the Client Company	Respondents	MP	MR	MS	ND	PR	PS	RB	RCI	RFS	SD	SWS	UR	WT	PMS	EMS
Central Government Department	Client Response					*		*				*			-	-
	Consultant Response														Y	N
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response														N	N
	Consultant Response						+								Y	Y
Law Society	Client Response										*				Y	N
	Consultant Response														Y	Y
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	*													N	Y
	Consultant Response														-	Y
Companies House	Client Response	*		*				*				*			Y	Y
	Consultant Response				+			+							Y	-
NHS Executive	Client Response														N	N
	Consultant Response	+			+			+							-	Y
BACS	Client Response						*		*	*					N	Y
	Consultant Response														-	Y
Department of Transport	Client Response					*							*		Y	Y
	Consultant Response		+					+						+	Y	Y

Key

MP	The consultants needed to make a profit	RFS	The consultancy developed a good reputation in the financial services
MR	The consultants needed to manage their's and the client's risks	SD	The consultants were provided with relevant documentation
MS	The consultants had marketable skills	SWS	The consultants needed the client's management to be satisfied with the proposed solution
ND	There were no disputes with the clients	UR	The consultants needed to understand what was required of them
PR	The consultants received praise	WT	The consultants needed to work as a team
PS	The project was completed successfully	PMS	Meeting the practical needs was a measure of success of the project
RB	The consultancy obtained repeat business	EMS	Meeting the emotional needs was a measure of success of the project
RCI	The consultancy developed a good reputation in the consultancy industry -		No response

The six projects appear to have demonstrated that the clients had generally clearly communicated some of their needs to the consultants, which is something that Ford (1974) suggested should be agreed at the beginning of the project. Of the fourteen measures that were identified only three client respondents reported what could be considered emotional needs, i.e. the ability to discuss problems with the consultant (CH project), to develop a good working relationship (Library project) and having the client respondent's stress relieved (BACS project). Interestingly, none of the consultants seemed to have identified any of these needs even though the consultant respondents in the BACS and CH projects had reported needs that were important to the client.

Perhaps the most interesting point was that there were more than twice as many needs identified for the consultants as for the clients (see Table 6.4). Only for the CH project was there agreement on one of the needs that was reported, i.e. the consultant's need to obtain repeat business. This measure was reported by the most respondents, i.e. it was reported by the CGD and CH clients and the CH, NHSE and DOT consultants. Of the thirty consultant needs identified there were seven emotional needs reported, i.e. the consultants needed to: 1) feel supported (BACS client), 2) feel trusted (BACS client), 3) develop a good working relationship with the client (CGD client and DOT consultant), 4) feel useful (CH client), 5) perform a worthwhile job (CGD consultant), 6) receive praise (CGD and DOT clients) and 7) have no disputes with the client (CH and NHSE consultants). Six clients and four consultants identified these measures.

When contrasting the number of needs proposed by the respondents it can be seen that the respondents felt the consultants had the most needs. The consultants appeared to know more about the requirements of the clients than vice versa, which would be expected of effective consultants. Thus this suggests that communication flowing from the client to the consultant was quite effective which supports Covin and Fisher's (1991) suggested requirements for a successful project.

One of the contributions this research has attempted to make to the current body of literature is the identification of the consultants' needs in the development of the client consultant relationship. One might rightly say that it is important that the focus of the project should be on the client but, as the Trust consultant indicated, when the consultants' needs are not being considered in the relationship then it will affect their work. The respondents were asked whether meeting the client's needs was a measure of success. Both the respondents from the

Trust, Library, CH, BACS and DOT projects believed that meeting the client's practical needs was a measure of success of the project. Only ten respondents felt that meeting the clients' emotional needs was also a measure of success. Four of the positive responses were from consultants.

Fifty percent of the respondents, i.e. LS, CH and DOT clients and CGD, Trust, LS, CH and DOT consultants, felt that it was a measure of success if the consultants' practical needs were met as part of the project. Ten respondents considered that it was important for the consultants' emotional needs to be met as part of the project (Library, CH, BACS and DOT clients and Trust, LS, Library, NHSE, BACS and DOT consultants). It should be noted that the Library and NHSE consultants did not feel that having their emotional needs met was a measure of success of the project but only for themselves personally. These findings do not support Ward and Peppard's (1996) assertion in Section 2.3 that the consultants shy away from emotions, although in Section 4.7.6 there had seemed to be some support for this belief.

Again one of the more interesting findings of this section has been that the client respondent, i.e. the Trust client, from a project that could be described as successful did not consider the emotional feelings of the consultant respondent even though they had a "good working relationship". What seems more predictable is the NHSE client's reaction in relation to the problems in the project. In relation to these two projects it seems that Rogers' (1961) theory is supported in terms of the ineffective behaviours, i.e. when the client respondent was remote, uncaring and authoritarian then the outcome was unlikely to be successful. Analysis of this section alone has not provided sufficient evidence to support Rogers' theory concerning the required behaviour for a successful project outcome to occur.

6.18 MONITORING OF THE CONSULTANCY PROFESSION

This section was included in the client interview schedule because it was felt that it was necessary to compare views in the case study organisations with the findings from the consultant survey instrument presented in Section 4.8. Both these sections were developed as a result of the Cabinet Office's Efficiency Unit report (Efficiency Unit, 1994) which suggested that a database could be used to identify consultants who are qualified to do particular types of work. So as not to bias the client respondents the questions were either read directly from the interview schedule or the clients read the questions themselves and

then provided a response. However, it should be noted that these results are only indicative and further investigation is required.

Table 6.5 presents the results of the data collection. The clients agreed that having a nationally available database would increase their knowledge of what to expect as part of the consultancy process. The companies worked for, a contact name and whether the consultant was BS5750/ISO9000 accredited was the most important information the clients felt should be included in the database. Other information that should be held was the specific work done by each consultant, the estimated fees, specific measures of performance based on a standard measure for each consultancy firm and accurate measures of the work done in each industry sector. It should be noted that the mean value for the responses for the remaining questions in Table 6.5 proved to either be neutral or agree.

The clients' responses varied slightly from those received from the consultants, which were presented in Section 4.8. Both clients and consultants believed that there should be a nationally held database containing contact names and the type of companies for which work was carried out. Both groups also agreed that the database could hold information on the specific type of work done by each consultancy. The clients were more in favour of having BS5750/ISO9000 registration and the estimated fees charged per day recorded than were the consultants. Although a comparison has been made, further investigation with larger sample sizes would increase the statistical validity of the results.

The comments made by the clients suggested that there was possibly a need for a database but the feasibility of its use would need to be further investigated. Some of the issues for consideration would be: 1) acceptance of its usefulness by consultants and clients; 2) how data would be collected; 3) how to determine which measures were the most important; 4) the requirements for each type of client industry; 5) where the responsibility would rest for maintenance of the database, i.e. ensuring that all the data was kept up to date; and, 6) the legal implications for the database holders if poorly performing consultancy practices lost business because of their ratings.

Table 6.5 The Determination Of The Existence Of A Potential National Database To Assess Performance Of The Consultants

Question Number	Question	Valid Cases	Frequency of Values						Mean	Std. Dev.
			1	2	3	4	5	9		
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing Response		
Q4A	Client Companies would be able to use consultancy services more effectively if they knew what to expect at each stage of an assignment	8	3	5	-	1	-	-	1.625	.478
Q4B1	Information concerning consultancies could be located on a database of sorts	8	1	7	-	-	-	1	1.875	.354
Q4B2	This information should be nationally available	8	1	6	-	-	1	1	2.250	1.165
The type of information that should be held on the database										
Q4C1	Type of companies worked for and possibly a contact name	8	3	4	1	-	-	1	1.750	.707
Q4C2	Specific work done by each consultancy / each consultant	8	1	5	-	2	-	1	2.375	1.061
Q4C3	Specific measures of performance based on a standard measure for each consultancy firm	8	1	4	1	1	1	1	2.625	1.302
Q4C4	Specific measure of performance based on a standard measure for each consultant	8	-	3	1	2	2	1	3.375	1.302
Q4C5	Estimates of fees charged e.g. per consultant day	8	1	5	-	1	1	1	2.500	1.309
Q4C6	There should be an expert system based on this data by which consultants could be selected	8	2	1	1	2	2	1	3.125	1.642
Q4C7	This model could be used to determine what degree of success a specific project had. (This information to be given by the client.)	8	-	4	2	2	-	1	3.000	1.309
Q4C8	Accurate measures could be obtained about the work done in each industry sector	8	-	5	1	-	2	1	2.875	1.356
Q4C9	Measures could be obtained about the work done in other types of consultancy	8	-	5	-	-	3	1	3.125	1.553
Q4C10	Whether the consultant was registered for BS5750 or ISO9000	8	2	5	1	-	-	1	1.875	.641

6.19 VALUE FOR MONEY

The reason for including this section in the case study analysis is because the CGD, Trust, Library, CH, NHSE and DOT projects were all in the public sector. The literature that discusses value for money and the related issues can be found in Sections 2.5.2.2 and 2.9.1. In addition the related consultant survey analysis also refers to this topic in Section 4.4.

There were twenty value for money (VFM) measures recorded by the case study respondents which were assigned to three categories: client related measures (8), consultant related measures (6) and project related measures (6) and these are found in Tables 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8 respectively. The two highest subscribed to VFM measures were both client related and were: 1) the solution met the respondents' objectives, which was identified by the CGD, Trust, LS, Library and DOT clients and the Trust consultant and 2) the clients were happy with the projects, which was identified by the Trust, LS, BACS and DOT consultants and the DOT client. These two measures were also reported, in Section 4.2.3, to be the two most important key success outcome measures.

From the interviews it was found that in the case of the NHSE and the DOT projects the Treasury had sanctioned the projects knowing that, at least in the short term, the projects would have high intangible benefits. In the case of the DOT the sell off of the various BR companies in the long-term would provide the necessary funds that the government were expecting which Harper (1995) suggested were between £4-6 Billion. Also the payback in the NHSE was to be improved efficiency of the IT systems throughout the NHS.

It was found that the clients and the consultants used different VFM measures, i.e. 1) for the clients the project was considered VFM if the solution met the respondents' objectives; and, 2) the project was completed within the specified timescale. The consultants' reported VFM measures were: 1) the client was happy with the project and 2) the consultant's fees were competitively priced. In terms of being priced competitively the consultants appeared to consider that the fees that they charged were important.

Table 6.6 Client Related VFM Measures

Name of the Client Company	Respondents	VFM	Exp	Hap	Adp	My	Gut	Save	ConF	Gov
Central Government Department	Client Response	Yes	*				*			
	Consultant Response	Yes								
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response	Yes	*							
	Consultant Response	Yes	*	*						
Law Society	Client Response	Yes	*		*					
	Consultant Response	Yes		*						
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Y/N	*			*				
	Consultant Response	Yes								
Companies House	Client Response	Y/N					*			
	Consultant Response	Yes								
NHS Executive	Client Response	No								
	Consultant Response	Yes								
BACS	Client Response	Yes								
	Consultant Response	Yes		*				*		
Department of Transport	Client Response	Yes	*	*					*	*
	Consultant Response	Yes		*						

Key

Adp	The client adapted to the change.
ConF	There was a contractual framework in place for the IS/IT systems for the rail industry.
Exp	The project met all its objectives.
Gov	The Conservative Government considered the project was successful.
Gut	The respondent felt that he/she had received VFM.
Hap	The client was happy with the output.
My	The client did not have to do the work themselves.
Save	Successfully implementing the solution saved the company from being closed.
VFM	Whether the client had received VFM.

Section 2.9.1 discussed Bounds et al.'s (1994) different types of value. Bounds et al.'s belief was that monetary value was a limited definition of value but it seems to be one that is an important definition in this context, i.e. in the competitive IT management consultancy market. However, this finding does not suggest that customer value is not also a useful concept but it suggests that the IT project context was more complex than previously anticipated, as it encompasses both of these definitions of value simultaneously, when different aspects of the project are viewed.

An example of this complexity is that in the Library project the client respondent believed that she had only partially received VFM because of the slippage in the project timetable. She did not appear to take into consideration that the consultants had not charged extra for

the delay and that they had also provided extra work for free. The consultants believed that they had provided her with value for money. What is interesting in this scenario is that there is a difference in the assessment about what constitutes VFM, e.g. the provision of free work, was viewed by both respondents in this project as something good. However, the client attributed blame, for the delay in the project, to the consultants and this devalued the provision of free work, even though she acknowledged that the consultants could have charged extra for the additional time the project took. This is a demonstration of how value is dependent on the perspective of the assessor in terms of the judgement made about the benefits and sacrifices that have to be made in their appraisal of what composes Customer Value, as discussed by Bounds et al. (1994).

Secondly, this difference of value assessment is a component of Gap 1 in the SERVQUAL instrument, as this gap is between the Library client respondent's perception of the services that she received and those that she expected should exist, e.g. no delay in the delivery of the project strategy and the consultants being able to deal with any of the Library's 'internal' organisational problems.

A second example of a client respondent identifying that the client organisation had only received partial VFM was in the CH project. The client respondent believed that money had been wasted on consultants' services at the beginning of the project, during the time when CH was trying to understand its IT/IS requirements. The consultant believed that CH had received VFM because CH had obtained a workable solution to its problem in a timescale that had been agreed.

As has been stated above, the CH project was conducted in an environment in which ICL had an outsourcing agreement with CH. Perhaps it can be stated that because of the heterogeneity of service provision, discussed in Section 1.2, the provision of IS/IT consultancy support is different from that provided by a hardware supplier. Nevertheless the onus seems to have been on the CH project manager to acquire 'quasi-experience' based on obtaining references to determine what IT/IS services and technical assistance in determining their requirements ICL and other potential tenderers could provide. Moreover, as was undertaken in the feasibility stage, the CH client respondent or his colleagues could have investigated similar IT replacement projects to acquaint themselves with the issues for consideration at the project tendering stage.

There seemed to have been several opposing forces acting on the project so that this was not done: 1) the CH were under a time constraint to replace the CH Direct contract; 2) the project was under-resourced in terms of CH staff who were assigned to the IT replacement project; and 3) senior managers were not involved with the daily operations and did not realise the need for better planning and clarification of their IT/IS requirements at the start of the project. It does appear that as the project progressed they became increasingly aware of the complexity of their requirements and therefore requested that the architecture and feasibility studies be conducted. From the discussion of credence and experience properties (see Section 1.2), it becomes apparent that if the CH's Board had spent more time undertaking a scoping study earlier, then they perhaps would have become aware of the complexity of integrating all the various discrete IS/IT projects that were being undertaken throughout the CH.

Table 6.7 Consultant Related VFM Measures

Name of the Client Company	Respondents	RB	Rep	RedC	ISO	PRat	QuaC
Central Government Department	Client Response						
	Consultant Response	*	*				
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response			*			
	Consultant Response			*	*		
Law Society	Client Response					*	
	Consultant Response					*	
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response						
	Consultant Response						
Companies House	Client Response						
	Consultant Response						
NHS Executive	Client Response						
	Consultant Response					*	
BACS	Client Response						
	Consultant Response						
Department of Transport	Client Response						
	Consultant Response			*		*	*

Key

- ISO The project met the consultancy's ISO 9000 quality assurance requirements.
- PRat The consultant's rates were competitive.
- QuaC The quality of the consultants working on the project.
- RB The consultants were given repeat business.
- RedC The consultants reduced their charges.
- Rep The consultants improved their reputation.

An interesting phenomenon found in the LS, Trust, Library, NHSE and DOT projects was that the consultants provided additional work for free. This can be viewed as a tactic employed to secure customer satisfaction and therefore improve the likelihood of the consultants receiving repeat business. The provision of work for free was an issue recognised by Ram (1999) and discussed in Section 4.12 above, in that consultants fees were not necessarily reflective of the work that they conducted but could also be an indicator of the preferential treatment that a client obtained because the parties had a good relationship. Even in the NHSE project having a good relationship with GEC Marconi, appears to have been important, in that GEC Marconi was responsible for ensuring that EASAMS resolved the problems with Administrative Register. If the work was done well for the NHSE and EASAMS was shown to have worked well, then there may have been the opportunity of obtaining additional work from other NHS organisations. A similar situation was seen in the financial services industry, as a result of the 'successful' completion of the BACS project. For the consultancy firm in the NHSE project provision of extra work for free was also a failure cost as discussed by Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (1994) and Clutterbuck et al. (1993) (see Section 2.9.2).

The client respondents felt that their assessment of whether they had received VFM was related to the quality of the advice they received, from the IT management consultants, throughout the course of the project. The advice provided the bedrock on which the strategy reports and/or IS/IT systems were based.

Being able to understand and use the systems was an important issue for those respondents who had IT/IS systems implemented as a result of the projects. The two most reported key outcome success measures recorded in Chapter 4, that clients were satisfied with the project's outcomes and that technical specifications were met, were the same as the two most favoured VFM measures. The majority of respondents took into consideration whether they had received VFM when judging the success of a project (see Table 6.6). Thus it can be tentatively concluded that these two VFM variables and evaluating the success of the project are linked. However, the direction of the linkage, i.e. the client obtained a successful project and thus felt he had received VFM or the client believed he had received VFM and thus considered the project successful cannot be clearly determined from the evidence reported. Further investigation is required to assess causality.

Table 6.8 Project Related VFM Measures

Name of the Client Company	Respondents	Af	Ext	Time	Sol	Bud	Fin
Central Government Department	Client Response			*			
	Consultant Response						
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response						
	Consultant Response	*					
Law Society	Client Response		*				
	Consultant Response						
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response			*			
	Consultant Response		*				
Companies House	Client Response			*			
	Consultant Response				*		
NHS Executive	Client Response						
	Consultant Response		*				
BACS	Client Response			*		*	
	Consultant Response						
Department of Transport	Client Response		*				*
	Consultant Response						

Key

- Af There was a post-project review conducted.
- Bud The project was completed within budget.
- Ext The was no extra charge for additional work that was done.
- Fin The consultants generated income from sales of its other products.
- Sol The client obtained an affordable solution.
- Time The project was completed within the specified timescale.

6.20 MEASURING SUCCESS BASED ON LITERATURE CRITERIA

Measurement instruments can be of two types: scales and indexes. Scales “are collections of items intended to reveal levels of theoretical variables, not readily observable by direct means” (DeVellis, 1991, p8). An index “is made up of “cause indicators” or items that determine the level of a construct” (DeVellis, 1991, p9). In this subsection an attempt has been made to develop an index of the IT/IS case study projects’ success. The construct that the index is intended to measure is called the latent variable. In this case it is a general measure rather than one particular aspect of IT/IS project success. To increase the reliability of the measure, as DeVellis recommends, multiple items were used and then a comparison was made between the two indices. The first is based on the use of the variables that were found in the literature to monitor success. The second index was developed using the most often used constructs that this study found were used to measure success.

In the ideal situation it would have been preferable to develop scales or indices based on the literature and the criteria that the respondents suggested, then request that they rate themselves on these scales/indices which could then have been analysed and compared to the scores which would have been assigned to them based on the analyses of the project. This was not possible, because 6 of the 8 respondents left their organisations soon after having been interviewed. A further method would have been to identify independent evaluators with sufficient knowledge of each of the projects to undertake an objective evaluation of the projects. It was decided that a variation of this method would be used because of the unavailability of such evaluators, i.e. a professor who was familiar with the case study projects and the current literature in this area was asked to review the author's assessments, to identify any apparent anomalies (see below).

A ranking system was developed which was based on the criteria identified in the literature as that used to determine project success (see Table 6.9) (see Sections 2.4.6, 2.8.2 and 2.9.4). The sections that the scores were based on are shown in the Key. In addition, all the information on which scores are based is presented in Chapter 5. Each project was scored on how well the project met each of the measures. The scores were given a weighting of unity for this system, as the literature does not suggest which of these criteria are of greater importance. The 'Comm' item is a composite of the characteristics that the literature suggests needs to be in operation between the clients and the consultants working on the projects, i.e. trust, rapport, mutual respect, confidence and communication. Based on the scale the projects were ranked in the order shown in Table 6.10.

Having reviewed the scores and the relevant sections in the thesis to determine if there was sufficient evidence for the scores given, the following questions were raised by the professor concerning the reasons for the scores given. These questions are addressed below:

1. Why have the CH, NHSE, BACS and DOT projects been assigned scores of '0' in the budget column?

It should be noted that budget scores for the CH, BACS, NHSE and DOT projects are '0' which is a neutral score because the projects did not have a fixed budget but the budget was set periodically, so it was not possible to determine if the project came within budget.

Table 6.9 Determination Of Literature Scores For Case Study Projects

Score											
-2	Very poorly met the measure		1	Met the measure well		0	Neutral				
-1	Poorly met the measure		2	Met the measure very well							
Name of Client Company	Bud	Comm	Dispute	Effngt	Ref	RepBus	Sat	TechMet	Time	Work	Total
Central Government Department	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	17
Preston Acute Hospitals	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	19
Law Society	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	17
London Borough of Waltham Forest	2	2	1	1	2	2	0	2	-2	2	12
Companies House	0	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	0	1	13
NHS Executive	0	-2	-2	-1	-2	2	0	-1	-2	-2	-10
BACS	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	16
Department of Transport	0	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	0	2	14

Key	
Bud	The project came in within budget (Section 6.5).
Comm	There was trust, rapport, mutual respect, confidence and communication operating between the parties (Sections 6.8, 6.13.1, 6.14.1, 6.14.2, 6.14.3, 6.14.4).
Dispute	There were few disputes between the two parties (Sections 6.14.2 and 6.14.3).
Effngt	The consultancy team was efficiently managed (Sections 6.8, 6.14.3 and 6.17).
Ref	The client was willing to act a reference site (Sections 6.14.2, 6.14.3 and 6.19).
RepBus	There was a likelihood of repeat business (Sections 6.7.1, 6.14.1, 6.17 and 6.19).
Sat	The client organisation's management was satisfied with the project's outcomes (Sections 6.11.3 and 6.13.1).
TechMet	These was a good correlation between the set objectives and the outcomes (Sections 6.11.1 and 6.11.3).
Time	The project came in on time (Section 6.6).
Work	The client and consultant worked well together (Sections 6.8, 6.13.1, 6.14.1, 6.14.2, 6.14.3, 6.14.4)

Table 6.10 Using The Literature's Criteria To Determine The Success Of The Projects

Rank	Name of Client Company	Total Score
1 st	Preston Acute Hospitals (Trust)	19
2 nd	Law Society (LS)	17
2 nd	Central Government Department (CGD)	17
4 th	BACS (BACS)	16
5 th	Department of Transport (DOT)	14
6 th	Companies House (CH)	13
7 th	London Borough of Waltham Forest (Library)	12
8 th	NHS Executive (NHSE)	-10

2. Why had the DOT project been given a score of '1' in the dispute column?

Although not a major incident reported by the DOT client respondent, he identified an incident in which a junior member of the consultancy team had acted unprofessionally and challenged a decision made by a senior member of the DOT. This is reported in Chapter 5 and Section 6.14.3.

3. Why were the CGD and CH projects only given a score of '1' in the Effmgt column?

Where there was evidence of efficient management, e.g. Trust, LS, BACS and DOT projects these projects were given a score of '2'. The other projects' management were scored in comparison to those that have been assessed to have more effectively managed their projects. Similarly, the work variable was scored on the basis that some of the case study respondents showed evidence that the respondents worked better together than did others.

4. Why was the CH project only given a score of '1' in the work column?

The reason that the CH project was only given a score of '1' was because although the working relationship was good generally, the client and consultant respondents did not appear to have developed a working relationship which allowed the consultant respondent to freely discuss his concerns about the integration of CH's IT/IS systems.

6.21 A PROJECT MEASUREMENT SYSTEM BASED ON THE ENTIRE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section presents a more elaborate project success measure based on the finding of the entire study. To determine the ranking system for projects the ten most subscribed to key success measures from Table 4.3 – The Key Measures of Success (see Chapter 4) were selected. The projects were rated on how they met these measures (see Table 6.11 for the Raw Scores). Then a weighted score was calculated by multiplying the initial rating by an importance weight (Weighting), i.e. the number of respondents who identified that they had used this measure themselves (the measure was not included in the total if it was reported for the end users, or if the client reported it for the consultant or if the consultant reported it for the client) when determining the success of the project (see Tables E.1 to E.5 and Table E.7 in Appendix E). One of the measures in Table 6.11, i.e. ClSat (client satisfaction), is a composite of 3 other equally weighted measures, i.e. ASM (approval of the project by senior management), AOS (proposals accepted by other members of client staff) and EUS (the end users were satisfied with the outcome of the project). This measure reflects the fact that these three factors all contribute to the client company's satisfaction. The sum of the weighted scores was calculated (see Table 6.11 for Project Weighted Scores) using the following formula:

$$\text{Project weighted Score} = \sum (\text{Raw Scores} * \text{Weighting})$$

The ranks and total weighted scores are shown in Table 6.12.

Table 6.11 Determination of Weighted Scores for Case Study Projects

Score
-2 Very poorly met the measure 1 Met the measure well 0 Neutral
-1 Poorly met the measure 2 Met the measure very well

Name of Client Company	Key Success Measures									
	CISat		TechMet		RepBus		TanBen		Own	
Importance Weights		12		6		6		6		3
	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score
Central Government Department	2	24	2	12	2	12	-2	-12	2	6
Preston Acute Hospitals	2	24	2	12	2	12	-2	-12	2	6
Law Society	2	24	2	12	2	12	-2	-12	2	6
London Borough of Waltham Forest	0	0	2	12	2	12	2	12	-2	-6
Companies House	2	24	2	12	2	12	-2	-12	2	6
NHS Executive	0	0	-1	-6	2	12	-2	-12	2	6
BACS	2	24	2	12	2	12	0	0	2	6
Department of Transport	2	24	1	6	2	12	2	12	2	6

Key
The table number and the performance indicator from which the importance weight was derived is shown in brackets.
CISat The client company was satisfied with the project (Table E.1, ASM+AOS+EUS) (Sections 6.11.3 and 6.13.1)..
Own The client has taken ownership of the output (Table E.2 USE) (Section 6.11.3).
RepBus There was repeat business or a likelihood of repeat business for the consultants (Table E.5 Rep) (Sections 6.7.1, 6.14.1, 6.17 and 6.19).
TanBen There were or were likely to be tangible benefits (Table E.7 Del) (Sections 6.11.4 and 6.19).
TechMet The technical specification was met (Table E.1 Exp) (Sections 6.11.1 and 6.11.3).

Table 6.11 Continued. Determination Of Weighted Scores For Case Study Projects

Score												
-2	Very poorly met the measure			1	Met the measure well			0	Neutral			
-1	Poorly met the measure			2	Met the measure very well							
Name of Client Company		Key Success Measures										
		Ref		Bud		Time		Rel		ConSat		
Importance Weights			2		1		3		5		2	
	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Total Weighted Score	
Central Government Department	2	4	2	2	1	3	1	5	1	2	58	
Preston Acute Hospitals	2	4	2	2	1	3	2	10	2	4	65	
Law Society	2	4	1	1	1	3	2	10	2	4	64	
London Borough of Waltham Forest	2	4	2	2	-2	-6	2	10	1	2	42	
Companies House	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	5	1	2	41	
NHS Executive	-2	-4	0	0	-2	-6	-2	-10	0	0	-20	
BACS	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	10	2	4	72	
Department of Transport	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	5	1	2	71	

Key

The table number and the performance indicator from which the importance weight was derived is shown in brackets.

Bud The project came in within budget (Table E.3 Bud) (Section 6.5).

ConSat The consultant was satisfied with the project (Table E.4 MCO) (Sections 6.14.1, 6.14.3 and 6.17).

Ref The client's willingness to act as a reference site (Table E.5 URef) (Sections 6.14.2, 6.14.3 and 6.19).

Rel The quality of the relationship between the client and the consultant was good (Table E.3 GRC and Table E.1 Hap) (Sections 6.8, 6.13.1, 6.14.1, 6.14.2, 6.14.3, 6.14.4).

Time The project met the set deadline (Table E.3 Time) (Section 6.6).

Table 6.12 The Ranks And Weighted Scores Of The Case Study Project

Rank	Name of Client Company	Total Weighted scores
1 st	BACS (BACS)	72
2 nd	Department of Transport (DOT)	71
3 rd	Preston Acute Hospitals (Trust)	65
4 th	Law Society (LS)	64
5 th	Central Government Department (CGD)	58
6 th	London Borough of Waltham Forest (Library)	42
7 th	Companies House (CH)	41
8 th	NHS Executive (NHSE)	-20

The comparison of the results obtained by different approaches was a method used to attempt to increase the internal validity suggested by Yin (1994). In this study there will be three levels of comparisons made. The first comparison is of the constructs included in Tables 6.8 and 6.10. Secondly, an analysis is made of the ranking of the projects in Tables 6.9 and 6.11. Finally, a comparison of the project ranked first and last will be made.

6.21.1 CONSTRUCTS INCLUDED IN THE INDICES

The classical project measures that were identified in the literature were: setting objectives; defining the scope; setting functional strategies - the use of a particular technology, its design and implementation, and its operations in relation to meeting the project's objectives; managing the design process so the technology is appropriate to meet the user requirements; and finally the appropriate human, financial, infrastructure arrangements, contractor's commercial performance and a supportive environment in which the project can take place (Morris and Hough, 1987; Turner, 1993). In developing the literature defined ranking system these variables were included in Table 6.9.

There were certain constructs that were common to both indices found in Tables 6.8 and 6.10. These constructs were: that the project kept within budget (Bud) and on time (Time), there was the likelihood of or there had been repeat business (RepBus), the client was likely to act as a reference site for prospective clients of the consultancy firm (Ref) and that the technical specifications were met (TechMet).

Of perhaps more interest are the constructs that the literature predicted were used to measure success of consultancy projects but were not found to be used by the respondents.

These constructs were: 1) that there needed to be trust, rapport, mutual respect, confidence and communication operating between the parties (Comm); 2) that there were few disputes between the consultants and their clients (Dispute); 3) that the consultancy team needed to have efficient management (Effmgt); 4) that the user management were satisfied with the project (Sat); and, 5) the client and consultant worked together well (Work). However, If constructs 1) and 5) are combined then it seems that they would provide the cause and effect of the Rel construct that is found in Table 6.11. The Rel construct is about the quality of the relationship that the clients and the consultants developed throughout the course of the project.

The emphasis in the literature had been on the client companies' management being satisfied with the project, although, in Section 2.2.1 the users involved were identified as being important. The variable AOS (the project proposals were accepted by other members of the client company's staff) which was found in the construct ClSat provided the greatest of the three variables used to weight the score. Thus this would indicate that the respondents did not only consider senior management's opinion in how successful they rated the project.

The respondents identified the clients taking ownership of the output (Own), there being tangible benefits (TanBen), the consultants were satisfied with the projects' outcomes (ConSat), the quality of the relationships between the client and the consultant was good (Rel) and the client firm were satisfied with the project. The Own construct is a practical demonstration of how the clients indicated that they understood and put to use the outputs that they received. The ConSat construct is unusual as it views the projects from the perspective of the consultants and not from that of the clients. Finally the TanBen identifies those things that can be physically or on a balance sheet be seen to have resulted from a project.

6.21.2 RANKING OF THE PROJECTS

Comparison of Tables 6.10 and 6.12 shows that only the NHSE retained the same rank in both the projects, i.e. 8th position. In the literature derived score the Trust project occupied the 1st rank. However in the table derived from the findings of the study the BACS project occupied the 1st position. Overall, however the Trust project had fewer negative or neutral

scores than did the BACS project. The reason for the poor lower ranking of the Trust project in Table 6.12, appears to be an effect of the weighting that was applied to the scores. The Trust project was not designed to create a tangible benefit and therefore scored poorly on this variable. The BACS project obtained more neutral scores because there was no fixed budget or timescale for its development and although it was organised in a private sector company neither respondent reported that a measure of the success of the project was to create tangible benefits. Although, the increased throughput of financial messages that would result from the system would invariably lead to increased revenues and therefore become a tangible output and this accounts for the neutral score given on the TanBen variable (see Table 6.11).

There was no consistent pattern of how the other projects were ranked in the tables.

Both the Trust and BACS client and the consultant respondents were happy with the outcomes of the projects. The original Trust's technical specification was not met but that was because the client agreed that they had wrongly identified their needs. Similarly with the BACS project the original requirement of a project manager was changed and OSI were brought into the project when the consultant project manager needed additional assistance to run the project.

A further reason for this Trust project's success was that the consultants working on the project had previously worked for the client and had built up a relationship with them, i.e. the client and consultants demonstrated the characteristics of the Tilles' (1961) *process* or Margerison's (1988) *travel agent analogy* of the client consultant relationship. This seems to have facilitated the excellent working relationship that was exhibited in this project. Similarly the BACS client and consultant project managers had had a good working relationship but the consultant had entered the project through a modified rebuy purchase. What appears to have happened in this project is that there appears to have been an 'attraction', which is reported by Klepper (1995). The client respondent seemed to have developed a respect for Christians he had worked with previously and transferred those feelings of 'trust' to the consultant project manager during the selection process. In time, the relationship appeared to have flourished and they worked well together.

In the Trust and BACS projects the client organisations had taken ownership of the outputs. For example, in the Trust project the client had taken ownership of the strategy and was

making use of it to help with the future development of the information management and technology strategy. Also for the BACS projects the staff had implemented and were successfully operating the REFT system at the time of the interview.

The lowest ranked was the NHSE project. This project exhibited many of the theoretical signs of a poorly managed and unsuccessful project, e.g. unrealistic expectations of the outcomes, senior management not providing enough support, lack of trust, poor communication of requirements, no clear contract to deal with problems, the client not seeking clarification of how the consultant would operate and the client failed to accurately identify the problem. The difficulties in this project seem principally to have resided with the client and the client respondent seemed to attribute 'blame' for all the problems to the external suppliers. This project appears to fit Tilles' (1961) purchase analogy, i.e. it is the supplier's responsibility after being provided with the specification to return after a given period with the desired product. At this point the supplier is paid and then leaves the project. In this situation, the client and consultant do not build a good working relationship, which negatively affects the project. Between the commissioning of the product and its delivery there was little direct communication between the supplier and the customer. Another factor that was not really considered by the respondents was that during the course of the project the specifications may have changed, a variable mentioned by Morris and Hough (1987), and which went unrecognised by the client and consultants.

6.22 SUMMARY OF ISSUES COVERED IN CHAPTER 6 THAT REQUIRED FURTHER INVESTIGATION IN CHAPTER 4

Table 6.13 lists the issues discussed in Chapter 4 that were covered in Chapter 6. Issues such as the size of a company and how this might affect the planning for computerisation (see Section 4.6) was explored in this case study interview schedule have not been included in the analysis because it was not found to be relevant to the case study projects. Another issue that was not covered in the analysis was the formulating of mechanisms and policies for controlling computerisation in projects. Again, the reason for doing so was that there was insufficient information provided to analyse the responses.

Table 6.13 Summary Of Issues Covered In Chapter 6 That Were Identified As Requiring Further Investigation in Chapter 4

Issues identified in Chapter 4 requiring further investigation in Chapter 6	Sections in Chapter 4 where the issues were discussed	Sections in Chapter 6 where the issues were discussed
1. The type of senior management and employee involvement in the projects	Sections 4.3 and 4.11.3	Sections 6.8, 6.9, 6.10.1 and 6.10.2
2. The requirement for a skills transfer	Section 4.3	Section 6.14.4
3. How were value for money assessments made in the projects	Section 4.4	Section 6.19
4. The management of the project, e.g. whether the project was kept under control or whether there was flexibility built into the project	Section 4.4	Section 6.8
5. Whether the new IT/IS system was an improvement on the old IT/IS system	Section 4.4	Section 6.11.4
6. How clients indicated that they were satisfied with the IT project's outputs and outcomes, e.g. by offering the IT consultants repeat contracts and/or by having tangible benefits	Section 4.5	Sections 6.20, 6.21.1 and 6.21.2
7. How clients indicated that they had taken ownership of the system	Section 4.2.3	Section 6.11.3
8. Whether there were indicators of the project's success shown by employees, e.g. improvement in staff morale	Sections 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.9.1, 4.9.2 and 4.9.3	Sections 6.20, 6.21.1 and 6.21.2
9. Whether the case study respondents' practical and emotional needs were met and how meeting those needs affected their assessment of the success of the projects	Section 4.5	Section 6.17
10. Whether effective communication was demonstrated	Section 4.2.4	Section 6.14.2
11. Whether company size affected the planning for computerisation that occurred in organisations	Section 4.7	This was not an issue important in the case study projects.

Table 6.13 Continued. Summary Of Issues Covered In Chapter 6 That Were Identified As Requiring Further Investigation in Chapter 4

Issues identified in Chapter 4 requiring further investigation in Chapter 6	Sections in Chapter 4 where the issues were discussed	Sections in Chapter 6 where the issues were discussed
12. The types of interdepartmental client relationships and how, if at all, were they managed	Section 4.7.6	Sections 6.14.1, 6.14.2, 6.14.3, 6.14.4, 6.15 and 6.16
13. How the internal political situation manifest itself and how it was managed	Section 4.7.6	Sections 6.2, 6.2.1, 6.13.1 and 6.13.2
14. How the project budgets were allocated	Section 4.7.7	Section 6.5
15. Whether the success of projects was measured and if so, what measures were used	Section 4.7.8	Sections 6.20, 6.21.1 and 6.21.2
16. Whether the client respondents believed that having a database to monitor the performance of IT management consultants would be useful	Section 4.8	Section 6.18

The next chapter draws together the findings and conclusions of this study.

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7 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter discusses first the limitations of the study (Section 7.1). The subsequent sections address the research aims which were presented in Chapter 1 (see Sections 7.2 – 7.2.6). Then the conclusions concerning the client and consultants relationships are discussed (see Sections 7.3-7.3.2.4). A summary of the contributions this study has made to the literature is presented in Section 7.4. Suggestions for future research projects are proposed in Section 7.5. Finally the epilogue is presented (see Section 7.6).

7.1 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study was conducted in accordance with the methodology described in Chapter 3. The role of the researcher in this study was multifaceted. The role involved the identification of a subject for study, researching the requirements of the industry, identifying the appropriate literature, identifying the sources of possible study respondents and reviewing the data collection instruments. A variety of techniques were used to interest the target groups in participating in the study, collecting and analysing data. The aim of the researcher has been to retain an objective perspective on projects which have become familiar and to try to produce a thesis whose findings are useful and will make a contribution to an area of study which the author is particularly interested in. To what degree this role and aims have been achieved can only be assessed by the readers of this thesis.

The author attempted to reduce the threats to the study's validity by the multimethod approach that was selected (see Chapter 3). The following sections address the types of threat to the validity of this study and additional measures that have, or might have, been taken to reduce their impact.

7.1.1 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

The triangulation of multiple sources of evidence was used to test for convergence at the data collection stages of the study. The author reviewed a variety of literature to ensure that the concept being investigated was placed in the context of the current literature. The summaries and descriptions for the case study reports were compiled from:

- the respondent's case study interview transcripts;
- the case study organisation's internal documents which included the project final reports, marketing and organisational information literature, organisational newsletters, financial accounts, curricula vitae and information from other members of staff who worked within the client organisation
- the *management consultancy journal*;
- independent archival sources, which included information about the CCTA and speeches from members of parliament;
- newspapers, such as the Times and the Guardian.

A chain of evidence was established, hypotheses and research questions were developed from the literature and consultant survey data collected. The questions on the case study instrument were paired to determine client and consultant interpretations of the same setting and were used to draw the conclusions. The key informants were asked to review the case study drafts, as recommended by Yin (1994). As reported in Ives et al. (1983) a factor analysis was also undertaken as a method of construct validation, as it examines the underlying structure of the concept being measured.

As in Willcocks and Fitzgerald's (1993) study it might have been useful to have requested that potential participants formally respond to a preliminary questionnaire to determine whether they felt the author's proposed approach was adequate for the construct being measured. In this instrument some questions might have been asked which determined a method for assigning weights to the type of consultancy work conducted, to ensure that a representative cross-section of the work the consultants conducted was investigated in the case studies.

A difficulty the author foresaw with this revised methodology was the limited pool of potential respondents, i.e. because of the diverse nature and small size of the IT management consultancy profession, one would unintentionally be building in biases into the study. A limited informal review was nevertheless undertaken, as a previous president of the Institute

of Management Consultants and his colleagues were asked to comment on the types of issues that would be of interest to the IT management consultancy profession and the contents of the survey and case study instruments.

A number of amendments had to be made to the case study instruments during the interviews to capture any additional information that would have been lost because of the assumptions that were made during its design. These assumptions were based on the findings from the analysis of the initial survey instrument (see Chapter 4). It would have also been preferable to interview all the key players working in the projects to improve the triangulation of the data. In certain cases, although it was requested, additional information on the background of the case studies, e.g. documents about the organisation and the respondents' formal project measurement systems, such as client satisfaction surveys, was not obtained. This meant that although a great deal of data was collected the whole picture was not viewed. Therefore, the conclusions that have been drawn have to be understood within this context.

7.1.2 RELIABILITY

Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained. In attempts to minimise the threats to reliability, databases of the qualitative and quantitative data have been kept, all data collected at each stage of the project has been collated and stored in folders, which include the original returned copies of the consultant survey instrument, printouts of the raw quantitative data, the handwritten transcripts made at the time of the case study interviews, the original tapes, the typed transcripts, copies of the transcripts that were reviewed and returned by key respondents and evidence about the case studies obtained from independent sources.

"A scale developed to measure a latent variable is intended to estimate its actual magnitude at the time and place of measurement for each person measured. This unobservable 'actual magnitude' is the true score" (DeVellis, 1991, p13). In ideal circumstances where one has perfectly reliable and valid measurement, the true score would be equal to the observed score for each respondent. However, the observed score derived from the measurement process is used to infer the true score. It is represented by the equation:

$$O = T + E + B$$

where O is the observed score; T, is the true score; E is the random error and B is the bias (Spector, 1992). Spector suggests that the error is random and from a population with a mean of zero. Thus, he implies that with multiple observations the average will be zero. Errors of measurement are inversely related to reliability. As undertaken in the consultant survey instrument multiple measures can be used as an assessment of the true score, which when averaged out make the measurement more accurate and consistent (reliable).

Bias, however, can never be totally eliminated but Spector (1992) suggests that through clear wording of items social desirability bias can be reduced. Nevertheless, the author is aware that the constructs measured only reasonably close approximations and may well be contaminated by bias. Section 4 of the initial survey instrument, monitoring of the consultancy profession and the last item of section 3 (Q3Z, rating the success of IT projects in general) are perhaps the sections which may have been most affected by biasing factors. This was because these items requested views about: 1) information to be placed on a database that could possibly have detrimental effects for a consultancy or consultants who were not performing adequately and 2) a subjective assessment of the success of projects. Therefore, as Spector (1992) suggests the consultants appear to have been more defensive in their response to questions Q4C2, Q4C3 and Q4C7 as these items were 'personally' sensitive and possibly exaggerated their assessment of the success of projects.

The case study interviews were recorded and interview notes were written at the time of interview so that the information could be checked if there was a problem with the recorded data. The date and time of the interviews were also noted. Cross-referencing of data between the client and consultant respondents was undertaken and where possible supporting information was obtained from documentation, i.e. annual reports, internal documents and from news reports. These measures were taken to improve the reliability of the data collection.

As explained above, every attempt was made to obtain the most comprehensive information. The reliability could possibly have been improved if additional client and consultant interviews had been conducted for each project. This would have enabled additional links to be made and opinions verified. Where further documentation was required or explanations were needed, it was found that five of the respondents, i.e. both Library respondents, the NHSE client and the NHSE consultant and the DOT client, had changed jobs within approximately six months of taking part in the interviews. Therefore, it was not possible to obtain additional information from them.

Additional improvements to this research, which would have been to undertake a study that collected data from anonymous respondents and viewed consultancy projects principally from the perspective of the clients, would perhaps draw different conclusions to those suggested in this study. Secondly, a study of different projects within a number of consultancies would have highlighted whether consultancy style affected the way in which the client viewed the project.

7.1.3 INTERNAL VALIDITY

Due to the novelty of the constructs being measured, i.e. the social and business dimensions of IT management consultancy projects, it has been difficult to base it on current empirical studies because of the limited amount of research that has been undertaken in this area. Thus, as Spector (1992) suggested the construct definition and scale are likely to evolve together and this is the perspective from which this research is to be viewed. Explanations were built and evidence in favour of particular relationships was sought by linking the data to emergent theories while trying to explore and eliminate alternative explanations and hypotheses in the data analysis phases, i.e. a grounded theory methodology was used. At each stage of the project, the author attempted to identify possible causal relationships for the emerging evidence. Therefore, findings from related fields of study were obtained and comparisons made with the IT management consultancy industry. The conclusions being drawn at each stage were reviewed and critiqued in an attempt to assess whether the evidence from the data could be linked to the conclusions being proposed.

One amendment, that the author would have made to the study in retrospect, would have been to use Basil et al.'s (1997) list to determine a representative index of the proportion of the types of activities conducted by IT management consultancies. In addition, a more definitive assessment of who could be described as an IT consultant, as opposed to a vendor, based on Peled's (2001) definitions, could have been included in the survey and case study interview schedules. However, these papers had not been published at the time of the survey's data collection or when the case studies were conducted.

When developing performance measures the techniques that were available were those used to develop organisational performance measures. Thus, these were adapted to take into account the specific requirements of IT/IS projects. One of the challenges in developing the

initial consultant instrument was that there were few empirical studies concerning IT management consultants from which to develop hypotheses to test. Therefore, this author used DeVellis' (1991) and Kettinger and Lee's (1997) notion that it is better to have imperfect measurement than no measurement, but to temper the conclusions being drawn by identifying the flaws of the measurement procedure.

Another of the challenges faced, in developing scales for the survey instrument was how to effectively include positively and negatively worded items. As recommended by Weller (1990) the responses to the negatively worded items on the survey instruments were recoded in SPSS before conducting the analyses which are reported in Chapter 4.

Likert scales were predominantly used in the initial survey instrument because; 1) they have good psychometric properties, i.e. well-developed summated rating scales can have good reliability and validity; 2) they are relatively cheap and easy to develop; and, 3) respondents find that they are quick and easy to complete and typically they do not induce complaints (Spector, 1992). There were nonetheless several challenges faced with the use of Likert scales: 1) questions may elicit too strong an agreement when mild statements are used; 2) one attempts not to write statements that will offend the respondents, thus, leading to items that nearly everyone will find agreeable; and, 3) the midpoint response can either imply apathetic disinterest or strong but equal attraction to both agreement and disagreement (DeVellis, 1991). To counter these challenges the author attempted to word the statements as clearly as possible and to include only one idea in each statement. When interpreting the data the author assumed the midpoint response was neutral, i.e. there was neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement. Again as recommended by DeVellis, experts, i.e. potential respondents and a senior academic, reviewed the item pool. They were requested to review the relevance, clarity, conciseness of each item and suggest alternative items that could be used to measure the construct. This then led to the modifications made to the instrument.

When ranking the case study projects the author used a summated rating scale construction to develop the index. The author then made the initial assessment of how the projects rated on each item. Then the scores were reviewed by a professor, familiar with the cases, to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to support the assessment. It would perhaps have been better to have a system whereby the respondents had ranked themselves on a scale of project success and used that as the comparison. Interpretation error is believed to have had a reduced effect because the interviews were recorded and therefore the nuance of each

response was captured and retained, as would not be the case if only a written record had been kept. The weighting of each item gave an indication of the relative significance given to each variable when making a judgement of the success of the project. However, as in Chapter 6, in some instances the weighting of particular variables may change the predicted rank of the project.

Although attempts were made to obtain all relevant information concerning each case study project, it became apparent that in some cases information that was required was not given on grounds of confidentiality or that the respondents' promises to send the relevant documents were not kept.

In addition the data, e.g. fee income or type of work undertaken, held in the Directory of Management Consultancy (1994) was not totally correct. For example, two case study interviews were conducted with respondents who had been identified as IT management consultants but who were in fact providers of IT staff for client organisations (recruitment consultants) and a management consultancy that developed software for IT consultancies, respectively. These companies were placed in the directory because there was no other appropriate title under which they could be categorised. This is not necessarily entirely the fault of the directory. Nonetheless, the editor was made aware of the problem.

In the analysis of the data in Chapters 4 and 5, answers to open-ended questions were presented in terms of the numbers of respondents who provided the same response. However, this is not necessarily a true reflection of an answer's importance. Once the analysis of the consultant survey instrument was underway the author identified certain key questions that had not been included in the instruments but whose importance was realised when trying to determine the variables that would be used to select the case study respondents, e.g. the fee income of the consultancy practices, the percentage of different types of work the consultants did, and whether the client respondents would recommend the practice to others etc.

An additional limitation was that the actual composition of all the client project teams was not clarified. For example, the Library project manager reported that she was provided with reports from a member of her team. However, during the interview the impression that was given was that she was the project manager and responsible for the entire project. Thus, the author could not test whether, as Lacity et al. (1995) suggested, certain experts had been missing from the team's composition. Secondly, in any further research of this type one

would suggest that the negotiators of the contract might have had an influence on the results and thus should have been identified and interviewed.

7.1.4 EXTERNAL VALIDITY

As a limited population of IT management consultants were investigated, the author attempted to select useful respondents for the initial survey instrument and the case studies. Multiple case studies and client organisations from different sectors were used because the author wished to provide analytical generalisations through induction. Using Yin's (1994) distinction between statistical generalisation and analytical generalisation, this study does not attempt to purport to be representative of the entire population of IT management consultants but the author believes that the conclusions drawn are reasonable because they are based on evidence collected from:

1. representatives from 57 different management consultancy organisations participated in the initial survey;
2. the case study projects analysed had: i) client and IT consultant organisations of different sizes, ii) client and consultant respondents with different levels of seniority within their own organisations, iii) diverse types of projects ranging from the writing of IT/IS strategy documents, implementation of IT/IS systems through to the review of a pre-existing IT/IS system and iv) organisations from different geographical locations of the in the UK.

The hypotheses that were developed in Chapter 2 were used as a template with which to compare the empirical findings of the case studies, which Yin (1994) identifies as the basis of analytical generalisation.

The representativeness of this sample could have been improved by having a greater number of client and consultant respondents taking part in the study, i.e. more consultants completing the survey instrument and more client and consultant respondents being interviewed for the case studies.

Caution was used when interpreting the data with respect to the private sector as only the LS and BACS projects were analysed, although, this author believes the types of measures used

to assess the work conducted by the IT consultants would be similar in both the public and private sector.

A further measure that could have been taken to reduce the threats to the external validity of this research was to have included an analysis of responses to the client version of the initial instrument, provided by randomly selected, client respondents. Then case studies could have been conducted with the IT management consultants that these clients had employed. This was not feasible, however, given the constraints mentioned in Chapter 3.

Further studies may show that these conclusions may have additional significance to other members of the IT management consultancy and the wider consultancy profession.

7.2 DISCUSSION OF HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH GENERATED QUESTIONS FOR INVESTIGATION

Both in the literature review (Chapter 2) and the analysis of the consultant survey instrument (Chapter 4) a number of hypotheses and additional research questions were identified in order to meet the following research aims for this study:

1. To identify the clients of IT management consultants and the work conducted for those clients.
2. To identify the factors that led to IT management consultants being commissioned to undertake IT/IS projects.
3. To identify the factors that influence the performance of IT management consultants when undertaking IT/IS projects.
4. To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.
5. To identify the factors that may influence the clients' feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of the IT/IS projects.

The analyses of the quantitative and qualitative stages of this study have been used to address these aims. The findings of the hypotheses and research questions are presented in Section 7.2.1 -7.2.5 below. A summary table of the hypotheses and research questions results can be found in Section 7.2.6.

7.2.1 RESEARCH AIM 1: TO IDENTIFY THE CLIENTS OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS AND THE WORK CONDUCTED FOR THOSE CLIENTS.

The client respondents of the case study interview schedule worked for a variety of organisations in both the public and the private sectors. The following definitions of the clients involved in IT/IS projects have been devised from both stages of the study (see Sections 4.4 and 6.10.1).

The *Contact Client* is the person with which the managing consultant has at least verbal contact every two or three days. The contact client is responsible for the daily management of the IT management consultants and is often a middle manager within the client organisation.

The *Contract Client* is usually a group of senior managers that the consultant(s) meet with periodically to be updated on the progress of the project, e.g. monthly. The contract clients are usually responsible for paying the consultants' fees. Hence, they often have greater influence over the consultants than the contact client who is answerable to the contract client.

The clients that took part in the case studies had varied experiences of managing the consultancy process. The more experienced client project managers did not always exhibit better project or consultant management skills (see Section 6.8). The ability to be able to effectively manage a project appeared to be based on the clients initially understanding exactly what they wanted to achieve, their willingness to work with the consultants but also to a certain extent on them never relinquishing responsibility for the project but not keeping too tight a reign on it.

Another factor that was operating in the 'more successful' projects was that there was a stable client team. Moreover, there was a distinction between the recognised contact and contract clients.

From this study it was found that in addition to the roles and functions identified in the literature, IT management consultants were also involved in assisting the client to formulate the policies for controlling computerisation and/or developing planning mechanisms for computerisation (see Section 4.7.2). The IT management consultants were sometimes hired to advise clients in both their contractual negotiations with vendors and their management of an insourcing arrangement once it had commenced (see Section 6.3.1). They developed

strategy documents for the IT/IS systems of their clients and audited such systems when they were not functioning correctly. In the privatisation project the consultant was also found to be a primary disseminator of IS/IT information to the rail industry (See Section 6.3).

The predominant types of IT/IS systems that IT management consultants were involved in implementing were financial accounting systems (see Section 4.7.4). The second and third most common were office support systems and manufacturing systems, respectively. The types of systems that were implemented by the IT management consultants that were not identified in Basil et al.'s (1997) list, in Section 2.3, were human resource, military and some of those identified in the miscellaneous category, e.g. health delivery and satellite TV (See Section 4.7.4).

7.2.2 RESEARCH AIM 2: TO IDENTIFY THE FACTORS THAT LED TO A PARTICULAR IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FIRM BEING COMMISSIONED TO UNDERTAKE THE IT/IS PROJECT.

This section reports the evidence from the research which will be used to either provide support to or reject the hypotheses that were developed in Chapter 2.

Hypotheses Results

It was suggested, by Peled (2001), in Section 2.3 that senior managers might use IT management consultants as weapons. This gave rise to the following hypothesis:

- H3. If senior non-technical managers' manipulation of the acquisition and application of IS/IT is associated with the use of IT management consultants as weapons then where these managers' influence has been greatest in determining use of IS/IT then IT consultants being used as political weapons will be greatest.

It was found in the discussion of Section 6.3, that in fact in the BACS and Trust projects, where this hypothesis applied, the IT consultants were not used as weapons but were considered to be conspirators with the client project managers working on the projects and not the weapons of the senior non-technical managers. Therefore this hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis H6 was developed as a result of the review of the literature concerning IT outsourcing found in Section 2.4.

- H6. If core activities should be retained in-house, then IT management consultants who recommend that only non-core IT activities be outsourced in the projects will be more likely to be selected than those that do not.

The determination of whether to support or reject this hypothesis was a much more complex process of reasoning than for some of the other hypotheses. Referring to the project descriptions found in Chapter 5 and analyses of the projects in Sections 6.13.1, 6.13.2, and 6.14.4 it was found that the projects that were undertaken did not all result in the direct implementation of IT/IS systems. Thus when making a judgement from the data presented only the CGD, NHSE, CH, BACS and DOT projects were taken into consideration. The other three projects, i.e. the LS, Trust and Library projects involved delivery of IT/IS strategy documents. Therefore, of those projects analysed, only the BACS project affected what could be defined as a core activity. Further investigation is required before any conclusions can be drawn.

Section 2.5.2 discussed the literature used to determine the stimuli that highlighted a need for change, which gave rise to the following hypothesis:

- H9. If the realisation that there is a need for change in the IT/IS of a client company is associated with an internal or external organisational stimulus then at least one type of stimulus should be found in the client companies which promoted the need for an IT/IS project.

Firstly, the study found, in Section 6.3.1, that there were internal and external stimuli that caused the initial identification of the need for the consultants to be brought into the client organisations. The internal stimulus was often the realisation that the current IT/IS system was becoming out-dated and was unable to cope with the client organisation's future requirements, e.g. the BACS and CH projects. The external stimulus was either a governmental or ministerial requirement. Two additional stimuli identified that were case specific were: 1) the need for the replacement of the CH Direct contract that was found in the CH project and 2) the review of an IT system that was not functioning correctly in the case of the LS project. These stimuli were neither wholly external nor internal. From the evidence that was presented hypothesis H9 was accepted.

Hypothesis H11 was developed from the discussion of the literature in Section 2.5.2.2 concerning whether public sector organisations commissioned IT consultants on the basis of a single or multiple tenders.

H11. If public sector organisations are more likely to use single tenders rather than competitive tendering when selecting consultants, then more case study projects conducted in public sector organisations should have more IT management consultants selected on the basis of a single tender than those selected using competitive tendering.

There were six public sector organisations that participated in this research, i.e. the CGD, the Trust, the Library, CH, NHSE and the DOT. Of these projects, all the client respondents, except the Trust client, stated that more than one IT management consultancy firm had been approached (See Section 6.7.3). As only one public sector project selected the IT management consultants on the basis of a single tender, hypothesis H11 was rejected.

The purchase decisions literature was discussed in Section 2.7.2. Hypothesis H13 below was developed on the basis of this literature.

H13. A straight rebuy purchaser is less likely to require information about the IT consultancy firm before making a decision to purchase the services of the IT consultants than either modified rebuy or new task purchasers.

Based on the discussions of the analysis of the purchase decisions in Section 6.7.1, only two projects made straight rebuys, i.e. the Trust and Library clients. These projects did require less information to make their purchase decisions. The new purchaser and some of the modified rebuy purchasers, obtained quasi-experience from other members of the client organisations because they obtained information about potential IT management consultancy bidders and by inviting multiple tenderers to bid for the project. Therefore hypothesis H13 was accepted.

Hypothesis H24 was developed on the basis of the discussion of the project performance measurement literature in Section 2.9.4.

H24. Clients commission IT/IS projects only so that they can inform stakeholders they are actively dealing with IT/IS issues.

It was found in Section 6.2.1 that only for the CH project was the IT consultancy firm initially commissioned to permit client management to give the impression to stakeholders that they were dealing with the IT/IS issues. Therefore hypothesis H24 was rejected, as there was not enough evidence to support it.

7.2.3 RESEARCH AIM 3: TO IDENTIFY THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE PERFORMANCE OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS WHEN UNDERTAKING IT/IS PROJECTS.

The third aim of this research attempted to identify the factors that influenced the performance of IT management consultants working on the case study projects.

Hypotheses Results

The hypothesised relationship (H4) concerned the emotions of the respondents and the effect of their emotions on the projects. It was derived as a result of the literature reviewed in Section 2.3.

- H4. If being an IT professional and being unable to deal with emotions are related then IT management consultants will find it difficult to discuss their emotions and how their emotions affect the IT/IS projects.

From the findings of Section 6.17, it was shown that this study does not support this hypothesis. It does not support Ward and Peppard's claims (1996) that IT professionals shy away from their emotions (see Section 2.3), although there had initially seemed some support for this belief in Section 4.7.6. The consultant respondents did not find it difficult to discuss their emotions. The consultants reported that having their emotional needs met was a measure of success. Four of the client respondents, i.e. the Library, CH, BACS and DOT clients, also felt that it was a measure of success of the project if the consultants' emotional needs were met.

The hypothesis below (H8) was developed from the discussion of the agency theory literature reviewed in Section 2.4.3.

- H8. If outsourcing contracts are dependent on the Principal's [Client] ability to observe the Agent's [IT management consultant(s)] degree of effort then a forcing contract is more likely to be used in IT management consultancy projects than either a wage or rent contract alone or any combination of these.

The types of contract that were found in the case study projects are presented in section 6.14.1. All the contracts used in the projects were forcing contracts and therefore the hypothesis was supported. Therefore the hypothesis (H8) was accepted. However, as suggested by Fitzgerald and Willcocks (1994), it became apparent that more than one type of forcing contract was used in the projects, i.e. both fixed fee and incremental fee. The fixed fee contract was used by the projects that had relatively small budgets, i.e. the CGD, LS, Trust and Library projects. These projects had fairly clear outcomes and therefore were characterised by low degrees of uncertainty and therefore low levels of risk and time implications for the consultants. The NHSE, CH and DOT projects involved incremental fee contracts because the client organisations wanted a means of fee payment which allowed them to monitor the work being performed by the IT consultants.

The final hypothesis (H25) discussed in this section was derived from the project performance literature discussed in section 2.9.4.

- H25. If there is an association between how closely a project is managed and the likelihood of it either showing signs of failing or failing, then the more removed client project managers become from managing the IT/IS projects the more likely the projects are to show signs of failing/fail.

The findings of this study discussed in Section 6.9 support hypothesis H25. In both the projects where the client project managers were not closely involved in the project on a regular basis, i.e. the Library and NHSE, the projects showed signs of failing.

Research Question Results

In Chapter 4, a series of research questions were posed based on the analysis that had been conducted. The first of these questions is reiterated below:

1. Is it in the consultants' interest that the clients are only provided with a limited amount of information concerning how the IT/IS systems operate as this facilitates

the need for the consultants to be brought in again to undertake further work (repeat business)?

Question 1 was investigated in Sections 6.14.1 and 6.14.4. In these sections it was found that although the transfer of skills was mentioned as a selling point in the case study consultants' literature it was not an element that was measured. There were five projects in which both respondents suggested that there were skills exchanged, i.e. the CGD, Trust, Library, CH, BACS and DOT projects. It was found that the transfer of knowledge was only intentional in the Trust and BACS projects. There was repeat business undertaken by the consultants for each of the following organisations, i.e. the CGD, Trust, Library, CH, NHSE and BACS.

The conclusion drawn from the study was that information or skills were not always readily transferred to clients by IT management consultants but this was not due to the consultants wanting to obtain repeat business; the clients offered the consultancy practices additional projects because the consultants had: 1) performed high quality work; 2) built good relationships with the client organisations, and 3) become familiar with the organisations' cultures and manner of working. Other reasons that were client related were that: 1) the client organisations found that it was cheaper in time spent continuing relationships and levels of trust with previously used consultancy organisations and 2) it was financially cheaper for them because the consultancy practices offered them projects at a lower fee rate.

7.2.4 RESEARCH AIM 4: TO IDENTIFY THE FACTORS THAT MAY BE USED BY THE CLIENTS AND IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS TO ASSESS THE SUCCESS OF IT/IS PROJECTS

This section discusses the results of the hypotheses and the research questions which address research aim 4.

Hypotheses Results

The first of the hypotheses dealt with the involvement of project managers and users in the project and how successful the project was viewed.

- H1. If the success of IT/IS projects is related to the involvement of users in the development process then projects will be considered more successful, by the client, if the users and project managers have more of an instrumental voice.

From the findings of Sections 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 6.10.2 and 6.11.3 it was found that this hypothesis (H1) was only partially supported. However, the degree of instrumental voice demonstrated varied and was dependent on whether the project was a strategic one or concerned the design and implementation of a system. At the more strategic levels of IT/IS projects junior staff involvement was not needed, except as a source of information about the organisation and its functions and their part within it. The level of involvement of senior management and employees and the type of voice that is used thus seems to be more complex than was hypothesised. The need for involvement is dependent on the project. Thus when the project entailed design of a system, then employee involvement was more likely to be encouraged and possessing an instrumental voice was important. Further investigation is required to understand the complex relationships involved.

Hypothesis H5 proposed that having preparatory data gathering and feasibility study work undertaken before the main project began would reduce the likelihood of overspends. This was discussed in Section 2.3.

- H5. If there is a relationship between IT management consultants not being permitted to undertake scoping studies at the beginning of projects and the IT projects coming in over time and budget, then projects will be considered more successful, by the client, and are less likely to come in over time and budget if a scoping study has been undertaken.

Four case study projects were scoped/re-scoped, i.e. the CGD, CH, NHSE and BACS projects (see Chapter 5). It was found in Section 4.5 that the consultants reported that the classic measures that were used in the projects to monitor their performance were that the projects came within budget and were completed on time. From analysing the case study projects that went over budget, i.e. the LS, Trust and Library projects (See Section 6.5) and over time, i.e. all the projects (See Section 6.6), it can be seen that there does not appear to be any correlation between these factors and whether a project was scoped prior to its start. The CH project was an example of a project in which the scoping of the project did not identify the most important issues and ultimately only added additional expense and time to the final project budget. Therefore, hypothesis H5 was rejected.

Section 2.4.2 discussed the partnership development literature. This lead to the development of the following hypothesis:

- H7. If partnership development and the client's and the consultant's use of power are related then the IT projects that will be considered most successful, by the client, will be those in which the power is more equally distributed between the client and the consultant.

Partnership was discussed in Sections 6.11.1, 6.11.4, and 6.14.1. The types of power that operated in the projects were discussed in Section 6.3 and 6.14.1. The BACS project which was rated the most successful project in the success weighted scale (see Section 6.21) appeared to have an unequal power distribution. The BACS and DOT projects could not have been conducted without the use of the consultants and therefore the power was weighted in their favour. However, the project ranked first in the literature based success scale was the Trust project and it did have an equal distribution of power. Therefore further investigation is required to identify the other variables that operate in these relationships.

This hypothesis (H14) relates to an important aspect of this research, i.e. the relationship between the client and the consultant. Using the ideas presented in Sections 2.8.1 and 2.8.2, the following hypothesis was developed:

- H14. When a combination of effective consultant and help-giving relationship behaviours is exhibited both the clients and consultants view the projects as more successful than where one or both of these two behaviour types is missing.

Sections 4.3, 4.5, 6.8, 6.9, 6.14.3 and 6.17 discussed the measures and relationships found in the projects. For some of the effective behaviours it was virtually impossible to determine whether they were exhibited, e.g. the consultants listened to understand. Moreover some effects were difficult to measure without having watched the actions of the consultants whilst working, e.g. the consultant gave confidence through gestures. In two projects where the consultants contradicted what the client wanted, then these were moments that the clients remembered as negative experiences and commented on them, i.e. the DOT and Library project (see Section 6.14.3). There were general effective consultant behaviours/characteristics found in all the projects: 1) the consultants were initially non-judgmental; 2) they took time to assess problems and tried to understand them, i.e. either through scoping studies or when making a bid for the project; and, 3) they fulfilled promises

– in general the consultants did what they said they would within the agreed timescale. The Trust, CH and the BACS consultants were all described as being very professional by the clients. From the evidence presented in Chapter 6 it appears that the consultants identified as professionals also demonstrated effective behaviours. In general it appears that in most cases a combination of the behaviours of H14 resulted in projects being ranked as fairly successful (see Section 6.21). However, hypothesis H14 was rejected because the CH project was ranked as one of the lowest scoring projects.

The hypothesised relationships H15 – H20 were developed as a result of the client and consultant relationship literature reviewed in Section 2.8.2. The relationships found in the study are reported below each hypothesis.

H15. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered successful by the client, if it has tight and immovable deadlines.

The findings of Section 4.4 suggested that deadlines should not be tight and immovable. Based on the discussion in Section 6.14.1, this hypothesis was rejected because there was no link identified between those projects ranked as successful in Section 6.21 and those that had tight immovable deadlines.

H16. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered successful by the client if the appointment of the consultants was communicated positively to staff.

Based on the discussion in 6.13.1, there was insufficient evidence collected to determine whether this hypothesis should be supported or rejected. There was only one instance, i.e. the Library project, where there was clear evidence that staff were not satisfied that IT consultants had been imposed on them which lends some support to this hypothesis. In the BACS and DOT projects where there was some negative reaction to the imposition of consultants there were other organisational changes occurring which make the actual causal relationship difficult to establish. Therefore, further investigation is required before this hypothesis can be supported or rejected.

H17. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if the consultant does not appreciate the client organisation's culture.

Culture was not a simple concept to capture in this study. Therefore proxy indicators were used to determine whether the consultant had appreciated the cultural environment in which clients worked. These indicators were based on the analysis of the ways in which the project management teams were set up and worked (see Section 6.8), the consultants' involvement in internal client company politics and resistance (see Section 6.13.1), how power was managed and manipulated by clients in the projects (see Section 6.14.1), how communication occurred in the projects (see Section 6.14.2), what the clients considered professional behaviour of the consultants (see Section 6.14.3), whether the clients wanted to operate in a learning environment (see Section 6.14.4) and what the clients understood of their needs and the expectations of the consultant respondents' needs (see Section 6.17).

There was no evidence that the consultants working on the NHSE project, which was considered the least successful project, did not consider the client's culture. However, there is more evidence to suggest that in the main the consultants were considerate of the organisation's culture and therefore acted in a manner that was harmonious with it. It is recommended that further investigation is required before any firm conclusions can be drawn about this hypothesis.

H18. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if there are many IT consultants working on the project.

Based on the analysis in section 6.14.1, concerning the management of power in the relationship, there was only one project, i.e. the LS project, in which the consultants had stated they had employed more than the minimum number of consultants that were needed for one element of the project. The client did not appear to have identified this as a problem and this project was ranked second on the literature based project success scale and fourth on the weighted scale. Therefore hypothesis H18 was rejected.

H19. An IT/IS project is likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if the consultant does not achieve the objectives that were set by the client.

From the analysis of Section 6.19, it was found that there is a relationship between what the client considered value for money from the project and the variables used in the assessment of project success. Therefore receiving value for money was considered a proxy indicator of success. The majority of client respondents, i.e. the CGD, Trust, LS, Library and DOT

clients reported that they believed they had received value for money because the technical specification was met. The BACS client respondent did not report this measure although it is clear from the account presented in Chapter 5 and the analysis of this project that if the project's main objective, i.e. to have the REFT system implemented and operating efficiently and effectively, had not been achieved then the project would have been considered a failure by the client organisation and the BACS consultants. Before hypothesis H19 can be accepted or rejected further investigation is required to determine if: 1) value for money should be used as a proxy measure of success and 2) whether a similar study would find similar results.

Hypothesis H20 arose from the discussion of the quality literature (see Section 2.9.2):

H20. For the IT/IS project to be considered successful by the client both the consultants and client must formally measure the quality of the service provided by the consultants.

Section 6.8 discussed the effectiveness of the project teams and the projects and how the quality of the work was measured. The project teams were diverse groupings but often the consultants' progress was measured in terms of whether they met the agreed project milestones, how the client felt and whether there was repeat business offered. The CH consultant stated that, to improve his method of measuring the quality of the work which the consultants had performed, he would have employed a satisfaction survey. The discussion found in Section 4.8 suggests that the consultants were not in favour of having their work measured using any other means than those that were already in existence. The idea of a database, which held their work performance scores, did not appeal to the consultants. Similarly, the clients wanted the database to be used as a source of reference rather than an expert system which could influence the selection of an IT consultancy firm. The analysis of Sections 4.3-4.5 and 6.19 suggest that the VFM and quality measures used are non-formal. From the review of the analyses in Chapters 4 and 6 hypothesis H20 was rejected as there is no evidence that either the consultants or the clients formally measured the quality of the work done.

The relationships that are hypothesised in hypotheses H21, H22 and H23 were developed from the project performance measures literature (see Section 2.9.4). The results of these hypotheses are as follows:

H21. The consultants need to redefine the problem so that their deadlines are achievable and performance targets can be met for the client to consider the IT/IS project successful.

The analysis of project duration (see Section 6.6) identified that the milestone delivery dates which changed because the client had initiated certain actions, i.e. the Trust, LS, Library, NHSE projects. Some of the more complex projects had working contracts which specified that work was set on a periodic basis, i.e. the CH, BACS and DOT projects. There was insufficient evidence obtained in the research to support hypothesis H21 and it requires further investigation.

H22. For the client to consider the IT/IS project successful the consultants need to have set phased output targets.

From the analysis of Sections 6.5 and 6.14.1 it was identified that three of the four larger projects were phased, i.e. the NHSE, CH and DOT projects. However all of the projects were set up in stages, many of which had outputs (see Chapter 5). Based on the evidence presented hypothesis H22 was rejected.

H23. For the client to consider that the IT/IS project is successful the consultants should have outsourced tasks that they did not have the skills to perform well.

There were two projects identified in the analysis that had sub-contracting arrangements, i.e. the NHSE and BACS projects. The NHSE consultants were managed by Coopers & Lybrand and the BACS consultants outsourced tasks to programmers. The BACS project was considered to be the most successful. However, further investigation is required before any conclusions can be drawn concerning this issue because it only was relevant to the BACS project. Therefore, hypothesis H23 can neither be rejected nor supported.

The section below deals with the research questions developed in Chapter 4 which addressed research aim 4.

Research Questions Results

Research question 2 was considered in Section 6.19.

2. If more consultants considered making VFM one of the main project objectives, would there be an improvement in project success outcomes?

What was apparent is that the value for money (VFM) assessment in projects is difficult and the clients' and consultants' two most important value for money variables were also the two most reported key measures of success, i.e. the client receives VFM and the client considers the project a success. However, this research has not been able to establish whether or not adoption of a VFM objective by consultants would improve project outcomes.

Research question 3 looked at the impact of clients not discussing their organisational strengths and weaknesses with the consultants. Although there were some instances of the client respondents discussing strengths and weaknesses with the consultants, these were not discussed in Chapter 6, as they did not add a great deal to the current body of literature.

3. Are clients who do not discuss their organisational strengths and weaknesses with the consultants more likely to have a greater number of problems with the consultants?

Some light can be shed on question 3, by considering the overall effect of communication. In Section 6.14.2, it was shown that only the NHSE project showed any signs of serious problems relating to not having open discussions with the consultants and the project reflected this finding in the success scores it achieved in Section 6.21, i.e. its scores were much lower than for any other project. Thus communication has also been found in this study to be important in IT management consultancy projects. Further investigation of this issue is required.

7.2.5 RESEARCH AIM 5: TO IDENTIFY THE FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE CLIENTS' FEELINGS OF OWNERSHIP IN RELATION TO THE OUTPUTS OF THE IT/IS PROJECTS

Research aim 5 was developed in order to determine which factors influenced the clients' feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of their IT/IS projects. Three hypotheses and one research question were developed to address this research aim.

Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis H2 was developed from the IT and users literature discussed in Section 2.2.1.

- H2. If feelings of ownership of the IT/IS system are related to the involvement of users in the development process then the outputs of the projects will be considered owned by the client if the users and project managers are involved in the development of the IT/IS system.

The findings of Section 4.5 indicated that if client staff were involved with projects then they were more likely to take ownership of the outputs. All the client project managers, except the Library client respondent stated that they had taken ownership of the output (see Section 6.11.3). However as has been stated above not all of the project managers and users participated in the development of the output. Therefore this hypothesis was rejected.

The influencers of change literature discussed in Section 2.5.2.1 was used to develop H10.

- H10. If taking ownership of the outputs from an IS/IT project is associated with the IT management consultants identifying and eliciting the support of opinion-leaders then IT/IS projects where this is done are more likely to be considered more successful by the client organisation than those where this has not been done.

From the analyses of Sections 4.3 and 6.11.1, there was some indication in the BACS project that opinion-leaders support was elicited. In five of the eight case study projects influencers were involved in some respect. However, further investigation of this issue is required before conclusions can be drawn.

The final hypothesis in this section (H12) was developed from the literature reviewed in Section 2.5.3.

H12. The more IT/IS consultants become involved in the client’s organisational politics and communication networks the less the likelihood that there will be resistance to the proposed change or outputs.

From the analysis of internal client organisational politics and resistance (see Section 6.13.1), it was found that in the Trust, LS, CH, DOT and BACS projects the consultant did become involved in either the communication networks or the internal politics. In these instances it appears that this helped to reduce resistance to the proposed change or outputs. Therefore, the hypothesis H16 was accepted.

Research Question Results

Finally, the findings of Section 6.12.3 were used to address question 4.

- 4. Are the clients more likely to take ownership of the outputs if they demonstrate strong positive commitment to the project?

All the respondents, except the Library client, felt that the clients had taken ownership of the outputs of their projects. This was exhibited by the clients using the outputs of their projects. Therefore the conclusion is that the clients are more likely to demonstrate ownership when they have a positive commitment to the project.

7.2.6 SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following table summaries the results of the hypotheses and research questions from Sections 7.2.1-7.2.5.

Table 7.1 Summary of the Hypotheses and Research Question Results

Research Aim 2: To identify the factors that led to IT management consultants being commissioned to undertake IT/IS projects.	
Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
H3 – Whether senior managers use consultants as weapons	Rejected
H6 – Whether consultants who recommend non-core activities be outsourced are more likely to be selected by the clients than those that do not	Further investigation required
H9 – An internal or external stimulus promotes the need for the project	Accepted
H11 – Consultants selected in the public sector are more likely to be selected on the basis of a single rather than multiple tender	Rejected
H13 – A straight rebuy purchaser is likely to require less information than either a modified rebuy or new task purchaser when selecting and IT consultancy firm	Accepted
H24 – Clients commission IT/IS projects only to inform stakeholders that they are actively dealing with IT/IS issues	Rejected
Research Aim 3: To identify the factors that influence the performance of IT management consultants when undertaking IT/IS projects.	
Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
H4 – IT management consultants will find it difficult to discuss emotions and how their emotions affect the IT/IS projects	Rejected
H8 – A forcing contract is more likely to be used in IT management consultancy projects rather than either a wage or rent contract	Accepted
H25 – Projects are more like to fail or show signs of failing if the project managers do not manage the projects closely	Accepted

Table 7.1 continued. Summary of the Hypotheses and Research Question Results

Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
Research Question 1 – The consultants provided limited information about the IT/IS system's operation to the clients in order for the consultants to be provided with repeat business	Agreed
Research Aim 4: To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.	
Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
H1 – Projects considered more successful by the clients will have users and project managers who demonstrate an instrumental voice	Accepted
H5 - Projects considered more successful by the clients will have had a scoping study undertaken at the beginning of the project and are less likely to come in over time and budget than ones that have not had a scoping undertaken	Rejected
H7 – Projects considered more successful by the clients are those in which power is more equally distributed between the clients and the consultants	Further investigation required
H14 – Projects are considered more successful by the clients when a combination of effective consultant and help-giving relationship behaviours are demonstrated rather than when either behaviour type is absent	Rejected
H15 – More successful projects have tight immovable deadlines	Rejected
H16 – More successful projects will have the appointment of the consultancy firms communicated positively to staff	Further investigation required
H17 – Projects are more likely to be considered unsuccessful if the consultants do not appreciate the client organisations' culture	Further investigation required
H18 – Projects are more likely to be considered unsuccessful by the client if there are many IT consultants working on the projects	Rejected
H19 – Project are considered unsuccessful by the clients if the consultants do not achieve the objectives that were set by the clients	Further investigation required

Table 7.1 continued. Summary of the Hypotheses and Research Question Results

Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
H20 – Projects are considered more successful by the clients when both the consultants and clients formally measure the quality of service provided by the consultants	Rejected
Research Aim 4: To identify the factors that may be used by the clients and IT management consultants to assess the success of IT/IS projects.	
Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
H21 – Projects are considered more successful by the clients if the consultants redefine the problem so that their deadlines are achievable and performance targets are met	Further investigation required
H22 – Projects are considered more successful by the clients if the consultants need to set phased targets	Rejected
H23 – Projects are considered more successful by the clients if the consultants outsource tasks that they cannot perform themselves	Further investigation required
Research Question 2 – Whether projects would be considered more successful if consultants made providing the clients with value for money one of the main project objectives	Further investigation required
Research Question 3 – Whether clients who do not discuss organisational strengths and weaknesses are more likely to have problems with the consultants	Further investigation required

Table 7.1 continued. Summary of the Hypotheses and Research Question Results

Research Aim 5: To identify the factors that may influence the clients' feelings of ownership in relation to the outputs of the IT/IS projects.	
Hypotheses and Research Questions Numbers and Issue Summaries	Hypotheses and Research Question Results
H2 – Projects that have the users and project managers involved in the delivery of the outputs are more likely to feel owned by the clients	Rejected
H10 – Ownership of the outputs is more likely to occur in projects where the consultants have identified and elicited the support of opinion-leaders	Further investigation required
H12 – There is less likelihood of resistance to the proposed organisational changes or outputs when the consultants become involved in organisational politics and communication networks	Accepted
Research Question 4 - The clients are more likely to feel ownership of the outputs if they demonstrate a positive commitment to it	Agreed

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

This section looks at the conclusions drawn from the findings of this study. It is subdivided into two main subsections the business dimensions of IT management consultancy projects (Section 7.3.1) and the social dimensions of IT management consultancy projects (7.3.2). There may be both business and social dimensions to a particular component of the project, e.g. factors affecting the success of IT management consultancy project. Therefore these two main subsections are further subdivided into the factors that comprise each of these dimensions but these will be discussed in the relevant subsection.

7.3.1 BUSINESS DIMENSIONS OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY PROJECTS

This section and its subsections bring together the conclusions concerning the business dimensions of IT management consultancy projects. Alvesson (1992), in Section 2.3, discussed how the success of IT management consultancy projects was assessed. The type of measures that were used in related industries was used to predict the success of the IT projects (see Section 6.21 and its subsections). The following sections discuss various elements that were found to influence the success of IT projects or were possibly affected by it.

The business dimensions of the IT/IS projects were those variables which affected the successful outcome of the project directly and were the more tangible elements of the project. In Section 1.2, one aspect of the professions discussed was the degree of intangibility of the various services. Management consultancy by its nature was one that was identified as having a high degree of intangible elements. Therefore when this section discusses the tangible elements of the IT projects it should be understood that tangibility is a relative and inexact term and thus the elements discussed in this section are only considered relatively more tangible than those in the social dimensions section, which will be discussed below.

The case study projects were characterised using a number of business related dimensions, i.e. the reasons why the projects were conducted, the budgetary considerations, the duration of the projects, how project management decisions were made, whether the technical and competitive business related aspects of the projects were met. These elements and their contribution towards the assessment of the success of the projects will be identified below. Figure 7.1 identifies how the case study projects' information systems and their primary business contribution would be characterised using McFarlan's (1984) strategic grid.

From the analysis presented in Chapter 6 the grid shows where each of the IT/IS systems that would result, either from the implementation or potentially from the strategy documents, would be placed. In the case of BACS and the DOT projects the deliverables from these projects were vitally important to the continued running of the company in the case of BACS and the long term future of the rail industry in the case of the DT project. The LS project was defined as a key operation project because the IT/IS project analysed in the case study

Figure 7.1 The Case Study Information Systems And Their Business Contribution

STRATEGIC	HIGH POTENTIAL
Applications which are critical to sustaining future business strategy: - BACS - DOT	Applications which may be important in achieving future success: - Trust - Library - CH
Applications on which the organisation currently depends for success: - LS	Applications which are valuable but not critical to success: - CGD - NHSE
KEY OPERATIONAL	SUPPORT

Adapted from: McFarlan (1984)

would provide a means forward for the improved running of the registration forms processes. Although not vital to the running of the organisation, if the RF forms had not been delivered on time, it would have had an impact on the Law Society's ability to administer practice certificates and to obtain the revenue from the process, so it was a key to its operations. The *high potential* projects were those in which non-critical systems involved an improvement in efficiency which would have a business impact but where the intangible benefits from these projects were of greater importance than the tangible benefits. Finally, those projects that were identified as *support* had systems which predominantly offered intangible benefits that would improve efficiency but were not critical to the success of the client organisations when fully implemented.

The following sections discuss: the reasons for undertaking IT management consultancy facilitated projects (Section 7.3.1.1), the reasons for selection of a particular IT management consultancy firm (Section 7.3.1.2), the factors affecting the performance of IT management consultants (Section 7.3.1.3), the factors affecting the success of IT management consultancy facilitated projects (Section 7.3.1.4) and ownership of the deliverables (Section 7.3.1.5).

7.3.1.1 REASONS FOR UNDERTAKING IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FACILITATED PROJECTS

In every case there was at least one stimulus which prompted the need for the project. These were found to be both internal and external. The most common internal stimuli found for undertaking the projects were that the in-house IT departments were under resourced and the staff were not appropriately skilled to undertake the projects. As the majority of projects were undertaken in the public sector the most common external stimulus for undertaking the project was in response to a ministerial or governmental request. Further investigation is required to determine what the major stimuli would be for projects undertaken in private sector organisations.

7.3.1.2 REASONS FOR SELECTION OF PARTICULAR IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FIRM

Particular IT management consultancy firms were primarily selected on the basis of multiple tenders in five of the public sector organisations. The exception was the Trust project. BACS was one of the private sector organisations and it did not go through the typical means of selection and therefore no generalisations can be made about it as a private sector organisation. The firms' selection was found to be principally undertaken as a modified rebuy purchase. One of the business dimensions for their selection was that the consultants did not recommend that core activities be outsourced except in the case of BACS where this was the main reason for the project being undertaken.

The purchase decisions were found to occur for a variety of reasons, e.g. the IT/IS system had become outdated or was requested by an auditing organisation, a parent body or Central Government. It was concluded that straight rebuy purchases did in fact require less information than either modified or new task purchases when selecting a particular consultancy firm. In some of the modified rebuy purchases and in the new task purchase pseudo-experience was gained by the commissioning person or body, e.g. the commissioner obtained recommendations from other members of staff or another agency about who should be approached to put in a tender. This appears to have been an effective means of obtaining information about potential tenderers when one is uncertain about who are suitable candidates to approach.

The size of client organisation did affect the consultancy organisation that was commissioned. Larger client organisations did tend to select larger consultancy firms which the clients believed was likely to minimise the level of business risk they were exposed to and because there were potentially more consultants to choose from within a larger consultancy firm rather than a small one; the clients had a wider skill sets at their disposal to deal with their more complex projects.

Michell and Fitzgerald (1997) noted that one of the selection criteria for an outsourcing partner was being independent of hardware and software suppliers. However, in this study it was concluded that independence between these groups would have been a disadvantage for the CH project, i.e. the ability of the consultants to work with people from other divisions of ICL made it possible for appropriate people to work on the project and for them to provide the hardware that was compatible with the existing microfiche systems. This was not necessarily the cheapest option but meant that the client project manager could deal with the many tasks that he had been assigned and the consultants were able to take the project forward without too much close supervision.

7.3.1.3 FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

The section looks at the conclusions drawn concerning the factors affecting the performance of the consultants when considering: 1) the ability of the clients to observe the work of the consultants, 2) how contracts were used, 3) skills and knowledge transfer, 4) manipulation of power, 5) securing repeat business, and 6) the actions to address the poor performance of the consultants.

Ability to observe the consultants while they were working

There were only three projects in which the consultants were not closely observed by the project managers, i.e. the NHSE, CH and Library projects. In these projects and the DOT project the technical knowledge required by the consultants to undertake their role played a part in the client project managers not observing their work too closely. There were quite serious problems observed in the NHSE, CH and Library projects, e.g. the halting of the projects for a period resulting in timing delays and the integration of various interfaces not being dealt with. Even in the NHSE where there was a quasi-symmetrical state and other consultants were brought in to oversee the work of EASAMS the output of the project did

not operate effectively. However, in the projects ranked in the top three on both the project success rating scales it was found that the client project managers worked closely with the consultants and were able to observe their work. Therefore it is recommended that in IT management consultancy facilitated projects, appropriately skilled and technically competent client employees be used to oversee the work of the consultants. Further investigation into the use of consultants being employed to manage other consultancy firms' work needs to be done because only one project of this type was analysed in this research.

Using contracts to influence the consultants' performance

All the contracts that were used were forcing contracts. They were of two main types, i.e. fixed fee and incremental fee. Smaller projects with certain outcomes used fixed fee contracts while the larger and more complex projects had incremental fee projects. The incremental fee contract provided both parties with more flexibility in the project. The client organisations were able to periodically monitor the performance of the consultants and the consultants could ensure that they had almost guaranteed work for a long period. This was also important for the consultancy firms because they could plan for and manage the number of consultants moving into and out of a project over a particular period.

Only in the BACS project did the client organisation clearly attempt to try to influence the consultants' performance by means of the contract. In this instance this method did not seem to work very effectively.

It is recommended that revisiting the contract partway through in larger more complex projects is important because if the clients are required to perform specific actions or the consultants have to meet specific requirements these can be discussed in light of other changes that have occurred in the project since its start. Some of the arguments put forward by EASAMS concerning why they had not performed effectively perhaps could have been avoided if in the NHSE project this had been done.

Skills and knowledge transfer in projects

Consultants promising to provide a skills transfer was used as a criterion to help in the selection of a particular consultant firm. The client organisation hoped to gain not only the agreed outputs but also the acquisition of transferable skills by members of its staff, e.g. the ability to develop a strategy document or undertake interviews. It was concluded that often when skills are transferred from the consultants to the clients this skills transfer was unintentional on the part of the consultants and therefore was not measured.

In many cases knowledge rather than skills was transferred from the clients to the consultants. If the performance of the consultants is satisfactory, then this may place the consultancy firm in a better position when bidding for repeat business. This occurred in the straight rebuy projects and the consultancy firms that obtained repeat business as a result of having undertaken the case study projects.

Manipulation of power in projects

It was concluded that in the majority of the case study projects power was quite evenly balanced. In the most complex projects, i.e. the NHSE, BACS and DOT and towards the end of the CH project, when power was weighed in favour of the consultants, the consultants bore more business risk but were also compensated accordingly. Power manipulation by the client most often was only to assist the consultants with providing the client organisation with the right output. Power was also used by the contact clients to meet both their personal agenda and organisational agenda of the client.

Securing Repeat Business

Obtaining repeat business was the goal of the majority of the consultancy firms to reduce the perishability element of these service organisations. Therefore it was in the consultants' interest to perform satisfactorily. There was perhaps some intentional withholding of knowledge and skills by the consultants in order to facilitate repeat business.

The study also found that when serious problems are resolved adequately as in the case NHSE project, the client organisation is likely to give the consultancy firm additional work because it does not want to waste the investment it has already made in building the relationship and does not wish to invest the time and money in requesting other tenders. Therefore it is in consultancy firms' interests to ensure that even if they have had serious problems with client organisations that the client is happy with their outputs and service at the end of the project.

A strategy used to secure repeat business was that the consultants undertook work for free on the initial project and also in subsequent projects lowered the price of the fees that were charged and therefore there was a financial advantage for the client organisations in reselecting them for other projects.

Actions to address the performance of poorly performing IT management

It was found that in most projects regular verbal feedback was sufficient to resolve any issues that arose in the projects. As reported in Chapter 6 there was only one very poorly

performing consultancy firm, i.e. EASAMS. It was concluded that a multi-layered approach was effective in helping to resolve the problem. The most effective single strategy was using an officer of EASAMS' parent organisation as arbitrator in the dispute. This was important in this project because GEC Marconi needed to ensure that it was seen to be acting 'fairly' with one public sector organisation as it had contracts with another important public sector organisation and the treatment of the NHSE might have had a negative impact on whether it retained and gained other public sector contracts. However, no firm conclusions can be drawn because further investigation is required in order to determine how effective it is to deal with poorly performing consultancy firms using a multi-layered approach.

7.3.1.4 FACTORS AFFECTING THE SUCCESS OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FACILITATED PROJECTS

This section looks at the factors affecting the assessment of success of IT management consultancy projects. The following subsections are found below: 1) project objectives and achieving project objectives after initial project failure, 2) scoping studies, 3) project budgets, 4) project duration, 5) deadlines and delivery of outputs, 6) project decision making, 7) secondary outsourcing, 8) tangible and intangible benefits arising from projects, and 9) measurement of quality.

Project objectives and achieving project objectives after initial project failure

The projects' objectives were written down in the terms of reference. In the Trust, BACS and DOT projects redefining the objectives and requirements was important in the successful delivery of the project's outputs. It was concluded that there should be flexibility to change the original requirements as, throughout the course of the IT/IS projects, clients' requirements changed or evolved. Being able to be flexible appeared to help to cement the partnership development between the clients and the consultants.

After a project has initially failed but subsequently achieves the desired goals the client respondents seem to consider the project more successful than it might have been considered if it had achieved its goals on the first attempt. This was demonstrated in the BACS project and to an extent in the NHSE project at the end of the negotiation period with GEC Marconi. In both cases repeat business was given to the consultants. Therefore it was concluded that whenever possible consultants should attempt to rectify clients' problems and ensure that they are happy with the final outputs of such projects. For OSI this meant that BACS

recommended their services to financial institutions and this contributed to their success in the industry sector.

Scoping studies

Both in the literature, and in this research, the classic measures of project success were that the project came in on time and within budget. All the IT/IS projects studied came in over time. Therefore it is recommended that when undertaking IT/IS projects in future the planners should allow for a project overrun when setting the due dates.

Scoping the project did not, in general, seem to provide a clear benefit in the projects where it was undertaken, except in the BACS project. Nor does it seem to have impacted on how successful the project was perceived to be. Therefore careful consideration should be given by client organisations as to whether the additional expense will provide a return on the investment made in undertaking a scoping study and what impact it is likely to have on the final success of the project.

Project Budgets

The budgets of the projects were also not a constraint and thus did not directly affect the success of the projects. The willingness of consultants to undertake work for free seems to indirectly identify the quality of the relationships within the case study projects, i.e. the consultants willingly conducted work for free in three of the projects, the LS, Trust and Library projects. The Trust project was ranked as the most successful project in the literature predicted scale and the third in the weighted scale. In at least the Trust and Library projects a friendship had developed between the client and consultant project managers. Only in the NHSE did the consultants conduct work for free unwillingly and this project was ranked on both scales as the least successful project.

Project Duration

It was concluded that project duration did not directly appear to influence the success of the projects as all the projects ran over the predicted period. In this instance, the project that was unintentionally halted for the longest was also ranked the least successful.

Deadlines and delivery of outputs

As noted above, flexibility in deadlines was found to be important as all the projects went over time. Phased delivery of outputs was also common in the projects. It was concluded

that there was no link found between whether output delivery was phased and whether a project was considered successful.

Project decision making

The projects ranked as the most successful in both the literature defined scale and the weighted scales used either bounded rational or political decision making, i.e. the Trust and BACS projects. Bounded rational type decisions are characterised by the decision makers knowing what they want to achieve. Political decisions are made by decision makers who know how they can achieve their aims. Either decision type probably brought some clarity to the project situation and reduced Huczynski's (1993) ambiguity. They therefore allowed the client firms to make decisions more easily leading to a more successful project. By contrast the NHSE project in which the garbage can approach was used was rated as the least successful. The rational project, i.e. the Library project, did not score highly because there were others forces which opposed its success (see Section 6.21.2).

Secondary outsourcing

Only two projects (NHSE and BACS) had used secondary outsourcers, i.e. used other contractors to perform work that neither the client staff nor the consultants could perform. No conclusion could be drawn concerning whether this contributed to the success of the projects because the BACS project was one that was rated the most successful and the NHSE was rated the most unsuccessful project. Therefore further investigation is required into the impact of the use of secondary outsourcers.

Tangible and intangible benefits arising from projects

The majority of consultants measured their success by their ability to obtain repeat business which was viewed as a demonstration of customer loyalty. This conclusion was formed from both stages of the research. A second key measure of success for the consultants was that there were tangible benefits from the IT/IS projects.

There were instances where intangible benefits outweighed the tangible benefits in the case study projects, e.g. in the DOT project where success was seen in the achievement of selling the various rail businesses and implementing an IT/IS infrastructure to run the new railway. The DOT project did provide financial benefits for both the Treasury, i.e. from the revenue gained from the selling-off of the businesses, and the Conservative party, e.g. from the contributions made to the party funds by Ernst & Young.

The intangible benefits also contributed to the success of other projects, e.g. the CGD, NHSE, Trust, Library and CH projects because less time would be lost due to duplication of effort and correcting of unnecessary administrative errors.

Measurement of quality

Quality was not a concept that was generally measured in the case study projects. Feedback was given by the clients and consultants mainly verbally. Satisfaction surveys appeared to have been administered in two projects but no use seemed have been made of the results. It was concluded that both the consultants and the clients had not, in general, formally or objectively measured individuals' and teams' performances and the success of the projects. Any 'measures' that both sets of respondents used were based on intuitive assessments or the way that they felt. The consultants' assessments were also based on the reactions of the client project managers and whether reports or outputs were signed-off by senior client managers. This method does not seem, on the surface, to have been very objective or satisfactory but if one considers that for the client project managers managing the projects it was only one of their functions, it is understandable that they were too busy to use quality measurement systems. In addition, if senior managers signed-off reports then for both the client project managers and the consultants this was sufficient evidence that the project was considered at least satisfactory. This was reinforced by the fact that subsequent work was offered to the majority of consultancy firms.

It was concluded that having a database which held information about the consultancy firm and the consultants was not greatly favoured by either the consultants or the clients. Such a database if used correctly and maintained would not be beneficial to consultancy firms that had been rated poorly by client organisations. Neither did the respondents believe that selection of firms would contribute to the success of projects if this method was used.

7.3.2 SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY PROJECTS

The section looks at the conclusions drawn about the social dimensions of the IT management consultancy projects. It contains the following subsections: the reasons for the selection of a particular IT management consultancy firm (section 7.3.2.1), the factors affecting the performance of IT management consultants (Section 7.3.2.2), the factors

affecting the success of IT management consultancy facilitated projects (Section 7.3.2.3), and ownership of the deliverables (Section 7.3.2.4).

7.3.2.1 REASONS FOR THE SELECTION OF A PARTICULAR IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FIRM

In the case study projects the selection of a particular IT management consultancy firm was based on the strength of the relationship that was built at the selection stage. It was important that the clients who commissioned the consultancy firm believed that the consultants could work within the cultural environment of the client organisation. In addition, having had experience of working with the consultants or having gained pseudo-experience from internal and external sources, i.e. through references from other organisations, the clients had to select a consultancy firm at the time of the selection interviews that they believed could accomplish the required task. As noted in the section on the limitations of this study, the manner in which the client organisations were selected is likely to have introduced a bias into the research. Client organisations selected using a different method may have given rise to different conclusions.

7.3.2.2 FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

This section presents the conclusions concerning the practical and emotional needs of respondents in the case study projects and looks at how they affected the performance of the consultants.

Clients in the majority of projects clearly communicated their needs to the consultants and this was demonstrated by the fact that the consultants were able to report the practical and emotional needs of the clients. It cannot be certain whether these were communicated at the beginning of the project, as Ford (1974) recommended, or were communicated throughout the course of the project as part of the process of developing the working relationship. In the six cases where both respondents identified the same clients' needs these were found to be practical rather than emotional needs. The consultants seemed to know more about the clients than the clients knew about them, in terms of what senior managers required from the

outputs and how the consultants were expected to function while working in the organisation. This contributed to their effectiveness as consultants.

When the respondents were asked about the consultants' needs it became clear that the consultants had more than twice as many reported needs as the clients, i.e. thirty, but these had not been clearly communicated to the clients by the consultants. The consultants receiving repeat business was the most reported need by both clients and consultants. Seven of the thirty needs were emotional and were identified by either the clients or consultants, whereas only three emotional needs had been reported for the clients. The majority of these needs involved the clients praising the consultants and making them feel trusted and supported. Only one of the needs stated by the consultants was about the consultants themselves feeling they were undertaking a worthwhile job.

Interestingly in the NHSE project which performed poorly on both project success scales all the needs that were reported were practical and the client respondent did not care about the needs of the consultant nor whether these might have an impact on how the consultants performed. There was a contrast in the client response from the two projects rated the highest on project success scales, i.e. the Trust client reported that the consultants had no emotional needs while the BACS client reported two separate emotional needs. The majority of respondents, i.e. ten, did feel it was important for the consultants' emotional needs to be met and was a success measure of the project or at least for the consultant.

The conclusion drawn is that the picture is not clear as to whether the consultants should have their emotional needs taken into consideration in order for them to perform more effectively. There are some indications from the case studies' analysis that taking the consultants' needs into consideration will help in improving the performance of the consultants and contribute to the success of the project.

7.3.2.3 FACTORS AFFECTING THE SUCCESS OF IT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FACILITATED PROJECTS

This section draws together the conclusions concerning the social dimensions of the assessment of success of the IT/IS projects. The following issues are covered below: 1) the working relationship between the clients and the consultants, 2) employee and senior management involvement in the projects, 3) project teams, 4) the consultants' understanding

of the cultures of the client organisations, and 5) the types of the behaviour required to be demonstrated by the consultants.

Working relationship between the clients and the consultants

It was concluded that not only in the literature but in this study the working relationship between the clients and the consultants was key to the success of the IT/IS projects. The consultants as outsiders in the client organisations had, in general, to be more co-operative, courteous and act more professionally than the clients because this was part of the service that they offered.

The communication between the two parties was found, as reported in the literature, to be important in the working relationship and contributed to the success of the relationship and therefore the project, when it was good. It is difficult to determine how the communication affected the service expectation but at least in the NHSE project it was clear that the client project manager had expected more than the consultancy firm had initially delivered. Also in the BACS project the consultant project manager must have made a good impression on the client project manager at the time of the interview because the client respondent was so emphatic about his desire to employ the consultant project manager and then the client respondent used OSI to undertake work as the preferred supplier based on the consultant project manager's recommendation. How communication affects the success of IT/IS projects is an area worthy of further investigation.

Involvement of employees and senior managers in the project

What appeared in most cases, when considering the success of the IT/IS systems or strategies, was that the respondents' perception of how successful the outputs were was not arrived at by any objective measurement. The feeling of pending improvements was then transmitted to the users or senior management, by the project managers, as they were informed of the improvement that these IT systems would facilitate.

Employee involvement, especially that of users, was important in all the projects. It was concluded that when writing strategy reports their involvement was necessary as a source of information which consultants could access to learn about the organisation and its operations in order to understand the organisation and its requirements, although their recommendations have to be assessed in light of the financial resources available to the client organisation. If not, a similarly negative outcome may arise, as was seen with the pilot sites in the NHSE project. Direct involvement in the projects by employees was crucial in ensuring that

implementation of the IT outputs went well. Employee/user involvement played a less important role in affecting assessment of the success of the projects. However, it should be noted that if more users had been interviewed in the course of the research a different view might have prevailed.

Senior management involvement was identified in the project management literature and consultancy literature as being important. However, it was difficult to identify who was considered a senior manager in the case study projects and the definition appeared to be dependent on who was responding to the items on the instrument. Both parts of the study concluded that senior managers', e.g. CEOs/heads of departments', involvement was important to the success of the project. However in the majority of projects, i.e. the LS, DOT, Library, CH and CGD, their involvement was not considered to have been adequate. When they were involved it was as interviewees or as part of a project board that signed-off the project deliverables. In terms of its effect on the assessment of success it was found that, in at least two projects which ranked in the first three on both indices, i.e. the Trust and the BACS projects, senior management involvement was important and probably affected either the assessment of success or the actual success of the project.

Project Teams

The project teams' effectiveness was also a social dimension which played a part in the assessment of the success of the project but was an indirect measure. It was noted in this study that there was diversity in the definition of the teams and further investigation of this aspect of IT/IS projects is required before any conclusions can be drawn.

Consultants' understanding cultures of the client organisations

Client organisational culture was found to be a difficult concept to identify as a single factor. The perception of whether a firm was likely to be able to work within a particular client organisational culture was used as a means of selecting the consultants and was based on an intuitive rather than an objective assessment. Therefore proxies were used, e.g. organisational politics and resistance, how power was managed, how issues were communicated, how professionalism was demonstrated and how needs were identified, to try to determine whether the consultants understood and worked successfully in the client's organisational culture. It should be noted that further investigation is required of whether these proxies were appropriate to use in this context. It was concluded, based on these proxies, that there was no evidence to suggest that any of the consultants did not work within the client organisation's culture effectively.

Types of behaviour required to be demonstrated by the consultants

The consultants' professional attitudes and appearances were contributory factors to whether the client companies' managers, i.e. contract and contact clients, accepted or rejected the recommendations made by the consultants. That the consultants were external to the organisation was also, in many instances, a plus factor in whether the recommendations would be implemented and how successfully the project would be viewed. When the client contact managers took a clear lead in identifying what it was that they required then the projects were also viewed as being more successful. Complicity between the contact client and the consultant was also an element which affected the assessment of how the projects were viewed. Where there was complicity between the clients and the consultants, e.g. in the Trust, BACS and DOT projects, then in general, the projects ranked higher on the success scales than did projects where there was no such complicity, e.g. in the NHSE project where there was only a purchaser relationship (see Section 2.8.2). In the CH project there was obvious complicity but there were a variety of other factors presented that did not promote the success of the project.

It was concluded that, as far as could be identified in this research, in the majority of projects the consultant demonstrated both help-giving and effective consultant behaviours. One of the difficulties of having not been involved in the projects was that the author was unable to directly observe the behaviour of the consultants as they interacted with the client staff and projects. In subsequent studies, direct observation by researchers at various stages of the IT management consultant facilitated projects would be desirable in order to determine whether these conclusions are justified.

7.3.2.4 OWNERSHIP OF THE DELIVERABLES

This section draws together the conclusions related to how ownership was taken of the project deliverables. The following sections are found below: 1) the involvement of the project managers and users and 2) support of opinion-leaders.

Involvement of the project managers and users

It was concluded that project managers had taken ownership of the outputs or achievements from the IT/IS projects because they had been involved with them. In the Library project where the client respondent had stated that she had not taken ownership of the output this seems to have been because: a) she had been more involved with the delivery of the previous

strategy; b) she had not been closely involved with the project until there had been a problem to resolve; and, c) because she was leaving the organisation.

A ripple effect of ownership was demonstrated in the projects where implementation occurred. As the users became aware and were involved in the implementation of the outputs it was reported that they took ownership of the outputs. Further investigation of this issue is required before any conclusions can be drawn. It does seem that ownership of the outputs by the project managers and users takes place when they become involved in the development and/or use of the outputs.

Support of opinion-leaders

In five of the eight case study projects influencers were involved because either the opinion-leaders directly oversaw the projects as project managers or the consultants had contact with members of the project boards. In a project such as the DOT where the consultants were primarily responsible for the dissemination of information then they wielded power and were potentially in a position to promote a positive perception of the changes that took in place the project.

7.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS THIS STUDY HAS ATTEMPTED TO MAKE TO THE CURRENT BODY OF LITERATURE

This section presents a summary of the findings throughout the study and presents the contribution the study has attempted to make to the current body of literature.

1. Communication was found to occur between the IT consultants and clients verbally every two to three days or weekly on average (see Section 4.6). Communication between the clients and the IT consultants was found to be multifaceted and was improved with the quality and depth of the relationship between the client and consultant (see Section 6.14.2).
2. The clients discussing their organisational strengths and weaknesses with the consultants was found to be important in the project but is not considered in the literature (see Section 4.4).
3. Flexibility to extend the project being a measure of the success of the project is also not identified in the literature (see Section 4.4).

4. Manufacturing and office support systems were found to be categories of IT systems that the IT management consultants helped to implement but were not included in Basil et al.'s (1997) list (see Section 4.7.4).
5. The factor analysis identified nine factors identified: *BENEFITS*, *OWNERSHIP*, *CLASSIC MEASURES*, *ROLES*, *WORKING RELATIONSHIP*, *CEO INVOLVEMENT*, *INTERACTIONS*, and *COMMUNICATION* and *SYSTEM OUTPUT*. These are discussed in Sections 4.11.1–4.11.3.
6. It was found that Ward and Peppard's (1996) belief that consultants fail to see the political elements of client organisations was not supported for the IT management consultancy case study projects (see Section 6.3.1).
7. The study did not support Morris and Hough's (1987) and Ward and Peppard's (1996) belief that projects often come in over budget for IT management consultancy projects (see Section 6.5).
8. When considering the type of purchase decision as discussed by Morgan (1991), it was found that the new task purchaser did not require any more information than did the modified rebuy purchasers, i.e. the purchase decision did not exhibit higher search properties. The modified rebuy was found to be the most used purchase decision for the IT management consultancy projects. (see Section 6.7.2).
9. The cultural fit and the quality of the IT management consultant was found to be the most used factors in IT management consultancy firm selection. The importance of the ability to transfer knowledge between the private and public sector by the IT management consultants was also not identified in the reviewed literature. Client organisational size, aversion to risk and complexity of the projects factors that were suggested by Morgan (1991) were also found to affect the selection of the IT management consultants (see Section 6.7.3).
10. In the BACS project the "cascade engagement" arrangement was exhibited, which had not been reported in the reviewed literature (see Section 6.7.3). This is the situation when a consultant is selected from a consultancy firm to act as a project manager. Once employed by the client organisation, then the consultant employs other members of the consultancy firm to undertake work for the client organisation he is now also employed by.
11. It was found that there was a variety of understandings of what constituted project teams' compositions in the IT management consultancy projects (see Section 6.8). This finding adds to Gilb's (1989) assessment of the factors that help consultants meet performance targets, in that it was identified that the IT management consultants needed to have strategies for coping with the movement of IT consultants

into and out of projects and situations where IS/IT projects were halted. The 'normal' movement into and out of a project by consultants possessing different skill sets did not otherwise appear to have any adverse effects on the outcome of the projects. It was also found that the project team's effectiveness was measured commonly by the project meeting its timetable and output deadlines.

12. It was found that this study did support Ward and Peppard's (1996) belief that IT/IS projects come in over time (see Section 6.6)
13. The study also found that both the clients and consultants had personal agendas for undertaking the projects (see Section 6.14.1). This issue was not identified in the reviewed literature.
14. The study used Butler et al's (1993) framework to categorise the projects into the various types of decision making that were found to be exhibited and also identified the factors which influenced how the decisions were made (see Section 6.9).
15. It was also found that the CEOs/Heads of departments did not become involved in IT/IS projects as with other types of projects (see Section 4.6). Employees were not found to be required at the strategy writing stage of documents but their inputs were found to be necessary at the implementation stage of an IT/IS project (see Section 6.10.2).
16. It was found that in IT management consultancy facilitated projects there were very few emergent changes, i.e. those changes which arise spontaneously, occurring. This seems to have been because of the need for changes to be agreed between the client and consultants before they were implemented. More opportunity-based changes, i.e. changes not previously anticipated, but then are implemented intentionally in response to an unexpected opportunity, event or breakdown, were recorded. The need for collaboration between the clients and consultants for the change to be implemented in Orlikowski and Hofman's (1997) Improvisational Model for Change Management was observed (Section 6.10.3)
17. The original terms of reference in the case study projects did not need to be completely adhered to for the client or consultants to consider that the projects were successful. When the terms of reference were changed because of the input of the consultants then the output and processes of conducting the project were found to meet the needs of the client more effectively (see Section 6.11.1).
18. An additional task, that of IT/IS system auditor, should be added to the list of tasks performed by IT consultants, when assessing the work of IT professionals based on Peled's (2001) definitions of consultants and vendors (see Section 6.11.1).

19. The IT management consultant's recommendations were found to be implemented in this study and the client organisations demonstrated that they had taken ownership of the recommendations by using the IS documents or IT system (see Section 6.11.3).
20. The study found that the IT management consultants were aware of the political issues of IT projects and did not attempt to solve the clients' challenges with technological solutions, as Ward and Peppard (1996) suggested, but discussed issues with members of client staff and tried to resolve problems through negotiation (see Section 6.13.1).
21. Staff morale was identified as possibly being a barometer of how successful an implemented project had been, in addition to the variable identified by Raimond and Eden (1990) (see Section 6.13.2).
22. The study identified tactics that could be used by the client to influence/control the work of the IT consultants and hence act as a means of manipulating power in projects (See Section 6.14.1).
23. This study supported the arguments of Parasuraman et al. (1988) in their belief that the appearance variable should be retained in the SERVQUAL instrument, as the clients identified it as a factor that they took into consideration when considering the professionalism of the consultants (see Section 6.14.3).
24. This study found that there was some skills transfer between the consultant and the client. However, in most instances the transfer was unintentional and was not measured (see Section 6.14.4).
25. It was found that the literature did not cover issues such as inter- and intra-consultancy team conflicts and how one consultant may openly wish to contradict another nor are reasons suggested what benefit, if any, this might have to the consultant who feels superior (see Sections 6.15 and 6.16).
26. This study found that the IT consultants did not shy away from emotions as suggested by Ward and Peppard (1996) (see Section 6.17).
27. In this study Bounds et al.'s (1994) monetary value and customer value were both found to be valid concepts of value (see Sections 4.4 and Section 6.19). Both VFM measures that were identified, were also considered the two most important key success measures identified but the direction of the causal linkage could not be ascertained (see Section 6.19).

7.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

This section discusses the possible future direction for research in this field.

1. Further research, could begin by conducting an initial postal survey of randomly selected client organisations. Distributing an instrument similar to the initial client survey instrument to a variety of clients would allow stronger evidence of their requirements to be identified.
2. A similar set of case studies could be conducted using private sector organisations. This investigation would be based on a frequency distribution of the various types of IT projects identified from the postal survey.
3. Peled (2001) reported that because compulsory competitive tendering was mandatory in the public sector then a new set of powerful IT consultants arose (Section 2.4.5.1). A further quantitative study of public sector organisations could identify the numbers of IT management consultants being used throughout the civil service. In-depth qualitative interviews could then be used to assess whether the consultants were considered 'powerful' by the clients and the consultants and if so what their power was based upon.
4. In the two case studies that identified that there had been problems between consultants working on the project these problems did not appear to have had an adverse effect on the project. This is not a subject that is discussed in the literature. Therefore, a future study could concentrate on: 1) the types of problems that occur in intra- and inter-consultancy team(s) working on a project; 2) how often multiple outsourcers are used and whether conflicts between them adversely affects the project; and, 3) whether a certain amount of 'friction' in these relationships is useful.
5. Further investigations could be carried out using the SERVQUAL instrument to determine its effectiveness as a diagnostic tool for IT consultancy projects. By comparing similar projects conducted by the same consultants, who employed the tool in some cases and not in others, it would be possible to assess how its use would affect the service delivery and performance rating for individual projects.

6. In Section 6.15 it was noted that a consultant from OSI was employed as a project manager by the client organisation. Once in position he employed other members of OSI to assist with this project. An investigation could be undertaken to determine if this kind of “cascade” strategy is used quite frequently and if so what are the impacts on project success of this kind of arrangement and whether it poses any ethical problems for the consultancy firms involved.
7. In Section 6.17 it was found that not all the respondents believed that it was a measure of success to meet the practical and emotional needs of the client. A study could be undertaken to identify, firstly whether clients’ needs change through the course of the projects, then how they are addressed by the consultants and what impact on the success of projects meeting these needs has.
8. Rogers (1961) discussed the type of behaviours that should be found in a help-giving relationship. From the analysis in Section 6.17 it was concluded that there was insufficient evidence presented concerning the required help-giving behaviour for a successful project outcome to occur. As noted above, this study could have been improved by having observed the entire consultancy process. Therefore a series of case studies could be conducted to determine which of Rogers’ help-giving behaviours were demonstrated in the projects and whether some help-giving behaviours are more important than others.
9. It was found that consultants provided work for free as part of the project (see Section 6.19). The view was expressed that this might be done to secure repeat business. An issue for further research would be to investigate if the consultants include a certain sum in their tender proposals which will allow additional work to be conducted without the client organisations apparently incurring additional charges.
10. A further area of research arises from the discussion in Section 6.19; this concern determining the direction of the linkage between the respondents’ assessment of IT project success and whether the clients felt that they had received VFM.
11. In Section 6.21.2 it was found that there was no consistent pattern of how the projects were ranked. Further investigation could be undertaken to determine whether the scales that were developed were appropriate. Subsequent research could be

undertaken to determine whether these scales are appropriate for other types of management consultancy facilitated projects.

12. With the impact of internet technology, a similar study could be undertaken to determine whether IT management consultants were required to implement the new technology. If the introduction of this new technology is not facilitated by IT management consultants then what means are being used to implement it into client organisations and how this affects the clients assessment of the success of projects.
13. In addition, with the introduction of qualifications to undertake IT management consultancy work it would be interesting to determine if a different set of skills and behaviours were required to operate in the changing IT/IS marketplace.

7.6 EPILOGUE AND ADVICE TO OTHER RESEARCHERS

This thesis has attempted to provide some greater understanding of the dynamics of the IT management consultancy industry and the author hopes this goal has been achieved.

The advice that she would give to other researchers would be that developing a good working relationship with one's supervisors is the most important factor in completing a study of this type. Creating informal links with the leaders in the industry sector is helpful in shaping the direction of a study. Identifying the methodology that will be used and being flexible about the need to change it in order to accommodate the target group is a necessity. The author attributes the high response rate of the postal survey to having spoken to the respondents in advance and would advise others to do likewise. When writing the final thesis it was invaluable to have been quite organised in cataloguing the responses to questionnaires and also storing photocopies or electronic media of the literature that had been reviewed as it was possible to access this information when going through the analyses. Improving this cataloguing system is one of the improvements that would be made when considering what was done.

The most important advice is that one could give another researcher is that perseverance is the key to completing a study of this type.

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APPENDIX A: THE CONSULTANT SURVEY INSTRUMENT



Canterbury Business School

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Tel: 827726 direct line
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Faith Gordon
6 Helix Road
London
SW2 2JS

Name
Company Address

Date

Dear Name,

I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Kent. I am researching the Management Consultancy phenomenon, specifically how Information Technology (IT) management consultants and their clients, both in the public and private sectors, interrelate. From this research a model will be created which will be used to determine performance, tangible and intangible, in both sectors.

The primary focus of this research is to combine academic theory with the knowledge and experience of practitioners, purchasers and project managers. For this purpose I have compiled a questionnaire, which I have designed so that it will be easy to use and will take approximately 15 minutes of your time to complete.

There are three questions that I have been asked about this research and why only specific people have been asked to complete it:

1. What will I be requested to do?

As I have mentioned above you have been requested to complete a questionnaire because of the specialist knowledge that you possess, i.e. either as an IT consultant or as someone who has purchased or used the skills of an IT Management Consultant.

2. What will I gain from taking part in this research?

When this research is completed it will be used as a benchmark by which consultancy performance can be measured in the public and private sectors. For clients it will be a means by which they can determine which consultancies they will ask to make tenders. Then once a consultancy is selected what to expect from the various stages of the consultancy assignment and finally how they can measure the performance of the consultants.

For the consultancies it is a means by which they can determine how they perform relative to others who operate in the same competency areas. Secondly it is a means by which they can continually measure the quality of service provided to clients. It may also become a means of not only aiding the advancement of the academic work done in the consultancy field but provide a model on which nationally available databases of competencies are based.

For both parties the results of this information will also be available to you before it will be published and therefore before it is available to your competitors.

Canterbury Business School
The University, Canterbury
Kent CT2 7PE, UK

3. What about confidentiality?

All responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual responses will not be included in my Ph.D. Thesis or in any other written work although comments may be quoted unattributed. You may return the questionnaire anonymously, although this will by definition prevents me from providing you with a copy of my research findings.

The questionnaire that you will receive is for the pilot study. As you may realise sometimes a certain question may be misinterpreted, as a result, you are asked to indicate, whether, if any revision of a question will take place whether or not you will be interested in answering any amendments to a particular question. If you would be interested in taking part in a case study please can you tick the appropriate box at the end of the form. I will be glad to receive any comments on the questionnaire, e.g. on its format or composition. Please return responses to me by **18 September 1995**.

Thank you for taking part in this research and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Faith Gordon

Instructions For The Completion Of The Consultant Questionnaire

- There are 4 sections in the questionnaire:
- Outcome Measures
 - Client Consultant Interaction
 - The Selection Project Results
 - Monitoring of the Consultancy Profession

The majority of the questionnaire is comprised of questions which require one response only to be circled:-

Your Firm was chosen because of your previous record with IS projects	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	Strongly Disagree 4	5
---	---------------------	---	---	------------------------	---

Circling number 2, suggests that you agree with the statement posed but not particularly strongly, i.e. that this was one of the major reason why your consultancy firm was chosen. Other questions may request additional information or an expansion or brief explanation of reasons for a particular response.

Name:	
Contact Address:	
Telephone Number:	

Please tick the appropriate box.

I will be willing to complete any amendments made to any of the questions

Yes ☐

No ☐

If you have any queries relating to the completion of the questionnaire please contact **Faith Gordon** at 6 Helix Road, London, SW2 2JS or if urgent Tel: (081) 671 2679, Email: fag2@ukc.ac.uk

SECTION 1:
OUTCOME MEASURES

The literature constantly discusses factors that relate to "project success" without defining them. The following questions will address various outcomes measures that relate to assignment outcome success.

		Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree	
		1	2	3	4	5
a)	There needs to be a good relationship between myself and the client firm on completion of the project.	1	2	3	4	5
b)	The client should feel that I was competent and therefore can be trusted me to make appropriate recommendations.	1	2	3	4	5
c)	Client specifications and expectations should be clearly and concisely recorded in the contract.	1	2	3	4	5
d)	Projects should be completed on time.	1	2	3	4	5
e)	Projects should be completed within budget.	1	2	3	4	5
f)	There needs to be a skill transfer between myself and client companies' employees.	1	2	3	4	5
g)	There were no major problems in the project.	1	2	3	4	5
h)	When fees are paid promptly.	1	2	3	4	5
i)	When fees are paid in full.	1	2	3	4	5
j)	There should be a clearly identifiable client for all projects.	1	2	3	4	5
k)	Client CEOs' or Department heads should be satisfied with the system installed.	1	2	3	4	5
l)	Client employees (users and other involved parties) should be satisfied with the system installed.	1	2	3	4	5
m)	There needs to be tangible benefits (e.g. savings) due to the installation of a computing system.	1	2	3	4	5
n)	There needs to be intangible benefits (e.g. better understanding of the work and increased efficiency).	1	2	3	4	5
o)	The CEO or Department heads should understand the benefits of the system in practice not only in theory.	1	2	3	4	5
p)	The CEO or Department heads should feel that they 'own' the new computing system.	1	2	3	4	5
q)	Client employees should feel that they 'own' the new computing system.	1	2	3	4	5
r)	You and your colleagues are satisfied with the project's outcome.	1	2	3	4	5
s)	There should be effective communication between myself and the clients.	1	2	3	4	5
t)	All involved or affected employees should be included in the project.	1	2	3	4	5
u)	Senior management dictates the course of the project with little involvement or no involvement from other members of staff.	1	2	3	4	5
v)	It is not important for the successful completion of the project for either the consultant or the client to understand the needs of the other.	1	2	3	4	5
w)	For the selection of a suitable computing system, client and consultant need to mutually appreciate each other's role.	1	2	3	4	5
x)	Consultants do not need to have a detailed knowledge of the client's operations for a suitable computer system to be selected.	1	2	3	4	5
y)	Clients do not need to understand the methods of the consultant, for the project to be successfully completed.	1	2	3	4	5
z)	For an effective solution to be achieved clients have to clearly understand, the role each of you are to play in the successful selection of the project.	1	2	3	4	5

aa) Other measures of success:

ab) What do consider the key measures of success?

SECTION 2:

CLIENT CONSULTANT INTERACTION

An essential feature when considering any consultation is the relationship between the client and the consultant and its implications for the successful outcome of an assignment. Please circle the response you feel appropriate when considering the relationship between client and consultant.

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|
| a) | In general, a good client consultant relationship is required for successful completion of the project. | Strongly Agree
1 2 3 | Strongly Disagree
4 5 |
| b) | How would you describe the relationship between yourself and clients, in general? | Very Good
1 2 3 | Very Bad
4 5 |
| c) | How would you describe the relationship between your firm and clients, in general? | 1 2 3 | 4 5 |
| d) | How would you describe the clients' attitudes towards you throughout the assignments? | Co-operative
1 2 3
Courteous
1 2 3
Unprofessional
1 2 3 | Belligerent
4 5
Discourteous
4 5
Professional
4 5 |
| e) | How would you have described your attitude towards your clients? | User-oriented
1 2 3
Co-operative
1 2 3
Courteous
1 2 3
Professional
1 2 3 | Self Centred
4 5
Belligerent
4 5
Discourteous
4 5
Unprofessional
4 5 |
| f) | How important are the CEOs' \Heads of departments' attitude to projects? | Very Important
1 2 3 | Very Unimportant
4 5 |
| g) | How would you have describe the CEOs' \Heads of departments' involvement in the projects, in general? | Consistent
1 2 3
Very Good
1 2 3
Significant
1 2 3 | Inconsistent
4 5
Very Bad
4 5
Insignificant
4 5 |
| h) | How important are employees' (users and other involved parties) attitudes to projects? | Very Important
1 2 3 | Very Unimportant
4 5 |
| i) | Do you attempt to involve the client in projects? | Always
1 2 3 | Never
4 5 |
| j) | Do clients attempt to become involved with projects? | 1 2 3 | 4 5 |
| k) | How often do you communicate with clients? | 1 Daily
2 Every 2-3 days
3 Weekly
4 Monthly
5 Longer than a month | |

l)	Communications with clients are verbal.	Always 1	2	3	4	Never 5
m)	Communications with clients are in writing.	1	2	3	4	5
o)	Communications with clients, in general, can be described as:	Productive 1	2	3	4	Destructive 5
		Vague 1	2	3	4	Precise 5
		Meaningless 1	2	3	4	Meaningful 5
p)	Is client employee involvement encouraged?	Never 1	2	3	4	Always 5
q)	How would you describe the interaction between yourself and your clients?	Always Candid 1	2	3	4	Always Deceitful 5
		Always Open 1	2	3	4	Always Evasive 5

SECTION 3:

THE PROJECT'S RESULTS

This section is concerned with your evaluation of how clients felt on completion of the project. Please circle the response you feel appropriate when considering the client's reactions to the project.

- a) Is there usually a mechanism for planning computerisation within clients' business planning process, please explain your response.
- b) Are there usually policies for controlling computerisation and its uses within client organisations, please explain your answer.
- c) Do you usually have any involvement in the formulation of statements a) or b), please explain your response.
- d) Does use of the system create a business advantage over competitors for clients, please briefly explain your response.
- e) What are the main applications of the systems you normally recommended?

f)	Projects are usually a complete success.	Strongly Agree 1 2 3	Strongly Disagree 4 5
g)	The time for new systems' development, on average, can be described as:	1. 1 week 2. 2 weeks - 1 month 3. 2-3 months 4. up to six months 5. 6 months 6. 6 months to 1 year 7. 1 year or more	
		Reasonable 1 2 3	Unreasonable 4 5
		Acceptable 1 2 3	Unacceptable 4 5
h)	To what degree do clients usually comprehend the IS systems contemplated?	Completely Understand 1 2 3	Completely Misunderstand 4 5
i)	How satisfied are you that clients understand their IT requirements?	Very Satisfied 1 2 3	Very Unsatisfied 4 5
j)	How satisfied are you, in general, with your understanding of what clients require, when you recommended a new system?	1 2 3	4 5
k)	Throughout projects interdepartmental relations, in general, within client firms can be described as:	Productive 1 2 3	Destructive 4 5
		Rational 1 2 3	Emotional 4 5
		Harmonious 1 2 3	Dissonant 4 5
l)	Please explain your response to question k).	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
m)	How would you describe the systems you recommended in terms of value for money?	Very Good 1 2 3	Very Bad 4 5
n)	From your perspective, in general, how successful do you think clients consider project outcomes?	Very Successful 1 2 3	Very Unsuccessful 4 5
o)	How complex, in general, are IT consultations.	Very Complicated 1 2 3	Very Uncomplicated 4 5
p)	How effective do you believe that current information system meet clients' demands?	Very Well 1 2 3	Very Unwell 4 5
q)	In general, how successful are you in identifying a suitable solution	Very Successful 1 2 3	Very Unsuccessful 4 5
r)	In general, is the performance of the information systems sufficient for clients' needs?	Very Good 1 2 3	Very Bad 4 5
s)	How would you describe clients' budgeting for computerisation?	Over Estimated 1 2 3	Under Estimated 4 5
t)	The amount allocated in the budget made a difference to the outcome of the project.	Strongly Agree 1 2 3	Strongly Disagree 4 5
u)	Please explain your answer to t).	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

If you were involved in implementation, please answer the following question, v) - z).
If you were not involved in implementation, please go to z).

v)How would you describe the outputs clients receive from their new system?

Reasonable
12345
Consistent
12345
Relevant
12345
Clear
12345
Accurate
12345

Unreasonable
Inconsistent
Irrelevant
Hazy
Inaccurate

w)How would you describe the manner in which the systems operate?

Flexible
12345
Versatile
12345
Useful
12345

Rigid
Limited
Useless

x)How would you describe the computer languages used, by the end-users, to interact with the systems?

Simple
12345
Easy
12345
Powerful
12345

Complex
Difficult
Weak

y)When dealing with hardware/software problems, how would you describe you response times?

Fast
12345

Slow

z)Using your outcome measures as defined above, in section 1, what percentage of your consultations have successful outcomes?

(total should be equal to 100%)

1	Very Successful	
2	Successful	
3	Don't Know	
4	Unsuccessful	
5	Very Unsuccessful	

SECTION 4.

MONITORING OF THE CONSULTANCY PROFESSION.

In the recent Efficiency Unit (Cabinet Office) report on the use of external consultants by the U. K. Central Government, certain issues were addressed and recommendations were made; the following questions are based on these recommendations.

a)Client companies would be able to use the services of consultancies more efficiently leading to a higher percentage of successful outcomes, if they knew what to expect at all stages of an assignment.

Strongly Agree
12345

Strongly Disagree

If you agree with statement a), please answer questions b1) - c10):
If you do not agree with statement a), please answer question d):

b1)Information concerning consultancies could be located on a database of sorts.

Strongly Agree
12345

Strongly Disagree

b2)This information should be nationally available.

12345

The type of information that should be held on the database:

c1)	Type of companies worked for and possibly contact name.	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree	
		1	2	3	4	5
c2)	Specific work done by each consultancy/each consultant.	1	2	3	4	5
c3)	Specific measures of performance based on a standard measure for each consultancy firm.	1	2	3	4	5
c4)	Specific measure of performance based on a standard measure for each consultant.	1	2	3	4	5
c5)	Estimates of fees charged e.g. per consultant day.	1	2	3	4	5
c6)	There should be an expert system based on this data by which consultants could be selected.	1	2	3	4	5
c7)	This model could be used to determine what degree of success a specific project had. (This information to be given by the client.)	1	2	3	4	5
c8)	Accurate measures could be obtained about the work done in each industry sector.	1	2	3	4	5
c9)	Measures could be obtained about the work done in other types of consultancy.	1	2	3	4	5
c10)	Whether you are registered for BS5750 or ISO9000.	1	2	3	4	5

If you did not agree with a) or any of the above statements:

d) Briefly explain the reasons for your answer.

I would be interested in taking part in a more in-depth study.

Yes

☐

No

☐

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.



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Fax: 761187

Faith Gordon
Canterbury Business School
University of Kent at Canterbury
Kent
CT2 7PE

Name
Consultancy Practice Address

Date

Dear Name,

I would initially like to thank you for responding to the questionnaire and secondly for taking part in the case study. As promised you will find enclosed a copy of the consultant and the client interview schedules and the cover letter sent to all client respondents.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Faith Gordon.

CONSULTANT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interviewee	
Organisation	
Department	
Position held in the organisation	
Position held in relation to project	
Date / Time	
Place	
Telephone Number	
Client company worked for	
Client project leader	
Title of Project	

PROJECT DETAILS

1. Provide a general outline of what you felt the client initially envisaged as the project.
- 2.1 Were you aware if the client was willing to consider differing options? (If No, 3)

YesNo
- 2.2 If Yes, what were the options?
3. Please give a brief description of the main sequence of events of the project, as far as you are aware, with respect to the decision process, from its inception to its completion - indicate where decisions were formalised and put into writing.
4. Who were the key players in the decision process?
- 5.1 What was the reason behind the decision to bring in consultants - please provide written information on selection criteria if you were provided with any.
- 5.2 If you are aware, please state the number of consultants asked to tender?
- 5.3 On what basis do you think your consultancy firm was chosen?

OUTCOME MEASURES

- 6.1 Do you consider there was a skills transfer between yourself and the client?

YesNo
- 6.2 Please provide details of what measures you have used to assess this skills transfer?
7. 1 Did the client discuss their organisation's strengths and weakness with the you?

AlwaysUsuallyNeutralRarelyNever
- 7.2 Would you consider clients discussing their organisation's strengths and weakness with you a success outcome measure?

YesNo
- 8.1 Do you consider the client has received value for money (VFM)?

YesNo
- 8.2 If Yes, what measures have you used to assess this? (8.4)
- 8.3 If No, please explain your response. (8.4)

8.4	Do you consider that receiving VFM is related to the quality of the advice or the quality of the system the client received. Please explain which your response is related to.		Yes System	No Both
		Advice		
8.5	If <u>Yes</u> , how is VFM related to the quality of the system they received? (9.1)			
8.6	If <u>No</u> , please explain your responses. (9.1)			
8.7	Do you believe that receiving VFM is a factor that the client took into consideration when deciding on the success of the project. Please explain your response.		Yes	No
9.1	Has the client completed a satisfaction survey for you?		Yes	No
9.2	Do you agree that by doing so, they have indicated to your firm that they were satisfied with the project. Please explain your response.		Yes	No
10.1	Was the project always under control?		Yes	No
10.2	If <u>Yes</u> , please explain how this was achieved?			
10.3	If <u>No</u> , please explain what occurred?			
10.4	Do you consider that having the project always under control was a measure of success. Please explain your response.		Yes	No
11.	Would you consider that having value added (i.e. savings / improvements in tangible factors e.g. reduced overheads and savings in intangibles e.g. improvement in staff morale) was a measure of success. Please explain your response.		Yes	No
12.	Would you consider that flexibility to extend the project was a measure of success. Please explain your response.		Yes	No
13.1	Would you consider the system's reliability of performance was a measure of success? Please indicate whether you implemented the system.		Yes	No
13.2	If <u>Yes</u> , what factors would you use to measure the system's reliability of performance?			
13.3	If <u>No</u> , please explain your response.			
14.1	Is the new system an improvement on the old (where appropriate)? Please explain your response.		Yes	No
14.2	If after preliminary studies you had found that the old system was adequate for the client's needs what course of action would you have taken?			
15.1	Are you satisfied with the project's outcomes?		Yes	No
15.2	If you <u>are</u> satisfied, what factors have you used to measure your satisfaction, if possible place them in order of priority? (15.4)			
1		4		
2		5		
3		6		

15.3	If you <u>are not</u> satisfied, please explain why not? (15.4)					
15.4	Is the client satisfied with the project's outcomes?		Yes	No		
15.5	If they <u>are</u> , have they used the same measures of success as you? Please explain your response (16)					
15.6	If they <u>are not</u> satisfied, please explain from your understanding why they are not.					
16.	Would you consider having the systems technical specifications met a measure of success? Please explain your response.		Yes	No		
17.1	Does the client feel ownership of the system?		Yes	No		
17.2	If they <u>feel ownership</u> what measures have you used to identify this? (18)					
17.3	If they <u>do not feel ownership</u> please explain why you believe they do not feel ownership of the system? (18)					
18.1	Please state what you consider were the client's practical needs met (i.e. as little disruption to the normal working atmosphere as possible) and do you consider having their needs met, a measure of the success of the project. Please explain your response.		Yes	No		
18.2	Do you consider having the client's emotional needs met (i.e. having fears and reservations concerning the project alleviated), a measure of the success of the project. Please explain your response.		Yes	No		
18.3	Do you consider having your practical needs met a measure of the success of the project? Please identify what your needs are and explain your response.		Yes	No		
18.4	Do you consider having your emotional needs met a measure of the success of the project? Please explain your response.		Yes	No		
19.1	Was there an improvement in staff morale?		Yes	No		
19.2	What factors did you use to assess this?					
20.	Were end users confident in operating the system? Please explain your response.		Yes	No		
21.1	Was the system user friendly?		Yes	No		
21.2	What measures did you use to determine how user-friendly the system was?					
22.	To what extent was senior management involved in the project?		Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23.	To what extent were employees (end-users) involved in the project?		Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Never

MECHANISMS FOR PLANNING COMPUTERISATION

- 24.1 Do you feel there is a need to have a mechanism for planning computerisation? Yes No
- 24.2 Is the size of the company a determining factor as to whether a mechanism, for planning computerisation, is found? Yes No
- 24.3 One consultant who responded to the survey did not know whether there was a mechanism in place, how do you believe this reflects on the work that would have been done for the client?
- 25.1 Was there a mechanism in place at the beginning of the project? Yes No
- 25.2 Was there a mechanism in place at the end of the project? Yes No
- 26.1 Who selected the mechanism? Consultant Client Other
- 26.2 (If it was the consultant.) how did you determine the specifications for the system?
- 26.3 How was the effectiveness of the system to be checked? (28)
- 26.4 (If it was not the consultant.), please explain why you did not select the mechanism? (27.1)
- 27.1 Were these plans made centrally or in the function area (e.g. finance, personnel etc.) where the project was taking place? Centralised Decentralised
- 27.2 If centralised, which function had control /responsibility for the planning of computerisation? (28)
- 27.3 If decentralised, which function had control /responsibility for the planning of computerisation? (28)
28. Do you believe that possessing a mechanism for planning computerisation is related to the outcome of the project. Please explain your response. Yes No

POLICIES FOR CONTROLLING COMPUTERISATION

- 29.1 Did the client have a policy for controlling computerisation? Yes No
- 29.2 If Yes, whose responsibility was it to produce the policy for controlling computerisation and what skills / qualifications did they possess to do this job. Please provide any written information on the policy where applicable. (30.1)
- 29.3 If No, then why was there not a policy? (30.1)
- 30.1 Were there any external regulatory bodies that were consulted or rules made by regulatory bodies that controlled the policies that could be made? Yes No
- 30.2 If Yes - please identify who they were and what restriction they imposed.
If No, (31)
31. How are the policies for controlling computerisation linked, if at all, to the mechanisms for planning computerisation?
- 32.1 Are there any benefits derived from having a policy for controlling computerisation?

- 32.2 Are there differences in whether a policy is found and the nature of the policy when a PC system is implemented rather than a mainframe one? Please explain your response.
- Yes No

BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

- 33.1 Was the system supposed to create a business advantage and if so, what advantage was it supposed to confer?
- Yes No
- 33.2 Does the system create a business advantage? (If **No**, 35.1)
- Yes No
- 33.3 If **Yes**, what advantage does it create?
- 33.4 How is this related to how the client viewed the success of the project?

PROJECT RELATIONS

- 35.1 Was a project team organised?
- Yes No
- 35.2 If **No**, please explain how the work was co-ordinated, organised etc. (35.6)
- 35.3 If **Yes**, how was the team organised and, was there a fixed team or did the team's composition change at different stages of the project?
- 35.4 Who were the members of the team?
- 35.5 What were the team's (s') functions?
- 35.6 How did you assess the effectiveness of the work that was produced? (if **not assessed** 36.1)
- 35.7 What changes, if any, would you have made to the way in which you assessed the team's effectiveness?
- 36.1 What do you consider professional behaviour on the part of the client?
- 36.2 Do you believe that the client behaved professionally at all times. Please explain your response.
- Yes No
- 36.3 What do you consider professional behaviour on your part and what characteristics do your consultants need to possess to do their job well?
- 36.4 Do you believe that your individuals within your organisation behaved professionally at all times. Please explain your response.
- Yes No

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL RELATIONS

- 37.1 Was there any resistance to the system or any organizational changes being implemented? (If **No**, 38)
- Yes No
- 37.2 If **Yes**, how were such situations resolved and what methods were used to persuade opposers and/or what methods were used to overcome the resistance to the system or other changes?
38. Did you attempt to become involved in the client's internal company politics. Please explain your response.
- Yes No

39. Were there any problems between the consultants working on the project that the client was aware of?
(If **No**, 41.1) Yes No
40. If **Yes**, how did this affect the project?

BUDGETS

- 41.1 What was the budget for the entire project (inc. of consultants' fees, any training etc.)?

- 41.2 Please provide a brief summary, in terms of your understanding, of how the money was to be divided?
- 41.3 Who was responsible for deciding the amount at which the budget should be set?
- 41.4 What amount was actually spent? _____
- 41.5 If there was a **difference** (i.e. increase or decrease in what was spent) what was the reason for this?
(If **No difference**, 41.8)
- 41.6 If there was an **increase**, who instigated the need for the increase?
- 41.7 At what stage of the project was it felt there should be an increase made in the budget?
- 41.8 If there was **no difference or a decrease** in the budget what would you consider was the next most influential variable that affected the outcome of the project?

INTERACTION WITH THE SYSTEM

- 42.1 From the survey results it was shown that some consultants believed that the language used to interact with the system caused the most problems for the client, what is your perspective on this? (If **it did not**, 43) Yes No
- 42.2 If **it did**, how did it affect the outcome of the project?
43. Who implemented the system? Client Consultant Other
- 44.1 Have there been any problems with the system since its implementation, as far as you know?(If **No** or **Do not know** 45.1; If **Yes** 44.2) Yes No Do not know
- 44.2 What was the nature of the problems?
- 44.3 Who dealt with the problems?
- 44.4 If they were not dealt with by the consultants, please explain why not.
- 44.5 How quickly were these problems dealt with (i.e. within 24 hours or less, one day, a week etc.)?
- 44.6 Has this factor affected the way in which the client has viewed the outcome of the project? Please explain your response.

MONITORING OF THE PROJECT

- 45.1 Was there a strategy (or performance indicators used) within your organisation which would indicate when the project was not going well?
Yes No
- 45.2 If Yes, please identify the indicators that you have or would have used.
- 45.3 If No, please explain why there were no indicators in place.
- 46.1 What factors would you have identified as the key measures for how successful the project has been?
- 46.2 How have or how would you measure them?
- 47.1 Do you believe that the client understood their IT/IS requirements before the project started and /or was there a learning curve? Please explain your response.
Yes No
- 47.2 Do you believe that you understood the client's IT requirements and thus provided them with an effective solution to their IS/IT needs. Please explain your response.
Yes No
- 47.3 What information / recommendations would the client have found useful before considering employing your consultancy e.g. on assessing the work of the consultants, understanding your IT/IS requirements etc.?
- 47.4 Did you provide this information?
Yes No
- 47.5 If not, please explain why.

APPENDIX C: THE CLIENT CASE STUDY INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



Canterbury Business School

Dialling code for Canterbury:
01227 (UK) or +44 1227 (International)
Tel: 827726 direct line
Fax: 761187

Faith Gordon
6 Helix Road
London
SW2 2JS

Name
Company Address

Date

Dear Name,

You will find enclosed a copy of the client interview schedule, as promised. I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Kent. I am researching the Management Consultancy phenomenon, specifically how Information Technology (IT) management consultants and their clients, both in the public and private sectors, interrelate. From this research, a model will be created which will be used to determine performance, tangible and intangible, in both sectors. The primary focus of this research is to combine academic theory with the knowledge and experience of practitioners, purchasers and project managers.

When this research is completed, it may be used as a benchmark by which consultancy performance can be measured in the public and private sectors. For clients it will provide a means by which they can determine which consultancies they will ask to make tenders. Then once a consultancy is selected what to expect from the various stages of the consultancy assignment and finally how they can measure the performance of the consultants.

For the consultancies, it is a means by which they can determine how they perform relative to others who operate in the same competency areas. Secondly, it is a means by which they can continually measure the quality of service provided to clients. It may also become a means of not only aiding the advancement of the academic work done in the consultancy field but provide a model on which nationally available databases of competencies are based.

I have previously carried out a survey of consultants and identified those who were interested in taking part in case studies. You will be one of twelve client companies taking part, whose size range from blue chip companies to small organisations in both of the above mentioned sections. Each client interview corresponds to a previously done consultant interview. The interviews are planned to run for approximately 1½ hours. The results of the information obtained will also be available to you before it will be published. All responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual responses will not be included in my Ph.D. Thesis or in any other written work although comments may be quoted unattributed unless otherwise authorised.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Faith Gordon

Canterbury Business School
The University, Canterbury
Kent CT2 7PE, UK

CLIENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interviewee	
Organisation	
Department	
Position held in the organisation	
Position held in relation to project	
Consultancy firm used	
Consultancy team project leader	
Date / Time	
Place	
Telephone Number	
Title of Project	

PROJECT DETAILS

1. Provide a general outline of what was initially envisaged by the project and for what period did the project run?
2. 1 Were differing options proposed?

YesNo
- 2.2 What were the options proposed by members of your organisation?
- 2.3 What were the options proposed by the consultancy that won the project?
- 2.4 What were the options proposed by other consultancies that made tenders?
3. Please give a brief description of the main sequence of events from the project’s inception to it’s completion - indicate where decisions were formalised and put into writing.
4. Who were the key players involved in making decisions?
- 5.1 How was the decision made to bring in consultants - please provide written information on selection criteria, where this exists?
- 5.2 How many consultancy firms were asked to tender?
- 5.3 On what basis was a specific consultancy firm chosen?

OUTCOME MEASURES

- 6.1 How good were the consultancies at identifying your needs. Please explain your response.
- 6.2 Do you consider there was a skills transfer between yourself and the consultant?

YesNo
- 6.3 Please provide details of what measures you have used to assess this skills transfer?
7. 1 Did you discuss your organisation’s strengths and weaknesses with the consultant?

AlwaysUsuallyNeutralRarelyNever
- 7.2 Would you consider this a success outcome measure?

YesNo
- 8.1 Do you consider you have received value for money (VFM)?

YesNo

- 8.2 If Yes, what measures have you used to assess this? (8.4)
- 8.3 If No, please explain your responses. (8.4)
- 8.4 Do you consider that receiving VFM is related to the quality of the advice you received or the quality of the system you received. Please explain which your response is related to.
- | | | | |
|--|--------|---------------|------------|
| | Advice | Yes
System | No
Both |
|--|--------|---------------|------------|
- 8.5 If Yes, how is VFM related to the quality of the advice you received or the quality of the system you received? (9.1)
- 8.6 If No, please explain your responses. (9.1)
- 8.7 Do you believe that receiving VFM is something you should take into consideration when deciding whether the project was successful. Please explain your response.
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 9.1 Have you completed a satisfaction survey, provided by the consultant?
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 9.2 Do you agree that by doing so, you have indicated to the consultancy firm that you were satisfied with the project. Please explain your response.
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
10. Do you consider that the consultant having the project always under control was a measure of success. Please explain your response.
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 11.1 Do you consider that having value added to the project, i.e. in terms of savings / improvements in tangible factors e.g. reduced overheads, was a measure of success. Please explain your response.
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 11.2 Do you consider that having value added to the project, i.e. in terms of savings in intangibles e.g. improvement in staff morale, was a measure of success. Please explain your response.
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 11.3 What is the relative importance of each to the outcome of the project?
- 12.1 Would you consider that having flexibility to extend the project, written into the contract, was a measure of success
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 12.2 If Yes, then for whom is it a measure of success. Please explain your response.
- 12.3 If No, please explain your response.
- 13.1 Would you consider the system's reliability of performance was a measure of success?
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
- 13.2 If Yes, what factors do you use to measure the system's reliability of performance. Please indicate whether the system was designed only or was designed and implemented by the consultant and how this affected your assessment of the system's performance.
- 13.3 If No, please explain your response.
- 14.1 How good were the consultants in proposing alternative solutions. Please explain your response.
- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|
| | Very Good | Good | Neutral | Poor | Very Poor |
|--|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|
- 14.2 Was there a system in place at the beginning of the project?
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|

- 14.3 If Yes, is the new system an improvement on the old (where appropriate). Please explain your response. Yes No
- 14.4 If after preliminary studies the consultants had found that the old system was adequate for your needs what course of action do you believe they would have taken?
- 15.1 Are you satisfied with the project's outcomes? Yes No
- 15.2 If you are satisfied, what factors have you used to measure your satisfaction? If possible place them in order of priority? **1** being the most important and **6** being the least important (15.4)
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 5 |
| 3 | 6 |
- 15.3 If you are not satisfied, please explain why not? (15.4)
- 15.4 Who were the end-users and were they satisfied with the project's outcomes? Yes No
- 15.5 If they are satisfied, what factors have they used to measure their satisfaction, if possible place them in order of priority? **1** being the most important and **6** being the least important (15.7)
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 5 |
| 3 | 6 |
- 15.6 If they are not satisfied, please explain why not? (15.7)
- 15.7 Are the consultants satisfied with the project outcomes? Yes No
- 15.8 If they are, have they used the same measures of success as you? (16) Yes No
- 15.9 If they are not satisfied, please explain, from what you have understood, why they are not.
16. Do you consider that having the system's technical specifications met was a measure of success? Please explain your response. Yes No
- 17.1 Do you feel ownership of the system? Yes No
- 17.2 If you feel ownership what measures have you used to assess this? (18)
- 17.3 If you do not feel ownership please explain why you do not feel ownership of the system? (18)
- 18.1 What do you consider your practical needs were (e.g. as little disruption to the normal working atmosphere as possible) and do you consider having your needs met a measure of the success of the project? Please explain your response. Yes No
- 18.2 Do you consider having your emotional needs (i.e. having fears and reservations concerning the project alleviated) met a measure of the success of the project? Please explain your response. Yes No
- 18.3 Do you consider having the consultant's practical needs met a measure of the success of the project. Please explain your response. Yes No

18.4	Do you consider having the consultant's emotional needs met, a measure of the success of the project. Please explain your response.	Yes	No		
19.1	Was there an improvement in staff morale?	Yes	No		
19.2	What factors did you use to assess this?				
20.	Were the end-users confident in operating the system? Please explain your response.	Yes	No		
21.1	Was the system user friendly?	Yes	No		
21.2	What measures did you use to determine how user-friendly the system was?				
22.	To what extent was senior management involved in the project?	Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23.	To what extent were employees (end-users) involved in the project?	Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Never

MECHANISMS FOR PLANNING COMPUTERISATION

24.	Do you feel there is a need to have a mechanism for planning computerisation?	Yes	No
25.1	Did you have a mechanism in place at the beginning of the project?	Yes	No
25.2	Did you have a mechanism in place at the end of the project?	Yes	No
26.1	Who selected the mechanism?	Consultant	client other
26.2	(If it was the <u>client</u> .) how did you determine the specifications for the system?		
26.3	How was the effectiveness of the system to be checked?		
26.4	(If it was <u>not the client</u> .), please explain why you did not select the mechanism?		
27.1	Were these plans made centrally or in the function area (e.g. finance, personnel etc.) where the project was taking place?	Centralised	Decentralised
27.2	If <u>centralised</u> , which function had control /responsibility for the planning of computerisation? (28)		
27.3	If <u>decentralised</u> , which function had control /responsibility for the planning of computerisation? (28)		
28.	Do you believe that possessing a mechanism for planning computerisation is related to the outcome of the project? Please explain your response.	Yes	No

POLICIES FOR CONTROLLING COMPUTERISATION

29.1	Did you have a policy for controlling computerisation?	Yes	No
------	--	-----	----

- 29.2 If Yes, whose responsibility was it to produce it and what skills / qualifications did they possess to do this job. Please provide any written information on the policy where applicable. (30.1)
- 29.3 If No, then why was there not a policy? (30.1)
- 30.1 Were there any external regulatory bodies that were consulted or rules made by regulatory bodies that controlled the policies?
- Yes No
- 30.2 If Yes - please identify who they were and what restriction they imposed.
If No, (33.1)
31. How are the policies for controlling computerisation linked, if at all, to the mechanisms for planning computerisation?
32. Were there any benefits derived from having a policy for controlling computerisation?

BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

- 33.1 Was the system supposed to create a business advantage? Please explain your response.
- Yes No
- 33.2 Does the system create a business advantage? (If No, 35.1)
- Yes No
- 33.3 If Yes, what advantage does it create?
- 33.4 How is this related to how you view the success of the project?

PROJECT RELATIONS

- 35.1 Was a project team organised?
- Yes No
- 35.2 If No, please explain how the work was co-ordinated, organised etc. (35.6)
- 35.3 If Yes, how was the team organised and, was there a fixed team or did the team's composition change at different stages of the project?
- 35.4 Who were the members of the team(s)?
- 35.5 What were the team's (s') functions?
- 35.6 How did you assess the effectiveness of the work that was produced?
- 35.7 With hindsight what changes, if any, would you have made to the way in which you assessed the team's effectiveness?
- 36.1 What do you consider professional behaviour on the part of the consultant?
- 36.2 Do you believe that the consultant behaved professionally at all times. Please explain your response.
- Yes No
- 36.3 What do you consider professional behaviour on your part?
- 36.4 Do you believe that your organisation or individuals within your organisation behaved professionally at all times. Please explain your response.
- Yes No

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL RELATIONS

- 37.1 Was there any resistance to the system or any organisational changes being implemented? (If No, 39)
Yes No
- 37.2 If Yes, how were such situations resolved and what methods were used to persuade opposers and/or what methods were used to overcome the resistance to the system or other changes?
38. Were the consultants aware of your company's internal dynamics (politics) and did they attempt to become involved. Please explain your response.
Yes No
- 39.1 Were there any problems between the consultants working on the project that you were aware of? (If No, 41.1)
Yes No
- 39.2 If Yes, please explain your response.
40. If Yes, how did this affect the project?

BUDGETS

- 41.1 What was the budget for the entire project (inc. of consultants' fees, any training etc.)?

- 41.2 Please provide a brief summary of how the money was to be divided?
- 41.3 Who was responsible for deciding the amount at which the budget should be set and what criteria was used to set this figure?
- 41.4 What amount was actually spent? _____
- 41.5 If there was a difference (i.e. increase or decrease in what was spent) what was the reason for this? (If No difference or decrease, 41.8)
- 41.6 Who instigated the need for the increase?
- 41.7 At what stage of the project was it felt there should be an increase made in the budget?
- 41.8 If there was no difference or a decrease in the budget what other variables would you consider affected the outcome of the project and what were their effects?

INTERACTION WITH THE SYSTEM

- 42.1 Consultants believe in general that the language used to interact with the system caused the most problems for the client, what is your perspective on this? (If it did not, 43)
Yes No
- 42.2 If it did, how did it affect the outcome of the project?
43. Who implemented the systems?
client consultant other
- 44.1 Have there been any problems with the system since its implementation? (If No 45.1; If Yes 44.2)
Yes No
- 44.2 What was the nature of the problems?
- 44.3 Who dealt with the problems?
- 44.4 If they were not dealt with, by the consultants, please explain why not.
- 44.5 How quickly were these problems dealt with (i.e. within 24 hours or less, one day, a week etc.)?

- 44.6 Has this factor affected the way in which you have viewed the outcome of the project. Please explain your response.

MONITORING OF THE CONSULTANCY PROFESSION

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|---|
| 45.1 | Client companies would be able to use the services of consultancies more efficiently leading to a higher percentage of successful outcomes, if they knew what to expect at all stages of an assignment. | Strongly Agree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Disagree | 5 |
|------|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|---|

If you strongly agree or agree please answer questions 45.2-46.10

If you did not agree please answer questions 47

- | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|---|
| 45.2 | Information concerning consultancies could be located on a database of sorts. | Strongly Agree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Disagree | 5 |
| 45.3 | This information should be nationally available. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |

This section focuses on the type of information that should be held on the database.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|--|
| | | Strongly Agree | | | | | Strongly Disagree | |
| 46.1 | The type of companies worked for and possibly a contact name. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.2 | Specific work done by each consultancy and/or each consultant. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.3 | Specific performance indicators based on a standard measure, for each consultancy firm. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.4 | Specific performance indicators based on a standard measure, for each consultant within a firm. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.5 | Estimate of fees charged e.g. per consultant day. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.6 | Information concerning the various stages of an assignment and the roles to be played by the client and the consultant. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.7 | There should be an expert system based on this data, by which consultants could be selected. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.8 | Using this database to determine the degree of success for a specific project. You would give (this information as the client.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.9 | Using this database accurate measures could be obtained about the work done within each market sector. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 46.10 | Whether the consultancy is registered BS5750 or ISO9000. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |

If you did not agree with statement 45.1:

47. Briefly explain the reasons for your answer.

MONITORING OF THE PROJECT

- | | | | |
|------|--|-----|----|
| 48.1 | Was there a strategy (or performance indicators used) within your organisation which would indicate when the project was not going well? | Yes | No |
| 48.2 | If <u>Yes</u> , please identify the indicators that you have or would have used. | | |

- 48.3 If No, please explain why there were no indicators in place.
- 49.1 What factors would you have identified as the key measures for how successful your project has been?
- 49.2 How have you measured or how would you measure them?
- 50.1 Do you believe that you understood your IT/IS requirements before the project started. Please explain your response.
- Yes No
- 50.2 Do you believe the consultants understood your IT requirements and thus provided an effective solution to you IS/IT needs. Please explain your response.
- Yes No
- 50.3 What information / recommendations would you have found useful before considering employing consultants e.g. on assessing the work of the consultants, understanding your IT/IS requirements etc.?

APPENDIX D: CROSSTABULATIONS SIGNIFICANT AT THE 5% LEVEL

This section presents the crosstabulations that proved to be significant at the 5% level, when a series of crosstabulations were performed. The relationships that proved to be statistically significant when a 2x2 chi-squared exact test was performed are presented in Section 4.9.

Table D.1 A Good Relationship Being Based On Trusting The Competency Of The Consultant.

		Trusting competency of the consultant to make appropriate recommendations		
The need for a good relationship	Count	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Row Total
	Strongly Agree 1	34	1	35 62.5
	Agree 2	15	3	18 32.1
	Neutral 3	1	2	3 5.4
	Column Total	50 89.3	6 10.7	56 100

Chi-Square	Value	D.F.	Significance
Pearson	12.74311	2	0.00171
Likelihood Ratio	9.01484	2	0.01103
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	10.21353	1	0.00139
Minimum Expected Frequency-	0.321		
Cells with Expected Frequency <5 -4 of 6 (66.7%)			
Number of Missing Observations:	1		

Table D.2 The Health Of The Client Consultant Relationship And The Co-operativeness Of The Client

		How co-operative the client was			
		Count	Co-operative 1	Quite Co-operative 2	Neutral 3
Quality of the relationship	Very Good 1	11	19	1	31 56.4
	Good 2	1	13	8	22 40.0
	Neutral 3		2		3 3.6
	Column Total	12 21.8	34 61.8	9 16.4	55 100

Chi-Square	Value	D.F.	Significance
Pearson	15.57255	4	0.00365
Likelihood Ratio	17.51538	4	0.00153
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	10.37080	1	0.00128
Minimum Expected Frequency-	0.327		
Cells with Expected Frequency <5 -5 of 9 (55.6%)			
Number of Missing Observations:	2		

Table D.3 The Health Of The Client Consultant Relationship And Courteousness Of The Client

		How courteous the client was			
Count		Courteous 1	Quite Courteous 2	Neutral 3	Discourteous 4
Quality of the relationship	Very Good 1	12	17	2	
	Good 2	3	14	4	1
	Neutral 3			2	
	Column Total	15 27.3	31 56.4	8 14.5	1 1.8
		Row Total			
		31 56.4			
		22 40.0			
		2 3.6			
		55 100			

Chi-Square	Value	D.F.	Significance
Pearson	18.01587	6	0.00619
Likelihood Ratio	14.78904	6	0.02196
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	10.07155	1	0.00151
Minimum Expected Frequency-	0.036		
Cells with Expected Frequency <5 -8 of 12 (66.7 %)			
Number of Missing Observations:	2		

Table D.4 The Effect On The Client Consultant Relationship Of The User-Orientedness Of The Consultant

		How user-oriented the consultant was		
Count		User- oriented 1	Quite User-oriented 2	Neutral 3
Quality of the relationship	Very Good 1	22	9	
	Good 2	6	13	3
	Neutral 3		2	
	Column Total	28 50.9	24 43.6	3 5.5
		Row Total		
		31 56.4		
		2 40.0		
		2 3.6		
		55 100		

Chi-Square	Value	D.F.	Significance
Pearson	14.55789	4	0.00571
Likelihood Ratio	16.48925	4	0.00243
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	12.07521	1	0.00051
Minimum Expected Frequency-	0.109		
Cells with Expected Frequency <5 -5 of 9 (55.6%)			
Number of Missing Observations:	2		

Table D.5 The Effect On The Client Consultant Relationship Of The Co-Operativeness Of The Consultant

		How co-operative the consultant was			
Quality of the relationship	Count	Co-operative 1	Quite Co-operative 2	Neutral 3	Row Total
	Very Good 1	21	10		31 56.4
	Good 2	6	11	5	22 40.0
	Neutral 3		2		2 3.6
	Column Total	27 49.1	23 41.8	5 9.1	55 100.0

Chi-Square Value D.F. Significance

Pearson	15.46050	4	0.00384
Likelihood Ratio	17.86211	4	0.00131
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	11.61356	1	0.00065

Minimum Expected Frequency- 0.182

Cells with Expected Frequency <5 -5 of 9 (55.6%)

Number of Missing Observations: 2

Table D.6 The Effect On The Client Consultant Relationship Of The Professionalism Of The Client.

		How professional the client was		
Quality of the relationship	Count	Professional 1	Quite Professional 2	Row Total
	Very Good 1	29	2	31 56.4
	Good 2	18	4	22 40.0
	Neutral 3		2	2 3.6
	Column Total	47 85.5	8 14.5	55 100.0

Chi-Square Value D.F. Significance

Pearson	13.61788	2	0.00110
Likelihood Ratio	9.92812	2	0.00698
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	7.93639	1	0.00484

Minimum Expected Frequency- 0.291

Cells with Expected Frequency <5 -4 of 6 (66.7%)

Number of Missing Observations: 2

**APPENDIX E: THE MEASURES OF SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE USED BY THE CASE
STUDY RESPONDENTS TO ASSESS THE PROJECTS**

This section presents the responses to questions 15.2, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6 on both the client and consultant interview schedules; 15.8, 15.9 and 49.1 from the client interview schedule; and, 46.1 from the consultant interview schedule in Tables E.1 - E.5. The * on each table indicates the responses made by each respondent. The client respondents provided measures used for themselves, the end users and the consultants. The consultants were asked to provide measures for the client and themselves. The only measures that were used to weight the scores in Table 6.11 are those that each respondent reported for themselves in Tables E.1 - E.5.

The performance indicators used for the projects, reported in Tables E.6 and E.7, were obtained from the responses to questions 45.1 and 45.2 on the consultant interview schedule and 48.1 and 48.2 on the client interview schedule. Both the client and consultant responses were used to weight the scores in Table 6.11. The tables used were Tables E.6 and E.7, as these were indicators the respondents reported that they had used for themselves.

Table E.1 People Related Outcome Success Measure

Key

AOS	The proposals were accepted by other members of client company's staff.
ASM	The project's results were approved by senior management.
EUS	The end users were satisfied with the outcome of the project.
Exp	Meeting client expectations/ objectives.
FB	Receiving verbal feedback from the client
Gut	The respondent's 'gut feelings' were used as a success measure.
Hap	The consultant is concerned about the client's happiness with the project.
Risk	The risk was shared between and managed by the two parties.
SM	The project was supported by maintenance staff.
Trust	The client trusted the consultancy and their methods.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	People related measures									
			ASM	AOS	Hap	SM	GUT	FB	Exp	EUS	Trust	Risk
Central Government Department	Client Response	Client	*	*		*	*					
		End user					*					
	Consultant Response	Consultant			*			*				
		Client							*			
		Consultant										
		Consultant										
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response	Client		*	*				*			
		End user										
		Consultant										
	Consultant Response	Client			*			*				
		Consultant			*			*	*			
		Consultant										
Law Society	Client Response	Client	*	*					*			
		End user										
		Consultant										
	Consultant Response	Client				*	*					
		Consultant			*							
		Consultant										
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Client							*			
		End user										
		Consultant										
	Consultant Response	Client										
		Consultant										
		Consultant										

Table E.1 Continued. People Related Outcome Success Measure

Key	
AOS	The proposals were accepted by other members of client company's staff.
ASM	The project's results were approved by senior management.
EUS	The end users were satisfied with the outcome of the project.
Exp	Meeting client expectations/ objectives.
FB	Receiving verbal feedback from the client
Gut	The respondent's 'gut feelings' were used as a success measure.
Hap	The consultant is concerned about the client's happiness with the project.
Risk	The risk was shared between and managed by the two parties.
SM	The project was supported by maintenance staff.
Trust	The client trusted the consultancy and their methods.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	People related measures									
			ASM	AOS	Hap	SM	GUT	FB	Exp	EUS	Trust	Risk
Companies House	Client Response	Client	*	*					*			
		End user										
	Consultant Response	Consultant										
		Client										
		Consultant										
NHS Executive	Client Response	Client		*					*	*		
		End user							*			
		Consultant										
	Consultant Response	Client							*			
		Consultant									*	*
BACS	Client Response	Client						*		*		
		End user										
		Consultant	*		*							
	Consultant Response	Client							*			
		Consultant										
Department of Transport	Client Response	Client	*	*				*				
		End user										
		Consultant	*	*	*							
	Consultant Response	Client										
		Consultant			*							*

Table E.2 System Related Outcome Measures

Key

CO There were few changes made to the output.
 Diff The deliverables made a difference to the company's working practices.
 ER The report was easy to use.
 FT The system quickly performed its function.
 Fut Future work was facilitated by the output of the project.
 Perf The system performed well generally.

PoF There was the potential for future development.
 QD The quality of the output.
 Rel The reliability of the system.
 RNA New issues were revealed as a result of the project or the output.
 Rob The robustness of the system.
 UF The system was user-friendly.
 USE The output has been put to use.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	System Measures												
			Diff	CO	QD	RNA	Use	Fut	ER	UF	FT	Perf	Rel	Rob	PoF
Central Government Department	Client	Client													
	Response	End user													
		Consultant													
	Consultant	Client	*												
	Response	Consultant													
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client	Client		*	*										
	Response	End user			*										
		Consultant													
	Consultant	Client			*										
	Response	Consultant			*										

Table E.2 Continued. System Related Outcome Measures

Key

CO There were few changes made to the output.
 Diff The deliverables made a difference to the company's working practices.
 ER The report was easy to use.
 FT The system quickly performed its function.
 Fut Future work was facilitated by the output of the project.
 Perf The system performed well generally.

PoF There was the potential for future development.
 QD The quality of the output.
 Rel The reliability of the system.
 RNA New issues were revealed as a result of the project or the output.
 Rob The robustness of the system.
 UF The system was user-friendly.
 USE The output has been put to use.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	System Measures												
			Diff	CO	QD	RNA	Use	Fut	ER	UF	FT	Perf	Rel	Rob	PoF
Law Society	Client Response	Client		*		*									
		End user													
		Consultant													
	Consultant Response	Client					*								
		Consultant													
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Client			*			*							
		End user													
		Consultant													
	Consultant Response	Client					*								
		Consultant					*								
Companies House	Client Response	Client													
		End user													
		Consultant													
	Consultant Response	Client													
		Consultant													

Table E.2 Continued. System Related Outcome Measures

Key

CO There were few changes made to the output.
 Diff The deliverables made a difference to the company's working practices.
 ER The report was easy to use.
 FT The system quickly performed its function.
 Fut Future work was facilitated by the output of the project.
 Perf The system performed well generally.

PoF There was the potential for future development.
 QD The quality of the output.
 Rel The reliability of the system.
 RNA New issues were revealed as a result of the project or the output.
 Rob The robustness of the system.
 UF The system was user-friendly.
 USE The output has been put to use.

Name of the Client	Respondent	Group	System Measures												
Company			Diff	CO	QD	RNA	Use	Fut	ER	UF	FT	Perf	Rel	Rob	PoF
NHS Executive	Client 2 Response	Client										*	*	*	*
		End user					*		*	*	*				
		Consultant													
	Consultant Response	Client					*	*							
		Consultant		*			*								
BACS	Client Response	Client						*							*
		End user													
		Consultant													
	Consultant Response	Client										*	*		
		Consultant													
Department of Transport	Client Response	Client					*							*	
		End user													
		Consultant					*							*	
	Consultant Response	Client													
		Consultant													

Table E.3 Project Related Outcome Success Measures

Key

Bud The project was completed within budget.

CoS The project was completed successfully.

GRC There was a good relationship between the client and consultant.

Int The SPCO was seen as part of the DOT.

Pol The political situation was not exacerbated.

Sale The completion of the project would allow the sale of the railway businesses.

Save There would be future cost savings.

Time The project was completed on time.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Project Related Measures							
			Pol	Time	Bud	GRC	CoS	Save	Sale	Int
Central Government Department	Client Response	Client								
		End user								
		Consultant								
	Consultant Response	Client								
		Consultant								
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response	Client								
		End user								
		Consultant								
	Consultant Response	Client								
		Consultant								
Law Society	Client Response	Client	*	*						
		End user								
		Consultant								
	Consultant Response	Client								
		Consultant								

Table E.3 Continued. Project Related Outcome Success Measures

Key

Bud The project was completed within budget.

CoS The project was completed successfully.

GRC There was a good relationship between the client and consultant.

Int The SPCO was seen as part of the DOT.

Pol The political situation was not exacerbated.

Sale The completion of the project would allow the sale of the railway businesses.

Save There would be future cost savings.

Time The project was completed on time.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Project Related Measures							
			Pol	Time	Bud	GRC	CoS	Save	Sale	Int
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Client								
		End user								
		Consultant								
	Consultant Response	Client								
		Consultant								
Companies House	Client Response	Client								
		End user								
		Consultant								
	Consultant Response	Client		*	*	*				
		Consultant		*	*	*				
NHS Executive	Client Response	Client								
		End user								
		Consultant								
	Consultant Response	Client			*					
		Consultant								

Table E.3 Continued. Project Related Outcome Success Measures

Key

Bud The project was completed within budget.

CoS The project was completed successfully.

GRC There was a good relationship between the client and consultant.

Int The SPCO was seen as part of the DOT.

Pol The political situation was not exacerbated.

Sale The completion of the project would allow the sale of the railway businesses.

Save There would be future cost savings.

Time The project was completed on time.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Project Related Measures							
			Pol	Time	Bud	GRC	CoS	Save	Sale	Int
BACS	Client Response	Client		*			*	*		
		End user								
		Consultant		*	*		*			
	Consultant Response	Client								
		Consultant								
Department of Transport	Client Response	Client							*	*
		End user								
		Consultant							*	*
	Consultant Response	Client							*	
		Consultant								

Table E.4 Consultant Related Outcome Success Measures

Key

Comp The outcome of the project was compared to that of other projects.

MCO The consultant's own objectives were met.

NB The consultant negotiated his own fee, i.e. a fixed fee was not requested contrary to normal practice.

PMC Improved reception of the consultancy in the management consultancy industry because of the project.

PUR The client had an improved impression of the consultant at the end of the project.

QW The quality of the work.

Sci The specific measures used.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Consultant related measures						
			Sci	Comp	MCO	QW	PUR	NB	PMC
Central Government Department	Client Response	Client	*						
		End user							
		Consultant							
	Consultant Response	Client							
		Consultant		*	*				
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant		*	*				
	Consultant Response	Client							
		Consultant		*	*	*			
Law Society	Client Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant							
	Consultant Response	Client							
		Consultant							
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant							
	Consultant Response	Client				*			
		Consultant				*			
Companies House	Client Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant	*						
	Consultant Response	Client				*	*		
		Consultant				*	*		

Table E.4 Continued. Consultant Related Outcome Success Measures

Key

- Comp The outcome of the project was compared to that of other projects.
MCO The consultant's own objectives were met.
NB The consultant negotiated his own fee, i.e. a fixed fee was not requested contrary to normal practice.
PMC Improved reception of the consultancy in the management consultancy industry because of the project.
PUR The client had an improved impression of the consultant at the end of the project.
QW The quality of the work.
Sci The specific measures used.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Consultant related measures						
			Sci	Comp	MCO	QW	PUR	NB	PMC
NHS Executive	Client 2 Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant					*		
	Consultant Response	Client							
		Consultant				*		*	
BACS	Client Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant					*		*
	Consultant Response	Client							
		Consultant					*		
Department of Transport	Client Response	Client							
		End user							
		Consultant							
	Consultant Response	Client							
		Consultant							

Table E.5 Consultancy Business Related Measures

Key
PAY The consultant's invoice was paid
Prof The project was profitable for the consultant.
Rep The consultant was asked to conduct repeat business.
Spin There was delivery of additional products.
URef The client is willing to act as a reference site.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Consultancy Business Measures				
			Rep	Spin	URef	PAY	Prof
Central Government Department	Client Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant	*	*			
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant	*		*		*
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response	Client	*				
		End user					
		Consultant					
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant					
Law Society	Client Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant					
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant	*				*
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant					
	Consultant Response	Client	*				
		Consultant	*				
Companies House	Client Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant					
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant					

Table E.5 Continued. Consultancy Business Related Measures

Key
PAY The consultant's invoice was paid
Prof The project was profitable for the consultant.
Rep The consultant was asked to conduct repeat business.
Spin There was delivery of additional products.
URef The client is willing to act as a reference site.

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Group	Consultancy Business Measures				
			Rep	Spin	URef	PAY	Prof
NHS Executive	Client 2 Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant	*				*
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant	*			*	
BACS	Client Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant					*
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant			*	*	
Department of Transport	Client Response	Client					
		End user					
		Consultant					
	Consultant Response	Client					
		Consultant	*				

Table E.6 People Related Progress Performance Indicators

Key

ComU	There were no complaints from the users	Perf	How well individuals performed
Con	There was regular contact with the senior consultant	QA	Whether the quality assurance standards were met
FB	There was informal feedback	MP	Whether there was appropriate levels of manpower to manage the project
FBud	There was a fixed budget		

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Indicators	Team related measures				Consultant related measures		
		Sat	Perf	FB	MP	ComU	QA	Con	FBud
Government Central Department	Client Response	Yes	*				*		
	Consultant Response	Yes	*						
Preston Acute Hospitals	Client Response	Yes							
	Consultant Response								
Law Society	Client Response	No		*					
	Consultant Response	Yes		*					*
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Client Response	Yes							
	Consultant Response	Yes		*					
Companies House	Client Response	Yes			*	*			
	Consultant Response	Yes						*	

Table E.6 Continued People Related Progress Performance Indicators

Key

ComU	There were no complaints from the users	Perf	How well individuals performed
Con	There was regular contact with the senior consultant	QA	Whether the quality assurance standards were met
FB	There was informal feedback	MP	Whether there was appropriate levels of manpower to manage the project
FBud	There was a fixed budget		

Name of the Client Company	Respondent	Indicators	Team related measures				Consultant related measures		
		Sat	Perf	FB	MP	ComU	QA	Con	FBud
NHS Executive	Client Response	Yes							
	Consultant Response	Yes							
BACS	Client Response	Yes							
	Consultant Response	Yes							
Department of Transport	Client Response								
	Consultant Response	Yes							

Table E.7 System And Project Progress Performance Indicators

Key

Cost	The consultant's costs were met	RAc	The rate of achievement
Del	The deliverables and project milestones were monitored	RDes	Whether there was regular contact with a designer
Mon	The project arrived within budget	RSp	The rate at which money was spent
OS	There were no overspends	SADM	Whether the project was monitored in relation to SSADM requirements
PerS	How well the system and network performed	SP	The willingness to support the production of documentation
PP	Whether the project plan was adhered to	Time	The project meeting the project timescale
Press	Whether the organisation was given any bad publicity	TR	The terms of reference were understood
Prin	Whether the project was monitored in relationship to PRINCE	WR	Whether a weekly report was written
QSoF	The quality of the software		

Name of the Client	Respondent	System Related Measures				Project Related Measures													
Company		Del	RDes	QSoF	PerS	Time	SP	TR	PP	WR	Prin	Mon	Press	OS	SADM	Cost	RSp	RAc	
Government	Client Response					*		*											
Central Department	Consultant Response					*	*												
Preston Acute	Client Response	*																	
Hospitals	Consultant Response																		
Law Society	Client Response																		
	Consultant Response								*										
London Borough	Client Response									*									
of Waltham Forest	Consultant Response	*																	
Companies House	Client Response					*					*	*							
	Consultant Response		*																
NHS Executive	Client Response	*		*		*					*				*				
	Consultant Response	*				*										*	*	*	

Table E.7 Continued. System And Project Progress Performance Indicators

Key			
Cost	The consultant's costs were met	RAc	The rate of achievement
Del	The deliverables and project milestones were monitored	RDes	Whether there was regular contact with a designer
Mon	The project arrived within budget	RSp	The rate at which money was spent
OS	There were no overspends	SADM	Whether the project was monitored in relation to SSADM requirements
PerS	How well the system and network performed	SP	The willingness to support the production of documentation
PP	Whether the project plan was adhered to	Time	The project meeting the project timescale
Press	Whether the organisation was given any bad publicity	TR	The terms of reference were understood
Prin	Whether the project was monitored in relationship to PRINCE	WR	Whether a weekly report was written
QSoF	The quality of the software		

[illegible]