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Collaborative Public Management: Exploring Public-Social Enterprise Partnerships in Conceptualising Innovative Models of User Involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of Public Services.

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A Thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Public Management

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ABSTRACT
THE LORD ASHCROFT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL
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Collaborative Public Management: Exploring Public-Social Enterprise Partnerships in Conceptualising Innovative Models of User Involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of Public Services.

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This study explores partnership working as a mechanism for effective public service delivery. It investigates into how Public-Social Enterprise Partnerships (P-SEPs) can utilise innovative models of user involvement and Service Innovation (SI) in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led socially-oriented services to young adults (18-24) in East England. It identifies the inability of P-SEPs to conceptually explore innovative models of user involvement and SI when engaging young-adult end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led solutions to `wicked` issues like `rough sleeping` as a gap in knowledge which I will explore three interrelated research questions in filling.

This study draws conceptual inspiration from the network theory, the Pragmatic research paradigm and the inductive-deductive research strategy in exploring the Concurrent Mixed Method underpinned by Likert-scale questionnaires and semi-structure interviews as my data gathering instruments. The emergent conceptual framework from my data analyses posits that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services can engineer satisfaction, transformational outcomes and high service quality.

A fieldtrip provided the conceptual opportunity for me to explore three multiple-case studies in gathering qualitative data through semi-structured interviews administered to staff as these were coded, thematised and analysed using NVivo. Quantitative data from questionnaires administered to end users were analysed using Excel. Evidence gleaned from both strands was integrated and triangulated in complementing and enhancing my research findings.

This study challenges misconceptions and dominant ideologies which underpin user involvement while making three interconnected contributions to knowledge. First, it extends the frontiers of knowledge in the discipline by creating new insights and articulating four innovative models of user involvement. Second, at the practical level, it contributes to the ongoing debate on conceptualising, modernising and delivering more effective user-engineered public services by informing professional practice and policymaking. And third, at the theoretical level, it contributes towards the development of a theory on user involvement. It thus underlines the factual conclusion that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes can engineer high user satisfaction, high service quality and transformational outcomes. It successfully re-positions the debates on user involvement on new conceptual and empirical grounds.

Key concepts: Partnership working, user involvement, transformational outcomes, collaborative Public Management, Public service delivery and Social Enterprise.

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List of Acronyms

BV	Best Value
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CIC	Community Interest Company
CLG	Companies Limited by Guarantee
CLS	Company Limited by Share
CPM	Collaborative Public Management
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
ECIE	European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship
IPS	Industrial and Provident Societies
LA	Local Authority
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MM	Mixed Methods
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NPM	New Public Management
NSD	New Service Development
PASC	Public Administration Select Committee
PFI	Public-Finance Initiative
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
P-SEP	Public-Social Enterprise Partnership
PSO	Public Sector Organisation
P-TSP	Public-Third Sector Partnership
QUAL	Qualitative
QUAN	Quantitative
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy
SE	Social Enterprise
SEL	Social Enterprise London
SI	Service Innovation
SMDO	Social-mission-driven-Organisation
TS	Third Sector
TSO	Third Sector Organisation
VCSO	Voluntary and Community Sector Organisation

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Chapter One

<u>Introduction</u>

The 1960s witnessed a huge upsurge in the drive to tackle cross-cutting social problems and deprivation through area specific policy mechanisms like "Educational Priority Areas, the Urban programme [and] Development Projects" (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.2) which targeted deprived communities. But partnership working initiatives stretch far back into history as Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCSOs) like faith-based groups have often played strategic roles in public service provision especially to deprived constituencies of the society (Seidle, 1995, pp.7-14 and Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, pp. 1-6). Such welfare-driven services have often been in sectors like education, health and social housing especially for vulnerable groups like the poor, children and women including residential homes for destitute children or orphans. This study argues that earlier endeavours like those cited above culminated in the emergence of the Beveridge, the Lord Seebohm and the Skeffington Reports of 1948, 1968 and 1969 respectively, on social services and planning (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.3 and Alcock and Scott, 2002, p.114). The central tenet of the above policy instruments emphasises the need for cross-boundary[1] collaboration between the State, and the private and Third sectors in conceptualising better models of public services delivery (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2).

While drawing inspiration from Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, p.44), I will argue that Partnership or cross-sector collaborative working implies;

> ...the linking or sharing of information, resources, activities and capabilities by
> organizations in two or more sectors to achieve jointly an outcome that could not
> be achieved by organizations in one sector separately.

I can contend that the third sector and its variants like charities, SEs and VCSOs can position themselves as vital models of public service delivery especially in tackling `wicked` issues

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[1] Cross-boundary collaboration refers to partnership working between the state and non state actors like the private and third sectors or between PSOs or across government departments with the aim of collectively tackling `wicked` cross-cutting issues which cannot be easily resolved through lone working. The current Coalition Government`s policy drive as encapsulated in the `Open Public Services White paper` (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.1) is to diversify public service provision by involving non-state actors through collaborative working.

like homelessness as these can often outstrip the capacity of any public sector organisation (PSO) to adequately resolve through lone working. But such a conceptualisation fails to capture and articulate problems like `collaborative inertia` and `subtracted value` which may impede effective `joined-up thinking` from leveraging `joined-up solutions to joined-up problems (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3)

The conceptualisation, design and delivery of public services in England today is undergoing huge changes partly due to the economic downturn and emergent developments in public service provisions like user involvement (Ferlie, Lynn, Jr. and Pollitt, 2007, p.1). This has triggered the development of collaborative tools like partnership working as hybridised organisations can jointly work across traditional organisational divide in tackling cross-cutting social, economic and environmental issues (Skelcher, 2007, p, 347 and Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.56). This renewed interest in collaborative working has triggered a cultural shift from the bureaucratic and hierarchical models through New Public Management (NPM) and the markets to the network model of public service delivery (Powell and Glendinning, 2002, p.1). Partnership working exposes the limitations of lone working and is a statutory requirement for organisations involved in public delivery in England today. It is also inspiring joined-up initiatives like networks, consortia, shared services and coalitions in achieving both political and strategic expediencies (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2).

But the growing body of scholarship on partnership working is marred by some definitional confusion or what Ling (2000, p.82) refers to as "methodological anarchy and definitional chaos" which risk undermining any `collaborative advantage` (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3). I will argue that the growing political and policy emphasis on partnership working raises fundamental challenges around its conceptualisation, mapping, definition, evaluation and governance while underpinning its multidimensional perspectives (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002, pp.33-34). This study argues that partnership or collaborative working is often bedevilled by ineffectiveness, weak user involvement, conceptual confusion and the tendency to promise more that it can deliver (Perri 6, 1997 cited in Powell and Glendinning, 2002, p.6 and Audit Commission, 1998, p.5). I will argue that "exclusionary structures, instructional practices and professional attitudes" (Carr, 2004 cited in SCIE, 2007, p.12) underpinned by

dysfunctional power dynamics between end users and staff or the service provider can engineer manipulation and marginalisation of user involvement.

This study contends that state and market failures are also continuously undermining the capacity of the state to provide responsive user-led solutions to cross-cutting issues plaguing citizens today thereby strengthening the case for partnership working (Simo and Bies, 2007, p.125 and Hudson and Hardy, 2002, p.51). I will also argue that public sector-engineered partnerships like Public-Social Enterprise Partnerships (P-SEPs) and other variants of Public-Third Sector Partnerships (P-TSPs) constitute vibrant and emerging models of public service delivery (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.1). I can contend that scholarship on P-SEPs is still embryonic despite the extensive body of extant literature on different forms of Public-Private collaborations like Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Public-Finance Initiatives (PFIs) (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.87, Minogue, 2001, p.7 and Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000, p.16). This is partly explained by the relative newness of Social Enterprises (SEs). This study argues that as Social-mission-driven-Organisations, SEs possess good knowledge and expertise of working with local communities especially in tackling razor-sharp, cross-cutting issues confronting citizens (Doherty et al., 2009, p.3, Barrett, Austin and McCarthy, 2000, p.2, Silverthorne, 2008, p.1 and Thompson, 2008, p.1).

I will argue that although partnership working can be conceptualised from two perspectives; as a tool for public service delivery and public governance, this study will focus on exploring and analysing the former because of its centrality in improving citizens` wellbeing (Stoker, 1997 cited in Clarke and Glendinning, 2002, p.43). Expeditious partnership working thus has the potentials of exploring New Public Management (NPM), market-oriented tools like contracting out and outsourcing in achieving efficiency and greater end user satisfaction (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p.280). The expertise for tackling long standing social problems like homelessness, alcohol and substance misuse, teenage pregnancies and social deprivation rests more with SEs because of their sector-specific knowledge and unblemished history of working with deprived communities. This study makes a compelling case for partnership working to adopt a transformational perspective and reposition itself "on new intellectual and practical foundations [rather than stale political and policy rhetoric in order] to avoid

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collapsing into a rubble of irrelevance" (Barzelay, 1992 cited in Heinrich, Hill and Lynn, Jr. 2004, p.3).

Partnership working has the potential of triggering a multi-stakeholder and multidimensional approach to tackling cross-cutting issues like educational underachievement in teenagers as these transcend the scope of any single organisation to adequately resolve alone (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.56). It was a key strand of New Labour`s narrative and discourse on public service modernisation as it sought to address the deficiencies of Old Labour`s bureaucratic model and the inadequacies of the Conservative-inspired markets (Powell and Glendinning, 2002, p.1 and Powell and Exworthy, 2002, p.15). Partnership working thus underpins not just a policy shift but leverages a `Third Way` for public service provision although there is scanty evidence of its ability to deliver user-led tangible outcomes (Rummery, 2002, p.231 and Giddens, 1998, p.78). New Labour emphasised this new narrative by signalling its intention to transform and reconfigure public service provision from a culture of contracts to that of partnership working (Craig and Taylor, 2002, p.132 and Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.3).This study conceptualises partnership working as a mechanism for enhancing user-led value creation and delivering effective public services especially in tackling `wicked issues` like homelessness and joblessness.

It will seek to investigate into how partnership working can explore innovative models of user involvement in engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. This is critically important because of the gap in knowledge and emergent interest and developments in user involvement (Beresford, 2010, p.497 and Hayes et al., 2011, p.17). It underscores the strategic importance of conceptualising innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led `joined-up solutions` to `joined-up problems`. It seeks to contribute to the growing bulk of scholarship on user involvement by streamlining and arguing that such involvement is vital in capturing user voice, `expertise`, experience and expectations as co-producers of services (Parston, 2008, p.4 and Dickson et al., 2002, p.193). Effectively exploring the above perspectives in engineering new conceptual dialogues, understanding and in extending the frontiers of knowledge will constitute distinctive features of this thesis (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.40, Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.15 and Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.7).

This chapter will also discuss issues like background information, conceptual framework, gap in knowledge and my contribution to knowledge. I will explore a field of study approach in conceptualising and articulating the key issues (Perry, 2005, p.8). This will be vital in strengthening my analysis and interpretations, delimiting my area of concentration, achieving internal coherence and avoiding digressions (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.45). The next subunit will discuss the background to this study.

1.1: Background to the Research:

This study argues that the failures of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery in the 1970s engineered a new wave of thinking which marked the emergence of NPM in the 1980s (Peters and Pierre, 2003, p.5). This marked a radical transformation of public service provisions as market mechanisms, private and TS provisions became mainstreamed into public service delivery amidst the diminishing resource base of the state (Pollitt, 2007, p.112). This necessitated a re-conceptualisation of partnership working as a policy tool for addressing the unintended consequences of NPM like service fragmentation which were engineered by the extensive use of the markets (Goldfinch, 2009, p.12). NPM tools such as outsourcing and contracting out are now widely used in fostering interagency-driven public service delivery initiatives (Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, p.7). The emergence of NPM has characterised public sector reforms in countries like the UK, New Zealand, Australia and the US over the last two decades (Christensen and Laegreid, 2007, p.1, Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p.284 and Minogue, 2001, p.1). This subunit will briefly demonstrate how the operational deficiencies of the bureaucratic model, engineered NPM and the current Network model of public service provision which explores partnership working and user involvement.

Post-NPM-driven policy initiatives like partnership working and user involvement have the potentials of addressing the inadequacies of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery by espousing the network model as citizen`s problems become more complex and interwoven (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.25). The bureaucratic model is bedevilled by hierarchies and a top down command-and-control approach to service delivery which treats service users as passive recipients of services (Peters and Pierre, 2003, p.5 and Minogue, 2001, p.3). This study argues that effective partnership working and user involvement can adequately address

the deficiencies of the bureaucratic model like silo mentality, inertia, the use of routines and non creative tools, a `one-style-fits-all approach` and "conservative work patterns" (Vigoda-Gadot, Schwabsky and Ruvio, 2005, p.57). I will argue that partnership working is a statutory requirement[2] for organisations involved in public service delivery in England and it is sometimes referred to as "compulsory partnerships" (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002 quoted in Anderson et al., 2005, p.3). This study argues that there is need to re-conceptualise the organisational structures of most PSOs as they were originally conceptualised to operate in tall hierarchical structures void of networks (Hughes, 2002). These have become largely irrelevant today because of the complex and interwoven nature of most societal problems like unemployment plaguing citizens (Osborne and McLaughlin, 2002, p.7, Ferlie et al., 1996, p.9 and Barzelay, 2002, p.15).

I will argue that the introduction of markets in public service delivery during the Thatcher era was driven by the need to `roll back` the size of the state and underpinned by the political and ideological belief in the primacy of the markets (Falconer and McLaughlin, 2000 and Chang, 2003, p.49). While proponents of NPM hail it as a new era, critics castigate its over reliance on the markets which are themselves flawed and refute its achievement of public sector efficiency for the lack of sustained empirical data (McCourt, 2001, p.112 and Flynn, 2002, p.57). But such a conceptual perspective fails to underline the inadequacies and negative impacts of government and market failures, as these can undermine effective public service delivery (Kruger, 1990, p.9, Verhoest, 2005, p.253 and Blom-Hansen, 2005, p.629). As captured by the Principal-Agent theory, causes of market failures such as information asymmetry, difficulties in monitoring contracts, moral hazard and adverse selections demonstrate the limitations of using markets in public service delivery (Zhang, 1998, p.232, Van Ackere, 1990, p.83 and Scott and Vick, 1999, p.111). On the other hand, the state can play a crucial role in mitigating the adverse effects of market failures by creating an enabling environment for markets to flourish (Chang, 2003, p.49 and Stiglitz, 1997, p.13).

I can argue that markets cannot be an effective tool for providing services to hard-to-reach groups, the poor or those with chronic debilitating health needs as TSOs can more effectively

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[2] For example, partnership working is a statutory requirement for local authorities (LAs) in England wishing to attract Central Government funding for local public service delivery.

explore partnership working in providing public services to these groups. New Labour re-invigorated the concept of partnership working as a paradigm shift from private sector to third sector provision of public services. Policy changes like the implementation of the Compact and Best Value (BV) inspired TSOs to synergise and bid to deliver large public sector contracts (Boyne, 1999, p.1). Partnership working is also a central strand of the "Big Society" ideology[3]. Effective partnership working thus emphasises clarity of goals, trust, commitment, shared objectives, consensus building, inclusivity, constant service improvements (Minogue, 2001, p.7, and Bovaird and Tizard, 2009, p.6) and "joined problem-solving[4]" (Entwistle, 2010, p.163). This study demonstrates that partnership working is predicated on shared learning since inter organisational working provides the opportunity for inclusivity and "collective action" (Milward and Provan, 2000) in jointly tackling issues germane to citizens.

I will argue that partnership working must avoid collaborative deficit or inertia by leveraging the opportunity for "collaborative advantage" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3) and added value in transforming citizens` quality of life (Donahue, 2004). I will also contend that `cross-sectoral` collaboration can provide effective strategies for pooling resources in tackling `wicked` or `joined-up problems` like youth unemployment through `joined-up solutions` (Logsdon, 1991, cited in Thomson, Perry and Miller, 2008, p.102 and Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, p.9). But this study cautions against over optimism by arguing that effective partnership working can be undermined by conflicts, poor allocation of resources, tensions, differences in budget cycles and organisational cultures (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.1). Innes (1999, cited in Thomson, Perry and Miller, 2008, p.102) views tension in consensus building as a potential lubricant for creativity, but warns against the adverse effects of chaos in collaboration as these can inhibit partners` ability to collectively tackle `wicked problems`.

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[3] This is a flagship programme conceptualised by the current Conservative-LIDEM Coalition government in the UK which encourages citizens and staff of failing PSOs and agencies like schools, hospitals, police authorities and GP surgeries to constitute themselves into consortia and takeover the running of such agencies.

[4] Partnership working also entails joined-up thinking`, `working together` and `joined decision-making` in which organisations and individuals pool resources in achieving shared goals and tackling razor-sharp `wicked issues`.

Partnership working as in the NHS, can leverage opportunities for "pooled budgets, lead commissioning and the integrated provision [of services]" (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.5) thereby avoiding service fragmentation. Although the Sir Jeremy Beecham`s "a Framework for Partnership" underscores its centrality in effective public service delivery there is thin evidence on the ground to justify it application (Balloch and Taylor, 2005 p.1). Partnership working is rapidly transforming public sector managers from service providers to service commissioners, facilitators, coordinators and contract managers. This therefore requires them to explore new toolkits like networking and consensus building in performing their new roles (Bingham and O`Leary, 2008, Morse and Buss, 2007 and Adair, 2004 and O`Leary et al., 2008, p.1). The main intellectual merit of this study is its potentials to extend the frontiers of knowledge by providing new conceptual insights and understanding into innovative models of user involvement. The next subunit will briefly discuss user involvement and the problematic with its definitions.

1.2: User Involvement: Origin, Limitations and Problematic with its Definition:

This study argues that public service provision in England has witnessed a paradigm shift over the last thirty years. First, the failures of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery in the 1970s with its overreliance on public provision triggered the emergence of NPM in the 1980s as markets introduced new providers like the private and third sectors (Liz, 2005, p.188). Second, the focus on service provision has also shifted from the service commissioners and providers to the service users as consumers and customers, hence the notion of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services (O`Flynn, 2007, p.3540). Prior to this paradigm shift in public service provision, the focus had been on service providers and staff to the detriment of service users as they were often treated as `passive recipients` of public services. This study will focus principally on investigating into user perceptions of the current emphasis on involvement marked by empowerment, choice, personalisation and service responsiveness which now characterise public service delivery across England (Cabinet Office, p.14). This subunit will briefly trace the origins of and the different conceptual meanings of user involvement while highlighting its limitations, problematic and areas where it can or cannot be applied.

The origins of user involvement can be traced to the emergence of disability movements in the 1960s and survivors groups in mental health as well as to developments and evolutions in public participation in democracy as these emphasise rights-based and empowerment agendas (Beresford, 2002, pp. 95-96). User involvement also emerged from the consumerist narrative which characterised NPM in the 1980s and 1990s as the user of public services became identified variously as `customer`, `consumer` and `client` (Beresford and Branfield, 2012, p.33). Emergent complementary concepts like identity, personalisation, empowerment, and choice widened and enriched the discourse and debates around user involvement. On the other hand, discourses of public participation in democratic community agendas as captured through Arnstein`s (1969, p.216) `Ladder of Citizen Participation` conceptualise citizens` involvement as progressing along a ladder-like structure ranging from manipulation to citizen control. These `rungs` of citizens` involvements also reflect different degrees of participation. Barnes and Cotterell (2012, p.xvi) argue that user involvement is a vast concept which can be conceptually confusing and sometimes contradictory as involvement can mean different things to different people.

This confusion is further compounded by the fact that user involvement can range from `passive` to `active`, `partial` to `total involvement` and from tokenistic strategies to complete user control of services. This study will focus on complete user control of services by investigating into how SEs engaged in public service delivery can explore innovative models of user involvement in fostering user perspectives in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. The inability of the bureaucratic model which had dominated public service provision for more than two centuries in the 1970s to effectively tackle the complex, interwoven and challenging problems confronting citizens engineered NPM in the 1980s and 1990s. This also provoked radical and new ways of engaging with service users in order to ensure that services address the specific needs of users. Figure 1.0, below depicts the key changes in public service delivery from the 1970s while capturing the web-like interactive and network relationships which sometimes characterise user-provider interactions.

Figure 1.1. Conceptualising User Involvement in user-led public service delivery through Public-Social Enterprise Partnership (P-SEP) working:
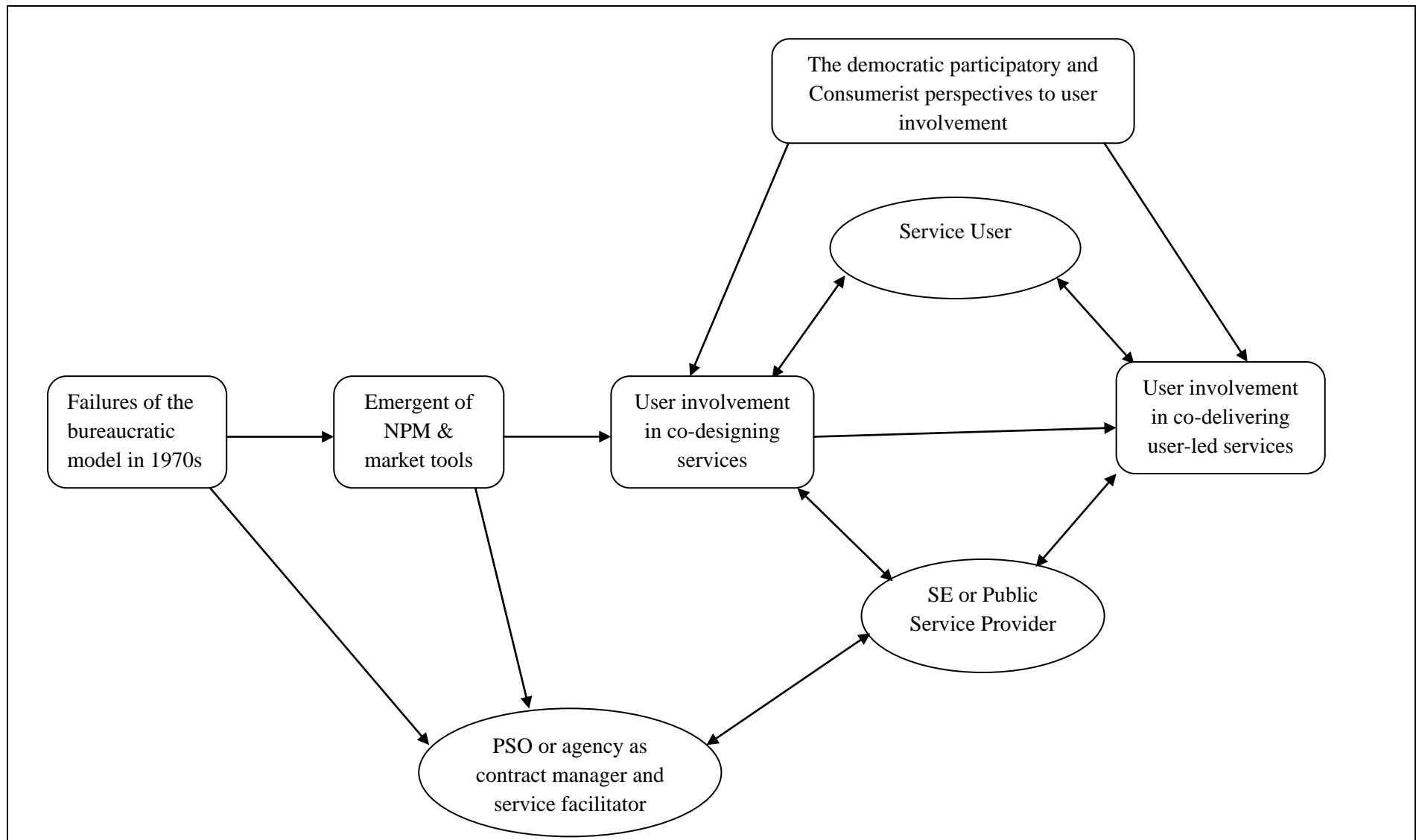
The above figure demonstrates that the failures of the bureaucratic model of public service provision in the 1970s and the emergence of NPM in the 1980s revolutionised the way PSOs and public managers provide public services as their roles changed from service providers to service commissioners and facilitators (Minogue, 2001, p.7). This led to the introduction of market principles in public service delivery especially in the health and social care sectors which underlines the consumerist perspective to user involvement (Beresford, 2010, p.496). The democratic participatory perspective to user involvement is underlined by associated concepts like human rights, empowerment and user networks and movements (Beresford, 2010, p.496). I can argue that extensive use of markets in the health and social care sectors led to the entries of VCSOs, charities and later SEs in public service delivery as the mixed and social economies of public service provisions developed (Ridley-Duff, 2011, p.2). A purchaser-provider relationship emerged between PSOs and organisations of the wider TS as the latter took on public service provision. The double-edge arrows indicate a two-way interactive relationship; between the purchaser-provider and between the provider-end user which constitutes the central premise of this thesis.

I can argue that government policies on user involvement are often not critical and turn to portray involvement as a `good idea` thereby failing to capture the problematic and contentious nature of this notion which generally has no agreed definition (Livingston and Cooper, 2004, p.85 and Beresford, 2002, p.95). End users and professionals sometimes hold very conflicting views on the issue of involvement which are further compounded by policy ambiguities, staff resistance, user apathy and the vexing issue of representativeness (Forrest et al., 2000, p.54 and Chamberlin, 2005, p.10). Genuine user involvement underlines the idea of `no decision about me without me` often articulated by user networks or `nothing about Us Without Us` which has become an enshrined principle of the international disability movement (Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.3). The political perspective of user involvement is captured through the power imbalance or differential between staff and end users while user or survivor groups and networks like `Shaping Our Lives` underline the historical/social perspective (Chamberlin, 2005, p.11 and Beresford and Branfield, 2012, p.40). I can contend that fragile user involvement infrastructure, dysfunctional power dynamics and the failures of user networks to clearly articulate their `own narrative` in influencing policymaking can undermine user involvement. This study argues that user involvement must divorce from its

current conceptual confinement and espouse evidence-base in rationalising its applications while articulating or building on user perspectives.

It argues that user involvement as in the NHS does not replace but complements clinical decisions and expertise hence it should be explored on the basis of its comparative advantage in unleashing user-led added value. It also argues that while user involvement can be applied in the health and social care sector through mechanisms like `expert patient` and `individual budgets`, it will be not be an effective tool in running hierarchical government agencies and structures like White Hall (PASC, 2007, p.14). Despite some limitations in exploring user involvement in public service delivery at the level of central government, there is growing evidence to demonstrate that public consultations and town hall meetings in public policy formulations can robustly diminish any policy failures and/or public protests (Beresford, 2010, p.496). I can argue that the expression `user involvement` requires some definitional clarity and consensus as its current encapsulation in definitional chaos is a disservice.

Beresford (2010, p.496) defines service user involvement as "people who use or might use services and who are also to be seen as members of the public", which echoes a dual identity as end users can be conceptualised as both people who use services and as citizens. On the other hand, service users can also be conceptualised as `consumers`, `client` or `customers` which underlines the consumerist perspective of user involvement which developed from NPM (Beresford, 2010, p.496). User involvement can be defined as

> "A process by which people are able to become actively and genuinely
> involved in defining the issues of concern to them; in making decisions about
> factors that affect their lives; in formulating and implementing polices; in
> planning, developing and delivering services, and in taking action to achieve
> change"
>
> (WHO, 2002 cited in Hayes et al., 2011, p.8)

This study will adopt the above definition of user involvement in illuminating its analyses while arguing that end users can refer to former or present users of a service. It espouses the view that end user involvement is the engagement of both past and present users of a service

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in the processes which inform and shape the conceptualisation, design and delivery of user-driven outcomes. It will argue that innovative models of user involvement can build positive synergies, shared learning and user-provider interactions which can draw invaluable inputs from users` experiences and `expertise`. User involvement can be captured through the active engagement of both former and present users in the co-conceptualisation, co-design, co-delivery and co-monitoring of service outcomes (Arnstein, 1969, p.216, Tritter and McCallum, 2006, p.156). This builds on the conceptual understanding that user involvement can potentially empower users, give them a voice and propel the co-production of user-led sustainable and responsive services (Beresford, 2010, p.496, Magnusson, 2003, p.228, Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.317 and Kujala, 2008, p.457).

For example the Government White Paper `Open Public Services` argues that future funding of public services will seek to empower and put individuals in control of their own lives by exploring mechanisms such as "direct cash payments to individuals...vouchers, tariff payments" (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.14). I will argue that while such mechanisms can enable individuals to buy services which reflect their specific needs there is no guarantee that these will necessarily lead to user satisfaction or improved service quality. The current shift in focus of public service provision from the provider to the service user is critical, radical and unprecedented. This study also argues that other policy initiatives such as patient involvement in the NHS, resident involvement in Supported housing and public involvement in policing and the delivery of Fire and Rescue Services are compelling evidence of user involvement in public service design and delivery (Audit Commission, 2004, p.16). It further contends that user involvement is currently applied in the public sector in England through mechanisms like `individual budgets` and `tenant-led management` in social care and social housing respectively, although evidence of their successful applications is mixed and patchy.

I will argue that the case for user involvement is premised on the understanding that such involvement can enhance user control, empowerment, promote inclusivity, joint ownership and mutual understanding (Ward and Gahagan, 2012, p.181). But critics argue that outcomes emanating from user involvement are `unclear` and have not been properly measured (Fischer et al., 2007, p.3). User involvements as in "tenant-led management" (PASC, 2007, p.14) in social housing can complement staff inputs, by providing new insights which can engineer

service improvements, personalisation, responsive services and cost-effective allocation of resources. But ineffective user involvement can engineer `value subtracted`, service failures, frustration, `collaborative disadvantage` and unresponsive services. The New Economics Foundation cited in (PASC, 2007, p.19) argues that service providers, staff and managers must transcend their traditional roles of `experts` and involve end users in redefining, re-conceptualising and reconfiguring services. I will argue that user involvement can create new understandings, valuable inputs, shared learning, engage users in monitoring and evaluating service standards and quality, generate new knowledge and capture users` perceptions of services (Cooper, Bryer and Meek, 2008, p.213, Crawford, Rutter and Thelwall, 2004, p.66). The complex, challenging, ever-increasing demands of end users for better, responsive, personalised and transformational services require service providers like SEs to conceptualise user involvement and service provision on new innovative and conceptual platforms

1.3: Social Enterprises: Origin, Definition and their involvement in Public Service Delivery.

"Social enterprise is the great institutional innovation of our times."

(Cameron, 2007 cited in Bochel, 2011, p.13)

This study agrees with the above description of SEs by the current British PM and argues that the sector`s strengthen can be perceived through its capacity to innovate, its creativity, entrepreneurial spirit and ability to employ robust and vibrant business models (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.66). SEs today have emerged as a vibrant model for the provision of health, social housing and social case services in areas like care for the elderly, childcare, youth apprenticeships and trainings and community regeneration. Doherty et al. (2009, p.1) trace the origins of SEs to the emergence of cooperatives in the 19th century and the recent upshot of mutuals. As part of the wider third sector, SEs are businesses which trade for social objectives with ancestry stretching to socially-driven member-owned organisations like cooperatives and mutuals. Defourny (2001, cited in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.30) argues that SEs are located between the not-for-profit sector and cooperatives. This study espouses the view that SEs occupy the space between the third and private sectors as depicted in the following figure (Pearce, 2003, cited in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.30).
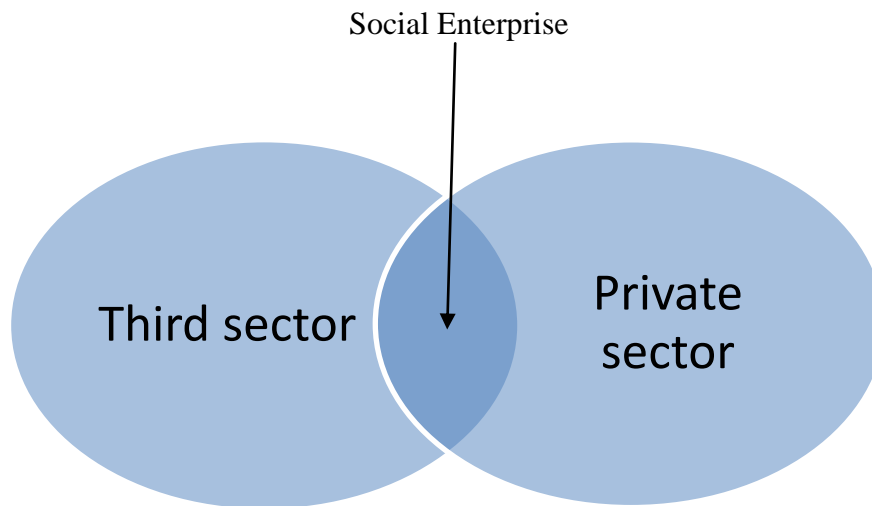
Figure 1.2: Depicting the space occupied by SEs.

The above figure supports the view that SEs "form at the boundaries of the third sector where it is influenced by interactions with the private and public sectors" (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.33). Hence SEs sit at the intersection between the third and private sectors which partly explains why they possess characteristics from both sectors. Ridley-Duff and Bull (2011, pp.38-39) also argue that SEs originated from NPM with the introduction of markets into public service delivery; a position which though fascinating to pursue is still embryonic. This study argues that SEs emerged as a major force on the UK public service delivery landscape with the ascension to power of New Labour in 9997 and the publication of "the third way" (Giddens, 1998, p.2). SEs can take any of the following legal forms; Industrial and Provident Societies (IPS), Community Interest Company (CIC), Companies Limited by Guarantee (CLG), Company Limited by Shares (CLS) and Charitable Status (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, pp.73-79 and SEL, 2003).

I can also argue that SEs have not been properly demarcated in the literature as they are characterised by definitional confusions or the lack of consensus. Social Enterprise London (SEL) defines SEs as "financially viable and sustainable businesses that trade in the market to fulfil social [and environmental] aims" (SEL, 2003, p.1). Bull and Crompton (2005 cited in Doherty et al., 2009, p.2) define SEs as the third sector (TS), thus comprising charities,

VCSOs and other organisational forms within the wider not-for-profit-sector. On the other hand, SEs are businesses

> "with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners"

> (Cited in Doherty et al., 2009, p.8)

While most definitions of SEs agree that they are organisations which trade for social objectives, they also disagree on how profits emanating from such trading should be used. In defining SEs, the OECD (2006, cited in Doherty et al., 2009, p.30) also underlines the social-driven mission of SEs especially in tackling social ills like exclusion, unemployment and poverty. The UK conceptualisation of SEs underlines its social objectives but argues that profits can be reinvested in developing new services and in improving or expanding existing ones and not necessarily shared to shareholders (Doherty et al., 2009, p.3). Doherty et al. (2009, p.25) also argue that SEs may be defined "by organisational type, legal structure and value characteristics" but the difficulties of clearly mapping out the SE sector also adds to the problematic of its definition. I can argue that two key characteristics define SEs; the capacity to trade in goods and/or services and to innovate while striving to achieve social and environmental objectives. This study conceptualises SEs from two perspectives; as organisations structured and known as SEs and as organisations which may be structured like charities or VCSOs but trade as SEs. This is important as such a straightforward conceptualisation can illuminate our conceptual understanding of the sector and widen the scope of organisations which I can explore in my case study.

This study espouses the conceptual view that SEs are social-oriented organisations which trade to achieve social, environmental and economic goals while creating social and public value (Rangan, Leonard and McDonald, 2008, p.1 and Moore, 1995, p.27). It also argues that SEs must strive "to stay relentlessly focused on their mission and seek to innovate" (Silverthrorne, 2008). This is necessary if SEs intend to deliver `social value` and transformational outcomes to deprived citizens most of whom constitute the "Base of the Pyramid" (Rangan, Leonard and McDonald, 2008, p.3).

1.4. Research problem and research questions

1.4.1. **Research Problems:**

This study identifies the inability of partnership working and especially P-SEPs to explore innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services through SI as a researchable problem (Beresford, 2010, p.495, Kujala, 2008, p.457 and Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.165). It argues that the lack of genuine user involvement in the conceptualisation, design and delivery of public services has been at the root cause of most service failures (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315 and Magnusson, 2003a, p.111). This has often led to the delivery of unresponsive and irrelevant services out of tune with users` aspirations (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.3). Such conceptual failures demonstrate that services are unable to meet the ever increasing and challenging demand of citizens for individualised and personalised services tailored to their specific needs (Shaw, 2009, p.19 and Beresford, 2009, p.206). This study also argues that the lack of conceptual clarity around what users can expect from their involvement can undermine effective user involvement. It identifies young persons aged 18-24 accessing social-oriented services like apprenticeships in the East of England as its target population because of their high unemployment (20.2%), vulnerability and propensity to access such services (Rhodes, 2012, p.2).

The rationale for investigating into the above problem is to provide new insights and conceptual understanding which can shape professional practice and policy making as well as contribute towards the development of a theory of user involvement. I will contend that user involvement can create shared learning; provide user-led new insights, tap into users` `expertise` and experiences in order to deliver highly responsive user-centric services (Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.166, Crawford, Rutter and Thelwall, 2004, p.66 and Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.4). User involvement in the service sector can also draw inspiration from recent successes with customer involvement in the tangible product industry in re-inventing itself and focusing on users` priorities (Magnusson, 2003b, p.228, Johnson et al., 2000, p.5 and Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 2000, p.xi). Practitioners should seek to tap into users` expertise and knowledge of their situations while fostering shared learning as they grapple with unlocking users` potentials in jointly creating user-driven outcomes (Beresford, 2010, p.495). The next subunit will capture the gap in knowledge highlighted in this study.

1.**4.2: Gap in Knowledge:**

This study identifies the lack of empirical scholarship on innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services and transformational outcomes as an intellectual vacuum worth filling (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, pp.1-4). It argues that apart of being celebratory, most of the literature on user involvement concentrates on modes of involvement thereby failing to articulate any conceptual models of user involvement (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315, Beresford, 2010, p.495 and PASC, 2007, p.14). Although recent government rhetoric and policy focus have emphasised the centrality of user involvement in tackling cross-cutting issues, such endeavours have conceptually failed to emphasise users` achievable expectations from such involvement (Mayo and Taylor, 2001, pp. 39-42 and Ambrose, 2001, pp.18). I identified the above gap in knowledge which this study will seek to fill after reading through the growing bulk of scholarship and exploring "emergent understanding" (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.41) on user involvement (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315 and Stickley, 2005, p.573).

I can argue that a gap in knowledge exists as there are limited empirical and academic studies which seek to provide new conceptual insights and understanding into how partnership working can explore innovative models of user involvement and SI in providing user-led transformational outcomes. The above gap in knowledge also exists because this area has not been of much interest to previous and contemporary researchers partly due to the lack of effective policy momentum and the misconception of end users as passive recipients of public services (Barki, 1994, p.59 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315). But the rising cost of public service provisions, service failures, the current fiscal constraints, recent policy and emergent developments on user involvement have energised and re-positioned the debate on innovative models of user involvement on new conceptual grounds (Beresford, 2010, p.495, Dunleavy, 2010, p.7, Cabinet Office, 2011, p.14 and PASC, 2007, p.5). The motivation to fill the above gap in knowledge is premised on the need to provide new insights, practical recommendations and conceptual focus on innovative models of user involvement in tackling the mirage of `wicked` issues confronting citizens today (Beresford, 2010, p.497 and Kujala, 2006, p.458).

I can argue that the lack of empirical scholarships on how SEs are exploring innovative models of user involvement in public service delivery can partly be explained by the relative newness of the sector (Defourney and Borzaga, 2001 cited in Doherty et al., 2009, p.3 and Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.19). Definitional confusions on user involvement, the particular nature of services and the general lack of professional commitment by public sector managers and practitioners also account for the lack of scholarships on this topic (Alam, 2002, p.255). This study will address the above gap in knowledge by extending the frontiers of knowledge, providing new empirically-driven insights and understanding into innovative models of user involvement and contributing to theory development (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.532). It also argues that innovative models of user involvement can leverage responsive, personalised and customised outcomes tailored to users` individual needs (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315). User involvement can thus create a sense of joint ownership, efficient allocation of scarce resources and widen user participation (Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.481, Magnusson, 2003, p.228 and Barki and Hartwick, 1994, p.59). User involvement can therefore be conceptualised as an innovative tool for creating user-led added value and as a compelling toolkit for addressing users` often challenging demands for cutting-edge personalised services (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.38 and Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.25). This study will answer the following research questions as it seeks to investigate into user involvement.

1.4.3: Research Questions:

This study will seek to provide robust responses to some research questions which have been crafted after reading through the growing body of literature on user involvement and partnership working (Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.1). I will argue that the literature on user involvement and partnership working is often celebratory and less empirically-driven. This study will draw inspiration from Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.287) in arguing "that the most important aspect of a research project is" to robustly interpret the results and make compelling inferences in order to fully answer the research questions". I initially gathered six research questions which were scrutinised and scaled down to three overarching questions reflecting the key strands of my Mixed Methods (MM) research design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.226). My research questions thus comprise one qualitative, quantitative and MM research questions. The rationale for focusing on three overarching research questions in

this study is premised on the understanding that research questions in MM research designs have to address its corresponding constituencies (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.248). The following are my research questions;

1) What major themes and innovative models of user involvement have emerged from my three multiple-case studies?

2) What is the importance of high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes?

3) To what extent do the qualitative analysis of themes and innovative models of user involvement and the quantitative analysis of users` perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services converge or diverge?

I will argue that answering the above research questions will enable me to bring closure, clarity, adequately investigate, capture, explain and provide new understanding on the phenomenon under study (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.42). The next subunit will present synoptic responses to my research questions.

1.4.4. Responses to my Research Questions:

I will argue that the following five overarching themes emerged from my thematic analysis; transformational outcomes, service improvement, user empowerment, service responsiveness and the Social Benefit Model. These themes strengthen the argument that high users` perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can engineer transformational outcomes and high service quality. I can also argue that four overarching innovative models of user involvement have emerged from my qualitative data analysis; User-led, Group-led, Staff-led and the Digital-driven models. The User-led model also emerged as the most preferred and effective model as identified by my respondents and interviewees. The digital-driven model was identified as a fast developing model because of the rapid expanding influence of the digital culture on our lives (Dunleavy, 2010, p.22).

A key importance of high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services demonstrates that high user perceptions of their involvement can

engineer user satisfaction, high service quality and deliver user-led transformational outcomes. For example, 83.55% of users surveyed said they have high perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services which concords with 86.71% of users who agree and strongly agree that their involvement has generated high satisfaction. The above examples resonate with the mean score of 1.99 which when placed on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1-5 with `1`corresponding to strongly agree and `5` to strongly disagree will fall between strongly agree and agree although very near to agree. I can thus argue that most of the end users surveyed agree that having a high perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can deliver transformational high quality services.

I will further contend that evidence from the quantitative strand of my study supports my qualitative data analysis at the integration, inference making and interpretation stage of my mixed data analysis by better enhancing our "understanding of the phenomenon under investigation" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286). Such evidence demonstrates that a quantitative measurement of users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can widen our conceptual understanding of the qualitative themes which emerged from my qualitative analysis (Saldana, 2009, p.193 and Gibbs, 2007, p.2). I can also contend that although there is a growing appetite for user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes; user apathy, trust deficit, limited resources and policy fluidity can inhibit effective user participation (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, pp.1-4, and Beresford, 2010, p.496). I will argue that discussing the above issues has enabled me to leverage new understanding into innovative models of user involvement, thereby making a modest contribution to knowledge.

1.4.5. Contributions to Knowledge and Distinctive Features of my thesis:

I will argue that there are two distinctive features which underpin this thesis; first, it conceptualises partnership working as part of the wider emerging field of Collaborative Public Management. Hence it will seek to create new conceptual understandings of an existing issue (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.17). And second, it conceptualises user involvement as part of the wider context of public service reforms and modernisation and as a

strand of partnership working between end users and staff, professionals or service providers. This is distinctively different from other forms of partnership working like inter organisational and inter-professional partnerships which have been extensively discussed in the literature (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002, p.6, Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.87 and Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.3). The above distinctive features thus enable me to clearly situate my study within the fast developing body of knowledge and scholarship in this discipline. On the other hand, this study has made a modest intellectual contribution to knowledge by filling a lacuna and informing and influencing our conceptual understanding of user involvement (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, pp.33-38 and Dunleavy, 2003, pp.49-53).

It has made three distinct but overlapping primary contributions to knowledge while re-positioning the debate on exploring genuine user involvement in effective public service delivery on new conceptual and intellectual grounds. First, at the theoretical level; it has extended the frontiers of knowledge in Public Management and Public Service Delivery by providing new conceptual insights into user involvement and by discovering four emerging innovative models of user involvement. Second, at the practical, policy and professional levels, it has contributed in influencing and shaping public policy and professional practice. It has provided new empirically-driven conceptual understanding; suggested a Social Benefit Model of user involvement and informed `best practice` by making some recommendations which can inform professional practice and public policy making. It has also robustly contributed to the ongoing debates, dialogues and conversations on exploring cheaper, cost-effective alternative models of public service delivery. Third, at the theoretical level, this study has contributed towards a theoretical development of user involvement. It has thus made a theoretical contribution in expanding our conceptual understanding of user involvement. It cogently and lucidly argues that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can engineer huge positive outcomes of transformational proportions for end users.

The above contributions to knowledge are critically important at this period for two reasons; first, because of dwindling public finances and the economic downturn. And second, because of the rising cost of public service provisions which makes the utilisation of cheap cost-effective alternative models of provision more imperative than ever before. This study has

also made three secondary contributions to knowledge; first, it has demonstrated that perception measurement can be a robust tool for policymakers and professionals to explore in measuring policy and service effectiveness. Second, it has identified the emergence of ICTs, the digital culture and the growing appetite by users for digital devices as a robust launch pad for digitalising user involvement. Third, evidence from my field notes has demonstrated that staff application of user involvement is mixed. This reflects the lack of conceptual coherence, strategic focus and commitment which are sometimes exemplified through fragmented and fragile user involvement infrastructure. This next subunit will seek to underscore the aims of my study.

1.5: Aims and Justifications for the Research:

The main aim of this study is to explore new insights and extend the frontiers of knowledge on user involvement and the discipline by investigating into and analysing new emerging issues on the phenomenon. This study will seek to provide new conceptual understandings into innovative models of user involvement and provide practical solutions which can influence and inform best and/or professional practice. It will argue that innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services can trigger highly responsive user-led transformational outcomes (Beresford, 2010, p.497 and Powell and Glendinning, 2002, p.1). It will seek to engineer a new conceptual perspective by demonstrating the pivotal role users can play in shaping, informing and co-producing user-led public services (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002, p.45). It will also seek to inform public sector managers, end users, policymakers, those involved in managing Social Enterprises (SEs) and other stakeholders of how partnership working can explore innovative models of end user involvement through SI in engineering user-driven services.

This study is necessary because the provision of public services today is undergoing huge changes due to some emerging challenges, a tough and uncertain fiscal climate and the need to conceptualise appropriate cost-effective models of service provision which prioritise end users and underpinned by `doing more with less`. It is also necessary because of its potentials to leverage new insights and understandings into unproblematising the above issues and unleashing cutting-edge innovative ways of conceptualising user involvement in public

service delivery (Shekar, 2007, p.4, Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2009, p.8 and Beresford, 2010, p.497). Its essence is further justified by its intensions to fill a yearning gap in knowledge and to creatively stretch the issues on user involvement to new horizons (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.33, Dunleavy, 2003, pp.49-53, Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.165 and Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.70). The next subunit will seek to discuss my conceptual framework.

1.6: Conceptual Framework:

This study argues that a researcher can draw the conceptual inspiration for designing his/her conceptual framework from the following four sources; "experiential knowledge...existing theory and research...through experiments...[and from his/her]...pilot and exploratory research" (Maxwell, 2005, p.37). The above sources can offer robust lenses through which the researcher can design his/her conceptual framework. Miles and Huberman (1994, cited in Maxwell, 2005, p.33) define a conceptual framework "as a visual or written product" comprising concepts that may be represented graphically or in narrative format. My conceptual framework states that gender, ethnicity and level of education can positively influence end users in effectively exploring innovative models of user involvement in participating in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. I designed the above conceptual framework because it encapsulates the variables which I want to investigate. Hence, I will investigate into how gender, ethnicity and level of education (independent variables) can influence the way in which end users explore network-inspired innovative models of user involvement in co-designing and co-delivering the public services (dependent variable) which they access (Hwang and Moon, 2008, p.1 and Borgatti, 2005, p.2). I will also investigate into how P-SEPs can explore innovative models of user involvement in engaging end users in the co-production and co-delivery of user-driven transformational outcomes.

The rationale of focusing on the above specific and limited number of variables is because of their potentials to provide enough rich data which can be analysed in facilitating new conceptual understanding of the phenomenon under study. I devised my conceptual framework after reading through the growing body of extant literature on the network theory,

partnership working; user involvement and from my experience as a user of public services (Maxwell, 2005, p.37, Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.31 and Gazley, 2008, p.36). I will also argue that my conceptual framework has witnessed a modification as gender, ethnicity and level of education proved ineffective and irrelevant in influencing how end users can explore innovative models in engaging in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. It was also necessary to re-conceptualise my conceptual framework as variables such as high users` perception underpinned by genuine involvement, positive communication and trust emerged from my primary research. I can argue that the aforementioned independent variables thus emerged as drivers which can enable end users in deriving greater satisfaction, transformational outcomes and high service quality from their involvement.

My re-conceptualised conceptual framework states that, high users` perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can engineer high user satisfaction, high service quality and responsive user-driven transformational outcomes (Beresford, 2010, p.497 and Clarke and Glendinning, 2002, p.45). My new conceptual framework thus draws inspiration from the Network Theory in providing new insights and understanding into the web of relationships and interconnectedness which underpin innovative models of user involvement (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.38, Angranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2 and Connelly, Zhang and Faerman, 2008, p.17). It also argues that trust, clarity of expectations from user involvement and the use of innovative models of involvement can foster successful user-led life-changing experiences. The next subunit will discuss the policy context and challenges underpinning partnership working.

1.7: Understanding the Policy Context and Challenges for Partnership Working:

This study acknowledges the fluid and evolving policy environment, in which partnership working operates. It argues that this fluidity is motivated by the quest to marketise, improve and search for alternative and expeditious models of public service delivery (Entwistle, 2010, p.164 and Seidle, 1995, p.142). New Labour`s ascension to power in 1997 signalled a departure from the culture of marketisation and contracts of previous Tory governments to a partnership culture as collaborative working became a central strand of its Public Service Modernisation Agenda (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.3). This study argues that partnership

working under New Labour was also contract and market-driven. I will contend that financial incentives and the statutory imperatives of partnership working led to the rolling out of partnership-enabling policy initiatives in areas like Health and Social Care, economic development and regeneration (Ambrose, 2001, p.17). New Labour`s extensive use of partnership working as a public policy mechanism made it almost mandatory for Local Authorities (LAs) to explore various local partnership initiatives like Local Strategic Partnerships[5] (LSPs) in improving communities and economic activities as well as sustainable community strategies (Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, p.17).

The strategic importance of partnership working is captured in White Papers such as; Modernising Local Government: In touch with the people (1998) and Modernising Social Services: Promoting independence, improving protection, raising standards (1998). These and other policy instruments thus seek to diatribe service fragmentations by encouraging user-led integrated provision (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.3). Other policy initiatives like the Charity Law (2006) and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) underscore the central role TSOs like Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCSOs) can play in "developing local visions" (DCLG, 2008), through Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The notion that partnership working can effectively explore end user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of personalised user-led outcomes is also captured by recent Coalition-government policy initiatives. Prominent among which is its Youth Contract and Work Programme aimed at training and getting young adults off benefit into work (DWP, 2011a, p.1 and 2011b, p.3). I will argue that other extant enabling institutional mechanisms like `The Compact Voice`, the Office for Civil Society and the `The Big Society Bank` can be strengthened in leveraging more effective support to TSOs involved in public service delivery (Alcock and Scott, 2002, p.114 and Cabinet Office, 2010, p.1).

On the other hand, the creation of The National Compact[6] in 1998 and its various subunits like the local compacts was aimed at strengthening LAs and VCS partnerships through a

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[5] LSPs are non-statutory local bodies which bring together local stakeholders like LAs, the NHS, Police, the private and third sectors to engage in joined-up working in order to improve on the quality of life for local citizens. The LA is the lead organisation in a LSP.

[6] The fluidity of the policy environment implies that some of the policies initiatives discussed here may not be relevant today. For example The National Compact has been closed and replaced with the Compact Voice which seeks to improve on joint working between VCSOs and the government

framework as well as to improve knowledge and practice in areas like procurement, funding and the independence of VCSOs (Alcock and Scott, 2002, p.113). A key benefit is the improvement in community cohesion and the ability to facilitate cross-sector strategic partnership working especially in achieving the SCS. This study argues that despite the above enabling policy tools, organisations involved in effective partnership working have to be creative, innovative and re-invent themselves in order to leverage the greatest public value with less. Exploring robust management strategies like fiscal discipline, eliminating wastage and establishing a compelling rationale for partnership working can be critical in the delivery of effective user-led outcomes. The next subunit will discuss the rationales for this `joined-up thinking` or partnership working.

1.7.1: The Rationales for Partnership Working:

This research posits that as an innovative policy mechanism, partnership working has been internationalised and is now widely used across the world as an innovative model for effective public service delivery (Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, pp.13-15 and Pearson, 2001, p.65). I will argue that partnership working can be a robust tool for delivering services to deprived hard-to-reach-groups but this may sound elusive as poor communication and the usual lack of effective `joined-up thinking` between professionals can rob end users of any positive benefits. The huge espousal of partnership working is energised by its capacity to synergise and tap into private and TS expertise in facilitating joint or shared learning, broadening end user involvement and enhancing efficiency in resource allocation and utilisation. Improving public service delivery is at the core of various `waves` of reforms which have characterised Public Management in the UK in recent years, hence partnership working seeks to contribute to the realisation of this goal (Entwistle, 2010, p.163, Flynn, 2007, p.10 and Needham, 2009, p.41). This study also demonstrates that partnership working can be an effective "mechanism for providing collective goods" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). For example, PPPs are widely explored for huge infrastructural investments; building bridges, hospitals, highways and airports in developed economies like the UK, New Zealand, France and the US (Hodge, 2000, p.5). Government`s emphases on partnership working can be captured through the following rationales.

First, government hails partnership working as a new tool which can revolutionise public service delivery especially in areas where the state has limited expertise, lacks capital for huge infrastructural investments or may simply want to spread or offload risks (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992 and Tomkinson, 2007, p.1). Government also argues that partnership working especially with TSOs can deliver greater value as these organisations are highly trusted by citizens, possess strong knowledge of local communities and can effectively mobilise resources in delivering personalised user-led services (Powell and Glendinning, 2002, p.1 and Clarke and Glendinning, 2002, p.34). Soon after coming to office in 1997, New Labour demonstrated its commitment to transforming public service delivery from "a contract culture to a partnership culture" (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.3) although partnerships often rely on some form of contracts. Government also contends that effective `joined-up` working can address service fragmentations, empower users and synergise resources in tackling razor-sharp issues confronting specific segments of the society.

Second, government further argues that partnership working can deliver significant outcomes, promote inclusivity and user engagement, increase productivity, flexibility and adaptability compared to bureaucracies (O`Toole, 1997, pp.46-47 and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.26). Partnership working supports `slimmer government` while arguing that "an overloaded and over-bureaucratized government is incapable of" (Salamon, 1994 cited in Seidle, 1995, p.144) leveraging effective user-driven services. Recent developments in ICTs can engage users in the `digitalisation` and improvement of public service delivery. For example, users can now explore online-driven opportunities in contributing to service design while online services like some GP appointments, renewing library books, council tax payments and some elements of NHS Direct constitute promising signals (Dunleavy, 2010, p.8). Although partnership working is expected to eliminate the complex institutional barriers which sometimes hinder service accessibility, the hierarchical and bureaucratic structures of most partnerships can inhibit flexibility and genuine user participation (Dunleavy, 2010, p.8).

Despite government`s optimism in partnership working, it can sometime generate inertia, less value for money or `value subtracted`, thus triggering less user satisfaction (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3 and Turner and Balloch, 2001, pp.165-168). I can argue that partnership working through the use of markets is depleting the skills base of the public sector while re-

configuring and transforming the roles of public managers from service providers to service facilitators (Kettl, 2004, p.viii and Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.14). For examples, the recent shambles over the West Coast rail franchise and the Olympic security fiasco by G4S demonstrate the problematic with exploring market mechanisms in public service delivery (Odell and Jacobs, 2012 and Monaghan, 2012). I can argue that while the former illustrates the depletion of the skill base of the public sector, the later demonstrates that despite its propensity to use markets, the public sector still has the potentials to step in when things are going wrong. I will contend that investigating into how partnership working can explore innovative models of user involvement requires robust craftsmanship of research design as the next subunit will highlight.

1.8: Research Design, Method and Methodology:

This study will draw huge inspirations from Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, (2001, p. 59) in arguing that research methods principally refer to the tools used in data collection which may include techniques like questionnaires, observations and interviews. Research methodology on the other hand is often philosophically-driven and refers to the approach or paradigm which underpins the research (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p. 59). This ethically informed study will explore three multiple-case studies as its data gathering strategy (Yin, 2009, p.25). These will be underpinned by an MM research design as questionnaires and semi-structured interviews will be explored in underpinning my quantitative and qualitative data gathering instruments respectively (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.237, and Morgan, 2007, p.57). I will argue that the rationale for using MM research design in this study is premised on its potentials to benefit from the complementary strengthens of both the quantitative and qualitative methods. It will also aim to achieve methodological triangulation and integration by enabling me to combine results gleaned from both strands in order to invigorate my inferences and interpretations (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.212). This section will briefly discuss my research design, method, and data sampling techniques.

1.8.1 Research Design and Strategy:

This study will explore the inductive-deductive research strategy underpinned by the Pragmatic research paradigm in informing the conceptualisation and design of my Concurrent MM (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27 and Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.26). I will equally explore the Concurrent or Parallel MM research design in informing my sampling, data collection and analyses. This study will explore three multiple-case studies through the use of data gathering instruments like questionnaires and open-ended semi-structured interviews (Punch, 2005, p.19 and Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.172). The rationale for espousing MM in this study is premised on the understanding that both qualitative (QUAL) and quantitative (QUAN) methods will benefit from their "complementing strengthens" (Brewer and Hunter, 1989 cited in Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006, p.48) while limiting any inherent weaknesses. Exploring the Concurrent MM research design will permit me to simultaneously gather and analyse QUAL and QUAN data in order to enhance complementarity, integration and methodological triangulation (Driscoll et al., 2007, p.24 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.75).

QUAN Likert scale closed-ended questionnaires will be administered to end users in order to measure their perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services while capturing their satisfaction and understanding of service quality (Oppenheim, 1992, p.100, Johns, 2010, p.1 and Choi and Anita, 2005, p.1). QUAL open-ended semi-structured interviews administered to staff will seek to investigate into their conceptual understanding of how user involvement can be effectively explored in leveraging user-led services (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.12). QUAL data generated from such interviews will be thematically analysed in order to robustly capture the phenomenon under investigation (Saldana, 2009, p.45, Bernard and Ryan, 2010, p.54, Bazeley, 2009, p.6 and Gibbs, 2007, p.38, Boyatzis, 1998, p.29). I will argue that field notes and memos gathered from my field work will also be used at the inference and interpretation stage in order to complement inference making from my MM data analyses (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.295 and Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.541).

This study will also explore Pragmatism, informed by its epistemologically, ontologically, axiological and methodologically assumptions in order to enhance the conceptual understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.17 and Morgan, 2007, p. 50). Although exploring more than three multiple case studies may be expensive, resource draining, time consuming and cumbersome for a single investigator, I will contend that three multiple-case studies will provide sufficient data for answering my research questions (Yin, 2009, p.13). But focusing on a single case study may be inappropriate for this study because of its vulnerability, shallowness and inability to generate substantially powerful data for analysis as multiple-cases will do (Yin, 2009, pp.4-6, Gerring, 2007 and Stake, 2006). The next subunit will discuss my data sampling and gathering techniques.

1.8.2. Sampling and Data Gathering:

This research will employ Parallel or Concurrent Mixed Methods Sampling underpinned by multiple probabilistic sampling strategies, cluster and random samplings as well as purposive sampling in order to achieve representativeness (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.89 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.170). These sampling techniques will enable me to select respondents for my questionnaires, interviewees for my semi-structured interviews and organisations for my multiple-case studies (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p.162). The rationale for choosing the above sampling techniques is premised on the fact that they are compatible and resonate with my MM research design and while random sampling is quantitatively-driven, purposive sampling is qualitatively-oriented (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.197). I will also design Likert scale questionnaires which will be administered to young adults accessing socially-oriented services at my case studies. The questionnaires will seek to measure end users` perception of how their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access through innovative models and SI can engineer their satisfaction, service quality and the outcomes emanating thereof.

On the other hand, semi-structured interviews administered to some staff will seek to explore staffs` conceptual understanding and application of innovative models of user involvement as well as explore some key aspects of the questionnaires in details from staff perspectives. The

rationale for such an approach will be to identify and account for any convergence or divergence in findings and perceptions. My sampling size will comprise 150-225 respondents for my questionnaires, 3-6 P-SEPs service providers and 3-5 staff per case study. I will argue that data collected through the above data gathering instruments will be analysed with findings from both strands of my study merged and triangulated in the final phase in order to ensure its "creative potential" (Eisenhardt, 1989). The next subunit will present my MM data analysis techniques.

1.8.3. Data Analysis:

This study will contend that MM data analysis involves the application of QUAN and QUAL-driven data analysis techniques respectively to both the QUAN and QUAL strands of a single MM study (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.212). It also argues that combining and integrating inferences and interpretations stemming from the QUAN and QUAL strands of an MM research design is a fundamental principle of MM studies (Teddlie and Tashokkori, 2010, p.287). I will explore Concurrent MM data analyses through the following personally conceptualised four phase Model;

- Separately and concurrently analyse my QUAL and QUAL data
- Displaying results from such analyses separately and concurrently
- Consolidating and comparing results from both strands
- Merging and integrating such results in one whole (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.12 and Combs and Onwuegbuzie, 2010, p.8).

I will argue that data analyses emanating from both strands of my study will be combined in the final phase for inference making and interpretations (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.295). I will further contend that I will organise and present my research findings by research questions as this will pull all relevant findings together while also enabling me to adequately address my research questions (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.552). I will further contend that integrating my QUAN and QUAL inferences in order to generate meta-inferences will constitute a key component of my MM research design. I will argue that such an integration will draw on the "complementing strengthens and nonoverlapping weaknesses" (Brewer and Hunter, 1989 cited in Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006, p.48) of the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study. I will also use data analysis computer software such as NVivo and SPSS or Excel in analysing my QUAL and QUAN data respectively.

1.9a. Structure of this Thesis

I have drawn inspirations from Perry`s Five Chapter Model (1998, p.3) in designing the structure of this thesis while splitting chapter three into two distinct chapters as recommended by Love, (2001, p.6). The chapter on data analysis, research findings and interpretations will be split into two because of its size and the importance of the issues discussed therein. I will argue that this thesis will adopt a seven chapter model as this will ensure unity, coherence and a unified perspective while leveraging the opportunity for me to fully answer my research questions while unfolding my arguments and analyses (Dunleavy, 2003, pp.47-48 and Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.50). This is critically important as the inability to adequately answer research questions has been identified as a structural weakness in most theses (Perry, 1998, p.3 and Nightingale, 1984 cited in Perry, 1998, p.3). This thesis will therefore comprise the following chapters;

1) Introduction
2) Engaging with Research Issues: A Review of Literature
3) Theoretical Perspectives and Paradigm of Inquiry
4) Research Design: Research Method and Methodology
5) Data Analysis
6) Inference Making, Interpretations and Discussion of Research Findings
7) Conclusion and Application of Research Findings:

I will argue that chapter one will introduce the study while discussing issues such as background, research problem and questions as well as theoretical perspectives (Love, 2005, p.4). Chapter two on the other hand will draw inspirations from the literatures of the parent and immediate disciplines in capturing my engagement with research issues like NPM and the bureaucratic and Network models of public service delivery (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.38). Chapter three will discuss my theoretical perspectives and research design while focusing on my conceptual framework, theoretical issues and research paradigm. Chapter four will focus on my research design, method and research methodology while chapter five will treat issues around data analysis. Chapter six on the other hand will concentrate on interpretations, inferences and a discussion of my research findings. Chapter seven will summarise my key findings while emphasising my factual and conceptual conclusions as well

as the implications of my research findings for professional practice and public policy. The next subunits will attempt a definitional capture of the key concepts explored in this thesis.

1.9b. Definition of key concepts:

Concepts are ideas which can be expressed in words or symbols that can help in shedding light on specific jargons or discipline-related words used in a piece of writing (Blaikie, 2000, p.129). This study agrees with Blaikie (2000, p.130) that it is the responsibility of the researcher to identify and "select relevant concepts and define them before the research commences... [as this will help] ...identify the basic features of the social world" of the research. The following key definitions will inform the conceptual focus of this study.

1.9b.1. Partnership Working:

This study argues that a partnership is a group of stakeholders from various organisations working together with the principal aim of "tackling mainly long-term challenges and opportunities in which they have a shared interest" (Frye and Webb, 2002). I will argue that such a definition confirms the view that partnerships are "voluntary and collaborative relationships" (UN General Assembly 2003, quoted in Findlay-Brooks et al., 2007) anchored on `joint working`, `joint decision-making` and shared objectives (McQuaid, 2000). Successful partnership working builds on trust, clarity of objectives, responsibilities and shared purpose in finding `joint solutions` to `joint problems` which transcend the capacity of any organisation working alone to adequately resolved (CIPFA 2001, Lester et al., 2006 and Wilson, 2005). Partnership working is a key feature of Collaborative Public Management as it focuses on inter organisational working and the Network Model of public service delivery (O`Leary et al., 2009, p.1 and Brudney, Cho and Wright, 2009, p.118).

1.9b.2: Third Sector:

The term "Third Sector" was coined by Etzioni (1973 quoted in Jenei and Kuti, 2008). It refers to "a third alternative sector between the state and the market" (Jenei and Kuti, 2008) or what Giddens (1998, p.64) refers to as "The Third Way". The third (TS) comprises a wide

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range of organisational forms which include; Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCSOs), Faith-based groups and Social Enterprises (SEs). These organisations often occupy the space between the private and public sectors. This study argues that the TS is value-driven, robust, entrepreneurial and differs from the profit sector in the way it raises its funds, operationalises its resources and surpluses, as well as how it renders accountability (Lester et al., 1999 and Markwell, 2003). I can argue that the wider TS is a driver of service innovation.

1.9b.3. Service Innovation

This study conceptualises "service innovation...[as]...the introduction of new service products or an improvement in the quality of an existing service product" (Windrum, 2008, p.8). Such an introduction of new services products and the improvement of existing ones can constitute incremental or radical innovation as these have the potentials of exploring digitalisation in transforming and driving up service quality (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 2000, p.xi). Incremental innovation implies making changes to extant service offerings while radical innovation refers to the introduction of new service offerings not initially available to service users (Johnson et al., 2000, p.4). This study adopts the conceptual understanding that SI is a "process comprising...[a]...set of activities executed to create a new or enhanced customer service" (Bertein, 1990, p.84). Such a conceptual definition builds on the idea of incremental or radical innovation which is closely related to New Service Development (Johnson et al., 2000, p.5 and Magnusson, 2003, p.228). I will argue that innovative models of user involvement can be vital in delivering high quality personalised services tailored to users` specific needs (Rust and Oliver, 2000, p.52). But understanding the peculiar nature of services; intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and variability is crucial in conceptualising and designing innovative models of user involvement. The next subunit will briefly define the boundaries of my research.

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1.9c: Delimitations of my research and key assumptions

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1.9c.1 Delimitations of this research

The conceptual focus of this study will seek to investigate into how P-SEPs can explore innovative models of user involvement through SI in co-designing and co-delivering socially-

oriented services to deprived young adults (18-24) in the East of England. The rationale for focussing on P-SEPs is triggered by their huge potentials, expertise, strong knowledge of local communities and of working with hard-to-access groups especially in tackling vexing and cross-cutting complex issues like unemployment and homelessness. Selected service providers must be SEs based in the East of England and engaged in providing socially-oriented services to young adults (18-24) especially to those often referred to as NEETs[7]. I will argue that the present high rate of youth unemployment especially amongst the 18-24 years old (19.9% as of June, 2012) strengthens the case for focusing on this age group (Rhodes, 2012, p.2). The recent announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister of a Youth Contract Scheme costing £1 billion pound Sterling aimed at subsiding training placements and apprenticeships for young persons demonstrates the problematic of youth unemployment (BBC, 2011b). This study argues that while such welfare to work schemes are commendable, the strategic role end users can play in the co-design and co-delivery of `joined-up solutions to joined-up` socially-oriented problems is critical for any sustainable success. I will argue that my target population is therefore likely to access socially-oriented services like youth apprenticeships, work placements, counselling for alcohol and substance misuse and sheltered accommodation. This study will thus build on the following key assumptions.

1.9c.2. Key Assumptions

The conceptual evidence from extant literature highlights the assumption that partnership working can explore innovative models of user involvement in engineering the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.7). The second key assumption holds that end user involvement, can propel efficiency, empower users, engineer innovation and deliver new user-friendly services tailored to their specific needs (Kickert and Koppenjan, 1997, p.46). The third key assumption builds on the conceptual understanding that partnership working seeks to revolutionise service provision by exploring networks in delivering user-led outcomes. This is necessitated by the complex and interconnected nature of vexing problems which often transcend the capacity of any organisation to adequately resolve alone (Seidle, 1995, p.140). Despite the above positive assumptions, this study underscores the fact that if not well construed partnership working can create frustration in users and partners thereby triggering "collaborative inertia" (Huxham

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[7] Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

and Vangen, 2005, p.3). This study will therefore explore compelling evidence gathered from my investigations in corroborating or refuting the above assumptions. The next subunit will articulate my conclusion to this chapter.

Conclusion

This study seeks to engineer new conversations and dialogues on how the current tough fiscal climate can inspire PSOs to explore P-SEPs and other forms of partnership working as innovative mechanisms for engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes. It articulates the conceptual argument that effective partnership working can be a good policy instrument for involving end users in the joint design and delivery of user-led outcomes (Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.166). It cautions that partnership working should only be undertaken where there is sufficient evidence that it can leverage added value or "collaborative advantage" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3). The next chapter will discuss research issues emanating from the growing bulk of scholarship on user involvement, partnership working and public service delivery. It will thus provide a conceptual mediation between the key issues which will emerge from my literature review (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.67 and Walker and Thompson, 2010, p.28).

Chapter Two

Engaging with Research Issues: A Review of Literature

Introduction

This study will make a compelling expostulation that public service provision in England today is undergoing a radical rethink as government seeks to improve, modernise and re-conceptualise service delivery through various forms of provisions (Milward and Provan, 2000, p.239). It argues that the failures of the industrial revolution-inspired inefficient and outmoded bureaucratic model which had characterised public service provision in England up to the 1970s has become ineffective in tackling the complex and interrelated `wicked` problems confronting citizens today (Pfiffner, 2004, p.446). The conceptual weaknesses of the bureaucratic model like its inflexibility and ineffectiveness engineered a new wave of reforms which characterised public service provision in England from the late 1970s (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000, p.8 and Goldfinch, 2009, p.1). This study contends that this emergence of NPM as characterised by the extensive use of market-driven principles and private sector management strategies in public service provision were key drivers of SEs involvement in public service delivery from the mid-2000s (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.17).

I will argue that user involvement and SE participation in public service delivery have become of common features of the public service delivery landscape in the UK despite the conceptual lack of unanimity on the meaning of user involvement (Beresford, 2002, p.95). I can argue that NPM reforms implemented in the 1990s and 2000s as well as a better understanding of the Social Economy have inspired the emergence of SEs as a strategic model of public service provision in England (Doherty et al., 2009, p.1). This chapter will explore three distinct but interrelated conceptual lenses in reviewing, discussing and analysing related extant literature in public sector management. First, it will firmly and robustly establish the research context while discussing and analysing issues like the public sector context, the bureaucratic model of service delivery and NPM. Second, it will define user involvement while demonstrating some conceptual clarity around its use and application in the wider public sector. It will also discuss SEs while underlining how and why they have

become involved in public delivery as well as discuss the literature on partnership working, Collaborative Public Management and the network model of public service delivery.

In establishing the research context, this chapter will briefly trace, discuss and analyse the history of public service delivery in England from the realisation of the weaknesses of the bureaucratic model in the 1970s, NPM, to the Network model and the emergence and involvement of SEs in public service provision. Third, in defining, discussing and analysing the literature on user involvement, this chapter will clearly capture and demonstrate areas in which user involvement is tenable and where users cannot involve. This chapter will also clearly establish the purpose of the thesis and the rationale of engaging with research issues or a review of literature.

2. The Rationale for Engaging with Research Issues in this study:

This study concurs with Hart (2001, p.2) that "an analytical reading of the literature is an essential prerequisite for all research" as this will offer an opportunity for the researcher to acquaint his/herself with relevant corpus. This can enable him/her to transform his/her topic into a practically researchable one (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.70). Although this chapter focuses on extant literature, its discussions will enable me to identify key "research issues" (Perry, 1998, p.13) worth investigating and gaps in knowledge worth filling. Another rationale for engaging with research issues in this study is predicated on the conceptual understanding that they will provide useful insights into issues like "the methodological approaches and experiences of others" (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.70). They will also enable me to learn from what other scholars have written on the subject, synthesise and theorise my "research evidence" (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.70). I will argue that engaging with extant literature will enable me to firmly establish the context of my research and draw conceptual inspiration from other writers in conceptualising my topic and in planning and designing my overall research (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.70).

Engaging with research issues will inform my conceptualisation and utilisation of the network theory in understanding partnership dynamics. A distinctive feature of this thesis is its conceptualisation of partnership working as a facet of the vast growing field of Collaborative Public Management (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2, O`Leary et al., 2009,

p.3, Cooper, Bryer and Meek, 2008, p.211 and Bingham, O`Leary and Carlson, 2008, p.3). This is critical in not only establishing and strengthening the conceptual and intellectual bases of my thesis but in positioning it within the growing body of knowledge underlining collaborative working and user-led value creation in the public sector (Moore, 1995, p.27). Engaging with research issues will underscore the constructive, analytic, conceptual and theoretical bases on which my conceptual framework, theoretical model, research questions and/or hypothesis will be premised (Perry, 1999, p.15). It will also enable me to establish the theoretical and conceptual linkages between collaborative public management, partnership working, the network theory and public service delivery (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.4 and Bingham, Sandfort and O`Leary, 2008, p.276). The next subunit will seek to firmly establish my research context.

2.1. Defining my Research Context:

This chapter argues that although Max Weber conceptualised bureaucracy as an efficient organisational model which can engineer "rationalization, measurement and control" (Gerth and Mills, 1974 cited in Goldfinch, 2009, p.3), its wide espousal and used across the world uncovered some conceptual failings. For example, the conceptual applications the bureaucratic model of public service provision in England unearthed some structural weaknesses in the 1970s (Hughes, 2003, p.20). I can argue that although bureaucracy was expected "to foster predictability, probity and universality" (Goldfinch, 2009, p.5), these were undermined by extensive standardisation, formalisation, inflexibility, rigidity and its `top-down, command and control` approach (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p.14). Although the Beveridge Report of 1942 argues that the state should be the primary provider of user-led public services, extensive state bureaucracy in the 1970s prohibited it from playing this crucial role (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.13). This chapter situates the scope of my research context to range from the identification of the failures of the bureaucratic model of public service provision in England in the 1970s, to the rise of NPM in the 1980s and 1990s and to the present day network model with its focus on user involvement (Hughes, 2003, p.20). The purpose of this thesis is to investigate and provide new conceptual insights and understanding into new innovative models through which end users can be involved in co-designing and co-delivering the services which they access within the wider public sector.

It argues that the emergence and involvement of SEs in public service delivery in England from the mid-2000s till date as a result of the extensive use of NPM-driven market principles constitutes not just a paradigm shift but a landmark (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000, p.6). It also contends that the growing involvement of TSOs in public service provision in England since the mid-2000s has seen the emergence of SEs as a robust tool for providing effective citizen-centred public services. The establishment of SEs as trading arms or subsidiaries by most TSOs as these have the propensity to explore private sector strategies chimes with NPM. SEs have the comparative advantage of trustworthiness, proximity and knowledge of deprived communities over other public service providers (Teasdale, 2011, p.4). Figure 2.1 below depicts a timeline which seeks to illustrate the evolution of public service provision in England from the 1970s to date. This period has been chosen because as one that immediately precedes the first waves of NPM reforms which were launched by Thatcher upon ascending to power in 1979, it can shed light on the deficiencies of the bureaucratic model.

The emergence of NPM Reforms   Era of partnership working

Late 1970s – 1980s   1999 & 2000s

1970   1990   From mid-2000s till date

Failures of the bureaucratic   More NPM Reforms   Emergence of SEs in public

Model of public service delivery   Markets/competition   service delivery in England
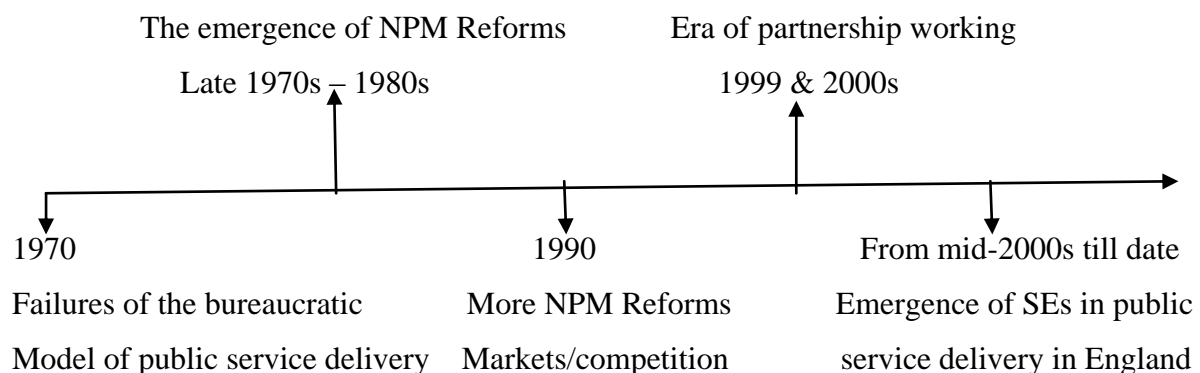
Figure 2.1: From the bureaucratic model to the emergence of SEs in public service delivery.

The above figure thus represents my research context as it demonstrates that the realisation that bureaucracy was a deficient, inadequate and effective model coupled with the rising cost of public service provision and the complex and interconnected `wicked` nature of citizens` problems made the case for reforms imperative. I can thus argue that limited state capabilities, scarcity of resources and a growing restlessness by citizens for more effective public services thrust state monopoly of public service provisions under serious scrutiny than before (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.88). This research will thus firmly seek to establish how the increasing failures of the bureaucratic model in the 1970s inspired a new wave of reforms introduced in the late 1970s which were supposed to improve and invigorate public

service provisions across England. It argues that the dominance of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery which had characterised public service provision in England for much of the nineteen and twentieth centuries was being challenged by the late 1970s.

The ascension to power of Prime Minister Thatcher in 1979 marked the beginning of a systematic attack on public sector bureaucracy and its dominant bureaucratic model through a series of reforms in the 1980s (Ferlie et al., 1996, p.3). The implementation of public sector reforms especially NPM reforms in the 1980s and 1990s was intended to address the defects of the bureaucratic model which impeded efficiency and the effective provision of user-led public services (Ferlie et al., 1996, p.2). On the other hand, the ascension to office of New Labour in 1999 marked a renewed interest in partnership working as defined by the Government White Paper: Modernising Government (1999) (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.4). The 2000s and especially the mid-2000s marked a new era with greater emphasis on TS or SE involvement in public service delivery as issues like user involvement, personalisation and choice became prominent features (Seidle, 1995, p.44).

NPM-inspired `marketisation` of public service provision did not only signal the arrival of new actors like the TS and SEs on the public service delivery landscape but equally engineered new roles for public sector managers. NPM thus defines the changing roles of public sector managers from service providers to service facilitators, contract negotiators and service commissioners (Osborne and McLaughlin, 2002, p.1). The wider implication of these is the upshot of TSOs and SEs as robust models of public service provision across England. It is worth noting that the foundation for the modern British public sector was laid by earlier commissions-driven reforms implemented in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries like the Northcote-Trevelyan report of 1854 (Pilkington, 1999, pp.18-25). The Fulton Report of 1968 on the other hand recommended for the professionalization of the British civil service while reinforcing the principles of impartiality and merit (Wegrich, 2009, p.138 and Pilkington, 1999, p.18). The conceptualisation of the public sector under the Northcote-Trevelyan report sought to replace patronage with merit-driven recruitments achieved through examinations and promotions in tandem with the Weberian bureaucratic tenets (Hughes, 2003, p.20). The next subunit will illuminate our conceptual understandings of the failures of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery thereby paving the way for NPM reforms.

2.1.1. The Bureaucratic Model of Public Service Delivery

This study argues that the deficiencies of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery as underpinned by its `top down command-and-control` approach to service delivery makes the case for public sector reforms inevitable (Hughes, 2003, pp.1-9). The bureaucratic model as underpinned by the hierarchical nature of most PSOs today has proved ineffective in coping with the increasingly, complex and challenging nature of citizens` problems (O`Flynn, 2007, p.354 and Wegrich, 2009, p.138). Osborne and Gaebler (1992, pp.11-12) emphasise the failure of the bureaucratic model by arguing that bureaucracy underpins:

> The kind of governments that developed during the industrial era, with their sluggish centralized-bureaucracies, their preoccupation with rules and regulations and their hierarchical structures, no longer work well...They became bloated, wasteful and ineffective. And when the world began to change, they failed to change with it.

The above assertion thus sums up the ineffectiveness of the bureaucratic model as its weaknesses have become very visible thereby making it an irrelevant tool for tackling the huge social, environmental and economic problems plaguing our fast changing society today. Bureaucracy also favours merit-based recruitments and appointments within the civil service but these have become undermined by political meddling, patronage, nepotism and the lack of clear ethical codes, thus breeding corruption and inefficiency (Goldfinch, 2009, p.6). Even horizontal and vertical collaborations between and within government departments have been inhibited by hierarchically rigid inflexible structures thus making the case for reforms cogent, urgent and imminent.

The bureaucratic model of public service delivery is highly criticised for its bereavement in innovation, adoptability and its `command and control` and `top-down` approach to public service delivery (Heinrich, Hill and Lynn, Jr., 2004) which treat service users as passive recipients of services. The bureaucratic model is generally considered as "guaranteeing mediocrity and inefficiency" (Hughes, 2003, p.9) and criticized for its inability to innovate and re-invent. This study also contends that the hierarchical, inflexible, rigid and rule-driven nature of most PSOs today underpin the bureaucratic model as these inhibit public sector

managers from innovatively stretching public service provisions to new horizons. Osborne and Gaebler (1992, p.12) corroborate the above assertions by arguing that;

> Hierarchical, centralized bureaucracies designed in the 1930s or 1940s simply do not function well in the rapidly changing information-rich, knowledge-intensive society and economy of the 1990s.

The centralised nature of bureaucracies implies that they are slow, heavy and unable to rapidly respond to emerging problems thereby making the case for change inevitable. The bureaucratic model is often characterised by a `one-size-fits-all` approach to service provision which fails to capture user`s specific needs or to tap into their `expertise` and experiences in enhancing service outcomes (Peck and Dickinson, 2008, pp.7-10 and Northmore, 2001, p.99). This "top-down, command-and-control mentality" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p.14) sometimes characterises partnership working thus eroding user voice, empowerment, involvement and choice as services are often non-standardised (Turner and Balloch, 2001, pp.165-167).

The bureaucratic model is restrictive, inward looking with operational procedures which are not suitable for adequately addressing challenging and complex problems like homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse and youth unemployment (Peters and Pierre, 2003, pp.4-5). It is often blamed for the "bloated, wasteful ...underperforming" (Ferlie et al., 1996, p.11) nature of the public sector which impedes effective `joined up thinking` as well as vertical and horizontal integrations between various service providers, professionals and end users. The inadequacies of the bureaucratic model are aptly captured by James March and Johan Olsen, quoted in Seidle, (1995, p.1), who ascertain that "public bureaucracies have become too complex, centralized, sectorized, and rigid as well as too difficult to influence". Hence, public sector bureaucracies are not oriented towards addressing the complex and challenging needs of citizens thereby failing to leverage effective user-led services. The hierarchical pyramid-like structure of PSOs hinders responsiveness, innovation, creativity and the ability to rapidly capture the complex; challenging and ever-changing needs of service users. Critics of partnership working also argue that most partnerships are themselves bureaucratic and hierarchical thus manifesting the potential of undermining creativity, inclusivity and innovation (Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, p.10, Heinrich, Hill, and Lynn, Jr., 2004 and Peters and Pierre, 2003, p.5).

Although there has been a gradual shift since the 1990s from the bureaucratic model of public service delivery to partnership working, such a shift is still timid, slow and unable to translate into concrete and feasible outcomes for service users. This shift from the bureaucratic model to markets and then to networks can be seen as linear or even cyclical but partnerships can themselves become too large and unresponsive, thereby encapsulating the ills of the bureaucratic model. This study argues that partnerships especially between health and social sectors sometimes constitute bureaucratic structures as their hierarchical chain of command may fail to involve end users in service commissioning processes and/or the co-design and co-delivery of services (Glasby and Dickinson, 2008). If not well construed, partnership working can get embellished by hierarchical and bureaucratic tendencies which may inhibit the rapid sharing of vital life-saving information between frontline professionals to the detriment of service users. Although, Frederickson and Smith (2003, p.208) argue that "the administrative state is now less bureaucratic, less hierarchical, and less reliant on central authority to mandate action", state failures in engineering effective partnership working can lead to disastrous consequences like the recent death of baby P.

The bureaucratised and hierarchical nature of most partnerships is a disservice as they risk unleashing `subtracted value` or "collaborative inertia" hence SEs engaged in public service provisions should innovatively explore user involvement (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3). The bureaucratic model can also engineer dysfunctional work patterns and generate tensions between the various hierarchical levels of government. Resolving and tackling the inadequacies of the bureaucratic model is critical in achieving effective partnership working and delivering user-led outcomes. I will argue that partnership working can be a good toolkit for addressing the above deficits of the bureaucratic model as it has the potentials to generate efficiency, greater user-driven value, customer satisfaction, and better user-led outcomes (Lane, 2000, p.49, Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000, p.8 and Wegrich, 2009, p.137). NPM reforms like the use of market principles in public service delivery and the drive for greater performance and efficiency are expected to address the aforementioned deficiencies of the bureaucratic model (Pollitt, 2007, p.10, O`Flynn, 2007, p.357 and Goldfinch, 2009, p.6). NPM reforms thus became a key strand of public sector reforms in countries like the UK, USA, New Zealand and Australia in the 80s and 90s (Minogue, 2001, p.21). The next subunit will seek to inform our conceptual understanding of NPM.

2.1.2. Understanding NPM

There is a growing body of scholarship to corroborate the assertion that the structural and conceptual weaknesses of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery engineered a new wave of reforms which swept across most Western democracies in the 1980s and 1990s (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000, p.8, Goldfinch, 2009, p.1, Ferlie et al., 1996, p.2 and Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p.12). Although the UK is believed to be the birth place of NPM, it rapidly spread its tentacles far away reaching countries like New Zealand and Australia as these became embroiled in the waves of modernisation programmes unleashed by this new paradigm (Ongaro, 2009, p.1). But NPM reforms were not uniformly applied across the world, not even in leading countries like the UK, New Zealand and Australia. For example, in New Zealand, the focus was on the use of contract-driven mechanisms like privatisation of public service delivery. This study argues that earlier NPM-driven reforms implemented during the Thatcher and Major eras exposed the deficiencies of the bureaucratic model (Flynn, 2007, p.5 and Osborne and McLaughlin, 2002, p.1). This subunit will briefly discuss the key themes of the NPM reforms because of their strategic contributions to the current gravitation towards user-led public service provision.

It argues that although scholars hold different interpretations of NPM, there are some key themes like disaggregation, competition and incentivization which run through much of the literature (Dunleavy et al., 2006, p.470 and McCourt, 2001, p.107). Hughes (2003, p.1) argues that NPM reforms were inevitable in the 1980s as the bureaucratic model which had dominated public administration during the greater part of the twenty century became largely ineffective for tackling the myriad of complex and challenging problems confronting citizens. Dunleavy et al., (2006, p.470), expostulate that there was need to disaggregate hierarchical structures of the public sector, ensure a clear separation of the purchaser/provider divide and explore incentives in rewarding good performance. While acknowledging definitional difficulties and ambiguities involved in conceptualising NPM, Pollitt (2007, p.10) highlights the need to improve public sector performance as a key tenet. An OECD report (1998, p.13) contends that NPM seeks to achieve;

> ...value for money...through management by objectives, the use of markets and market-type mechanisms, competition and choice, and devolution to staff through a better matching of authority, responsibility and accountability.

NPM reforms therefore seek to import business tools, values and techniques in fostering efficiency, effectiveness and high productivity in the management of the public sector which has been bedevilled by inefficiency. De-bureaucratization of the public sector has become the main thrust of NPM reforms as organisational restructuring, downsizing and the use of performance-oriented and market-driven mechanisms have been passionately espoused in countries like the UK, New Zealand and Australia (Goldfinch, 2009, p.6). NPM reforms were intended to liberate public sector managers from the rigidity of public sector rules by empowering them to innovatively explore their creative flare in improving service delivery and leveraging transformational outcomes (Goldfinch, 2009, p.1). NPM thus seeks to address the inefficiencies, rigidity and the stultifying weaknesses of the Weberian bureaucratic model by introducing efficiency-driven mechanisms like contracting out (Hughes, 2003, p.256, Goldfinch, 2009, p.1 and Hodge, 2000, p.13). Proponents of NPM were quick to state that it could instil new `managerialism` with autonomy devolved to line managers thus adding flexibility and speed to service delivery (Pollitt, 2007, p.112 and Goldfinch, 2009, p.2).

Other key features of NPM thus include the decentralisation of bureaucratic structures, the vertical and horizontal devolution of power and responsibilities to grass-root structures as well as being "customer-focused...[and]...quality improvement" (Pollitt, 2002 cited in Goldfinch, 2009, p.2). Dunleavy et al., (2006, p.469) in an article titled "New Public Management Is Dead – Long Live Digital-Era Governance" herald the demise of NPM and argue that it has been replaced by the digital revolution. Digitalisation may provide a novel window via which end users can access public services as most services such as council tax payment and tax declaration are now available online. This study ascertains that although NPM had long passed its `use-by-date`, its core themes like competition, disaggregation, customer satisfaction, performance management and service improvement continue to inform public service delivery around the world today (Dunleavy et al., 2006, p.470, Pollitt, 2007, p.112 and Goldfinch, 2009, p.2). Despite the positive achievements ushered by NPM, critics argue that it was the changes to the world economy in the 1980s and 1990s that forced governments to espouse market-oriented reforms and not NPM (Goldfinch, 2009, p.5). It can be argued that these critics have failed to explicitly state what these changes were.

They also argue that the bureaucratic model can leverage "consistency, continuity, predictability, suitability, efficacious and easily replicable performance of repetitive activities, equity and professionalism" (Shafritz and Ott, 1996 cited in Goldfinch, 2009, p.4). But proponents of NPM refute such an assertion arguing that NPM as a reform paradigm has drastically engineered a host of other public sector reforms aimed at improving quality and efficiency across the sector (Pollitt, 2007, p.112). This study argues that although NPM may be dead, its spirit lives on as it has unleashed a new wave of thinking across the public sector! This is discernible through innovative concepts like partnership working, networks and governance which are constantly influencing and informing a new set of reforms and `joined-up thinking` within the public sector (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.15, Keast and Brown, 2007, p.41, Klijn, 2007, p.257 and Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.53). The next subunit will briefly discuss recent public sector reforms implemented in the UK.

2.2. Recent Public Sector Reforms implemented in the UK:

The public sector in the UK includes organisations and agencies such as central government, the NHS, Local government, Public Corporations sometimes referred to as quangos, universities and the police authorities (Office for National Statistics, 2010, p.2). This subunit will conceptually discuss recent public sector reforms implemented in the UK from two perspectives; first, it will articulate highlights of recent public sector reforms implemented under the Thatcher and Major Conservative Governments. Second, it will discuss some public sector reforms implemented under New Labour. Peters (1996, cited in Goldfinch, 2009, p.1) argues that "change in the public sector is the rule rather than the exception", but such change can be disjointed, structurally and conceptually confusing as well as marked by episodes of incoherence and discontinuity.

The rationale for briefly discussing public sector reforms implemented during the above periods is predicated on the understanding that reforms implemented during the Thatcher and Major years (1979-1997) have already been extensively discussed in the literature especially under NPM (Hodge, 2000, p.17, Neiman, 2000, p.269, and Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000, pp.1-23). Second, the accession to office of New Labour in 1997 heralded a new era for `joined-up thinking` and the integrated delivery of public services which constitute the main thrust of

this thesis (Dean, 2009, p.22 and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.15). The next subunit will highlight key public sector reforms implemented under the Thatcher and Major Conservative governments.

2.2.1. Highlights of Key Public Sector Reforms Implemented under Thatcher and Major (1979-1997):

The Thatcher and Major governments of the 1980s and 1990s implemented various facets of public sector reforms like downsizing, privatisation, PPPs, PFIs and different public sector restructuring programmes (Ferlie et al., 1996, p.3 and Hughes, 2003, p.4). These reforms were informed by ideological and market-driven views as well as by the need to increase public sector efficiency and effectiveness (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.15). The market-driven culture established under the Conservatives was widened under New Labour as a tool for fostering competition, efficiency and greater user satisfaction from public services (Hughes, 2003, p.256 and Seidle, 1995, p.44). This subunit will very briefly discuss some public sector reforms like privatisation and the Next Step Initiative which were implemented under Thatcher and Major (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.21).

First, NPM-inspired reforms under Thatcher were conceptualised on the premise that limited state intervention will leverage the opportunity for an upshot of a free market economy driven by market and quasi-market mechanisms (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.19). Privatisation was implemented from 1984-94 as the management of some public enterprises like British Telecom was transferred from state to private ownership (Hodge, 2000, p.14). This marked a "transfer of assets and/or service functions from public to private hands" (Hodge, 2000, p.14) through mechanisms like contracting out, outsourcing, various forms of joint ownerships (PPPs) and the outright sale of publicly-owned enterprises to private firms (Hodge, 2000, p.14 and Cook and Kirkpatrick, 1995, p.5). But premising public service delivery solely on market provisions is conceptually flawed as markets cannot provide effective, efficient and cheaper public services in every instance, hence there is need to complement markets with state and/or TS provisions.

Second, Thatcher introduced the Next Step Initiative in 1988 through the creation of over a hundred executive agencies charged with public service delivery, improving performance through targets and underpinned by performance-related pay (Wegrich, 2009, p.142). These executive agencies were expected to lucidly dichotomise the purchaser/provider roles, to separate policy formulation from the implementation arm of government and to improve service quality (Wegrich, 2009, p.145). But James (2003 cited in Wegrich, 2009, p.145) argues that performance control and management as well as the introduction of agency targets may inhibit inter agency cooperation as agencies become target-driven. Critics also point to the failure of the Child Support Agency by contending that executive agencies are not the most effective and efficient way of delivering customer-focused responsive public services (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.24). But Butcher (1995 cited in Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.24) argues that the introduction of the Next Step Initiative had leveraged the structural and cultural transformations of some executive agencies like the Benefit Agency. This study contends that the implementation of partnership working is supposed to mitigate the negative effects of the Next Step policy initiative by enabling organisations to achieve greater efficiency through hybridised outcome-driven working strategies and other market-led mechanisms.

Other public sector reforms implemented by the Thatcher government include Efficiency Scrutinies, (1979), Financial Management Initiative (1982) and performance-related pay which were further developed during John Major`s tenure of office (1990-1997). Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) was also introduced to facilitate contracting out of NHS support services like catering and cleaning although it was later extended to other public sector agencies through open competitive bidding especially in LAs (Audit Commission, 1989 cited in Entwistle and Martin, 2005, p.234). The most striking reform implemented by Prime Minister Major in 1991 was the Citizen`s Charter which was expected to re-direct focus away from the provider to the citizen as a consumer of public services (Powell et al., 2009, p.1 and Shaw, 2009, p.20). This study argues that the key tenets of the Citizen`s Charter such as citizens` involvement, choice, empowerment, voice, accessibility and the need for services to respond to the specific needs of users have endured till date and constitute the core of public service delivery in England (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.24 and Wegrich, 2009, p.142). While some of the above reforms were

extended under New Labour, others were considered `not fit-for-purpose` and simply scraped.

2.2.2. Key Public Sector Reforms Implemented under New Labour (1997-2010)

New Labour invigorated the Next Step initiative through the creation of more executive agencies while widening the concept of performance management and entrenching a target culture through the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) of 1998 (Wegrich, 2009, p.142 and Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.24). The CSR firmly established the idea of performance targets and management evidenced through Public Service Agreements (PSAs) as these sought to set service levels and expected service quality. PSAs thus depicted key departmental aims, priorities "objectives and key performance targets" (Wegrich, 2009, p.142) as these constituted the core aims of the CSRs since each department was charged with setting its own PSAs. Targets were rapidly expanded by the Prime Minister`s Delivery Unit (PMDU) to key sectors like the NHS, crime, schools, transport as they were intended to facilitate service monitoring and improvement (Wegrich, 2009, p.147). Although targets were explored in determining "hospital waiting time, street crime, examination results, delays in railway services [and traffic] congestion" (Wegrich, 2009, p.147) they were highly criticised for stifling local creativity and innovation. Hood (2006, cited in Wegrich, 2009, p.147) refers to this target culture as "target terror" which further underscores the disdain with which targets were regarded. This subunit will discuss some main public sector reforms implemented by New Labour.

New Labour published the White Paper `Modernising Government` which underpins the concept of `joined-up` government; this became a defining document as it laid the foundation for later reforms (Cabinet Office, 1999, p.6 and Wegrich, 2009, p.143). On the other hand, other reforms like the Civil Service Report, 1999 and the Gershon Review 2004 focused on improving public sector performance and efficiency through mechanisms like performance-related pay, downsizing and the use of ICT (Wegrich, 2009, p.143). Earlier reforms implemented by New Labour in the health and education were aimed at raising standards, strengthening accountability and collaboration as well as building the capacity of staff through improvement in pay and the use of market mechanisms (Commission on 2020 Public

Services, 2010, p.29). Top down performance enhancing mechanisms like school rankings and `league tables` widely used in improving the school system emphasised the need for greater competition, choice, incentives, transparency and partnership with local businesses (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.29). `Individual learner accounts` and `Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) ` were used to incentivise attendance, learning and achievements. The introduction of `Train to Gain` qualifications and the "Building Schools for the Future [Programme]" (BSF) (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.29) were also implemented in the education sector.

I will argue that the above reforms were undermined by central government-driven targets which stifled local involvement or initiative. Some reforms were also marred by fraud and corruption as evidenced by the abandonment of the `Individual Learner Accounts` initiative (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.29). On the other hand, internal markets and centrally-driven targets were widely used in the NHS while a web of Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) at regional levels were free to buy healthcare from any provider (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.34). PCTs were able to apply for Foundation Hospital status as underscored by the NHS Reform and Healthcare Professional Act of 2002 as this gave them the autonomy to set their own targets and ability to operate freely from any centrally-driven top-down targets (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.34). Further reforms in the health sector were intended to improve commissioning in order to achieve Value for Money (VFM) and greater patient satisfaction which also stressed patient choice, voice and rapid access to services in order to ensure a pluralistic provision (Bosanquet, 2007 cited in Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.34). Increased funding for the NHS was a key priority of New Labour`s NHS reforms as there was a remarkable shift from targets to delivering greater health outcomes and patient satisfaction (Darzi, 2008 cited in Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.34).

The above public sector reforms were largely continued under the Brown government (2007-2010). Brown thus indicated the need to make public service reforms in the health, education, welfare and social care sectors the key priority of his government as stated in the document "Excellence and fairness: Achieving world class public services" which was published in 2008. There was emphasis on healthcare improvement in the NHS while the "National

Apprenticeship Scheme, National Skills Academies and...Graduate internships" were introduced in education (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.37). Elsewhere the use of star ratings and targets in the health and education sectors respective was as controversial as evidence of its success is mixed (Wegrich, 2009, p.147). For example, proponents of the use of targets claim its use in school rankings could engineer improved performance or reduce hospital waiting times when used in hospital milieus (Barber, 2007 cited in Wegrich, 2009, p.148). A comparative study by Propper et al., (2007, cited in Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.45) on hospital waiting times in England and Scotland where targets were non-applicable confirmed that targets and the fear of sanctions did actually reduce hospital waiting times in England.

Supporters of this `target culture` point to an increase "from 45% in 1995/96 to 59% in 2005/06"...[in the number of]...GCSE candidates achieving five A-C grades or equivalent" (Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010, p.45) as a positive benefit of targets but critics argue to the contrary. They point to the distortional effects of over reliance on numeric targets as these can be flawed as a results of staff manipulations in the quest to achieve desired results hence "professional values and intrinsic motivation" (Wegrich, 2009, p.148) may be further sacrificed. But March and Olsen, (1989 cited in Entwistle and Martin, 2005, p.237) argue that reform "rarely satisfies the prior intentions of those who initiate it" as it can be poorly implemented or unleash some unintended consequences which can also be addressed by later reforms. The next subunit will discuss some of the processes which can inform effective partnership working.

2.2.3. Coordination, hierarchies, Markets and Partnership Working

I will argue that coordination, hierarchies, markets and networks are critical and important tools which can inform, influence, widen and broaden our conceptual understanding of effective partnership working (Entwistle, 2010, pp.162-165). I will also contend that recent developments in partnership working emphasise choice, personalisation, voice and the importance of end users as consumers and co-producers of services (Needham, 2009, p.39). This study discusses coordination, hierarchies, markets and networks as tools for effective

public service delivery and partnership working (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, pp. 38-42 and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.51).

Coordination is the orchestration of people [organisations] towards a particular goal; it involves more formal and longer-term interactions, increased risk, and shared rewards" (ibid. Quoted in Bingham, O`Leary and Carlson, 2008, p.6). Coordination in partnerships is thus predicated on steering members towards tackling specific problems and achieving shared goals. It also reflects social and organisational features like trust, norms and networks which facilitate organisational cooperation for mutual gains and in achieving shared objectives (Fountain, 1998, p.113) as well as in "coordinating resources for producing public value" (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.24). Creating sustainable public value will build on user involvement in the processes which inform, influence and shape public service delivery. Effective coordination as in partnership working can create a synergy through the pooling of resources in order to co-produce citizens-led public services and value which draw on good customer service in ensuring customer satisfaction (Moore, 1995, pp.36-38). But this study argues that effective coordination of the various networks involved in partnership working can minimise service fragmentation, provide a wider choice and allow users to customise and configure services as may suit their preferences (Needham, 2009, p.39 and Shaw, 2009, p.19). As a governance strategy, coordination is a painful activity which can be time consuming, may breed conflict, fail to add value, propel inertia and create collaborative deficit.

It requires good leadership skills in pooling people and resources together often across organisations with different organisational cultures in order to achieve shared goals. But good leadership skills from the lead organisation built around consensus building, mediation, dialogue, negotiation, diplomacy, influencing, interpersonal relations and effective communication can facilitate the smooth coordination of partnership working (Morse and Buss, 2007). The lead organisation in a partnership venture may assume such a role because of its strategic, technical or resource base. It may therefore seek to rapidly establish a common ground with the other partner(s) in order to build mutual trust and inspire confidence through clarity of objectives and terms of engagement. Although coordination is more likely associated with the bureaucratic model and its hierarchical pyramid structures; it is now

hugely explored as a tool for organising, managing and steering networks of partners involved in working together in delivering specific services or policy goals.

Coordination is also important in the networked model of public service delivery especially as they may be a multitude of stakeholders involved in `joined-up` working especially in tackling `wicked` problems like floods, hurricanes and earthquakes (Hicklin, 2009, pp.94-99). Despite its use as a tool in facilitating the networked model, coordination is still deeply entrenched in hierarchies as it places emphasis on a sort of " pyramid control" (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.39), reminiscent of bureaucracy. But partnership working may be bedevilled by hierarchical excesses and the lack of inclusivity. I will argue that hierarchies are a key strand of the bureaucratic model of public service delivery and are therefore blunt tools for tackling the multitude of complex, challenging and interrelated problems plaguing our societies today (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, pp.38-42). Hierarchies are regarded as inflexible, risky, too parochial in depth, slow, rigid, tied down by red tapes, lack inclusivity, innovation and creativity as underpinned by their pyramid and `command-and-control` structures (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.51). Hierarchies thus underscore a top-down approach and are rule-driven with complex routines and procedures which can inhibit innovation.

But it is worth noting that the very pyramid-like manner with which most partnerships are structured with a chief executive at the helm, risks transforming them into hierarchies hence there is need for broad base decision making strategies which build on greater end user and stakeholder involvements. Goldsmith and Eggers (2004, p.8) argue that although "the hierarchical model of government still persists, its influence is steadily waning" as government comes under more pressure to provide swift, effective and efficient solutions to citizens` problems. This is important as the rigid, inefficient, ineffective and restrictive nature of the hierarchical model is unsuitable for tackling the myriad of problems which confront our societies today. The above deficiencies of hierarchies thus engineered the growth of markets as underpinned by the NPM paradigm. I will argue that although markets are a key feature of the NPM, partnership working is increasingly exploring market tools like contracting out and outsourcing for incentivising TS and private participations in public service delivery (Minogue, 2001, pp.6-8, Walker and Davis, 1999, p.16 and Glasby and

Dickinson, 2008, p.9). Proponents of the use of market mechanisms in partnership working argue that markets will unleash cost efficiency, competition and the effective allocation of resources but critics contend that there is no compelling evidence to demonstrate such an assertion (Minogue, 2001, p.26).

The use of markets in partnership working without proper oversights risks unleashing inefficiency, wastage, a poor allocation of resources and less user-led value creation as the recent failure of the fire and rescue control scheme[8] illustrates (BBC, 2011). This failure demonstrates the vital role of strong strategic leadership, effective oversights and accountability in the overall success of partnership working (Public Accounts Committee, 2011 cited in BBC, 2011). The utilisation of outcome-based commissioning strategies, clear monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, proper terms of engagements and clarity in service outcomes and expectations can mitigate the adverse effects of market mechanisms and ensure that taxpayers are not defrauded (Ingraham and Getha-Taylor, 2008, p.79 and O`Leary and Bingham, 2009, p.255). Hence, I can argue that market mechanisms alone cannot propel the effective delivery of user-led transformational outcomes; there is thus need for organisational overhaul and a cultural change. I will also contend that the utilisation of markets in public service delivery facilitates partnership working as PSOs can purchase services from a wide range of providers, including private and TSOs especially where these have comparative advantage over in-house provision (Tschirhart, Amezcua and Anker, 2009, pp.15-22). The next subunit will focus on my engagement with the literature on SEs through a presentation of an overview of how SEs came about from NPM.

2.3. An Overview of how SEs Emerged from NPM-inspired Public Service `marketisation`

I will argue and demonstrate that apart of their relevance as an effective model of public service provision; SEs emerged as a result of the extensive use of markets in public service delivery as TSOs grapple with searching for more competitive and profitable organisational models (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2011, p.3). I will contend that the huge influence of

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[8] This was a giant partnership "project intended to set up nine regional control services for fire and rescue services in England" (BBC, 2011) which ended up in complete disaster with £469m of public money wasted as none of the initial objectives of the project were achieved.

NPM in shaping and reconfiguring the public service delivery landscape through market principles like outsourcing and contracting out necessitated the entry of the private and third sectors in public service delivery and by mid 2000 SEs joined the race (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.1). It is worth noting that SEs had been existing in the UK since "the Rochdale Pioneers" (Doherty et al., 2009, p.1) of 1844 in the forms of cooperatives and mutuals. A redefinition of the role of the state from public service provider to `enabler`, coupled with the failures of the bureaucratic model, engineered an entrepreneurial spirit in government which shifted focus from standardised processes to maximising resources in creating public value (Ferlie et al., 1996, p.18). Ridley-Duff and Bull (2011, p.39) also support my perspective on the emergence of SEs by equally arguing that SEs grew and became more visible in public service delivery with the introduction of NPM-driven market mechanisms in the public service in England. I can argue that NPM-driven markets mechanisms led to policy changes in mid-2000s as witness in the creation of the Office of the Third Sector in 2006 as these policy changes changed the dynamics by squarely placing SEs on the public service delivery agenda (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.1).

The rationale for this interest in SEs is evidenced by the understanding that SEs can deliver more compelling user-led public services since they command the trust of the public, have a long successful history of working with hard-to-reach groups and are more robust than other forms of TSOs (Doherty et al., 2009, p.5). As a key player in the social economy, SEs can leverage effective user-focused public services in the areas of health and social care, regeneration, waste management and the criminal and probation services (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2011, p.3 and Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.4). I will contend that most TSOs today are creating subsidiaries in the forms of SEs because of the competitive advantages which SEs can deliver as they operate like businesses in trading for social and environmental goals as well as social value creation. The Social Enterprise Coalition (2011, p.3) argues that SEs are a compelling model for engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services because of their inherent culture of co-production and empowering disadvantaged and disempowered communities. I can contend that despite the potentials for SEs to create user-led social value through effective public services delivery, the tough fiscal climate, poor commissioning, government bureaucracy and mechanisms like payment by results are prohibiting smaller SEs from actively involving in public service delivery (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2011, p.3).

I will further argue that facilitating access to capital for smaller SEs, encouraging joint provisions (the Lead-contractor Model), mergers and sharing backroom operations like HR and IT can ease the financial pressures on smaller SEs and strengthen their involvement in public service delivery (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2011, p.3). This study argues that recent policy instruments like the passing of The Public Services (Social Value Act) in 2012 underline the added value which SEs can bring into public service delivery especially at this moment of budgetary restraints and dwindling public confidence and trust in public services. The next subunit will explore and expand on the above position in further informing our understanding of SE involvement in public service delivery.

2.3.1. Social Enterprises and their involvement in Public Service Delivery:

There has been an upsurge in recent years in SE engineered policy initiatives and research although much of it is conceptually confusing in definitional terms and has led to the creation of SE initiatives in major universities like Harvard, Yale, Columbia and ARU (Defourney, 2004, p.1, Defourney and Nyssens, 2010, p.5 and Barraket and Collyer, 2010, p.1). The current tough fiscal climate and the drastic reduction in funding for TSOs have energised the growth of SEs in recent years as there is a growing policy insistence today on the use of SEs in public service provision in England (SEL, 2010, p.7). This study argues that SEs constitute a popular and expanding sector comprised of innovation-driven philanthropic organisations which explore private sector managerial models and strategies in trading for social and environmental objectives (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.1). As part of the larger TS, SEs are non-profit in nature although they are potentially profitable with profits ploughed back into developing new services, expanding the scope of the organisation, or in pursuing further social and environmental goals (Doherty et al., 2009, p.26). The rapid emergence of SEs has triggered a conceptual confusion as a vast range of organisations like charities, other TSOs, mutuals and cooperatives conceptually operate like SEs in terms of activities (Defourney and Nyssens, 2010, p.5).

Despite this conceptual confusion, the SE-focused European Research Network (EMES) (cited in Defourney and Nyssens, 2010, p.37) identifies the following four key determinants of SEs;

- The ability to continuously produce services and/or goods, hence SEs are often productively involved in producing and delivering goods and/or services to citizens and especially to deprived segments of the society.

- Autonomy and independence; SEs must honestly respond to the competing demands of funders, service commissioners and end users by defending and asserting their independence in tandem with their organisational philosophies.

- SEs often undertake economic risks which are a maker of economic production as they engage in the production of goods and/or services through the espousal of vibrant and viable business models.

- Unlike VCSOs which may largely rely on volunteerism, SEs often attract highly skilled paid staff and volunteers where appropriate for competitive reasons.

The DTI (2002, p.6) defines a SE as

> ... a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community rather than being driven by the need to maximize profits for shareholders and owners.

SEs constitute the main strand of the social economy and are conceptualised as mechanisms for pursuing and achieving social and environmental objectives hence there is a growing expectation today for SEs to play a key role in public service delivery. Like cooperatives and mutuals, SEs are `not-for-private-profit` unlike private enterprises, hence profits are usually re-invested in expanding the scope of activities while a tiny fraction may be shared to shareholders in exceptional cases (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.12). The following rationales will seek to account for the upsurge of SEs in the UK.

This study argues that markets and state failures coupled with their limitations in leveraging user-led public services especially to disadvantaged segments of the society have re-inserted SEs on the policy agenda (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000, p.553). Policymakers and politicians of all political persuasions expostulate that SEs can explore their unique position in invigorating service delivery and environmental and economic regeneration especially at this moment of dwindling public resources. The non-private profit motive of SEs underpinned by their innovative credentials and capacity to explore private sector management tools in achieving sustainable profits ascertain the fact that SEs are a vibrant

model for public service delivery (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.14). Westall (2001, cited in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.14) contends that SEs are engineering new conversations "about the role of the state and [are] radical organisations in developing alternatives to private enterprise" or private sector provision of public services. Unlike private enterprises, SEs do not solely seek to generate profits for shareholders but seek to leverage alternatives to private business models which are driven by the need to create public value underpinned by social and environmental objectives (Westall, 2001, p1).

This study conceptualises SEs as both organisational activities and forms in which some TSOs trade for the advancement of social and environmental objectives with surpluses re-invested in the expansion of new activities or services (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.14). This conceptualisation of SEs implies that I will be able to focus on both TSOs like VCSOs and charities with trading activities based on SE principles as well as TSOs structured and known as SEs. Such a conceptual focus will widen our understanding of the sector and broaden the range of organisations which I can explore in investigating the phenomena under study. Hence, the key rationale for conceptualising SEs as both activities and organisational forms is predicated on their complex, challenging and often mutating nature. Today most TSOs are fast creating subsidiaries or espousing SEs management and business models for sustainability and profitability hence further blurring the line between SEs and other forms of TSOs. Professor Kash Rangan of the HBS argues that SEs are social value creating organisations, nonprofit and philanthropic and may be hybridised. His colleague at the HBS, Herman B. Leonard, on the other hand, argues that SEs are social-Mission-driven-organizations (SMDOs) (Thompson, 2008, p.1 and Silverthorne, 2008, p.1).

This study also conceptualises SEs as part of the wider TS thus locating them on the margin between the third and private sectors which partly explains their propensity to utilise private sector management models in pursuing social and environmental objectives (Pearce, 2003 cited Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.30). It draws further inspiration from Defourney (2001, cited in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011, p.30) in extrapolating that although SEs constitute part of the TS, they are closer to the private sector in business strategies and the profit motive than to the TS. But Doherty et al., (2009, p.26) argue that by exploring competitive business

models and trading strategies, SEs can adequately leverage user-led social and environmental outcomes. The following figure thus seeks to underscore my conceptual location of SEs.
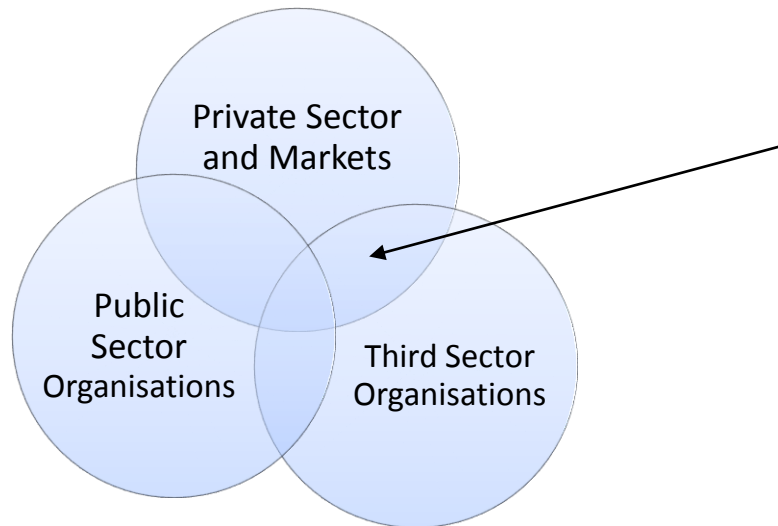
Figure 2.2. Capturing the location of SEs.

The arrow in the above figure indicates the area occupied by SEs and by positioning themselves between the private and TSs, SEs are better able to utilise private sector management strategies and models in creating social and environmental value. In order to leverage the greatest public value, (Moore, 1995, p.1), SEs often target disadvantaged segments of the population which "lack the financial means or political clout to achieve... transformative benefits on... [their]...own" (Martin and Osberg, 2007, p.35). I will argue that the strategic importance of SEs in public service provision is also echoed by recent emerging government policies like the White paper; Open Public Services (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.77). Its key rationale is to diversify public service provision to include TS providers like Charities, VCSOs, Public sector Mutuals, and SEs in order to engineer a `mixed economy` of service providers (Brown and Gash, 2011, p.6). SEs are not a panaceas, or `magic bullet`, hence they should be explored where there is ample evidence that they can leverage the greatest social and environmental value to those at the base of the pyramid (Rangan, Leonard and McDonald, 2008, p.3). The next subunit will focus on discussing and analysing the literature on Collaborative Public Management or partnership working as a prelude to a discussion on user involvement.

2.4. Review of Literature on Collaborative Public Management and Partnership Working

Introduction:

This study argues that like Partnership Working, Collaborative Public Management (CPM) is a rapidly growing field which is fast establishing its own body of scholarship. It also contends that the primary focus of CPM is to provide a knowledge base and practical skills on how PSOs can explore partnership working strategies in tackling cross-cutting issues (O`Leary et al., 2009, p.1, Parker, 2007, p.176 and Parston, 2008, p.1 and Bingham, O`Leary and Carlson, 2008, p.1). Most public sector staff today are increasingly working in networks across their traditional organisation boundaries as they seek to leverage citizen-led high quality responsive services (Provan, Kenis and Human, 2008, p.121). Huxham and Vangen, (2005, p.3) caution that partnership working can be frustrating, resource draining and even trigger "collaborative inertia". Partnership working can take various forms including; shared services, mutuals, cooperatives, consortia, alliances, PFIs, mergers and PPPs, underpinned by joint working in achieving shared goals and objectives (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2).

I will argue that CPM and Partnership working are intertwined as both expressions are used interchangeably in this study and extensively in the literature (Entwistle, 2010, pp.162-165, Boyne, Entwistle and Ashworth, 2010, p.1, O`Leary et al., 2009, p.3 and Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.182). This section will also briefly discuss the rationale, barriers, and implications of partnership working as well as other topics related to user involvement. The rationale for discussing the above research issues and others is twofold; first I will situate my study within the growing and fast developing discipline of CPM by demonstrating how it draws conceptual impetus from extant literature. Second, such a discussion will capture and establish the links between the above concepts and partnership working while exploring multiple perspectives in evidencing and analysing extant literatures. This study argues that the emergence of CPM as a fast growing discipline is testimonial of its unique strategic importance in public policy and public service delivery today (Connelly, Zhang and Faerman, 2008, p.17, Agranoff, 2008, p.162 and McGuire, 2008, p.71). The next subunit will focus on CPM.

2.4.1. Collaborative Public Management as an Emerging Discipline

There is need for PSOs to continuously seek to work across organisational boundaries through various forms of "partnerships, networks, contractual relationships, alliances, committees, coalitions [and] consortia" (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2) as they tackle the myriad of `wick problems` confronting the society today. The centrality and importance of partnership working in generating a growing body of scholarship especially in the US through the emergence of CPM is critical to understanding end user involvement (O`Leary et al., 2009, p.1 and Hicklin et al., 2009, p.95). This body of scholarship seeks to demonstrate and inform our understanding on how PSOs can collaboratively work across organisational boundaries in providing citizens-driven responsive public services (Alexander and O`Leary, 2009, p.197, Graddy and Chen, 2009, p.53 and Brudney, Cho and Wright, 2009, p.117). This study argues that networks and collaborative working have become robust tools for effectively tackling multi-dimensional complex problems like care for the elderly, floods and anti-social behaviours as these outstrip the capacity of any single organisation to adequately resolve alone (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.4).

CPM describes a process that seeks to facilitate interagency and multi-sector collaborative working aimed at resolving complex and challenging problems which cannot be easily resolved through alone working (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.4). This study argues that the state should often reach out to new constituencies like VCSOs, SEs and other TSOs as well as the private sector in the quest to deliver high quality public services since state capacity, expertise and resources are limited and can easily be overwhelmed in instances like natural disasters (Hicklin et al., 2009, p.95 and Waugh, Jr., 2009, p.157). It also argues that CPM partly focuses on the growing number of "networks of public, private and nonprofit organisations; context, environment, and constraints" (O`Leary et al., 2009, p.1), in which collaborative working operates. This implies co-labour, co-production and joint working in achieving specific goals as well as working vertically and horizontally across organisational divide within multi-actors networks in co-creating public value and tackling `wicked problems` (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.4, Moore, 1995, p.1 and O`Leary et al., 2009, p.3).

Collaborative working thus provides robust institutional and inter-organisational networks through which cross-cutting policy issues as well as `wicked`, complex and challenging problems can be adequately resolved as these transcend the scope of any single organisation working alone (O`Toole, 1997 quoted in Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.24). The limitations of any single-handed government intervention in situations like disaster relief in adequately delivering aid, support and services to victims, underscore the centrality of collaborative working (O`Toole, 1997 quoted in Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, pp.24-25). Without being prescriptive, such collaborative working should be non-hierarchical, nonbureaucratic in structure and built on the experiences and `expertise` of service users as well as go beyond mere meetings, agendas and rhetoric, if it intends to deliver robust transformational outcomes to deprived citizens. This study argues that other key features of collaborative working include, trust, the depth and breadth of shared goals and resources, the underlying motivation and structure, sharing of rewards and risks, achieving shared vision and the sheer drive to leverage citizen-focused cutting-edge public services (O`Leary, 2009, p.6). This study makes the case for PSOs to explore collaborative working where there is sufficient evidence for achieving "collaborative advantage" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3).

In conclusion, despite the above conceptual relationship between CPM and partnership working, this study argues that partnership working "can lay claim to an impressive intellectual heritage" (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000, p.552) which includes the widely acclaimed work of Osborne and Gaebler (1992). It thus contends that public sector managers and those involved in collaborative working need to be entrepreneurial and innovative by constantly seeking new ways of working and engaging with citizens (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000, p.553). CPM and partnership working thus possess a shared, rich heritage and feed off or inform each other. The next subunit will seek to explore the literature on partnership working.

2.4.2.   Partnership working: Evidence from the Literature

I will argue that although the notion of partnership working through PPPs and PFIs existed well before New Labour`s accession to office in 1997, New Labour energised and renewed its conceptual application in public service delivery (Falconer and McLaughlin, 2000).

Partnership working emerged as a response to service fragmentations and the extensive use of market disciplines in engineering service delivery (Goldfinch, 2009, p.12). This does not exclude the fact that partnership working also explores market-driven tools like outsourcing and other "private sector methods and management techniques" (Falconer and McLaughlin, 2000), in delivering better user-led outcomes. The rationale for engaging with extant literature on partnership working is premised on my desire to draw inspiration from established scholars in the area, to acquaint myself with current debates, to identify gaps in the literature, avoid duplications and to inform my theoretical and conceptual framework (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.84). This subunit will focus on discussing the key issues emerging from the literature on partnership working.

It begins by arguing that most of the literature on partnership working is more often celebratory (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.2 and Glasby and Dickinson, 2009, p.1). It often depicts partnership working as a panaceas thus failing to critically evaluate its outcomes from the user`s perspective or to emphasise the strategic importance of exploring innovative models of user involvement in engineering more responsive user-led outcomes (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.1, and O`Leary, 2009, p.3). Partnership working is widely utilised today as a network tool for exploring hybridisation and pooling resources across organisations in tackling `wicked` cross-cutting issues like floods and homelessness (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.5 and Milward and Provan, 2006, p.6). Such resources may be geared at addressing challenging and complex problems which transcend the scope of any organisation to single-handedly resolve alone or for pursuing shared achievable objectives (Vangen and Huxham, 2003, p.61). I can argued that effective partnership working obtains "in the midrange" (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.44) of a continuum with no partnership working at the beginning of the same continuum as depicted in this figure below.
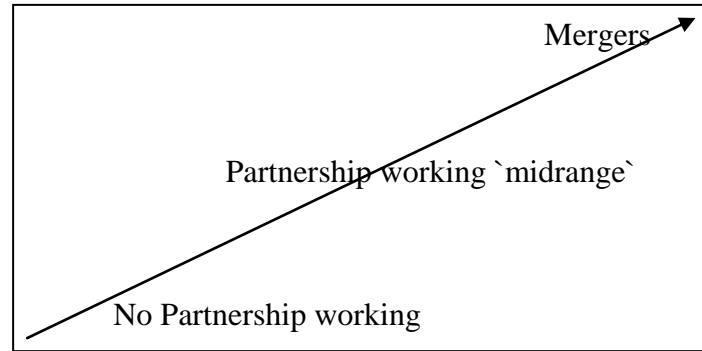
Figure: 2.3.   Partnership working at `midrange` of continuum

The above figure demonstrates that organisations rarely collaborate at the beginning of the continuum while heavy collaboration obtains at the middle of the range or `midrange` with total collaboration through mergers at the end of the continuum. A possible explanation for this pattern is that it takes considerable time to nurture partnership working and establish trust which is a key ingredient for successful partnership working (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.44). A successful history of partnership working underpinned by shared goals, trust, leadership, information sharing and resource pooling constitutes a compelling recipe for effective cross-sector collaboration in tackling vexing issues plaguing citizens (Vangen and Huxham, 2003, pp.61-65 and Simo and Bies, 2007, p.126). Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, p.45) explore the framework below in identifying the following key determinants of successful partnership working; "process...structure and governance... contingencies and constraints...[as well as]...outcomes and accountability issues".

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│           Initial Conditions                │
│ General Environment: Competitive and        │
│ institutional elements                      │
│           Sector Failure                    │
│ Direct Antecedents: Conveners General       │
│ agreement on the problem                    │
│ Existing relationships or networks.         │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

```
┌───────────────────────────┐      ┌───────────────────────────┐
│ Process: Formal & Informal:│      │ Structure & Governance    │
│ Forging agreements, Building│ ◄──► │ Formal and Informal       │
│ leaderships, Building      │      │ Membership, Structure     │
│ Legitimacy, Building trust,│      │ configuration,            │
│ Managing conflict, Planning│      │ Governance structure      │
└───────────────────────────┘      └───────────────────────────┘
```

```
        ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │      Contingencies and constraints      │
        │   Type of collaboration/partnership     │
        │  working, power imbalances, competing   │
        │         institutional logics            │
        └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Outcomes and Accountabilities: Outcomes Public          │
│ value, first, second and third order effects, Resilience│
│ and reassessment. Accountabilities: Inputs, processes   │
│ and output, Results management system, Relationship     │
│ with political and professional constituencies          │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure: 2.4 "A Framework for understanding [partnership working]" (largely adopted from Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.45).

The above figure thus clearly illustrates the key conditions necessary for fostering effective partnership working which include initial conditions such as environmental factors and the need for organisations to have clarity around agreed objectives for collaborative working (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.45). Although Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, p.45) conceptualised the above framework for cross sectoral collaborative working, it is also applicable to the wider context of partnership working (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.6 and Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.45). Simo and Bies (2007, p.125) contend that the increasing failure of state institutions, agencies and other PSOs to effectively tackle razor-sharp cross-cutting problems strengthens the case for and has re-positioned partnership

working on the public policy agenda. `Cross-sector collaborations` involving actors from the public, private and third sectors have become the modus operandi for resolving complex challenging social and environmental problems which outstrip the capacity of any single organisation to adequately tackle alone (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.44). I will argue that the following key themes are discernible from the literature on partnership working.

The theme of initial conditions necessary for successful partnership working identifies institutional and general environmental factors such as the legal and regulatory frameworks as key since these emphasise the need for shared agreement in pursuing shared objectives like tackling cross-cutting issues (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.45). But Gray and Yan (1991 cited in Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.45) argue that both institutional and competitive factors can enhance or inhibit partnership working, for example, a reduction in grants and funding can be a disincentive for partnership working. Fragile cross sector collaborative relationships underpinned by the lack of clarity around leadership, communication and coordination are some of the limitations of effective partnership working (Simo and Bies, 2007, p.125). But the inability of PSOs to single-handedly tackle cross cutting issues because of limited resources has created space for nonprofit organisations to explore their enormous skills, expertise, resources and trust-based relationship with citizens in delivering services to deprived constituencies of the society. I will also argue that the `micromanagement` of partners can undermine genuine partnership working (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.44), hence there is need for a mutual sharing of power between partners.

I will contend that there are equally associated risks to partnership working such as lose of independence as a result of accessing public fund and mission incompatibility as a SE may realise that funding or contractual strings may be incompatible with its mission goals (Gutch, 2010). The case of the faith-based charity Marie Stopes benefitting from public fund but unable to offer independent, impartial faith-free advice to women requesting abortions is a clear example of mission incompatibility (BBC, 2011). SEs involved in partnership-engineered public service delivery also risk downgrading their reputation as they may be seen as being closed to PSOs and may even incur financial or contractual losses as a result of undervaluing the actual cost of service delivery (Gutch, 2010). I will argue that partnership

working is a vibrant policy tool for synergising, harnessing and exploring innovative models of user involvement in driving the co-design and co-delivery of user-led responsive and customised public services. Innovative models of user involvement can also inform and shape the processes which characterised effective partnership working.

Key processes which inform and shape effective partnership working, Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, p.45) argue include "forging initial agreement, building trust, building leadership, building legitimacy, [as well as] managing conflicts and planning". This study argues that it is necessary for partnering organisations to build a common consensus on the rationale for joint working and explore both formal and informal agreements in sharing "roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority" (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.46). The rationale for clearly conceptualising the processes which inform and shape effective partnership working is to strengthen trust, legitimacy, ensure robust conflict management mechanisms and networks in order to translate conceptual ideas into effective user-led transformational outcomes. I will argue that the tall hierarchical bureaucracies under which most PSOs and agencies work are not often conceptualised to deal with cross boundary working and collaborations. This study advocates for a fundamental rethink in designing the operational structures of PSOs and other government agencies. This is vital if such organisations intend to work across traditional organisational boundaries especially in tackling the mirage of `wicked` problems confronting citizens today.

It also suggests that public sector managers may need to acquire new skills in networking, contract management, consensus building, influencing and effective commissioning if they intend to fully explore the fruits of partnership working (Milward and Provan, 2006, p.8). Partnership working can also erode the skills levels, capacity and capability of PSOs as core activities and services originally provided by these organisations get contracted to private and TS providers (Kettl, 2004, p.vii). I will argue that the above shortcomings associated with partnership working can be mitigated by implementing `best practice` like `open bidding` in service commissioning while creating greater space for user or public involvement. PSOs also have to retain their core skills while developing cutting-edge new skills in areas like contract management and consensus building (Kettle, 2004, p.viii).

Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, p.49) argue that the structural contexts which underpin "system stability", resource dependence and sharing, the horizontal and vertical elements, specialised tasks and power dynamics can inform, shape and determine the outcomes of partnership working. Shared objectives, shared connecting mechanisms and networks characterised by clarity around "problem definition" (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.49) as well as robust leadership can widen trust and legitimacy for the achievement of better user-centric outcomes. Structural and governance mechanisms like those cited above are further corroborations to the centrality of partnership working in resolving issues germane to citizens. New Labour MP, Lord Chris Leslie underscores this perspective by arguing that;

> "The problems facing local communities today are complex and inter-related. They cannot be addressed in isolation. All too often traditional boundaries get in the way of better services. Local authorities are unlikely to have all the resources and skills to [resolve these problems] alone. That is why we have emphasised the need for working in partnership across boundaries and traditional divides"
>
> (Quoted in Leslie, 2003)

The interrelated nature of challenging and complex problems confronting citizens today such as teenage pregnancies and drug and substance misuse underscore the need for working across traditional organisational divide in resolving them. Another theme highlighted in the literature on partnership working is the idea of "contingencies and constraints" (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.50) which may affect the outcomes of inter agency working.

Contingency factors like "power imbalance...[and various]...competing institutional logics" (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p.50) can constrain effective partnership working by breeding mistrust amongst partners. But these can be mitigated by exploring mechanisms such as effective conflict resolution and problem solving tools, legitimacy and robust leadership underpinned by effective strategies for planning and anticipating collaborative problems. The size of the partnership and a history of successful partnership working can also engineer effective collaborative working which can build on strong accountabilities and the need to achieve better user-led outcomes (Simo and Bies, 2007, p.137). Bryson, Crosby and Stone, (2006, p.51) also argue that partnership working "can effectively create public value

by taking advantage of each sector`s relative strengthens while moderating each sector`s characteristic weaknesses". Tapping into each organisation`s strengthen while mitigating its weaknesses can enable partnership working to create added value by exploring innovative models of user involvement.

This study conceptually argues that if not well construed partnership working may suffer from accountability and trust deficits as underlined by ineffective oversights (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.43). In conclusion, Bardach (1998, p.17) argues that partnership working "should be valued only if it produces better organisational performance" at a cheaper cost while leveraging better user-led services than lone working. Partnering organisations must be resilient and establish robust systems for enhancing accountability through good monitoring and evaluation tools while tracking "inputs, processes and outcomes" (Bryson, Crosby and Stone, 2006, p52) in order to deliver user-led outcomes. This study advances a number of implications embedded in partnership working as PSOs gravitate toward leveraging joined-up approaches to public service delivery.

2.4.3. Implications of Partnerships Working:

I will argue that partnership working can entail some implications for the various stakeholders involved. The extensive use of market mechanisms in public service delivery can diminish the skill base of PSOs as demonstrated by the recent shambles in awarding the West Coast rail franchise (Milmo, 2012).

Some implications of partnership working to PSOs include:
- Public managers today are becoming more of service facilitators, negotiators, contract managers and commissioners than service providers. They often manage a web of challenging and conflicting relationships which require skills in networking, consensus building, problem solving and contract management (O`Toole, 1997, p.46, Agranoff, 2008, p.162 and Milward and Provan, 2006, pp.8-9 and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, pp.4-10)

Implications to TSOs and SEs in particular;

- Funding restrictions and contractual obligations may sometime raise the issue of independence, impartiality, neutrality; loss of identity and independence as well as blurring of the boundaries between TSOs and the private sector (NCVO, 2006, p.1).

- Partnership working between the SE and end user can greatly enhance staff-end user relationship and trust; vital values often missing from public service delivery.

Implications of partnership working for end users:

- End user`s `expertise` and experience can be explored through co-production in improving service quality.

- Partnership working between service providers or professionals and end users can enable end users to learn new skills, raise their self esteem and confidence, more effective allocation of resources, promote inclusion and create a sense of ownership on the part of the users (Foster et al., 2005 cited in Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.13).

I can argue that partnership working may also consider issues around intellectual property, liability of members, composition of its management board, its life span, sustainability, and conflicts of interests as well as its dissolution (Frank and Smith, 2000, Findlay-Brooks et al., 2007 and CIPFA, 1997). The next subunit will discuss some enablers and barriers to partnership working.

2.4.4. Enablers and Barriers to Partnership Working:

Effective partnership working can be facilitated by environmental factors, the organisational contexts, sustained funding and policy mechanisms, previous successes in joint working, accountability, professionalism and "catalytic leadership" (Luke, 1998 quoted in Morse and Buss, 2007 and Anderson, 2005). I can argue that genuine user involvement in partnership working can build consensus, strengthen end user participation and voice, create a sense of joint ownership, engineer user-led responsive services, ensure sustainability and added value (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002 quoted in Anderson, 2005, p.14). But barriers such as sharp organisational and "professional boundaries between agencies" (Warmington et al., 2004, p.16), differences in organisational culture, budgetary cycles and professional practice as well

as poor communication and leadership can greatly impede effective partnership working (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.8). The Joint Improvement Partnership (JIP) (2009, pp.5-11) identifies the following five broad barriers to partnership working; people, skills and knowledge, structure, resources and external and cultural influences. People will include issues like power imbalance, the loss of identity and autonomy as well as "differences in employment conditions...poor staff morale" (JIP, 2009, pp.5-6).

On the other hand, structural factors such as "partnership fatigue...wrong or insufficient... [choice of]...partnerships...[underpinned by processes such as the]...lack of agreed outcomes... [poor]...decision-making mechanisms" (JIP, 2009, pp.7-9) which lack inclusivity are huge barriers to partnership working. I will also argue that fragile partnership infrastructure, "unresolved tensions" (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002 quoted in Anderson, 2005, p.14) and differences in professional practice between the social and medical models of care can impede expeditious partnership working (Glasby and Dickinson, 2008). For example, while Connexions may prefer a one-to-one approach in dealing with young people which is reminiscent of the career service, their counterparts from the Youth Service may "employ group-based interventions" (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.111) in delivering user-led services. Despite the aforementioned enablers and barriers, this study argues that the Network Model of public service delivery is critical for the success of partnership working.

2.4.5.   The Networked Model of Public Service Delivery and Partnership Working:

The deficiencies of the bureaucratic model coupled with the growing desire by citizens for high quality services facilitated by markets-oriented mechanisms like contracting out and outsourcing make the case of exploring networks in partnership working compelling (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002). The Networked Model emphasises interagency working across professional and organisational boundaries especially in tackling cross-cutting issues. This study argues that effective partnership working builds on a Networked Model of public service delivery as this supports multiple actors interacting with each other (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, pp.7-17). The rationale for discussing networks is premised on the understanding that knowledge of networks can better inform our conceptualisation of how partnership working can more effectively respond to the challenging and complex needs of

citizens. I can argue that the Network Model of public service delivery seeks to actively espouse a multi-stakeholder approach in engaging the various actors in the processes which inform and shape effective service delivery (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, pp.7-17 and Entwistle, 2010, p162-166). The following figure thus depicts a network of actors.
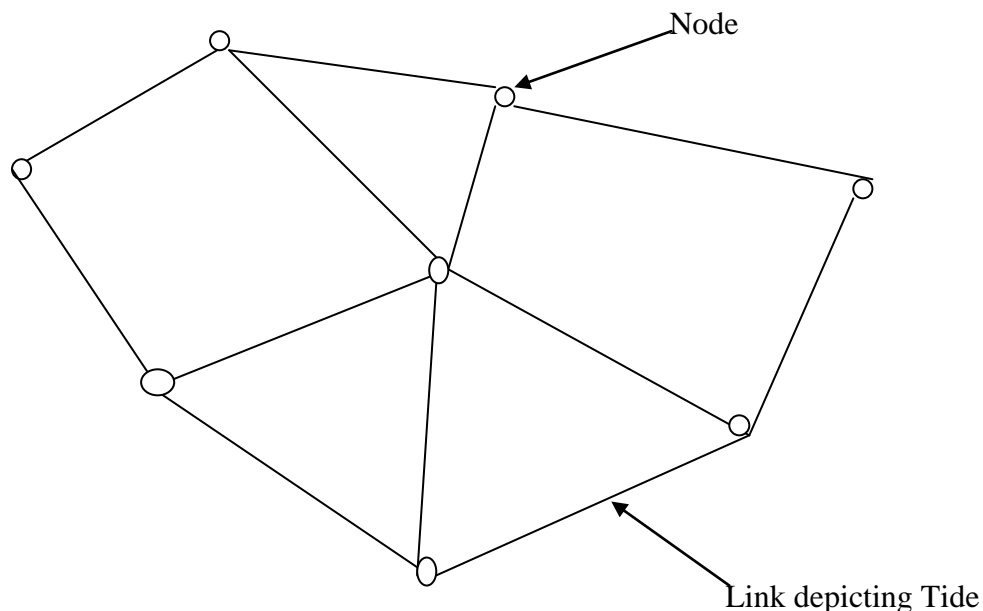
Figure: 2.5. Shows a network of actors involved in partnership working

The nodes in the above figure depict the various individuals, actors and organisations with a stake in collaborative working which may include partnering organisations, end users and their family and staff while the tides indicate the linkages and connections between these different actors (O`Toole, 1997, p.46 and Milward and Provan, 2006, p.9). This study argues that networks as in partnership working constitute structures of interdependence unified by the shared objective of co-designing and co-delivering user-led responsive services (O`Toole, 1997, p.45). Networks thus capture the interactions and web of relationships present in partnership working hence they emphasise `joined-up`, shared systems and integrated approaches to service delivery (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, pp.7-17, Doherty and Horne, 2002, p.17 and Entwistle, 2010). The importance of networks in public service delivery, Public Management and Administration is stressed by O`Toole (1997, p.50) and echoed by Hwang and Moon (2008, p.1) who all argue for a better and serious treatment of networks as these have the potential to leverage new conceptual grounds. Although the Networked Model

is currently transforming public service delivery most public services are still being organised bureaucratically.

Despite the fact that the networked model of service delivery is widely espoused and utilised in the public sector, John Donahue quoted in Goldsmith and Eggers (2004, p.22) argues that most civil service personnel systems are designed to function in the hierarchical model. They may thus be unable to cope with the expectations and demands of the networked model. The networked model of public service delivery can propel inclusivity and engage all stakeholders in co-creating "collaborative advantage" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3) as well as greater public and social value (Moore, 2007). This study thus argues that although public services today in most developed countries are largely provided by a plethora of for-profit and not-for-profit providers, the "core functions still remain the responsibility of governmental bureaucracies" (Heinrich, Hill and Lynn, 2004, p.9). These key functions involve the management of numerous webs of relationship embedded in partnership working, providing oversights and ensuring compliance with contract terms through effective management skills. Although hierarchies and networks may be viewed "as two ends of a continuum" (Heinrich, Hill and Lynn, 2004, p.10), effective partnership working builds on robust networks as hierarchies can undermine success, impede connectivity and undercut productivity.

Networks as found in collaborative working underscore the notion of "voluntary participation in inter-organizational (horizontal) relationships" (Heinrich, Hill and Lynn, 2004, p.8) and entail trust and mutual agreement in tackling cross-cutting issues. Effective networks as embedded in shared and integrated service provisions are characteristic of partnership working (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002 and Balloch and Taylor, 2001). I will argue that despite the huge benefits which networks can leverage in public service delivery, dysfunctional power dynamics and poor coordination of relationships can frustrate any effective delivery of user-led outcomes. Networks can "activate, integrate, and facilitate the contribution[s] of independent organizations" (Agranoff, 2007 cited in Posner, 2009, p.235), in fostering public service delivery. Posner (2009, p.235) argues that networks should seek "to achieve the advantages of collaboration, while leveraging the authority, expertise, and resources of hierarchies" through the effective coordination of hierarchies and market disciplines. I will argue that the network model should actively espouse participatory and

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inclusive techniques since it has the potentials to inform the conceptualisation of new or alternative models of public service delivery.

2.4.6.   Conceptualising Alternative Models of Public Service Delivery:

The complex and challenging demands of citizens for high quality personalised public services are generating political consensus on the need to conceptualise more cost-effective alternative models of public service delivery (Tomkinson, 2007, pp.1-2). Shared and integrated services, employee-owned models of service provision like public service mutuals and cooperatives are being discussed not as post-partnership models but as extensions and complementary models to partnership working (Cowper, 2010). The rationale for conceptualising alternative models of public service delivery is premised on the efficiency-effectiveness arguments, hence the need to search for better and cheaper ways of delivering more compelling user-led public services (OPM, 2010, p.10). The highly influential All-Party Commission on 2020 Public Services (2010, p.10), argues that a new model of service delivery which builds on civic participation, engagement and responsibility may emerge from the current budgetary constraints gripping the country. This subunit will seek to briefly discuss some alternative models of public service delivery.

2.4.6a.   Shared and Integrated Service Provisions:

PSOs like LAs can explore shared services by building on shared approaches of working together in providing services to the community hence; they can share some operational functions like human resources, the payroll, call centres and frontline delivery (DCLG, 2006, p.7). "A new shared service approach is needed to release efficiencies across the system and support the delivery of more focused customer needs" (Cabinet Office, 2005 quoted in DCLG, 2006, p.7). Such shared services can be driven by the need to achieve economy of scale, efficiency and cost effectiveness, for example through the joint purchase of services and joint commissioning. This study argues that shared service can be an effective tool at this moment of fiscal restraints especially in delivering user-led public services, minimising the cost of backroom operations like HR, sharing risks and responsibilities, eliminating inefficiencies and sharing costs on key operations (DCLG, 2006, p.7). Shared services can take the forms of the joint sharing of expertise across organisations, joint service provision

and "collaborative procurements" (DCLG, 2006, p.25) through the joint purchase of goods and services.

Closely related to the notion of shared services is the concept of integrated service provision. "Integrated Services are characterized by a unified management system, pooled funds, common governance, whole systems approach to training, information and finance, single assessment and shared targets" (Horwath, and Morrison, 2007, p.58). An Integrated service therefore implies shared delivery by "more than one [organisation] of a specific service in which service aims and objectives are mutually shared" (Tomkinson, 2007, p.2) as such a service is geared at delivering value and better outcomes to end users. Integrated services can provide a sort of one-stop shop or single window which pools related services together under one roof so that service users can easily access a variety of services at one location (Seidle, 1995, p.117 and Milbourne, 2005). Although such a `service hub` underscores the need for greater and effective multi agency working in tackling cross cutting issues, it can be undermined by the lack of integrated working systems, poor communication and tension between professionals (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.9 and Glasby and Dickinson, 2008, pp.21-22). But the above problems can be addressed by utilising more integrated working and communication systems. The next subunit will briefly discuss mutuals and cooperatives as alternative models of public service delivery.

2.4.6b. Public Service Mutuals and Cooperatives:

The Coalition Government recently announced the launching of five pathfinders to serve as trailblazers in the health, social care and education sectors, largely comprising of employees-owned mutuals (Cabinet Office, 2010). The pathfinders will seek to experiment with the novel idea of public sector employees grouping themselves into public service mutuals in order to bid to provide public services. Pathfinders can access mentoring from expert firms like PWC, Tribal, Care and Share Associates and Sunderland Home Care Associates (Cabinet Office, 2010). While the idea of Public service mutuals and cooperatives providing frontline public services is innovative, there is scanty evidence that such an approach will succeed. I can also argue that employee-owned ventures may not be suitable for running certain government institutions like the Home Office and the Cabinet Office; hence public service

mutuals and cooperatives have their limitations. I can contend that while involving public service mutuals in public service provision may look attractive the evidence to justify their suitability and effectiveness is "still emerging" (OPM, 2010, p.10).

This study argues that as part of SEs, mutuals and cooperatives are innovative business ventures which trade for social, economic and environmental reasons, underpinned by the need to transform the lives of their members, clients and the society at large (Social Enterprise London (SEL), 2001, p.31). SEL (2001, p.32) further defines cooperatives as

> ...autonomous association[s] of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through...jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise[s]

Cooperatives are mostly an employee-owned type of business venture trading with profits reinvested and part shared to its members while mutuals on the hand include building societies, cooperatives, credit unions and other forms of employee-owned businesses (SEL, 2001. pp.31-32).

Briefly speaking, other emerging alternative models of effective public service delivery include;

- Joint Provision
- Public-Public Partnerships
- Consortiums
- Alliances
- Committees
- Taskforce
- Joint Ventures

- Public-Third Sector Provision
- Public-Private Provision
- The Lead Contractor Model
- Employee-owned Model
- User-led Provision (e.g. tenant run housing services)

(Adopted from Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.2 and Doherty, 2010, pp.3-6)

This study argues that the above alternative models of public service delivery should be explored on their comparative advantage as these can largely utilise networks in pooling resources together in co-creating and co-delivering end user-led value. The next subunit will draw conceptual focus from the evidence base of user involvement in the co-design and co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services.

2.5. Evidence of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of Public Services in England

Introduction:

This study argues that public service provision in England has witnessed a paradigm shift over the last thirty years with focus shifting from the service providers and commissioners or from a predominantly public provision to user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services (Liz, 2005, p.188). Prior to this general shift in public service provision, the focus had been on service providers and staff to the detriment of service users. Today the focus in public service delivery is on the service users; on empowering them, promoting choices and emphasising the need for services to reflect end users` individual preferences (Cabinet Office, p.14). This shift from service providers to service users is intended to address service inefficiency, ineffectiveness, unresponsiveness and conceptual inadequacy (O`Flynn, 2007, p.3540). This study argues that the emergence of NPM in the 1980s and 1990s and its focus on the user of public services as a customer re-energised the idea of user involvement as a tool for effectively addressing the needs of end users (Pollitt, 2007, p.112 and Goldfinch, 2009, p.2). Policy documents like the `Open Public Services` and the Health and Social Care Act, 2001 underscore the idea of user involvement because of its huge potentials in transforming public services (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.14)

For example the Government White Paper `Open Public Services` argues that future funding of public services will seek to empower and put individuals in control of their own lives by exploring mechanisms such as "direct cash payments to individuals...vouchers, tariff payments" (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.14). I will argue that while such mechanisms can enable individuals to buy services which reflect their specific needs there is no guarantee that such mechanisms will necessarily lead to user satisfaction or improved service quality. The current

shift in focus of public service provision from the provider to the service user is critical, radical and unprecedented. This study also argues that other policy initiatives such as patient involvement in the NHS, resident involvement in Supported housing and public involvement in policing and the delivery of Fire and Rescue Services are compelling evidence of user involvement in public service design and delivery (Audit Commission, 2004, p.16). It further contends that user involvement is currently applied in the public sector in England through mechanisms like `individual budgets` and `tenant-led management` in social care and social housing respectively, although evidence of their successful applications is mixed and patchy.

It argues that user concerns, criticisms of service deficiencies and inadequacies in quality underpinned by the persistent lack of effective user involvement have engineered service failures and re-positioned user involvement on the public policy agenda (Beresford, 2012, p.25 and The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) et al., 2007, p.16). Despite evidence of user involvement, this study argues that service fragmentations, discrepancies in priorities, conceptual confusion over clarity in stating what users can expect from their involvement and dysfunctional power dynamics emerged as some of the limitations of effective user involvement (Robson, Begum and Locke, 2003, p.16 and Szebeko, 2011, p.42). This section will trace the emerging interest in user involvement by reviewing some key literatures and scholarships in evidencing its applications in the public sector (Beresford and Carr, 2012, p.11). The rationale for evidencing user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services in England is to avoid any duplication and draw conceptual inspiration in situating my study within the wider context of extant literatures and scholarships. The next subunit will briefly discuss the emergence of user involvement.

2.5.1. User Involvement: Definition, Limitations and making its case:

This subunit will seek to define user involvement while underlining areas in which it can and cannot be applied. It will also seek to review the web of conceptual and definitional confusions which underscore user involvement while proposing a definition which can be applied across the wider public sector rather than just to health, social care and probation services as the current evidence suggests (Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.74). It will conclude by making a compelling case for its application within the wider public sector based on evidence of its potential to deliver added value. One of the key aims of this thesis will be to

illuminate and attempt to untangle the web of confusions and problematic surrounding user involvement by providing more conceptual focus and clarity. The focus in public service provision over the last three decades has shifted from public agencies as the main provider to private and TS provisions and from the service providers to the end users. Although user involvement as in the NHS can create a robust evidence-base of patient-driven service provision which can inform, influence and shape managerial and clinical practice such involvement can be conceptually confusing or mean different things to different users (Smith et al., 2006, p.299).

Branfield et al. (2006, p.ix) contend that "user involvement is a complex and ambiguous idea" as it can mean different things to different people or may be used to "describe a wide range of interactions between service users and [professionals or service providers]" (Smith et al., 2005, p.26). Phillips (2004, cited in Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.15) echoes the above perspective by arguing that the simplicity of the term hides the challenges of achieving effective user involvement. He contends that user involvement means "the involvement of service users in the management, design and delivery of services" (Phillips, 2004 cited in Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.15). I will argue that the lack of consensus across the public sector as in the use of the expression `user involvement` raises some fundamental challenges. For example, while an NHS professional may refer to someone who accesses health care services as a `patient` reminiscent of the `medical model,` a social work professional may refer to a similar person who accesses social services as a `client`, `consumer`, `costumer` or `service user` which underpins the `social model` (Livingston and Cooper, 2004, p.85). I may argue that while the wide range of terminologies used by various public service professionals in referring to those to whom they provide services may be confusing, they underline the constantly changing face of public service provision as evidenced by NPM and consumerism.

Trait and Lester (2005, p.163) echo this confusion by arguing that the notion of end user involvement in the mental health sector can imply different things to different users; ranging from patients and survivors to consumers which underpins the consumerist perspective encapsulated in the NPM discourse. The problematic with defining user involvement is amplified by the fact that it may mean different things to different people as it may range from tokenistic strategies like cosmetic consultations to more compelling mechanisms like

one-to-one surgeries between staff and end users. I can argue that the narrow use of the term `user` in much of the literature to refer to "a person who receives or is eligible to receive health and social care services and [their families and carers]" (Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.73, Beresford, 2002, p.95 and Farr, 2012, p. 80) adds to this ambiguity.

This study argues that the above difficulty with defining user involvement as evidenced in the literature also partly owes to its origin and roots in participatory democracy and more recently in the consumerist approach (Beresford, 2002, p.95 and Bovaird, 2007, p.846). The participatory democratic roots of user involvement blossomed through ideas like human rights, democracy, community participation and governance, advocacy, empowerment and liberation as evidenced through the disabled people`s movements (Beresford, 2002, p.95). Young (2005, cited in Farr, 2012, p. 80) argues against practices entrenched in deliberative or participatory democracy as these can engineer "exclusionary implications through privileging reasoned and dispassionate arguments". But such proposition fails to recognise that democratic values can open and define new spaces for those at the base of the pyramid. The consumerist approach to user involvement is fairly recent and emerged from the use of market-oriented principles in public service delivery and subsequent reference to end users as `clients`, `customers` or `consumers. This study argues that for user involvement to make much relevance in transforming the lives of citizens, its conceptual meaning must be widened to include all those `who receive or are eligible to receive` other forms of public services like public transport, libraries and tax relief (Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.73).

Smith et al. (2005, p.25) define a service user as anyone "who has, is or may access NHS or independently health sector services in the UK" although such people may not be willing to see themselves as service users. While agreeing that there is no generally agreed definition of user involvement, Smith et al. (2005, p.25) argue that user involvement may refer to formal, structured and informal interactive approaches between the service user and professionals or service providers aimed at generating and co-producing user-led services. In defining service users, Beresford (2005, cited in Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.2) argues that

"service user has become a generic term to describe people who receive, have received or are eligible for health and social care services, particularly on a longer term basis"

I can argue that such conceptualisation of service or end users is limited as it fails to take account of those who occasionally use public services and who can also laid claim to be regarded as service users. The notion of end users also raises another problematic with the issue of identity as service users can be viewed both as `citizens` or as consumers of public services which underpins the consumerist perspective of user involvement (Beresford, 2010, p.495). On the other hand, Richardson (2005, cited in Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.15) argues that

"user involvement encompasses a number of degrees of engagement from sharing information between service users and [service providers] through [to actually delivering user-led services]"

The above view echoes the idea of passive user involvement as in user consultations, residence meetings, focus group discussions and active user involvement as captured through one-to-one meetings between end users and staff (London Drug & Alcohol Network, 2005, cited in Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.16). This study argues that conceptualising user involvement as active and passive involvement echoes the idea of voluntary and involuntary user involvement; hence user involvement must be premised on users` aspirations and wishes. Hickey and Kipping (1998 cited in Stickley, 2006, p.573) define user involvement as "encompassing an equal relationship between service users and providers in which decisions are made jointly". I can argue that this notion of "an equal relationship between service users and [service] providers" (Hickey and Kipping, 1998 cited in Stickley, 2006, p.573) is contested by Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2007, p.8). They argue that end "users` relative lack of resource power [and robust knowledge of the service] renders them as less than equal partners" (Barnes, Newman and Sullivan, 2007, p.8). Barnes and Cotterell (2012, p.xxiii) define user involvement as the

"involvement of people who receive a service or are eligible to receive health and social care services and their carers who may be family or close friends"

While the above definition is narrow as it only focuses on those who access health and social care services, it nevertheless illuminates the debate on user involvement. This study argues that user involvement must genuinely seek to involve users "in planning, developing and delivering services" (WHO, 2002 cited in Hayes et al., 2011, p.8).

It defines user involvement as the free and active participation by previous and/or existing users of a public service in influencing, planning, co-designing and co-delivering the service which they access and/or in monitoring and evaluating its quality. The above definition thus underscores the notion of coproduction of public services within the wider public sector while shaping service quality. This study argues that user involvement can be applied in some areas within the public sector like health, social care, welfare and the probation services as these services often deal with issues which are very intimate and personal to people like care for the elderly (Farr, 2012, p.81, Beresford, 2010, p.495 and Barnes, Newman and Sullivan, 2007, p.8). It argues that user involvement may not easily be applied in managing huge public bureaucracies like the White Hall and ministerial departments because of the sometime highly technical and professional nature of decisions that have to be made. This study argues that user involvement as in the NHS does not replace sound professional or clinical expertise and decisions but simply complements as health professionals and clinicians can tap into users` `expertise` of their health conditions in delivering more effective user-led services (PASC, 2007, p.14). This study cautions that user involvement is not a panacea and must not be applied like a one-style-fits-all approach but rather on its comparative merits to trigger greater user-engineered public services and value than the staff-led or other models.

It also argues that for user involvement to transform the lives of disadvantaged citizens and make any meaningful relevance it must be built a clear conceptual framework of staff and provider involvement. I will contend that while there is overwhelming focus and research on promoting user involvement, attention should equally be paid by academics, researchers, policymakers and practitioners on articulating staff and provider involvement. I will argue that this focus within the literature solely on user involvement without a corresponding focus on staff and provider involvement further underpins a key problematic and the issue of staff resistance (Beresford, 2010, p.495, PASC, 2007, p.14 and Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.481). Staff and provider involvement can illuminate compelling mechanisms and strategies

which can be used by both staff and providers in invigorating and improving user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. Another crucial problematic with user involvement is the issue of representativeness especially on user-led management boards as in tenant-led management in social housing (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315). This raises the wider question about how representative those on the management boards may be in order to prevent `mission capture` as a small clique or group may hijack the issue of user involvement to for its own agenda. User involvement can be stretched to include user involvement on service commissioning and public agency management boards as well as transcend co-design and co-delivery of services to also include the monitoring and evaluation of service quality (Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.481).

I will argue that the case for user involvement is premised on the understanding that such involvement can enhance user control, empowerment, promote inclusivity, joint ownership and mutual understanding (Ward and Gahagan, 2012, p.181). But critics argue that outcomes emanating from user involvement are `unclear` and have not been properly measured (Fischer et al., 2007, p.3). User involvements as in "tenant-led management" (PASC, 2007, p.14) in social housing can complement staff inputs, by providing new insights which can engineer service improvements, personalisation, responsive services and cost-effective allocation of resources. But ineffective user involvement can engineer `value subtracted`, service failures, frustration, `collaborative disadvantage` and unresponsive services. The New Economics Foundation cited in (PASC, 2007, p.19) argues that service providers, staff and managers must transcend their traditional roles of `experts` and involve end users in redefining, re-conceptualising and reconfiguring services. I will argue that user involvement can create new understandings, valuable inputs, shared learning, engage users in monitoring and evaluating service standards and quality, generate new knowledge and capture users` perceptions of services (Cooper, Bryer and Meek, 2008, p.213, Crawford, Rutter and Thelwall, 2004, p.66).

On the other hand, some scholars argue that user involvement is unnecessary as users possess limited skills, expertise, knowledge and less robust inputs to inject into SI, service design and delivery (Christensen and Bower, 1996 cited in Alam, 2002, p.251). But I will argue that users can constitute a pool of knowledge for fostering user-led innovation which can transform service design and quality as well as build user-driven social capital (IfM and IBM,

2008, p.4 and Meroni and Sangiorgi, 2011, p.1). This study castigates the lack of a muscular user representation on most P-SEP and service commissioning boards as well as at other strategic levels. It argues that for user involvement to make any meaningful relevance, the vexing issues of "quality and accessibility" (Flynn, 2007, p.5) must be robustly addressed (Crawford, Rutter and Thelwall, 2004, p.66). The complex, challenging, ever-increasing and changing demands of end users for better, responsive, personalised and transformational services imply that service providers must strive to be at the cutting-edge of innovation and creativity (Alam, 2002, p.250 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315 and Methlie and Pedersen, 2005, p.15). This study makes the case for genuine user involvement while arguing that the root causes of most service failures can be attributed to dysfunctional user involvement and the lack of service innovation.

2.5.2. The Emergence of user involvement:

Emerging developments in participative democracy and citizens` participation in civic life rekindled the interest in user involvement in public service delivery in the 1980s as these challenged the `traditional top-down` approach to service delivery (Beresford, 2012, p.23 and Carr, 2012, p.37). Arnstein`s ladder of participation with its depiction of citizen`s participation along a continuum ranging from non-participation to participation constitutes a model and springboard for the current understandings on user involvement (Arnstein, 1969, p.217). Beresford (2012, p.24) on the other hand, identifies the following four emerging developments as drivers of the current interest in user involvement; the growth of the service user and disability movements, interest in `social participation` and inclusions and `equal rights`. Beresford (2012, p.25) also argues that recent politically inspired market ideologies and the emergence of social movements like "the disabled people`s movement" underpinned by their drive for emancipation revitalised the interest in user involvement. I will argue that pressure from other groups such as self-advocacy and community-based groups also increased the momentum for user involvement (Barker and Peck, 1987 cited in Fischer et al., 2007, p.1). Evidence from Supported Housing demonstrates that despite recent developments in user involvement through enabling legislations and policy frameworks, residents involvement is still largely underused (Audit Commission, 2004, p.4).

I will contend that increased awareness by citizens, professionals and policymakers of the differences which user involvement can make in engineering better user-led outcomes also contributed to the emergence of user involvement. Barnes and Cotterell (2012, p.xv) argue that user or patient involvement in the NHS dates back to the 1970s although it only gained prominence in the 1980s and 1990s with the emergence of market mechanisms in public service delivery underpinned by the need to capture user`s voice and satisfaction. Earlier policy instruments such as the Citizen`s Charter (1991) and the NHS Patient`s Charter were buttressed by "the NHS and Social Care Act 2001" (Fischer et al., 2007, p.1) which makes patient involvement mandatory in the NHS. Although user involvement has become a statutory requirement for organisations involved in public service provision in the UK, its driving force across the public sector is still premised on political and economic rationales as captured in the recent government White paper `Open Public Services` (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.14). The next submit will seek to evidence the use of user involvement in public service delivery in England.

2.5.3: Evidence of user involvement in public service design and delivery in England:

I will argue that the use of user involvement in public service delivery stretches far back well before the ascension to office of New Labour in 1997. I can contend that New Labour`s emphasis on user involvement is tantamount to a paradigm shift. It underpins a renewed era which marks a re-energised focus on user involvement as a mechanism for empowering end users in taking greater control of how, when and what public services are provided to them (Cabinet Office, 2012, p.3 and Leadbeater and Cottam, 2006). I will contend that user involvement can provide the opportunity for end users to actively participate in the governance and the co-design and co-delivery of public services (Martin, 2012, p.47). Policy documents like the Health and Social Care Act, 2001, institute patient or user involvement as a statutory requirement in the provision of health and social care services as underscored by the choice and personalisation agendas. I will draw conceptual inspiration from the extensive application of user involvement in the health, social care, education and prison and probation services in evidencing its applications in public service delivery in England. Emerging evidence demonstrates that some PSOs explore a range of mechanisms like focus groups, one-to-one meetings and user consultative committees in fostering user involvement in joint

service design and delivery (Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.165, PASC, 2007, p.10 and Hayes et al., 2011, p.18).

 I will contend that there is compelling evidence to demonstrate effective user involvement in the social care sectors through the application of mechanisms like `direct payments`, `self-directed support` and `personalised budgets` (Leadbeater et al., 2008, cited in Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.74). In considering evidence of patient involvement in nursing and midwifery-related health services, Smith et al. (2006, p.298) contend that there are "different purposes and domains for user involvement" which can be explored for service improvement. Further evidence from the application of user involvement in the NHS demonstrates that remarkable success mechanisms like `expert patient` can enable patients with long-term health needs to actively participate in the design and delivery of their healthcare (PASC, 2007, p.10). I will also argue that more evidence from the social care sector which highlights the application of user involvement initiatives like `In Control` as used by a Wigan-based SE, can effectively support "people with learning disabilities [to] take control of their own care" (Leadbeater and Cottam, 2006). The above evidence demonstrate that user involvement can conceptually enable professionals, staff and end users to jointly commission, design and deliver user-led services `with users and not for users` (Bradwell and Marr, 2008, p.17, Cabinet Office, 2011, p.29 and Evans and Jones, 2012, p.91).

Evidence of user involvement or public participation in local Policing Services demonstrates that involvement or participation can improve service quality by ensuring that services which are provided by the Police Authority meet "the needs of local communities" (Northampton Police Authority, n.d.). Further evidence of user involvement in partnership working between the Fire and Rescue Services and the Prince`s Trust which works with young disengaged persons from disadvantaged backgrounds supports evidence from public participation in policing. It demonstrates that involving young persons in the provision of Fire and Rescue Services can enable young persons with behaviour problems to better appreciate and facilitate the provision of more targeted services as well as reduce incidence of false alarms. I will also argue that such involvement can strengthen trust and enable the Fire and Rescue Services to support deprived unemployed young persons through youth apprenticeship programmes which have seen some of them employed after their trainings. Such involvement can also

enable young persons to better understand the challenges faced by the Fire and Rescue Services in providing user-focused services and enable them to learn vital lifelong skills like team work, problem solving, self discipline, communication and other transferrable skills.

On the other hand, the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue service is involving and working in proximity to communities and the public through strategies aimed at improving service quality by emphasising on prevention than emergence response, through community safety programmes and youth apprenticeships (Silver, 2012). It has also initiated youth apprenticeship programmes which have seen over a thousand young unemployed, disengaged, deprived and disadvantaged young persons acquired the qualifications and skill sets which can improve their employability (Silver, 2012). It has also developed a model known as `Community Budgets` which involves pooling resources from interconnected and related service providers in sharing vital information in order to enhance service efficiency, early interventions and service improvements (Silver, 2012). The use of the above strategies especially the youth apprenticeship programmes demonstrates more evidence of successful user and public involvements in Policing and the Fire and Rescue Services.

A review of the extent of user involvement in the prison and probation services across England and Wales (Hayes et al., 2011, p.1) identifies the use of consultations, committees, prison councils, focus groups and user representatives as evidence of user involvement. But I can argue that while such evidence of user involvement can foster shared learning, they are weaker and less robust than more vigorous ones such as one-to-one-surgeries which have the potentials of unleashing more effectiveness. I will contend that while organisations like the prison and probation services may prefer group-based intervention in achieving user involvement others like education may choose to explore `personalised learning` in evidencing user involvement (PASC, 2007, pp.10-11 and Hayes et al., 2001, p.1). Evidence of user involvement in the prison and probation service also demonstrates that although user involvement is a robust tool for delivering effective services, more research still needs to be done in accurately capturing the outcomes of user involvement in the sector (Hayes et al., 2011, p.5). I can contend that evidence of user involvement in drug treatment within residential and community organisations demonstrates a predominant use of focus groups

interventions. This is necessary in ensuring that services are flexibly tailored to addressing the specific needs of individual users (Fischer et al., 2007, p.34).

Evidence emerging from user involvement networks like the Wilthshire and Swindon Users` Network, Shaping Our Lives and People First Lambert; demonstrate strong applications and commitment to user involvement (Brennan, Forrest and Taylor, 2012, p.244, Barnes, 2012, p.173 and Barnes and Mercer, 2003, p.13). Such user-controlled organisations emphasise the need for users to collectively pool together in challenging dominant ideologies, stereotypes and socio-political barriers which negatively affect their wellbeing in perpetrating a culture of dependency (Branfield et al., 2006, p.9). But while the above organisations and networks emphasise the need for greater user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services, they have failed to demonstrate how such involvement can improve the quality of life for end users (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315). Further emerging evidence from the literature also demonstrates that effective end user involvement will require adequate safeguards against any risks to users, overcome any user-provider power imbalance and protect those unwilling or unable to actively participate in delivering user-led outcomes (PASC, 2007, p.17).

I will argue that despite its strong case, user involvement has some limitations like the taking of unpopular socio-political and policy decisions which may not go down well with end users or citizens. A clear example is the replacement of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with a "non means tested cash benefit...[and]...Personal Independence Payment" (DWP, 2011c). These changes which were conceptualised without genuinely involving disabled people and their supporters have seen the above groups protest outside Number 10. This clearly demonstrates the problematic and limitations of user involvement. On the other hand, in a study commissioned by SCIE to investigate into the impact of user involvement on service users, Carr (2004 cited in Carr, 2012, p.49) argues that "certain participation strategies do not necessarily...[result]... in user-led change" although she fails to state what these strategies are. She further corroborates the above negative assertion by arguing that the impact of user involvement on end users is "...seldom...fed back to [them] (Carr, 2004, cited in Carr, 2012, p.49).

She then concludes that the "...lack of organisational responsiveness to issues identified by service users...[and]...a lack of commitment" (Carr, 2004, cited in Carr, 2012, p.49) are impeding user involvement. These equally raise the problematic of user involvement and demonstrate that resistance to change from staff, professionals and organisations can frustrate genuine user involvement. I can argue that despite the momentum for user involvement, such involvement must deliver tangible transformational gains to users in order to avoid causing frustration. Despite the compelling case for user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services, it is worth noting that users can sometimes be hesitant or unwilling to get involved (PASC 2007, p.3). This study thus argues that despite the mixed evidence base on user involvement, there is a growing and sustained interest in its application which is backed by `small wins` like the use of `personal or individual budgets` in Social Care (PASC, 2007, p.10).

I can argue that although much is currently being done within the public service in the area of user involvement, there is a strong case for improvement in enhancing service quality, user satisfaction and ensuring that users have adequate control over the planning and delivery of the service(s) which they access. I will further contend that despite setbacks like staff disinterest, institutional inflexibilities and contextual factors which may hinder user involvement, it can effectively enable staff to explore users` perspectives in gaining "greater understanding of particular service issues" (Farr, 2012, p.81). I will argue that staff can capture and evidence user involvement through user feedbacks and monitoring and evaluation of services in fostering "user-defined quality criteria" (Raynes et al., 2001, cited in Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.75). User involvement has the potentials to generate social capital, transform and improve service quality, enhance accountability to end users and enhance their quality of life (Audit Commission, 2004, p.4). This subunit thus builds on the above evidence in providing new insights and extending our conceptual understanding of user involvement. The next subunit will build on the above evidence in discussing some models of user involvement.

2.5.4. Models of User Involvement

This study investigates in how P-SEPs can explore innovative models of user involvement and SI in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. It argues that previous studies

on user involvement turn to focus on modes of involvement like focus groups, user networks, consultations, user groups and meetings (Alam, 2002, p.256, Beresford, 2010, p.497 and Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.482). It also contends that while the above modes have been widely captured in extant literature, such studies have continuously failed to articulate conceptual and innovative models through which user involvement can be more effectively achieved (Smith et al., 2006, p.298, Magnusson, 2003, p.228 and PASC, 2007, p.14). It will also seek to stretch the debate to new frontiers by suggesting some innovative models through which user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services can be more effectively realised. Rajala (n.d., p.3) identifies three models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of elderly care services in Japan; Client-driven, Provider-dominated and a balanced model. But I will argue that the balanced model seems difficult to achieve as it could be difficult to obtain a 50-50 input from both clients and providers. Hence, such a perspective will not put end users in the driving seat of service design. User involvement can be complex, demanding, challenging and dynamic (Smith et al., 2008, p.307).

Some authors on the other hand, conceptualise models of user involvement as processes, ladders or continuums. For example, Chambers and Hickey (n.d., pp.7-10) conceptualise three models of user involvement comprising of the `integration continuum` which is made of `systemic users` and `piecemeal users`, the `engagement continuum` made up of `passive` and `active` users and the `participation continuum`. But their `engagement` and `participation continuums` are very similar. Arnstein (1969, p.217) suggests an eight-rung model of citizen participation comprising of manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership and delegated power with the intensity of participation varying in degree along the ladder. Arnstein`s (1969, p.217) model is widely quoted in the literature on user involvement especially in capturing the various levels and degrees of user involvement. Hickey and Kipping (1998, cited in Chambers and Hickey, n.d., p.9) on the other hand propose a four-rung model comprising of information/explanation, consultation, partnership and user control where user involvement seems to be most effective. Tew et al., (2004, cited in Chambers and Hickey, n.d., p.9) also propose a five-rung model of user involvement made up of no involvement, limited involvement, growing involvement, collaboration and partnership. I will argue that inputs from existing and potential users and their interactions with the service providers can inform the modification and improvement of extant services (Alam, 2002, p.250).

Croft and Beresford (1992, cited in Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.481) argue that there is some conceptual confusion around user involvement as involvement in service design and delivery can mean different things, vary in degree and can be manipulated by staff. On the other hand, Barker and Peck (1997, cited in Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.482) emphasise the lack of a conceptual focus in the theoretical and political undertones of end user involvement. Forbes and Sashidharan, (1997, p.482) contend that "the complexities and contradictions" which underpin user involvement in social work "are often ignored because the issues raised by users are fundamentally challenging" to the conceptual provision of social and psychiatric services. Evidence of user involvement in the product development industry demonstrates that innovative models of user involvement can be conceptualised through three approaches; participatory design, ethnography and contextual designs (Kujala, 2008, p.458). It further identifies three conceptual models on which user involvement can be predicated; informative, consultative and participative (Kujala, 2008, p.458). But while the participative model is the most effective, I will argue that the other two models encapsulate tokenistic and weak forms of user involvement which may not engineer any radical user-led transformational outcomes.

Forbes and Sashidharan (1997, p.484) on the other hand, identify two predominant models of user involvement in the literature which comprise Provider-led and User-led Models. I will also content that user involvement must transcend its current conceptual confinement to the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes to encapsulate the overall organisation and provision of services. User involvement is a key strand of recent NHS policy initiatives in the UK (DoH, 2000 and 2001 cited in Stickley, 2006, p.573) although the user involvement and survivor moment in mental health dates back to some three decades ago. There is thus emphasis on end users and public participation in shaping health service design and delivery although hierarchical power dynamics and the disempowering perceptions of mental health service users are inhibiting their trenchant involvement (Stickley, 2006, p.573). Beresford (2003, cited in Stickley, 2006, p.575) on the other hand, identifies two models embedded in the user involvement discourse; managerialist and the consumerist models which draw impetus from the `marketisation` of public service delivery. User involvement can also be conceptualised as a hierarchical structure ranging from `no involvement`, `passive involvement`, `token involvement`, `collaboration` and `Partnership` (Northern Centre for Mental Health, 2003, cited in Stickley, 2006, p.573). But I will argue that genuine user

involvement can conceptually occur at the `partnership` stage of the above hierarchical approach if such a `partnership` is built on mutual trust and inclusivity. The next subunit will focus on service innovation.

2.6.   Service Innovation: (SI)

Contrary to the view that innovation in the service industries does not have much momentum and intensity, SI today is gathering pace as the growing service sector now constitutes a critical part of economic activities in most developed countries, contributing about 59% to the Norwegian GDP in 2004 (Methlie and Pedersen, 2004, p.1). The service sector including retail, insurance, financial and business services, tourism and leisure contributes about 75% to the UK economy and is fast expanding and innovating in order to meet the ever-increasing demands of citizen for better high quality services (CBI/QinetiQ Report, 2008, p.5). This perspective is corroborated by the European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ECIE), (2009, p.1) which argues that the service sector of most developed countries like the UK, USA, and France contributes about 70% to the GNP as manufacturing industries re-locate to more cost efficient Asian countries. The service industry of recent has become the focus of immense scholarship because it is now a big employer and plays critical part in economic growth and development (Windrum, 2008, p.8, Methlie and Pedersen, 2004, p.1 and Alam, 2002, p250).

The above assertion is important considering the fact that most Western economies are now shifting "from product-driven markets to information-based, service-driven markets" (Johnson et al., 2000, p.1). SEs engaged in public service delivery need to be user-focused in order to optimize productivity and attain "competitive survival" (Johnson et al., 2000, p.1). This study argues that SI has been a neglected area of scholarship as much interest had been devoted to innovation in the manufacturing sector but emerging developments and the strategic role of the service sector in economic growth are thrusting SI on the agenda (Windrum, 2008, p.8 and Bason, 2010, p.8). The scanty scholarship on SI has also been misinformed by the belief that the service sector is less knowledge, technology, labour, production and innovation intensive (Econ, 2003, cited in Methlie and Pedersen, 2005, p.6).

I can postulate that today, the service sector is also very knowledge, technology, production and innovation intensive (Windrum, 2008, p.8 and Bason, 2010, p.8). SI is different from other forms of innovations and is often incremental than radical because of the very nature of services since they are "created, produced and consumed at a singular moment" (Methlie and Pedersen, 2005, p.2) hence services can undergo slight modifications. This study argues that SI includes the introduction of new services or improvements to already existing ones as these can incorporate the design of entirely new services or incremental improvement on existing ones for greater efficiency and competitiveness (Windrum, 2008, p.8 and Bessant and Tidd, 2007, p.14). Public services like other service products are characterised by intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability and inseparability (Alam, 2002, p.250 and Ojanen et al., 2008, p.1). The interactive use of new technologies can engage users in co-designing, co-producing and co-delivering high quality user-led services.

New technologies are transforming and revolutionising service provision as users can now shop online for deals or services and even put together service packages which encapsulate their preferences. Effective user involvement may build on other inherent characteristics of the service sector such as user participation in the various processes, co-creation, co-production and co-delivery of effective user-led services. The aforementioned processes underscore a paradigm shift which recognises user involvement as a vital source of innovation (Bason, 2010, pp.157-158 and Drucker, 1994, p.122). In conclusion, user interactions through the joint scaling up or improvement of existing service offerings as in SI are critical in achieving success and in diffusing innovation. User involvement through SI can thus engineer user education, greater value creation and diffusion, and improve the provider-user relationship. This study thus argues that espousing a user-centric approach in improving existing services is critical for effective public service innovation. I will thus summarise the key arguments of this chapter in the next subunit which constitutes my conclusion.

Conclusion:

This study argues that CPM is informing our conceptual understanding of how partnership working can provide the opportunity for staff and end users to explore innovative models of user involvement and SI in tackling cross-cutting issues which cannot be adequately resolved through lone working (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p.4). As an effective tool for Public

Policy and public service delivery, partnership working can create a sense of joint ownership, inclusivity and user-centricity in leveraging transformational outcomes (Ojanen et al., 2008, p.1, Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002, p.56, Shekar, 2007, p.4 and Magnusson, 2003, p.288). This chapter also argues that although user involvement is a statutory requirement for public service delivery in England, evidence of its application is pale and mixed. The next chapter will discuss the theoretical perspectives, paradigm of inquiry, research logic, the Network theory and my conceptual framework.

Chapter Three

Theoretical Perspectives and Paradigm of Inquiry

Introduction:

This chapter will draw conceptual inspiration from the Network Theory in discussing my theoretical perspectives as these will inform my conceptual framework and overall research design (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.79). The use of theory will inform my ability to conceptualise, problematise, critique and challenge "taken-for-granted orthodoxies" (Walker and Thomson, 2010, p.28) about end user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services. My use of theoretical perspectives will also broaden our conceptual understanding by identifying, analysing and capturing various models of end user involvement in P-SEP-inspired public service delivery, by suggesting how these can be better explored in delivering user-led responsive outcomes (Borgatti, 2005, p.2 and Entwistle, 2010, p.162). My conceptual framework on the other hand captures the key concepts and variables underscored by my study. It makes the case for the Networked Model of public service delivery if services are to positively transform the lives of deprived citizens (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.25, Entwistle, 2010, p.162 and Seidle, 1995, p.139).

This chapter will thus discuss the following key strands of my theoretical perspective; first it will discuss the Network theory as my main theoretical tool. Second, it will conceptualise and discuss my conceptual framework and third, it will articulate Pragmatism as my research paradigm while also capturing the inductive-deductive research strategy (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.87 and Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.27). Such a conceptual approach will illuminate my arguments, widen our conceptual understanding of my overall research design and inform my conceptual analyses and discussions of the phenomena under investigation. It will also relate my study to the relevant body of knowledge and scholarship. This chapter will comprise three main subunits; the first will discuss the Network theory, while the second will focus on my Conceptual framework and the third subunit will discuss my research paradigm and strategies (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.8). The next subunit will thus concentrate on discussing my theoretical perspectives.

3.1. Theoretical Perspectives: The Network and Resource Dependence Theories

Introduction:

The Network Theory has developed quite considerably since the 1950s, witnessing an exponential in its application as it is often used in explaining different sorts of relationships in disciplines such as Computer Science, management, the social science and in business studies (Kim et al, 2007 and Borgatti and Foster, 2003, p.991). The Network theory thus resonates with the Networked Model of public service delivery as it emphasises a user-centric approach in underscoring the purchaser-provider-user relationships often characteristic of service delivery (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.38). This section will discuss the Resource Dependence theory (RDT) as an alternative theoretical model which was considered but not chosen for this study despite the central role of resource accessibility in effective partnership working (Bardach, 1998). The next subunit will discuss both the Network and Resources Dependence Theories.

3.1.1. The Network and Resource Dependence Theories:

A network is made up of "the intersection of segments of autonomous systems of goals" (Castells, 1996, p.171) which capture the idea of shared interests and vision. This may depict a joined-up approach in which a PSO and a SE can pool resources in combating either long and/or short term complex and challenging issues confronting citizens. Like Social Networks, a Network comprises multiple nodes which represent the actors, individuals, agencies and organisations in the network while the multiple linkages and relationships between these stakeholders are depicted by multiple ties (McGuire and Agranoff, 2007, p.1 and Granovette, 1983, p.219). The Network theory thus emphasises the multiple social relationships and ties between the actors present in partnership working as such relationships can constitute social capital (O`Toole, 1997, p.46 and Boyne, Entwistle and Ashworth, 2010, p.3). I will argue in this subunit among other things that, network-driven relationships must espouse trust, shared interests and objectives as well as focus on engaging users through meaningful dialogues and opportunities which can leverage user-led responsive services.

Bavelas and his colleagues of the MIT examined network structures in the 50s and argued that centralised networks are appropriate for tackling simple problems while decentralised

networks are more effective for addressing complex problems (Lazer and Friedman, 2007, p.668). Lazer and Friedman (2007, p.668) also argue that "denser ties" as in decentralised networks can be good for facilitating effective synergy for interorganisational working as can be found in P-SEP working. This study argues that a high network density and connectivity between these nodes portray closer ties although both weak and strong ties are important and significant in shaping and informing effective user involvement (Granovette, 1983, p.219). The Network Theory is central in informing my conceptual framework as it emphasises greater exploration of the various modes of user involvement in achieving effective public service delivery especially through SI (Alam, 2002, p.255). My conceptualisation of the Network theory draws inspiration from extant scholarship in arguing that, innovative models of user involvement in P-SEP working through SI have the potentials of leveraging high quality, responsive user-led services (Turner and Balloch, 2001, pp.165-166, Borgatti and Foster, 2003, p.992, Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.54 and Craig, 2004, p.48). This study will adopt a working definition of a network as "a set of autonomous [actors who] come together to reach goals that none of them can reach [working alone]" (Chisholm, 1998, p.xxi).

I will argue that user involvement networks must seek to achieve shared goals and objectives while fostering shared learning and user education. This study will focus mainly on public service delivery networks (Borgatti and Foster, 2003, p.991, Lazer and Friedman, 2007, p.667 and Agranoff, 2003, p.10). Public service delivery networks can be identified and defined as web-like amalgamation of actors driven by the shared objective of collectively designing, providing and facilitating the delivery of effective citizen-led public services and social value creation. The rationale for focusing on public service delivery networks is premised on their crucial importance in shaping and informing public service delivery and in tackling cross-cutting, interwoven and complex issues since these transcend the capacity of any single organisation to adequately resolve alone (Agranoff, 2003, p.10). I will argue that state and market failures, resource scarcity, the lack of specific skill sets within the public sector, underpinned by the limited capability of PSOs to single-handedly provide public services make the case for user involvement more compelling.

Networks are thus central in facilitating effective public service delivery as markets, the state and hierarchies are ineffective and inefficient in tackling cross-cutting problems (Goldsmith

and Eggers, 2004, p.38 and Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.55). Public service delivery networks therefore constitute part of the vast public management networks which also include organisations focused on policy formulation, implementations and other types of public interventions aimed at tackling `wicked issues`. This study supports the use of the network theory in public management as hierarchical and bureaucratic deficits imply that public managers and staff have to increasingly operate in multi-networked environments. The shift from labour-based to knowledge-driven public service delivery today implies that no single agency can possess the resources, skills and information necessary to adequately resolve the myriad of complex problems confronting citizens (Agranoff, 2003, p.7). Hence, the network theory provides new insights and understandings into how organisations can explore various relationships which could be sanctioned by contracts, "memorandums of understanding" (Bardach, 1998) or inspired by commercial and/or charitable goals. This study will contend that "denser ties among groups members" (Lazer and Friedman, 2007, p.668) as denoted through contractual relationships are critical for successful partnership working and user involvement. The next figure thus depicts the multiple nodes, ties and linkages often present in networks.
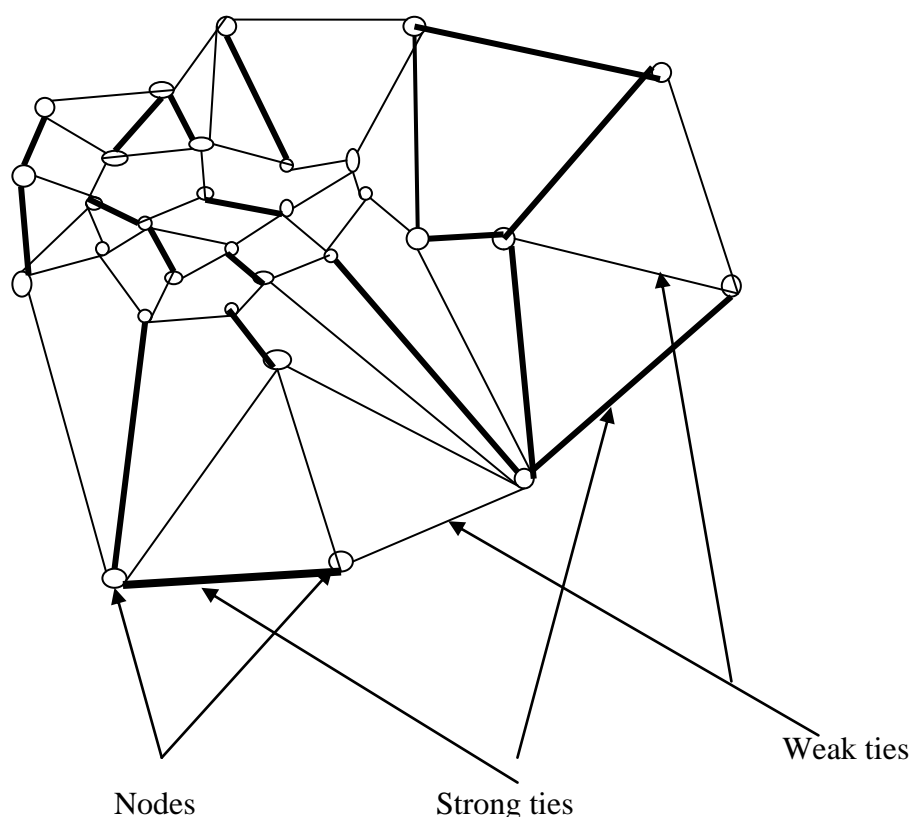
Figure 3.1 Shows the nodes and linkages (strong and weak ties) which connect various actors

The nodes in the above diagram represent the actors, individuals, agencies and organisations present in a service delivery network while the lines denote the linkages and ties which underpin formal and informal relationships between the various stakeholders present in the network (Gummesson, 2006). Actors in a network such as a P-SEP can form "thick webs of [formal and informal] social relationships and interactions" (Borgatti et al., 2009) through which they can strive to leverage user-led social value creation (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.53). Networks can be formal or informal structures, reflecting multiple nodes and linkages in interagency environments through which "public goods and services may be planned, designed, produced, and delivered" (McGuire and Agranoff, 2007, p.1). Basole and Rouse (2008, p.53) contend that value creation in the case of service delivery should be determined and shaped by the user. Dense ties in networks denote strong interconnections between members (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.55).

Weak ties may denote alienation although Granovette, (1983, p.219) argues that weak ties possess some advantages as they can also create opportunities for cohesion between actors in the network. Bardach, (1998) identifies implementing and production networks as examples of emerging ties of interagency collaboration prevalent within the high-tech firms of the Silicon Valley in California. Relationships encapsulated in multiagency networks such as P-SEPs must seek to leverage services in tandem with end users` specific needs and preferences (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.55 and Wei-Skillern, 2005). Apart of espousing the Network theory, this study has also considered the RDT although it was not selected because it lacks the potentials to adequately capture the myriad of relationships and ties present in P-SEP working.

RDT holds that organisations often involve "in networks of interdependencies and social relationships" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003, p.xii) as they seek to access financial, information and physical resources which are critical for organisational survival, profitability and sustainability. The quest by organisations operating in partnerships to access resources is the central premise of the RDT but such a perspective fails to capture the complex webs of interactions and inter-actor relationships present in the collaborative working. I can also argue that the drive to access resources is a crucial determinant of P-SEP working. This study posits that networks and relationships are critical in informing and influencing successful

partnership working as the "power imbalance" (Casciaro and Piskorski, 2005, p.167) and lack of trust can be potential barriers. Hence, "power imbalance and mutual dependence" (Casciaro and Piskorski, 2005, p.167) are key drivers of successful partnership working and in informing organisations to increase autonomy and reduce uncertainty and environmental interdependence (Hillman, Withers and Collins, 2009, pp.1404 and Davis and Cobb, 2010, p.23). The fact that the RDT conceptually focuses on resource acquisition implies that it is a blunt tool for investigating user involvement in P-SEP working as such involvement is hugely shaped and influenced by various relationship dynamics.

In conclusion, this study makes a strong argument that networks have to be results-driven and move rapidly beyond mere processes and endless agendas if they want to make positive life changing impacts on the lives of deprived citizens. While acknowledging the strategic role of resource acquisition and the RDT in partnership working, this study argues that the Network theory leverages more compelling mechanisms for investigating into innovative models of user involvement in P-SEP-engineered public service delivery, hence its use in this thesis.

3.1.2. The Network Theory and its Implications for Partnership Working:

This study contends that today, Networks and partnership working are central features of the public sector as the sheer size and complexity of public service delivery simply outstrips and transcends the capacity of any organisation to adequately provide alone (Kettl, 2004, p.ix and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.15). This study argues that although horizontal inter-organisational relationships are vital for effective partnership working, interpersonal and social networks between staff of partnering organisations and end users are also critical in building successful interagency working. Hence, understanding and exploring the relationships dynamics prevalent in partnership working can buttress user involvement not only as consumer but also as co-designer and co-producer of public services (Powell et al., 2009, p.5 and Doherty and Horne, 2002, p.4). Public service delivery today increasingly relies on a network of relationships grouping a diverse range of stakeholders with different motives for involving in service delivery (O`Toole, 1997, p.45). Exploring innovative models of user involvement thus demonstrates the vital role users can play in the co-design and co-

delivery of seamless and responsive user-led services. This subunit will seek to illuminate the link and implications of the network theory for effective partnership working.

O`Toole (1997, p.46) thus argues that "networks are structures of interdependence involving multiple organizations" hence networks should be non-hierarchical. Networks-engineered partnerships are effective tools for resolving "vexing problems" (Agranoff, 2003, p.6) and working across organisational boundaries in leveraging meaningful transformational outcomes to deprived people, improving performance and service quality. This study postulates that successful interagency networks can be premised on strong interpersonal relationships at the micro levels which may also reflect interorganisational relationship at the macro levels (Gummesson, 2007 and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.19). It equally argues that the network theory can inform effective public service delivery in this hugely dynamic, interrelated and interconnected world where unilateral interventions in resolving `wicked problems` can often be ineffective (Chandler, 2009 and Kim et al., 2007). This study will focus mainly on Public Management networks, characterised by interdependence, non-hierarchies and trust as well as underpinned by vertical and horizontal collaboration as can be captured in P-SEPs (Hwang and Moon, 2008, p.2).

Such networks can be inspired by shared interests in tackling challenging, complex and `wicked problems` confronting citizens (Rittle and Webber, 1973 quoted in O`Toole, 1997, p.46). While requesting for networks to be taken "seriously", O`Toole (1997, p.46) argues that the degree of "wickedness" of most challenging problems, their sheer complexity and interwoven nature make the case for public management-engineered networks more compelling. The implications of networks in public service delivery are discernible through their capacity to tap into the web of human relationships and interagency resource basis in collectively tackling challenging issues. Another implication of Networks is that they are fast transforming the role of the public sector from service provider to service facilitator as PSOs contract out and commission public service provisions. O`Toole (1997, p.46) also argues that PSOs often turn to use "inappropriate organizational models" or outdated toolkits in solving problems which far outpace their capacities, resources and abilities, hence the need for networks. Although most public sector managers and staff today are increasingly taking on the new role of service facilitators, contract managers and negotiators, there is sufficient

evidence to demonstrate a public sector skill deficit in such areas like commissioning and IT (Hope, 2012 and Blatchford and Gash, 2012, p.14).

The changing role of public managers from service providers to service facilitators is exposing a skill gap or deficit within the sector in areas like effective service commissioning, contract negotiation, management, monitoring and reporting (Kettl, 2004, p.viii). A key implication of this skill deficit to the public sector is the inability of public managers to adequately perform their new roles of service facilitators, commissioners and contract managers as the recent fiasco in awarding the "West Coast rail franchise" (ITV News, 2012) demonstrates. It is therefore important for public managers and staff to espouse new skill sets like communication, negotiation, consensus building, problem solving, interpersonal, leadership and networking in facilitating interagency working (Radford, 1977 and Mason and Mitroff 1981 quoted in Koppenjan and Klijin, 2004). Another emergent implication of this changing role of the Public sector is the increasing emphasis on how service delivering-networks can explore "trust-building or value-sharing" (Miller, 1994 quoted in Mingus, 2001) relationships in engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services.

I can argue that partnership-engineered networks can be explored in leveraging specific programmes like; help lines for teenage victims of sex abuse, One-Stop shops and seamless service outlets. I can also contend that the use of networks in partnership working is not without problems as conflicts and inertia can undermine collaborative working thereby propelling "collaborative inertia" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3). Despite these, networks are a huge asset and their wide espousal in the public sector and especially for effective public service delivery are illustrious testimony of their "collaborative advantage" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3). I will argue that the focus on exploring innovative models of user involvement in public service delivering networks as articulated above is central to understanding my conceptual framework.

3.2. Conceptual Framework

Introduction:

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.330) define a conceptual framework as a "consistent and comprehensive theoretical framework emerging from an inductive integration of previous literature, theories, and other pertinent information" My conceptual framework will draw theoretical impetus from the Network theory. It will also draw conceptual focus from extant literatures on partnership working and user involvement in investigating into whether gender, ethnicity and level of education can influence user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven public services (Tait and Lester, 2005, p.170). My conceptual framework seeks to investigate and demonstrate if gender, ethnicity and level of education (independent or input variables) can influence users` propensity to get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services (dependent or outcome variable) through network-inspired partnership working (Beresford, 2010, p.496 and PASC, 2007, P.14). It will therefore leverage a window of opportunity through which I can reframe my research questions, organise my research design; formulate any hypothesis and "make informal tentative predictions" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.39). This section will thus highlight the above conceptual framework; discuss its construction and how I arrived at it as well as underscore the rationale for including certain variables in it (Trafford and Leshem, 2002, p.49). This subsection will also discuss my theoretical perspectives, research paradigm and strategy as well as articulate the rationales for their selections (Trafford and Leshem, 2002, p.49).

3.2.1. How I arrived at my Conceptual Framework:

Maxwell (2005, p.37) articulates four sources from which a conceptual framework can draw inspiration; these include "experiential knowledge...[extant theory and literature]...pilot and exploratory research...[and]...experiments". I will argue that "experiential knowledge" (Maxwell, 2005, p.37) and extant theory and literature have informed the design of my conceptual framework. I arrived at my conceptual framework after reading through the growing body of extant literature on the Network theory, partnership working and user or customer involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services (Alam, 2002, p.255 and Shaw, 2009, p.29). Its conceptualisation thus draws theoretical grounding from the

Network theory and extant literature on partnership working in demonstrating that positive trust-driven user-staff relationships engineered by joint working can inspire positive legacies of user involvement (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.56). The main rationale for constructing a conceptual framework is to vividly illustrate the key variables to be investigated, provide new insights, inform and influence my overall research design (Leshem and Trafford, 2007, p.93). Evidence from extant literature on user involvement also demonstrates that end user involvement can enhance performance, improve service quality and energise a mutual purchaser-provider-end user relationship (Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.485, Barki and Hartwick, 1994, p.62, Stickley, 2006, p.570 and Beresford, 2010, p.495).

I will argue that I have also drawn inspiration from extant literature and my `experiential knowledge` as a user of public services in constructing my conceptual framework. I will also contend that exploring innovative models of user involvement can engineer the delivery of user-driven transformational outcomes and social value (Maxwell, 2005, p.37 and PASC, 2007, p.9). The lack of end user involvement in public service delivery has been one of the key criticisms of the top-down approach and failures of the bureaucratic model over the last three centuries as services have largely been unresponsive, irrelevant and dysfunctional (O`Flynn, 2007, p.354, Wegrich, 2009, p.138, Doherty and Horne, 2002, p.17 and Lane, 2000, p.53). My conceptual framework thus seeks to consistently and comprehensively weave together "an inductive integration of previous literature, theories, and other pertinent information" (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, p.704) on end user involvement. It also seeks to demonstrate and widen our conceptual understanding of how independent variables like gender, level of education and ethnicity can engineer better user-led outcomes for end users as a result of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services. User involvement can inform, influence and shape the upgrading of extant service offerings and make such services more responsive, user-friendly and led (Alam, 2002, p.255 and Magnusson, 2003, p. 228).

This study recognises the distinct characteristics of services; intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.56). This is important as the product/service dichotomy is blurring with Levitt (1972 cited in Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.55), arguing that "everything is a service" as tangible products become a means of

leveraging a service. My conceptual framework will equally draw conceptual inspiration from Miles and Huberman (1994, p.18) who contend that its design can enable the researcher to focus on the phenomena under investigation. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.18) also argue that a "conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied". This is true as my conceptual framework explicitly illustrates the phenomena to be investigated and the relationships between the variables involved. A conceptual framework also "...consists of statements that link abstract concepts to empirical data" (Rudestam and Newton, 1992, cited in Leshem and Trafford, 2007, p.96). My conceptual framework is `theory-driven`, graphic, and `descriptive `in nature (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.18) as these illuminate and emphasise its main thrusts. Figure 3.2 thus illustrates the key researchable concepts and variables embedded in my conceptual framework.
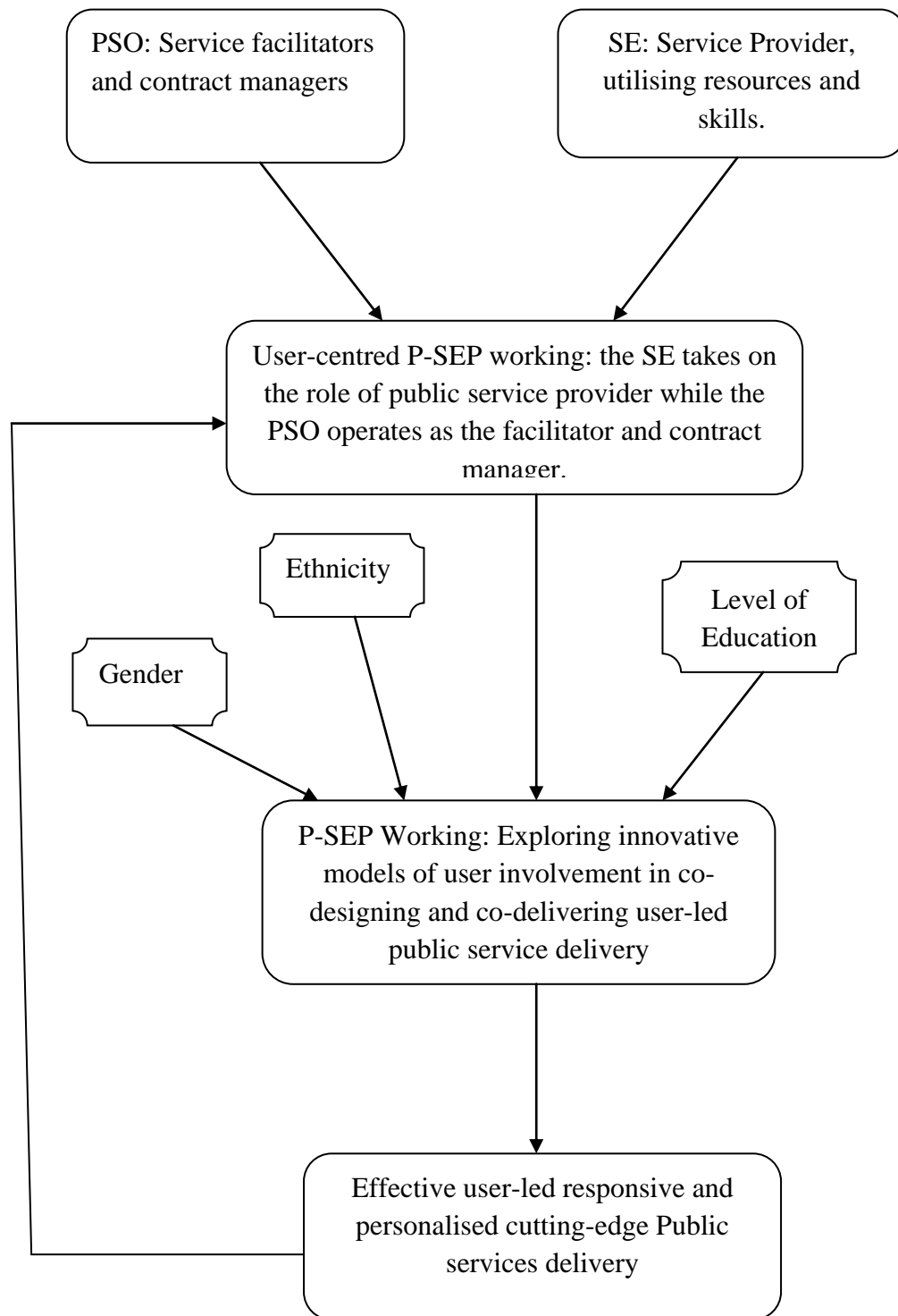
Figure 3.2: My Conceptual Framework: Investigating whether gender, ethnicity and level of education can influence user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services.

At the top of my conceptual framework or at the entry point are PSOs and SEs which decide to get involved in partnership working with the aim of providing end users with high quality user-led public services. The PSO may contract the provision of specific public services to a SE which thus assumes the role of a service provider while the PSO becomes the service facilitator. Such joint working can constitute the bases on which the SE can explore innovative modes of user involvement, such as one-to-one meetings, focused group discussions and surveys in engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of high quality personalised user-led outcomes (Alam, 2002, p.257). Below the partnership is the actual process of the co-production of public services as the SE engages end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. I will argue that public sector managers today are continuously operating in networks underpinned by new emerging web-like relationships which capture various end user-provider-purchaser interactions within the wider context of public service provision. Such interactions may also be sanctioned by purchase-provider contractual tidings or by trust-driven Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) aimed at harnessing resources in tackling cross-cutting issues confronting end users.

Single edged arrows from gender, ethnicity and level of education constitute inputs into the partnership as it seeks to engage end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. Hence, this study will seek to investigate into whether gender, ethnicity and level of education can influence end user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. It will also investigate into the extent to which the above variables can influence how a P-SEP can explore innovative models of user involvement in engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. The purpose of user-centred partnership working as captured in the above figure 3.2 is to enable organisations like SEs which may be contracted to provide public services by a PSO to explore well informed user-led innovative models of involvement in providing user-led transformational public services. Figure 3.2 also demonstrates that the potential result of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services is the provision of high quality transformational outcomes. Figure 3.2 thus depicts a continuous and cyclical process which starts from the service providing partnership, which engages end users in the processes of co-design and co-delivering user-led public services and ends back at the partnership for the co-production of more services.

I will argue that my conceptual framework can also be applied in informing our understanding of how other alternative models of public service delivery like mutuals, cooperatives and localism can explore user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. I will argue that the easy applicability of my conceptual framework to other models of public service delivery demonstrates the fact that most innovative models of service delivery share one strong fundamental purpose; the provision of high quality user-led services. I will contend that my conceptual framework has some limitations, for example it cannot be applied to the bureaucratic model of public service delivery as this model is deficient in innovation, flexibility and in placing the end user at the strategic centre of public service delivery. I can also contend that despite the huge benefits in exploring user involvement, it also has some limitations; for example, users maybe unenthusiastic about involvement, it may raise unfilled hopes in users or deliver lip service as these can trigger massive frustration in users. I will also argue that my conceptual framework will inform the design of my research questions, working hypothesis and how I will make "informal tentative predications about the possible outcome of [my study]" (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, p. 704). The next section will seek to establish the link between my conceptual framework and my research method and questions.

3.2.2 Linking my Conceptual Framework to my Research Method and Questions:

My conceptual framework is predicated on the conceptual understanding that gender, ethnicity and level of education can positively inform the use of innovative models of user involvement and SI in exploring end users involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.55). I will explore multiple-case studies as a data gathering technique underpinned by the Concurrent Mixed Methods (MM) (Yin, 2009, p.3). My conceptual framework has therefore influenced the choice of Pragmatism as my research paradigm and informed my selection of appropriate methods for data collection and analysis. It has also influenced my choice of the MM as my research method and the inductive-deductive logic as my research strategy. For example, my conceptual framework emphasises the need to explore a pragmatic approach in involving end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services which resonates well with the pragmatic underpinnings of Pragmatism.

Linking my conceptual framework to my research method will inform our conceptual understanding of the most effective strategies I can explore in gathering data with which to adequately answer my research questions. Hence, I decided after designing my conceptual framework, that I should collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data while exploring Pragmatism and the inductive-deductive research strategy through the MM research design. I was able to read through the growing bulk of extant literature on the above components of my research to ensure compatibility, robustness and multiple perspectives of interpretations and inference making (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.102 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.15). My conceptual framework resonates with the MM and thus offers me the opportunity to adequately explore qualitative and quantitative data in strengthening my analyses and answering my research questions (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.15, Yin, 2006, p.41, Morgan, 2007, p.48, Bryman, 2006, p.97 and Greene, 2008, p.7). As I have argued above, my conceptual framework influenced my selection of Pragmatism as my research paradigm as it will give me the creative and innovative freedom to explore what works well in understanding the phenomenon under investigation.

Research Paradigm and Paradigm of Inquiry

Introduction:

Remenyi et al. (1998, p.102) argue that "before researchers undertake any research activity it is essential that they consider carefully an overall research strategy...[and]...which research community that they feel they belong to". Knowing the "overall research strategy" (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.102) implies great awareness of the research paradigm, familiarity and ability to dexterously explore "the epistemological, ethical and ontological assumptions" which underpin a study. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2008, p.331) contend that a paradigm is "a consensual pattern in the way scientist understand, and inquire into, the world" as such generally agreed approaches for understanding and inquiring into the world may include Pragmatism, Positivism and Constructivism. This section will discuss my research paradigm, articulate the rationale for selecting it, discuss other paradigms which were considered but not chosen for this study and define a paradigm while situating its importance in my overall research design.

3.3.1. What is a Paradigm?

"A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs...that deals with ultimates or first principles" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.107) as such beliefs constitute a framework through which theories, models and mental maps underpin how our worldviews can be premised. A paradigm thus sets the boundaries of the research indicating "what falls within and outside the legitimate [boundaries]" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.108). It responds to and explores the ontological, epistemological and methodological issues which underpin the study through the mental lens of the researcher. Guba and Lincoln, (1994, p.110) also argue that the ontological, epistemological and methodological issues present metaphysical questions which the researcher must attempt to answer in the best way possible. A paradigm implies "a shared set of assumptions. A paradigm is the way we perceive the world;...[it]...explains the world to us and helps us to predict its behaviour" (Barker, 1992, quoted in Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.108). It underscores a set of beliefs which capture and reflect our worldviews and perceptions of the world through mental maps. A paradigm thus underpins the "way we see the world in terms of perceiving, understanding and interpreting a theory, an explanation, model or map (Covey, 1989, paraphrased in Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.108). The next table thus illustrates the fundamental assumptions which underpin a research paradigm.

Ontology	Whether the object of investigation is the product of consciousness (nominalism) or whether it exists independently (realism).
Epistemology	What our grounds of knowledge are.
Human nature	Whether humans interact creatively with the environment (voluntarism) or whether they are passive objects (determinism).
Methodology	Nomothetic or ideographic approaches to evidence collection.

Table 3.1 Assumptions made by researchers (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.103)

The above assumptions therefore "define the field of research and consequently the tactics or approaches" (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.103) used in exploring it. Burrell and Morgan (1979 cited in Remenyi et al., 1998, p.103) contend "that the deductive approach to research has

become synonymous with positivism" while the inductive approach has crucially become identified with phenomenology. Four key assumptions are therefore crucial in understanding paradigms; these include the ontological assumptions which refer to the nature of reality and axiological assumptions which refer to issues around values (Johnstone, 2004, p.261 and Wellington, 2010, p.129). On the other hand, the epistemological assumptions underpin the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the researcher and the researched while methodological assumptions underscore the various processes which inform and shape data collection and analysis (Johnstone, 2004, p.261). Choosing an appropriate research paradigm is therefore central to representing these different assumptions which underpin research. Guba and Lincoln (1994, p.111) also argue that a paradigm of inquiry encapsulates "the researcher`s basic beliefs and assumptions" as well as shape "the legitimate limits of inquiry" by determining its ontological, epistemological and methodological underpinnings.

Bryman (2004, cited in Armitage, 2007, p.2) "identifies a paradigm as a cluster of [beliefs] and dictates which, for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied, how research should be done [and] how results should be interpreted". These capture the key roles paradigms can play in informing and influencing how research is done and its results articulated. Senge (1990, p.8) insinuates that a paradigm is a mental map which he argues consists of "...deeply ingrained assumptions and generalisations that influence how we see the world and behave" as these fundamentally encapsulate our worldview and shape how we interpret `reality`. Such assumptions constitute the premise for mental models which may be flawed or may produce paradigm shifts through adding value to extant body of knowledge (Senge, 1990, p.8 and Covey, 1989, quoted in Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.110). Mertens (2003 quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.4) defines a paradigm as a "worldview, complete with the assumptions that are associated with that view". Morgan (2007, p.49) refers to paradigms as "systems of beliefs and practices that influence how researchers select both the questions they study and methods that they use to study them". Morgan (2007, pp.50-54) also contends that paradigms can be articulated as "worldviews...epistemological stances...Shared Beliefs in a Research Field...[and]... as Models Examples". The above definitions of paradigms illustrate a clear lack of consensus on the part of researchers and practitioners on a precise definition of a paradigm.

In conclusion, this study will adopt the above definition of a paradigm articulated by Mertens (2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.4) as its working definition and in selecting the research questions and methods used in investigating and answering them. On a similar note, Mixed Methods research has its own defined language and lexicons, with QUAN being frequently used for quantitative and QUAL for qualitative methods (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.11). The words QUAN and QUAL will be used in this study from the aforementioned perspectives (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.11). The next section will therefore seek to discuss the conflicting paradigmatic arguments which characterise MM research.

3.3.2. Paradigmatic Arguments in Mixed Methods Research:

The established use of Positivism or `received tradition` and Phenomenology including variants such as constructivism and interpretivism in both quantitative and qualitative studies respectively have gained increasing prominence over the years, (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.104). The emergence of MM with its own paradigms is challenging the status quo and hence the dominance of Positivism as characterised by "the mono method era" (Armitage, 2007, p.3) of the 1960s. MM therefore advocates for a more pragmatic approach to research through a combination and integration of QUAL and QUAN data gathering and analysis techniques in a single study. MM thus emerged from the "great qualitative-quantitative debate" which characterised and polarised researchers for most of the last century (Greene, 2008, p.10) and ended with a fragile truce. I will argue that some researchers still behave as if the "paradigm wars" are still ravaging and ongoing (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.4). Today, MM engineered paradigms; Pragmatism and Transformational Perspectives are gaining prominence and academic entrenchment (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.7). This section will articulate the paradigmatic arguments involved in MM while focusing on Pragmatism in arguing that the above debates are an extension of the `Great Quantitative-Qualitative debate`.

This study will espouse the Pragmatic research paradigm as this will support `multiple perspectives` and resonate with the QUAN and QUAL research methods which constitute my MM research design. The main rationale for espousing Pragmatism in this study is premised on the conceptual understanding that it will leverage the opportunity for me to utilise multiple data sources, data gathering and analysis strategies as well as techniques in engineering

compelling arguments and inferences (Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, pp.1-2). Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.4) also argue that researchers in MM work "primarily within the Pragmatic paradigm" as this enables them to explore and employ both QUAL or nonnumeric and QUAN or numeric data in their analysis. I will argue that a key rationale for espousing Pragmatism for this study is its potential to support creativity, strengthen my arguments and research findings as well as leverage high "quality meta-inferences" (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2009, p.105). Researchers in the QUAN method who argue that science is empirically-driven as it seeks to capture the truth, espouse Positivism as their main paradigm of inquiry, ontologically believing that truth and objective `reality` "exist independent of human experience" (Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil, 2002, p.44).

Such researchers argue from the epistemological perspective that, the investigator should be independent of the investigated (Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil, 2002, p.44). They also contend that the researcher must not be influenced, hence should be value-free while seeking to establish "the causal relationships between variables" (Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil, 2002, p.44). They propose procedures for data collection and analysis including the use of randomization, precise sample size and statistical methods for data analysis as these are quantitatively-oriented (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.169). On the other hand, QUAL method is phenomenologically-driven and explores variants such as interpretivism and constructivism (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.104 and Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p.61). Ontologically it articulates multiple perspectives of `reality` underpinned by the researcher`s construction and perception of reality (Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil, 2002, p.45). Epistemologically, the investigator and the phenomena under investigation are interactively intertwined hence inseparable from each other while at the axiological perspective; research is value-driven (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.10). QUAL research thus espouses data gathering techniques such as semi-structured and focused group interviews with data analysis techniques such as thematic analysis, cross-case analysis and discourse analysis (Guba and Lincoln, 1994 and Denzin and Lincoln, 1994 paraphrased in Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil, 2002, p.45). The above arguments therefore lead us to the idea of competing paradigms.

Competing paradigms and paradigm shifts articulated by Kuhn (1962, 1970 and 1996 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.15) culminate in the "paradigm debate" which underpins the "conflicting scientific world of positivism...constructivism" and interpretivism. The `paradigm debates` involved in MM draw most of their impetus and wit from and echo the

`Great quantitative-qualitative debate` thereby appearing as an extension of this debate. Kuhn (1962, 1970 and 1996 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.15) in `The Structure of Scientific Revolution` argues that paradigms are `scientific models` which may exist `simultaneously`, competing with each other with new `models` replacing outmoded ones. This Kuhnian notion of competing paradigms underpins the idea of `paradigm incommensurability` implying that it is inappropriate to `directly compare` one paradigm with another due to the lack of "interparadigmatic communication" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.336). Such interparadigmatic "communication breakdown" (Morgan, 2007, p.58) is possible during paradigm shifts although Patton (1982 quoted in Morgan, 2007, p.50) makes the case for `interparadigmatic communication`. He thus argues that there are great benefits in mixing paradigms as this entails making "mind shifts back and forth between [them]" (Patton, 1982 quoted in Morgan, 2007, p.50). But Schwandt (1989 quoted in Morgan, 2007, p.50) doubts the success of such paradigmatic mixing as it is not lucidly clear how "such an astonishing feat is to be accomplished".

As researchers in the post `paradigm wars` era observe a shaky truce, others like (Cherrholmes, 1992, Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, Miles and Huberman, 1994 and Guba and Lincoln, 1994 and 2005 all quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkorri, 2009, p.88) have successfully provided paradigm contrasts tables through which paradigms can be compared and any interparadigmatic communication meltdown minimised. Paradigm contrast tables thus explore the various philosophical assumptions in comparing paradigms hence they focus on the ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions which underpin any paradigm. The notion of `paradigm incommensurability` is directly connected to the `incompatibility thesis`. The `incompatibility thesis` which emerged from the `paradigm debates` contends that "it is inappropriate to mix QUAL and QUAN methods due to fundamental differences in the paradigms underlying [these] methods" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.15). Proponents of the `incompatibility thesis` including Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil, (2002, p.45 and Guba, 1987 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.15) argue against combining QUAL and QUAN methods in a single study. They argue that the dichotomous philosophical differences which underlie the QUAL-QUAN methods as encapsulated by their different ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological strands make any combination untenable. But this perspective is contended by the `compatibility thesis`.

Proponents of the `compatibility thesis` like Morgan, (2007, p.49) and Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.15) argue that by using a `pragmatic approach` QUAL-QUAN methods can be appropriately combined in a single study. They also argue that it is appropriate and compatible to combine paradigms in a single study for reasons like leveraging multiple perspectives and tapping from their `complementary strengthens` hence "the complementary strengthens thesis" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.98). The 'compatibility thesis` echoes the pragmatic perspective as it thumbs-up the combination of QUAL and QUAN methods in a single study by arguing that this will explore "different types of data to answer research questions" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85). `The compatibility thesis` reflects the current paradigm debates which characterise MM as there is a general lack of consensus among scholars and practitioners with Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, pp.96-102) highlighting six areas of paradigmatic divergence. Those who hold an `a-paradigmatic` position argue that "methods and paradigms are independent of one another hence the epistemology-method link is not an issue" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.96). Other scholars like Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002, p.45) while drawing inspiration from `the incompatibility thesis` argue that it is impossible to combine QUAL and QUAN methods in a single study through MM.

On the other hand, scholars who belong to `the Complementary strengthen thesis` hail MM and Pragmatism as leveraging greater opportunities for researchers to tap into the strengthens of both the QUAL and QUAN methods within `a single` study (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.96). Other scholars argue that MM has already established its own paradigms; hence researchers in the field can either espouse the Pragmatic or Transformational paradigms of inquiry. These proponents argue that any of the above paradigms can be sufficiently used in MM especially through the use of Pragmatism (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.96).

3.3.3. Pragmatism as a Research Paradigm:

Pragmatism has its roots in Philosophy through the writings of philosophers like William James (1842-1910). Pragmatism is a "deconstructive paradigm that debunks concepts such as `truth` and `reality` and focuses instead on `what works` as the truth regarding the research questions under investigation (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, p.713). This subunit will discuss pragmatism as an appropriate research paradigm for this study while focusing on its ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions. It will also articulate the rationale for selecting Pragmatism, explore a contrast table in highlighting its

key tenets and establish the link between Pragmatism, and my method as well as conceptual framework.

"Pragmatism is a set of ideas articulated by many people" (Hanson et al., 2005, p.226) and described as the `best paradigm` in MM by scholars like Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.85) with thirteen prominent mixed methodologists agreeing with the above description (Hanson, et al., 2005, p.226). The pragmatic paradigm thus draws inspiration from positivism, in articulating the view that "there is no problem with asserting that there is a single "real world" and that all individuals have their own unique interpretations of that world" (Morgan, 2007, p.72). Although pragmatism rejects the dominance of positivism, it still encapsulates some of its features, as it seeks to find a "middle ground between philosophical dogmatisms and scepticism and to find a workable solution" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.18). Achieving such a `workable solution` may entail embracing `what works` best, hence combining the QUAN and QUAL methods in order to obtain a better understanding of the phenomena under investigation. I will argue that Pragmatism transcends the `paradigm wars` as it offers "a logical and practical alternative" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.17) to the dominance of positivism and constructivism. The next table will seek to highlight the key philosophical assumptions of Pragmatism.

Assumptions and dimensions of contrast	Pragmatism
Ontological Assumptions: ▪ Nature of Reality	• Diverse viewpoints regarding social realities; best explanation within personal value systems.
Epistemological Assumptions: ▪ The nature of knowledge ▪ Researcher/participant relationship	• Both objective and subjective points of views, depending on stage of research cycle.
Axiological Assumptions: ▪ Role of values	• Values are important in interpreting results
Methodological Assumptions: ▪ Role of researcher	• Both QUAN and QUAL; • Researcher answers questions using best method

Logic	• Both inductive and hypothetico-deductive

Possibility of causal linkages
  ▪ Assumptions and dimensions
     of contrast
	• Causal relationships, but they are transitory and hard to identify; both internal validity and Pragmatism

Possibility of causal linkages	• Credibility is important
Possibility of generalization	• Ideographic statements emphasised; both external validity and transferability are issues of importance.

Table 3.2. Philosophical Assumptions of Pragmatism: Adopted from Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.88).

I will make a case for the use of pragmatism as my research paradigm by briefly discussing its ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions as depicted in the above table. Ontologically, "pragmatists agree with positivists and postpostivists on the existence of an external reality independent of our minds (Cherryholmes, 1992 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.92) pragmatists challenge the objective and subjective notions held by positivists and constructivists respectively about the nature of reality. Pragmatism supports creativity and the use of the deductive logic (theory and hypothesis testing), inductive logic (discovering patterns) and even the adductive logic (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.17). Pragmatists see "epistemological issues as a continuum" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.90) rather than polarising as participants in a study may at some point require a high interactive relationship with the researcher. Pragmatists thus believe that reality has both objective and subjective orientations.

At the axiological level, pragmatists believe that "values play a large role in conducting research and in drawing conclusions from studies as they see no reasons to be particularly concerned about it" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.90). Pragmatists thus believe in the "personal value system" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.90) of the researcher and think this should play a key role in determining the "unit of analysis and variables that" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.90) the researcher feels will deliver the best results. Pragmatism focuses on `what works` well "using diverse approaches, valuing both objective and subjective knowledge (Cherryholmes, 1992, cited in Hanson et al., 2005, p.226). It enables the

researcher to "link the choice of research approach directly to the purpose of and nature of the research questions posed" (Creswell, 2003 cited in Armitage, 2007, p.3). I can argue that despite the above advantages of using Pragmatism, the following conceptual weaknesses can be evident in its application;

- Applied research may gain more attention than basic research as it may appear to produce more immediate and practical results.
- Pragmatism may promote incremental change rather than more fundamental change in the society.
- Transformative-emancipatory researchers have suggested that pragmatic researchers sometimes fail to answer the question "For whom is a pragmatic solution useful?" (Mertens, 2003, cited in Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p.19).
- What is meant by usefulness or workability can be vague unless explicitly addressed by a researcher. .

(From Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.19)

Despite the above weaknesses, "pragmatism is a [robust] philosophical paradigm for MM ...[as]...it rejects the either-or choices from the constructivism-positivism debate" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.90). Its use in this study will leverage the opportunity for me to explore a hypothetico-deductive logic in testing my working hypothesis while building on the complementary strengthens of the QUAN and QUAL methods (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.20). The next subunit will seek to link Pragmatism to my conceptual framework and research questions.

3.3.4. Linking Pragmatism to my Research Questions and Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual use of Pragmatism in this study is predicated on the understanding that it will enable me to utilise multiple sources of MM data gathering and analysis techniques in collecting, analysing and interpreting my data in order to answer my research questions (Kelle and Erzberger, 2004, pp.174-176 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.88). It will also foster creativity and enable me to explore what works well in conceptualising my conceptual framework and research questions as well as in adequately answering them. My conceptual

framework will also enable me to explore appropriate methods in investigating the phenomena under study and in establishing causal relationships between various variables (Punch, 2001, p.57). The use of Pragmatism will enable me to draw inspiration from extant scholarship in making some tentative assumptions about the social reality which underpins user involvement (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p.60 and Giles, 2006, p.2). Pragmatism has influenced my choice of the inductive-deductive research strategy as it supports its use alongside the QUAN and QUAL research approaches. The next section will briefly discuss Positivism and Constructivism as alternative paradigms that were considered but not selected for this study.

3.3.5. Positivism and Constructivism

The dominant position enjoyed by positivism over the years as the primary research paradigm in the social and behavioural sciences is being challenged by the emergence of paradigms such as constructivism, interpretivism, Pragmatism and Transformational Perspectives (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.84 and Gephart, 1999, p.1). Positivism holds that

> ...social research should adopt scientific method...and that it consists the rigorous testing of hypothesis by means of data that take the form of quantitative measurements.

> (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, p.251)

Constructivism on the other hand, holds that "researchers individually and collectively construct the meaning of the phenomena under investigation [and that] observation cannot be pure in the sense of excluding altogether the interests and values of individuals" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.331). I will also argue that "Positivism assumes that there is an objective world `out there` which can be observed, defined and measured" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p.22) using quantitative instruments like questionnaires, surveys and observations. Constructivism on the other hand, contends that what we refer to as `objective reality` is a social construct which underpins "how we perceive" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p.22) `reality`, hence it is socially constructed. This subunit will briefly discuss and critique positivism and constructivism.

Positivism seeks to capture and explain causal relationships between variables through the use of scientific, measurable and objective quantitative methods but critics argue that such a procedure will fail to depict the importance of context in understanding the phenomena under study (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, P.106). Constructivism argues that meaning and truths or `reality` is subjective and can also result from perspectives and context hence it embraces the interaction between the researcher and the researched (Gephart, 1999, p.4). Guba and Lincoln, (1985, cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85) also refer to Constructivism as `naturalism`. The following table vividly depicts the dimensions of contrast and philosophical assumptions which underpin Positivism and Constructivism.

Dimensions of contrast	Constructivist (Naturalist) Paradigm	Positivist Paradigm
Epistemological: the relationship of the knower to the known; the nature of knowledge and its justification	Knower and known are interactive, inseparable.	Knower and known are independent, a dualism.
Axiology: the role of values in inquiry	Inquiry is value bound	Inquiry is value free.
Ontology: the nature of reality, being, and truth.	All entities are in a state of mutual, simultaneous shaping so that it is impossible to distinguish causes from effects.	There are real causes, temporally precedent to or simultaneous with their effects.
The impossibility of generalization.	Only time- and context-bound working hypothesis (ideographic statements are possible).	Time- and context-free generalizations (nomothetic statements) are possible.

Table 3.3. From Lincoln and Guba (1985, 37 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.86)

Epistemologically speaking, positivists argue that the researcher and the researched are independent and separate while constructivists contend that the researcher and the researched

are intertwined and cannot be separated (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85). From the axiological perspective, positivists contend that knowledge is value free while "constructivists believe that inquiry is value-bound" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85). At the ontological level, positivists argue that `there is a single reality`, constructivists contend that reality has multiple constructions, layers and meanings (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85). Methodologically, Positivism is quantitatively-inclined while constructivism is qualitatively-driven (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85). But the use of Positivism and Constructivism can be undermined by the fact that doubts often arise over the possibility "to control variables" especially in experimental research involving human beings and over its elimination of contextual variables (Snape and Spencer, 2003, p.8). Above all, Positivism`s over reliance on data and theories to the detriment of context may be irrelevant in understanding the "...lives of individuals...[since] ...emphasis on hypothesis testing...[may neglect]...the importance of discovery through alternative understandings" (Snape and Spencer, 2003, p.9). I will argue that context can also influence research outcomes. The next subunit will thus focus on my research strategy.

3.4. Research Strategy: The Inductive-Deductive Research Cycle

A research strategy underscores the philosophical underpinnings adopted by the researcher in a particular research and thus provides "the overall direction for the research including processes by which the research is conducted" (Remenyi, 2003, p.44). Research strategies can leverage a guide, step-by-step procedure and multiple perspectives through which research questions can be answered (Blaikie, 2000, p.100). Two rationales have informed my choice of the inductive-deductive research logic for this study. First, it resonates with my research paradigm or Pragmatism and with my overall research method and design. Second, the inductive-deductive research strategy will enable me to proceed in steps; from adopting a conceptual framework and a working hypothesis, through to investigating, by gathering and analysing both QUAN and QUAL data in order to test, predict and generalise my study to similar contexts. The inductive and deductive research strategies can be explored in a distinctive order as captured below;

The inductive-deductive research cycle may be seen as moving from grounded results (observations, facts) through inductive inferences to general inferences, then from

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those general inferences (or theory, conceptual framework, model) through deductive inferences to predictions to particular (a priori hypotheses).

<div align="center">Krathwohl (2004 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.26)</div>

I can argue that the inductive-deductive research strategy can support my conceptual framework and working hypothesis in depicting how the phenomena under study will be investigated at any given time and point in the research process in order to adequately answer my research questions (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.26). The researcher can either begin with the inductive or deductive strategies depending on the stage at which s/he is investigating the phenomena under study and the strategy s/he deems appropriate to start with (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.26). The next figure thus illustrates the inductive-deductive research cycle.
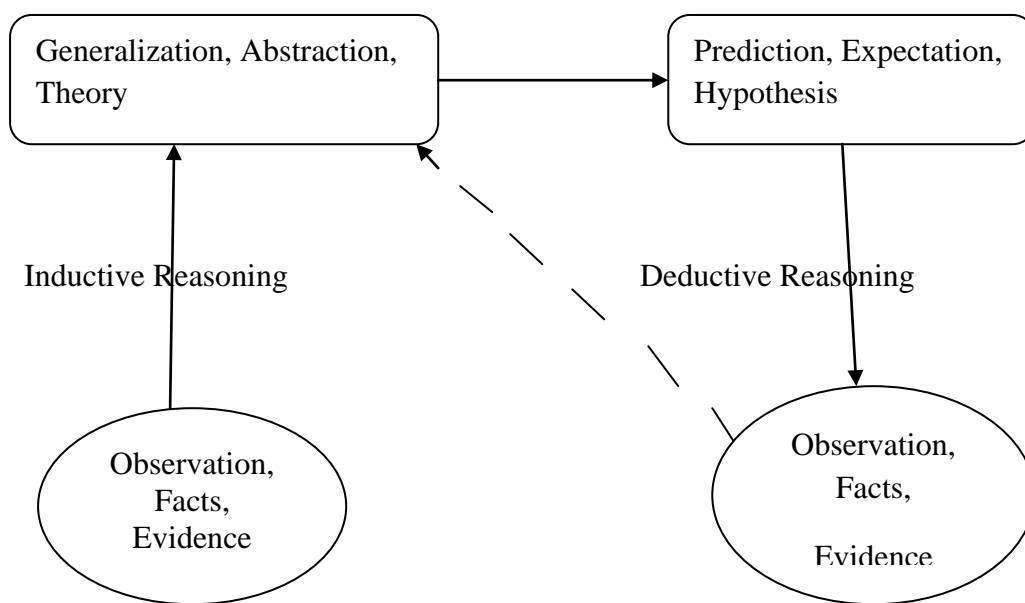
Figure: 3.3: The Inductive-Deductive Research Cycle (cycle of scientific methodology) From Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27)

The above figure clearly illustrates how the inductive and deductive reasoning can be explored in a MM as either can come first at any stage of the research process depending on the research questions and the phenomena under study (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27). Over the years, researchers like Aristotle and Newton (cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.79) have successful combined inductive and deductive reasoning in the same studies.

Hammersley (1992 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.79) corroborates this by arguing that;

> Indeed it seems to me that all research involves induction and deduction in the broad sense of those terms; in all research, we move from ideas to data as well as from data to ideas.

The inductive-deductive reasoning can either be explicitly or inexplicitly obtained in the same study. Gilbert (2006 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.79) even contends that, many research traditions in the social and behavioural sciences already make use of inductive-deductive reasoning as both processes are used iteratively. Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.87) corroborate this by arguing that "pragmatists believe that research on any given question at any point in time falls somewhere within the inductive-deductive research cycle". Morgan (2007, p.71) even contends that pragmatism explores a kind of abductive research logic which moves forward and backward between inductive and deductive reasoning. I will therefore explore both the inductive-deductive logic in gathering, analysing and making inferences about the phenomena under investigation. The next table will illustrate the philosophical assumptions which underpin quantitative, qualitative and MM research as these are underscored by the inductive-deductive research logic.

Assumptions	Question	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Method	This researcher`s view of the world
Ontological Assumption	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is objective and singular, apart from the researcher	Reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in a study	Reality can offer diverse (objective and subjective) view-points; based on best explanations within the researcher`s value system.	Quantitative and qualitative

Epistemological Assumption	What is the relationship of the researcher to the researched?	Researcher is independent from what is being researched	Researcher interacts with what is being researched	Relationship between researcher and the researched may be highly interactive in order to answer complex questions.	Quantitative and qualitative
Axiological Assumption	What is the role of values?	Value-free and unbiased.	Value-laden and biased	Values are important in interpreting results	Quantitative and qualitative
Rhetorical Assumption	What is the language of research?	Formal Based on set of definitions Personal voice Accepted quantitative words	Informal, Evolving decisions Personal voice Accepted qualitative words	Formal and informal involving both set of definitions and personal voice with researcher being key	Quantitative and qualitative
Methodological Assumption	What is the process of research?	Deductive process Cause and effect Static design – categories isolated before study	Inductive process Mutual simultaneous shaping of factors. Emerging design – categories identified during	Both QUAL and QUAN; researcher answer questions using best methods. Both inductive and hypothetico-deductive processes	Quantitative and qualitative

		Context free Generalisations leading to predictions, explanations, and understanding. Accurate and reliable through validity and reliability	research process Context – bound Patterns, theories develop for understanding. Accurate and reliable through verification		

Table 3.4: Deciding on research strategy (Based on Firestone, 1987; Guba and Lincoln, 1988; and McCracken, 1988 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.88)

The above table demonstrates that ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical and methodological assumptions are crucial in informing and influencing the decision I make about my research strategy. Like Positivism, the deductive strategy ensures that "results provide accurate reflections of reality" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008, p.87). Ontologically and epistemologically the deductive strategy makes "...assumptions about the nature of reality...[and]...how that reality can be known" (Blaikie, 2000, p.101). The inductive research strategy encapsulates "meticulous and objective observation and measurement and the careful and accurate analysis of data" (Blaikie, 2000, p.102). This involves data collection, analysis and generalisations with the availability of further testing in order to become law as opposed to the construction and testing of tentative theories and hypothesis through appropriate gathering and analysis of data during the deductive process (Blaikie, 2000, p.100). Pragmatism on the other hand, leverages the opportunity for both QUAL and QUAN, inductive-deductive-driven processes to be explored at any stage of the research cycle. The next table captures more dimensions of contrast between the inductive, deductive and the inductive-deductive research strategies.

Dimension of Contrast	Qualitative Position Inductive Strategy	Mixed Methods Position Inductive-deductive Strategy	Quantitative Position Deductive Strategy
Methods	Qualitative methods	Mixed Methods	Quantitative Methods
Researchers	QUALs	Mixed Methodologists	QUANs
Paradigms	Constructivism (and variants)	Pragmatism, Transformative Perspective	Postpositivism Positivism
Research Questions	QUAL research questions	MM research questions (QUAN plus QUAL)	QUAN research questions; research hypotheses
Form of data	Typically narrative [nonnumeric]	Narrative plus numeric	Typically numeric
Purpose of research	(often) exploratory plus confirmatory	Confirmatory plus exploratory	(often) confirmatory plus exploratory
Role of theory; logic	Grounded theory; inductive logic	Both inductive and deductive logic; inductive-deductive research cycle	Rooted in conceptual framework or theory; hypothetico-deductive model
Typical studies or designs	Ethnographic research designs and others (case study)	MM designs, such as parallel and sequential	Correlational; survey; experimental; quasi-experimental.
Sampling	Mostly purposive	Probability, purposive and Mixed	Mostly probability
Data Analysis	Thematic Analysis; categorical and contextualizing	Integration of thematic and statistical; data conversion	Statistical Analyses; descriptive and inferential
Validity/trust worthiness issues	Trustworthiness; credibility; transferability	Inference quality; inference transferability	Internal validity; external validity.

Table 3.5. Dimensions of Contrast between the Inductive, Inductive-deductive and the Deductive Research Strategies (From Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.22)

The above table lucidly captures the key dimensions of contrast between the inductive, deductive and inductive-deductive research strategies which represent QUAL, QUAN and MM respectively. The above dimensions of contrast also illustrate the key philosophical assumptions inherent in each research strategy. The above table also depicts other key components like sampling, data analysis and issues of trust and validity which are crucial in informing our understanding of the phenomena under study. I will argue that the inductive-deductive research strategy is the most appropriate research logic for investigating and understanding innovative models of user involvement as this resonates with my MM research design. The rationale for choosing the inductive-deductive research logic is premised on its appropriateness in supporting multiple sources of data and analyses as well as factors such as my skills, research questions, the resources available to me including cost, material and time (Remenyi et al., 2003, p.44). The next subunit will discuss the practical and methodological considerations which influenced my choice of research design and approach.

3.5. Practical and Methodological considerations which influenced my choice of Research Design and Approach:

Practical and methodological considerations are important in research as they can play a vital role in influencing the researcher`s choice of research design and approach and can also directly or indirectly influence the success as well as enable the research to be realised on time and budget. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001, p.80) argue that a researcher needs to consider practical issues like "time, money, availability of samples and data, familiarity with the subject under study, access to situations and gaining cooperation" as these can influence his/her choice of research design, methods and approach. Some of the practical and methodological considerations which have influenced my choice of research design, approach and method include; the length of time available for this research, resource availability including finance, cost and material, environmental and contextual constraints, my skills level as well as the fact that I am a lone researcher (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.45).

For example budgetary constraints and lone working imply that I cannot embark on many or more than three multiple-case studies. I have thus choosen three multiple-cases studies as my data gathering strategy as I consider these manageable and appropriate in providing adequate

data with which I will fully generate robust arguments in answering my research questions (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.45). I resolved on the above practical and methodological considerations by being innovative, flexible and after reading through extant literature, taking cognizance of the cost and budget availability as well as after considering my skills and other competences. The next subunit will sum up the key arguments of this chapter in the conclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter explores the network theory in informing my conceptual framework and our understanding of the huge web-like relationships often present in partnership working while arguing that such relationships must be premised on trust, mutual respect and clarity. My conceptual framework seeks to investigate into how gender, ethnicity and level of education can positively or negatively influence user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. It argues that exploring innovative models of user involvement and SI in engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can engineer cutting-edge high quality outcomes. This chapter re-visits the paradigmatic arguments which underpin the MM while espousing pragmatism and the inductive-deductive research strategy as the appropriate research paradigm and strategy for investigating the phenomenon under study. The next chapter which will focus on my research method and methodology will discuss my overall research design; methodology and method, including data gathering instruments and sampling strategies.

Chapter Four

Research Design: Method and Methodology

Introduction:

Before delving into a critical and analytic discussion of my research design; method and methodology, I will like to make a clear distinction between research method and research methodology. This is important as the growing lack of clarity between these two concepts can create some conceptual paralysis. Research method refers mainly to the techniques; tools used for data collection and may include data gathering instruments like questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, archival records and a review of documents (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p.59 and Kothari, 2004, p.7). Punch (2005, p.28) argues that research methods "include design, data collection and data analysis" as data gathering and analysis are often empirically-focused. Research methodology on the other hand, is more philosophical and "usually refers to the approach or paradigm that underpins the research" (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p.59). Hence, research methodology involves choosing, selecting, "reflecting upon" (Wellington, 2010, p.129) and rationalising for the use of methods. It encapsulates the "overall analysis" (Punch, 2005, p.28) of the entire research process and proceedings. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001, p.59) also argue that an interview conducted from a quantitative method perspective will have a different focus on data sets than one conducted from a qualitative angle.

Research methodology thus underpins "the procedural framework within which research is conducted" (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.28) which Leedy (1989, cited in Remenyi et al., 1998, p.28) also refers to as "an operational framework within which the facts are placed so that their meaning may be seen more clearly". Such a framework will underpin "sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation of [the research] findings" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.339) as well as underscore the overriding philosophy on which data collection and analysis are predicated. This chapter will also discuss my research strategy, method, methodology and sampling including data gathering and analysis techniques (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.28, Punch, 2005, p.19 and Mikkelsen, 2005, p.169). This cross-sectional study will explore MM research design and specifically parallel mixed design for sampling and data gathering through three multiple-case studies (Teddlie and Tashakkori,

2009, p.266, Creswell, 2003, p.17 and Yin, 2009, p.19). Three multiple-case studies are used as strategies for data collection since they will leverage the opportunity for me to collect rich data while investigating into a "contemporary [phenomenon] within a real-life context" (Yin, 2009, p.2). The rationale for utilising MM research in this study is premised on the conceptual understanding that it will leverage the opportunity for complementarity, integration and triangulation of data collection and analysis as well as for achieving compelling inferences` (Driscoll et al., 2007, p.24, Thurmond, 2001, p.254 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27). This chapter will comprise three main subunits; the first subunit will focus on research design, while the second will discuss my research methodology and the third subunit will concentrate on MM research design.

4.1. Research Design

Punch (2000, p.52) argues that research design implies "connecting the research questions to data" hence this implies linking research questions to data collection and analysis. This can be achieved by exploring data gathering tools like questionnaires, documents and semi-structured interviews in order to adequately answer the research questions. MM research design can leverage the opportunity for flexibility and creativity as the researcher may have the licence to create a research design that permits him/her to effectively answer his/her research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.138). MM research designs thus "involve the collection, analysis and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single or multiphase study" (Hanson et al., 2005, p.224). While questionnaires will generate quantitative data, semi-structured interviews will leverage qualitative data. Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.110) argue that there are "three phases of the research process: conceptualization, methods and inferences". The conceptualization phase begins from planning and culminates in the decision to undertake the research and its implementation while the methods phase focuses on the selection of appropriate research methods for gathering and analysing mixed data.

This phase then culminates in the inference phase which involves interpretation of the research findings (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.110). Research design is also influenced and shaped by the philosophical assumptions which guide the researcher`s worldview as

these underpin the paradigm and logic of enquiry on which the study is predicated. As already discussed in the previous chapter, this study will explore the Pragmatic paradigm underpinned by the inductive-deductive research logic. My research design will therefore leverage "conceptual clarity...[by]...achieving internal consistency...[and creating]...logical links between [the various] concepts" (Punch, 2005, p.21) embedded in my conceptual framework as this will facilitate a robust respond to my research questions. This subunit will focus on my research methodology while discussing the rationale for its selections, how it was done as well as establish boundaries around my case.

4.2. Research Methodology:

Introduction:

Research methodology refers to the general approach which I have adopted in investigating the phenomena under study and in designing and answering my research questions. This study argues that methodology refers to the various methods used in research hence "the overall analysis of how [my] research [will proceed]" (Punch, 2005, p.28). Research methodology also refers to;

> ...a broad approach to scientific inquiry specifying how research questions should be asked and answered. This includes worldview considerations, general preferences for designs, sampling logic, data collection and analytical strategies, guidelines for making inferences, and the criteria for assessing and improving quality
>
> (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.20)

My research methodology thus highlights the philosophical assumptions which underpin this study and indicates the methods for data collection, analysis and interpretation. My research methodology thus starts with an identification of a researchable problem and extant literature. It also encapsulates my research questions, paradigm of inquiry, research strategy, methods, data collection and analysis techniques and instruments as well as the interpretation and diffusion of my research findings (Kothari, 2004, p.8). The next subunit will seek to discuss how I arrived at the choice of my research methodology.

4.2.1. How I arrived at my choice of research methodology

My choice of research methodology was influenced by my reading of the vast growing body of scholarship on research paradigms, research design and strategy and research methodology (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.45, Blaikie, 2000, p.104, Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p.66 and Punch, 2005, pp.55-59). I can argue that prior to the above readings, I had already identified a researchable problem hence, further readings as cited above enabled me to better formulate my conceptual framework, tentative hypothesis and research questions (Punch, 2005, p.58). My reading of extant scholarships on research methods and methodology informed my thinking and choice of research method and methodology. It thus enabled me to decide on my research paradigm, research strategy, methods including data collection and analysis instruments as well as techniques which will be effective in adequately answering my research questions (Kothari, 2004, p.8).

Remenyi et al., (1998, p.66) also suggest that "the issue of time and money" may influence one`s choice of methodology, this is true as I could not engage in a longitudinal study because of the limited time which I had at my disposal. My choice of research methodology underpins the need for me to explore multiple sources for data collection as a single source like "observations do not provide reliable" (Blaikie, 2000, p.104) basis for the generation of scientific theories. This is important as the social and political contexts (Kelemen and Rumens, 2008, p.9) can influence and shape the nature of `reality`. The next figure thus illustrates the conceptual journey of my research design, method and methodology by emphasising the overall framework which will assist me in answering my research questions and attaining my research objectives.

Figure: 4.1   Illustrates my Overall Research Design; Method and Methodology:
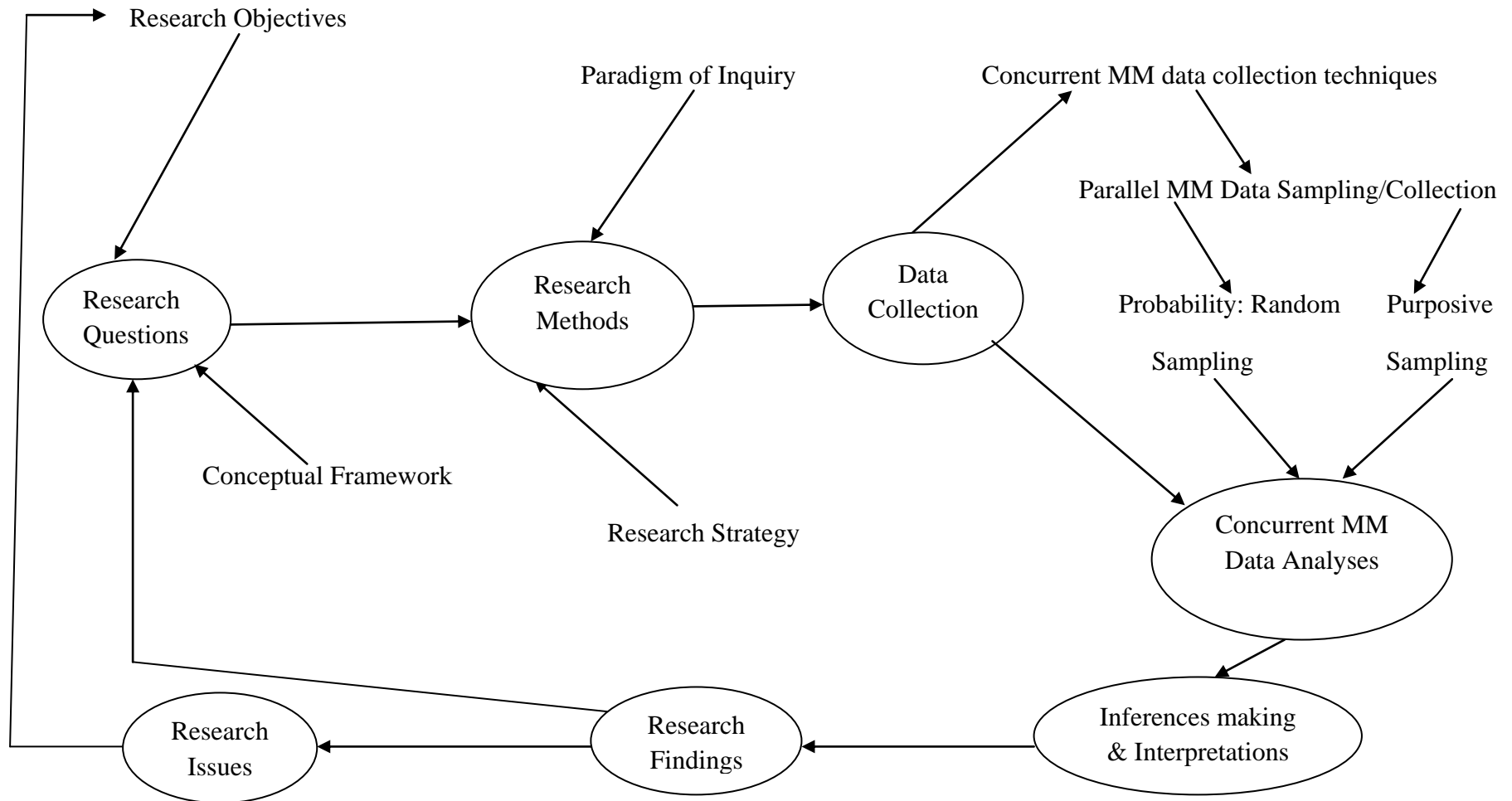
The above figure demonstrates that my research questions will draw inspiration from my conceptual framework, research objectives and research issues (review of literature) in informing my research method and instruments for data collection as these are central to my research methodology. The above table thus leverages a birds` eye view of my research design, method and methodology as discussed in the rest of this chapter. My research methodology therefore encapsulates my overall research design and methods while clearly defining the boundaries of my study as the next subunit will demonstrate.

4.2.2. Delimiting the Case and Defining the Unit of Analysis:

This section will attempt to delimit the case and build boundaries round it in order to avoid irrelevant and digressional materials from creeping into my study and obscuring focus hence it will also seek to define its unit of analysis. Although the boundary between the context and phenomena under investigation may be indistinguishable, this study argues that it is very important to bind the case by putting boundaries round it and clearly identifying the unit of analysis. This is vitally important in defining the study`s scope, ensuring consistency, clarity and internal and external validities (Baxter and Jack, 2008, p.546 and Yin, 2009, p.24). A case is a phenomenon which is intended to be explained through inference, spatially bounded, with well-defined boundaries, observable at a "point in time or over some period of time" (Gering, 2007, p.19). It is vital to bind the case within clearly defined boundaries while indicating its time span, activities, place and the context of the study (Creswell, 2003 and Miles and Huberman, 1994 cited in Baxter and Jack, 2008, p.546). This study will specifically concentrate on three multiple-case studies of P-SEPs which provide socially-oriented public services to young adults aged 18-24 in the East of England.

The three multiple-cases engaged in providing public services to my target population, must meet my definition of a SE and the services provided must be free at the point of access. The rationale for focusing on three multiple-cases is premised on the understanding that they will provide sufficient data with which to adequately answer my research questions (Gerring, 2007, p.37, Yin, 2009, p.24, Gerring, 2004, p.341 and Eisenhardt, 1991, p.620). I can argue that the inability of the Case Study to explicitly state its unit of analysis is one of its central

criticisms with Platt (1992, quoted in Gerring, 2007, p.18) describing the situation as conceptually confusing and often compounded by the treatment of multiple themes in a single study. Clearly defining the boundaries of my case underpins methodological rigour as this will facilitate the use of multiple data sources and data gathering techniques in intensively examining the phenomenon under study (Benbasat, Goldstein and Mead, 1987, p.370, Eisenhardt, 1991, p.620 and Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, p.25). A case may constitute variables as the dependent variables will denote outcomes while the independent ones denote the causal explanation on which dependent variables are based (Gerring, 2007, pp.20-21).

I will investigate into how independent variables such as gender, ethnicity and level of education can positively or negatively influence end user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes (Gerring, 2007, p.21). My unit of analysis is the end user. In defining a unit of analysis Miles and Huberman (1994, quoted in Baxter and Jack, 2008, p.545) contend that it is "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context". It thus depicts what a researcher wants to extensively investigate and analyse in a case and should be explicitly encapsulated in the research questions. Boyatzis (1998, p.62) also contends that a unit of analysis "is the entity on which the interpretations of the study will focus". Hence, I have identified the end user as my unit of analysis. My interpretations of the end user will focus on investigating, analysing, interpreting and drawing compelling inferences on innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services and potential outcomes. The rationale for clearly defining my units of analysis and building boundaries around them is to ensure a conceptual focus and a clearly defined scope for my study while articulating my research propositions.

4.2.3. Research Propositions:

Research propositions are important in keeping the study in focus; enabling the researcher to limit his/herself to investigating the selected phenomenon which constitutes the unit of analysis and in ensuring the study is completed on time (Baxter and Jack, 2008, p.551). My research proposition draws inspiration from the researchable problem in agreeing with extant literature that the lack of innovative models of end user involvement in P-SEP-engineered service delivery is the main reason for the delivery of unresponsive services (Byrne, 2001,

p.244, Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.165 and Alam, 2002, p.255). The main proposition articulated in this study argues that;

> High or positive users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can engineer greater user satisfaction, high quality services and better user-led outcomes.

The above proposition resonates with my conceptual framework as it assumes that end user involvement in P-SEP working through innovative models of involvement and SI can leverage user-led value creation and transformational user-centric outcomes (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.15, Entwistle, 2010, p.163 and Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.55). The conceptual focus of the above research proposition underpins my research questions, conceptual framework in emphasising the urgency and importance of positive users` perception of their involvement in achieving better user-led outcomes (Shaw, 2009, p.24 and Flynn, 2007, p.8). The above research proposition will be addressed through the responses to my research questions. The next subunit will focus on discussing my research method.

4.3. Mixed Methods Research Design: Data Collections, Analyses, Interpretations and Inference making in Mixed Methods

Introduction:

Mixed Methods (MM) is a fast growing area of study which is sometimes referred to as "the third methodological movement" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.1), the "third research paradigm" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.15) or as "a new star in the social science sky" (Mayring, 2007 cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.1). There is no unanimity amongst mixed methodologists and practitioners on a consistent use of terminologies or nomenclatures in the field since it lends itself to constant pragmatism-driven mutations, multiple perspectives and innovation (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.139). MM research design is a "natural outlet for research...[and]...an accessible approach to inquiry" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.2) underpinned by what Greene (2007, cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.1) refers to as "multiple ways of seeing and hearing".

I will argue that it is necessary for the researcher to creatively conceptualise and design an MM research that will enable him/her to adequately answer his/her research questions. But the lack of conceptual consistency in the use of terminologies in MM research designs can engineer conceptual confusion and inhibit rigour. This subunit will be comprised of three key elements; first, it will attempt to define MM research, discuss its taxonomy and state its advantages, disadvantages and the rationale for utilising it in this study. Second, it will focus on conceptualising and designing MM research and third it will concentrate on data analysis and interpretation in MM research.

4.3.1. MM Research Design

MM research thus seeks to combine both the QUAL and QUAN research approaches in the same study while underscoring its multidimensional perspectives, since it has the potentials of leveraging methodological rigour (Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, p.1 and Kothari, 2004, p.7). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.21) argue that;

> ...research methods include specific strategies and procedures for implementing research design, including sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretations of the findings.

MM thus draws inspiration from traditional well established QUAN and QUAL research strategies and techniques underpinned by sampling, data gathering and analysis as well as inferences and interpretations. This study will explore MM on the conceptual understanding that data gathering and analysis will be underpinned by integration, mixing and triangulation at the interpretation and inference phases (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006, p.474 and Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, p.7).

This is critical as `real` integration and mixing of both QUAN and QUAL data in a single study through strategies like analytic and interpretative integration and triangulation of data and findings are crucial determinants of MM research designs. But despite the benefit of integrating and combining QUAL and QUAN approaches and data in a single study for complementary reasons, scholars like Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002, p.44) argue against combining the QUAL and QUAN approaches for paradigmatic reasons. Such an argument is

a bit stale and echoes the Kuhnian idea of "incommensurability of paradigms" (Morgan, 2007, p.58). But Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.12) while drawing inspiration from `the compatibility and complementary` theses as well as the `commensurability of paradigm arguments`, support the combination of the QUAL and QUAN approaches in a single study through MM research design. I will begin my discussions of MM research by attempting to capture its definition.

4.3.2 Defining Mixed Methods Research:

Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007, pp.119-121) reviewed 19 definitions of MM research design from leading academics and practitioners in the field and came up with the following definition which captures the key elements that cut-across all the 19 definitions;

> Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration
>
> Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007, pp.119-1210)

This implies that an MM will entail capturing, gathering, integrating, analysing, interpreting and mixing elements of QUAL and QUAN approaches within a single study. Another important definition of MM research holds that;

> Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone
>
> (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.5)

The main thrust of the above definition argues that MM research designs seek to combine elements of both QUAN and QUAL approaches at appropriate phases of the research process within a single study in order to inform a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In a similar light, Tashakkori and Creswell (2007, p.4) define an MM research as:

> ...a type of research design in which QUAL and QUAN approaches are used in types of questions, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures, and/or inferences.

The above definitions of MM research highlight some common features; first, there must be `true` mixing, integration and combination of QUAL and QUAN data analysis, interpretations and inferences within a single study (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007, p.124). MM can also be conceptualised as a methodology with its philosophical assumptions which can inform data collection and analysed. Greene (2007 cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.4) argues that MM research is a type of inquiry which "actively invites us to participate in [a] dialogue about multiple perspectives ...of making sense of the social world...[underpinned by]...multiple standpoints". Collins, Onwuegbuzie and Sutton (2006, quoted in Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006, pp.474-475) identify thirteen steps for conceptualising MM research design which emphasise elements such as the rationale/purpose and objectives for mixing both QUAN and QUAL approaches in a single study. The next figure thus depicts the thirteen steps for conceptualising an MM research design as proposed by Collins, Onwuegbuzie and Sutton (2006, quoted in Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006, pp.474-475).
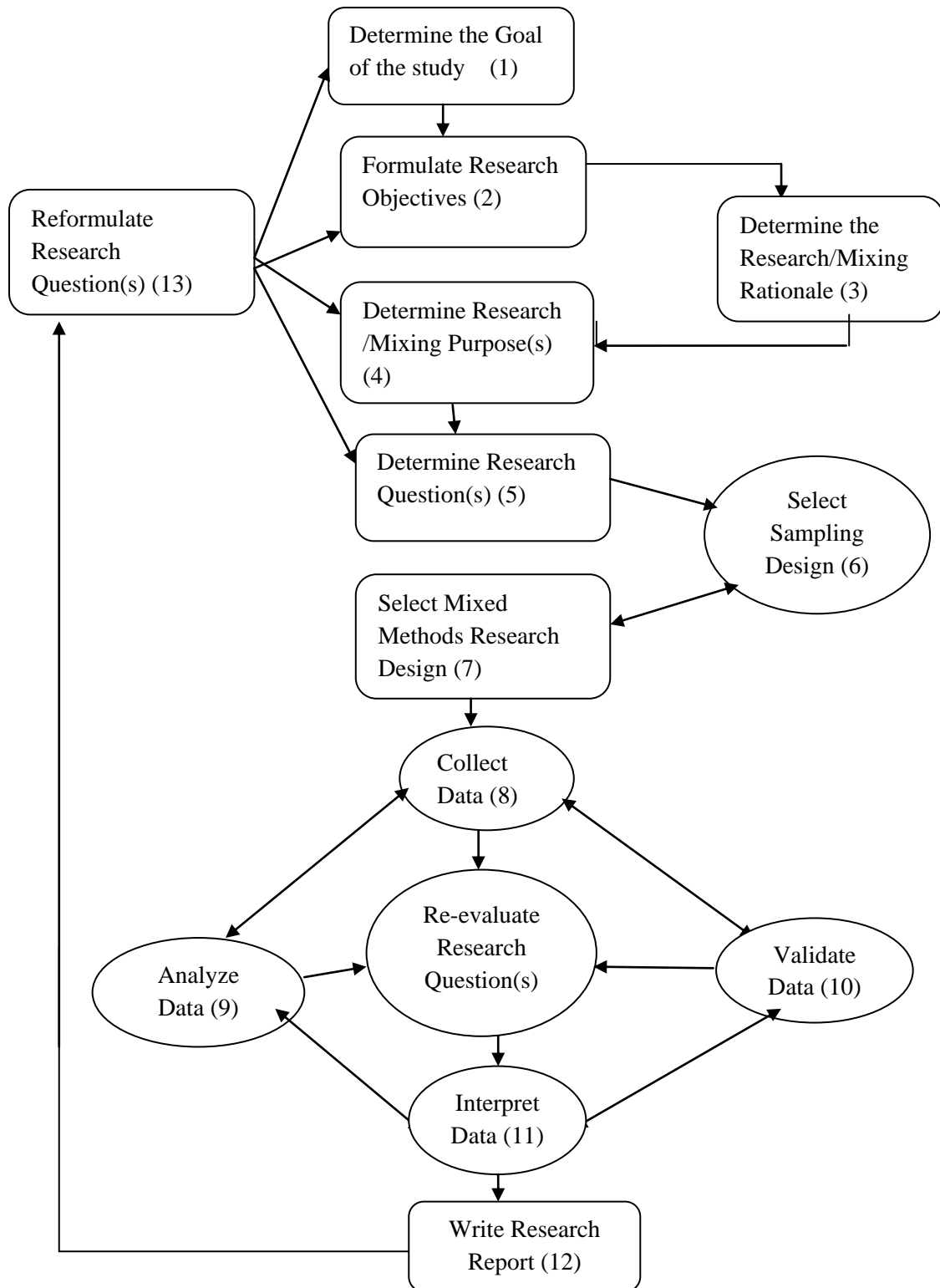
Figure 4.2 From Onwuegbuzie and Leech, (2006, p.476): Steps in Mixed Methods Research Process.

It is important to determine the goals of the study as this will define its context, rationale and inform its objectives. This will also enable the researcher to determine the appropriate

type of MM research design which can be QUAL or QUAN-oriented or an equal status MM design (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006, p.476). This is also important in informing the type of data gathering instruments and strategies to be used and in underscoring the rationale for such an approach. This study also argues that the type of research questions to be answered are important in shaping and determining the type of MM research design, sampling strategies and data gathering techniques to be utilised (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006, p.476). Designing a robust MM research is a rigorous and quintessential procedure which needs to be premised on an appropriate MM typology.

4.3.3. Typologies of Mixed Methods Research Design

Numerous typologies of MM research design have emerged over the last 20 years with Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.139) suggesting some typologies based on their examination of a few extant typologies of MM research design. Other Mixed Methodologists like Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2006, p.12 and 2009, p.139) and Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, quoted in Niglas, 2009, p.36) have also suggested more typologies of MM design although these vary in depth and breadth. Despite the dichotomies witnessed in the various MM research typologies suggested by the above scholars and others, they are all unanimous that MM research design must espouse the integration of QUAL and QUAN approaches in a single study. There are therefore areas of divergence and convergence among the various MM research typologies articulated. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003 quoted in Niglas, 2009, p.36) argue that `mixed methods` is an appellation which refers to different designs involving the mixing of aspects of QUAL and QUAN in the same study. Some examples of typologies of MM research designs include; "Monomethod designs and Mixed Methods designs" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, 145).This subsection will discuss the rationale for having MM typology and advance some examples and criteria for designing MM typologies.

The main rationale for espousing MM research typologies is premised on the understanding that they can facilitate and support the researcher especially a novice researcher in designing appropriate MM research designs for answering his/her research questions (Teddlie and Taskakkori, 2009, p.138 and Niglas, 2009, p.37). These can equally help the novice

researcher to cope with the numerous, varied and sometime confusing typologies operational in MM (Niglas, 2009, 38). MM typologies can also establish a common language; engineer coherent MM research structures, legitimise the growing field of MM and serve as examples as well as didactic tools for students (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006, p.12 and 2009, p.139). It is also worth noting that there is no exhaustive list of typologies in MM research, as researchers can creatively build their own MM research designs which are appropriate for addressing their research questions and investigating the phenomena under study. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006, p13) also contend that the difficulty in establishing a common `menu` or "complete taxonomy of MM designs is due to their capacity to mutate into other forms". Maxwell and Loomis (2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.139) also argue that "the actual diversity in mixed methods studies is far greater than any typology can adequately encompass". Hence, researchers can creatively innovate and adapt existing typologies to suit their research needs.

Closely related to the rationale for establishing typologies in MM research are the criteria used in establishing such typologies. While drawing inspirations from other established scholars in MM research like (Creswell et al., 2003, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004 and Greene and Caracelli, 1989), Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.140) identify the following seven criteria for establishing MM research designs.

- Number of methodological approaches used
- Number of strands or phases
- Types of implementation process
- Stage of integration of approaches
- Priority of methodological approach
- Function of the research study
- Theoretical or ideological perspectives

From Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.140)

It is worth noting that a researcher may not necessarily use all the above criteria in building an MM research design, for example, Teddlie and Tashakkori,(2009, p.140) use four criteria

in establishing their Methods-Strand Matrix for MM research design. A monomethod study refers to one that uses a single method, either QUAN or QUAL while number of strands refers to the number of phrases in the study either single (monostrand) phrase or multiple (multistrand) phrases. Type of implementation process refers to how data is collected, treated and analysed within the study (parallel, sequential, conversion, multiple) or a combination of both and in varied proportions (Hanson et al., 2005, p.228 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.141). Stage of integration of approaches refers to the stage at which the `mixing` of the QUAN and QUAL approaches occurs within the study while methodological priority implies the weighting allocated to the QUAL and QUAN approaches in the study.

As highlighted earlier, there is no consensus on typologies of MM research among mixed methodologists with scholars like Greene et al., (1998 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.160) establishing a typology based on the functions and purpose of the MM research. But Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.161), on the other hand suggest a "parsimonious typology of mixed research design" which underscores two priorities; the need to choose either equal or dominant status which may either be sequential or parallel. They therefore suggest the following MM design matrix which can be creatively used by MM researchers in constructing a typology of MM in consonant with their research question(s).

		Concurrent	Sequential
Paradigm Emphasis Decision	Equal Status	QUAL + QUAN	QUAL → QUAN QUAN → QUAL
	Dominant Status	QUAL +quan QUAN + qual	QUAL → quan qual → QUAN QUAN → qual quan → QUAL

Table 4.1 MM Research Design Matrix indicating the four cells (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie et al., 2004, p.22)

As used in MM, `qual` implies qualitative, `quan` denotes quantitative, while + implies concurrent and the arrow (⟶) stands for sequential (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.22). The first cells indicates that the QUAL and QUAN approaches have equal status in the study while in the reminding cells, uppercase letters denote the dominant strand while lowercase letters indicate the less dominant component (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.22 and Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.109). The above MM design matrix suggested by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p.22) mirrors the one suggested by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.145) as they both draw inspirations from the widely accepted MM notations suggested by Morse (2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.143). The above matrix offers numerous opportunities for the MM researcher to creatively design a typology that will enable him/her to attain his/her research objectives as well as efficiently answer his/her research question(s). Creswell et al., (2003, cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.161) propose the following four bases on which MM research typologies can be conceptually classified; "type of implementation process, priority of methodological approach, stage of integration, and theoretical or ideological perspectives".

Creswell et al., (2003, cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.161) have also built a framework for MM research design from which they suggest the following six typologies; "Sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, sequential transformative, concurrent triangulation, concurrent nested, and concurrent transformative". MM researchers can flexibly and creatively explore MM research typologies like those presented in the table below, in planning and designing specific MM research projects. The next table illustrates "the Methods-Strands Matrix" as suggested by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.145).

Design Type	Monostrand Designs	Multistrand Designs

Monomethod designs	Cell 1
	
	Monomethod monostrand designs
	  1) Traditional QUAN designs
	  2) Traditional QUAL designs
		Cell 2
		
		Monomethod multistrand designs
		  1) Parallel monostrand
		    a) QUAN + QUAN
		    b) QUAL + QUAL
		  2) Sequential monomethod
		    a) QUAN → QUAN
		    b) QUAL → QUAL

Mixed methods designs	Cell 3
	
	Quasi-mixed monostrand designs
	  1) Monostrand conversion designs
		Cell 4
		
		Mixed methods multistrand designs
		  1) Parallel mixed designs
		  2) Sequential mixed designs
		  3) Conversion mixed designs
		  4) Multilevel mixed designs
		  5) Fully integrated mixed designs
		Quasi-mixed multistrand designs (designs mixed at the experiential stage only, including the parallel quasi-mixed designs

Table: 4.2 The Methods-Strand Matrix: A Typology of Research Designs featuring Mixed Methods: From Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.145).

The above table illustrates the methodological considerations MM researchers may consider when conceptualising and designing an appropriate MM research. As depicted in cell 1 above, a `monomethod monostrand design` maybe employed in exploring a single methodological approach which may either be QUAL or QUAN. Cell 2 on the other hand, depicts that multiple strands of a single approach constituting both QUAL and QUAN may be explored (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.144). Most mixed methodologists are unanimous on the fact that the integration or `mixing` of QUAN and QUAL approaches in a single study is a critical feature of MM research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.5,

Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.144, Greene, 2008, p.14 and Yin, 2006, p.41). Cell 3 comprises the "Quasi-mixed monostrand design" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.145) in which the MM design may fail to integrate data collection, analysis and inferences as this design may be characterised by data conversion.

Cell 4, on the other hand, comprises "Mixed methods multistrand designs" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.145) which depict various combinations of MM research designs. This study will draw conceptual inspiration from this strand in designing its `concurrent or parallel mixed design` comprising two "independent strands" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006, p.20) which are built on both the QUAN and QUAL approaches (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.22). Data collection and analysis may be pursued concurrently with integration obtaining at the interpretation and inference phase (Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, p.8). The next subunit will briefly discuss some terminologies and notations used in MM research.

4.3.4 Some Terminologies and Notations used in MM

This subunit will focus on clarifying and defining some basic concepts and terms often used in MM research such as qualitizing and quantitizing used in depicting data conversion (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27 and Driscoll et al., 2007, p.20). The rationale for discussing some terminologies often used in MM research is premised on the understanding that these may not be known to researchers from different backgrounds or unfamiliar with MM research designs. Some of these terminologies include;

- Data conversion: This refers to the process of transforming or converting data. Quantitization refers to the conversion of nonnumeric qualitative data or narrative data into numeric data or numbers (Miles and Huberman, 1994 quoted Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27). Qualitization refers to the conversion of numeric data or quantitative data into words or narrative data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27).
- Triangulation: It "refers to the combination and comparisons of multiple data sources, data collection and analysis procedures, research methods, investigators and inferences" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27) in a single study. Examples of

triangulations include: data sources, investigator, methodological, theoretical and data analysis (Thurmond, 2001, p.253-258).

- Inference Quality encapsulates trustworthiness and internal validity. It "refers to the standard for evaluating the quality of conclusions that are made on the basis of both the QUAN and QUAL findings" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27).

- Inference Transferability: It encapsulates external validity and transferability and depicts "the degree to which the conclusions from an MM study may be applied to another setting, people, time period, contexts" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.27).

Closely related to the idea of terminologies used in MM research is the use of MM-inspired notations as depicted in the next table as most of these notations were initially designed by Morse (1991 and 2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.142).

The plus sign + indicates that the research projects are conducted simultaneously, with the uppercase indicating the dominant research approach

The arrow ⟶ indicates that the research projects are conducted sequentially, again with the uppercase indicating dominance

QUAL indicates qualitatively-driven

QUAN indicates quantitatively-driven.

Simultaneous designs:

QUAL + qual, indicates a qualitatively-driven, qualitative simultaneous design.

QUAN + quan, indicates a quantitatively-driven, quantitative simultaneous design.

QUAL + quan, indicates a qualitatively-driven, qualitative and quantitative simultaneous design

QUAN + qual, indicates a quantitatively-driven, quantitative and qualitative simultaneous design.

Sequential designs:

QUAL ⟶ qual, indicates a qualitatively-driven research project, followed by a second qualitative research project

QUAN ⟶ quan, indicates a quantitatively-driven research project, followed by a second quantitative research project.

QUAL ⟶ quan, indicates a qualitatively-driven research project, followed by a quantitative

---

project.

QUAN $\longrightarrow$ qual, indicates a quantitatively-driven research project, followed by a qualitative research project

Table 4.3. Notations used in MM Research; based on Morse (2003 cited in Teddlie and

Tashakkori, 2009, p.143

The above notation system illustrates that MM research designs can either be QUAL or QUAN-driven and may also have a dominant approach followed by a less dominant one. For example QUAL $\longrightarrow$ quan implies a sequential MM research design in which the qualitative approach is dominant. The use of uppercase letters denotes the dominant approach while lowercase letters depict the less dominant one (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.143). Simultaneous MM designs are captured through the use of the plus (+) sign as in QUAN + qual indicating that priority in the research design will be more quantitative and followed by the qualitative approach. This study will explore a concurrent or simultaneous equal status MM research design; QUAN + QUAL, with the QUAN and QUAL components having equal priority. The rationale for prioritising equal status between the QUAN and QUAL strands is to ensure that data from both strands will be accorded equal importance before being triangulated (Bryman, 2006, p.105). Greene et al., (1989 cited in Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004, p.21) propose the following five rationales for using MM in a study; complementarity, initiation, development, triangulation and expansion. The use of MM can engineer more diverse data sources, compelling data analysis, stronger inferences and interpretations as well as offset the weaknesses inherent in monomethod. The next subunit will discuss the Concurrent MM research design.

4.4.1. Conceptualising and Designing MM research

Introduction:

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.110) argue that "there are three phases of the research process: conceptualization, methods, and inferences". I will argue that the conceptualization phase stretches from planning, making the decision to carry out the study and culminates in actually implementing the study. The methods phase includes deciding on the research paradigm and strategy, the methods to be used in sampling, collecting and analysis data while the inferences phase refers to the interpretation and making of inferences from analysed data

(Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.110). This section will discuss the steps involved in identifying a MM research design. It will focus on MM multistrand designs and specifically on Concurrent mixed designs and will underscore the rationale for exploring it (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.145). I will also identify my data collection procedures, data analysis, integration, interpretation and inference strategies as these interact and progress with each step informing, shaping, building on and leading to the next (Creswell, 1999 quoted in Hanson et al., 2005, p.52).

4.4.2. Steps in Conceptualising and Designing MM research:

I will argue that the steps pursued in designing MM research are similar to those explored in designing either a traditional QUAN or QUAL study. These include the purpose, research questions, theoretical lens, data gathering, analysis and interpretation strategies to be used in the study (Hanson et al., 2005, pp.52-53). Hanson et al. (2005, p.52) thus identify the following three steps for designing MM research;

- Deciding on the appropriate theoretical lens, philosophical basis or paradigms to be explored.
- Deciding on data collection, analysis and prioritization
- And deciding on the point at which data analysis and integration will occur

Maxwell and Loomis (2003 quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.162-163) on the other hand have identified five interactive steps in designing MM research. The Maxwell-Loomis Interactive Model illustrates how the various steps are interrelated to each other in a web-like structure "rather than in a linear progression" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.162). As captured in the next figure, the Maxwell-Loomis model comprises the following steps; the purpose, conceptual framework, the research questions, methods and validity (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.162).
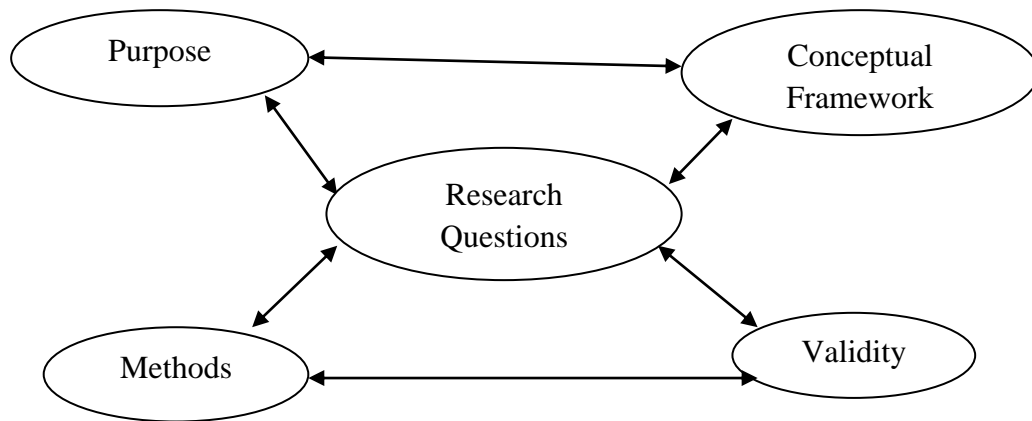
Figure 4.3: The Maxwell and Loomis`s Interactive Model for designing MM Research

As can be discerned from above model, the arrows show the interaction and interconnectedness between the various steps in the design of MM research as they interact, inform "connect with and influence one another" (Maxwell and Loomis, 2003, quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.162). This study also agrees with Hanson et al., (2005, p.52) that "all researchers bring implicit theories and assumptions to their investigations", hence the Network theory and the Pragmatic paradigm will inform and influence my investigations in this study. These are important as they will enable me to show clarity, conviction and firm decision on theoretical perspectives, philosophical assumptions and data collection (Hanson et al., 2005, p.52).

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.3) on the other hand, suggest the following seven steps for designing MM research as captured through a framework.
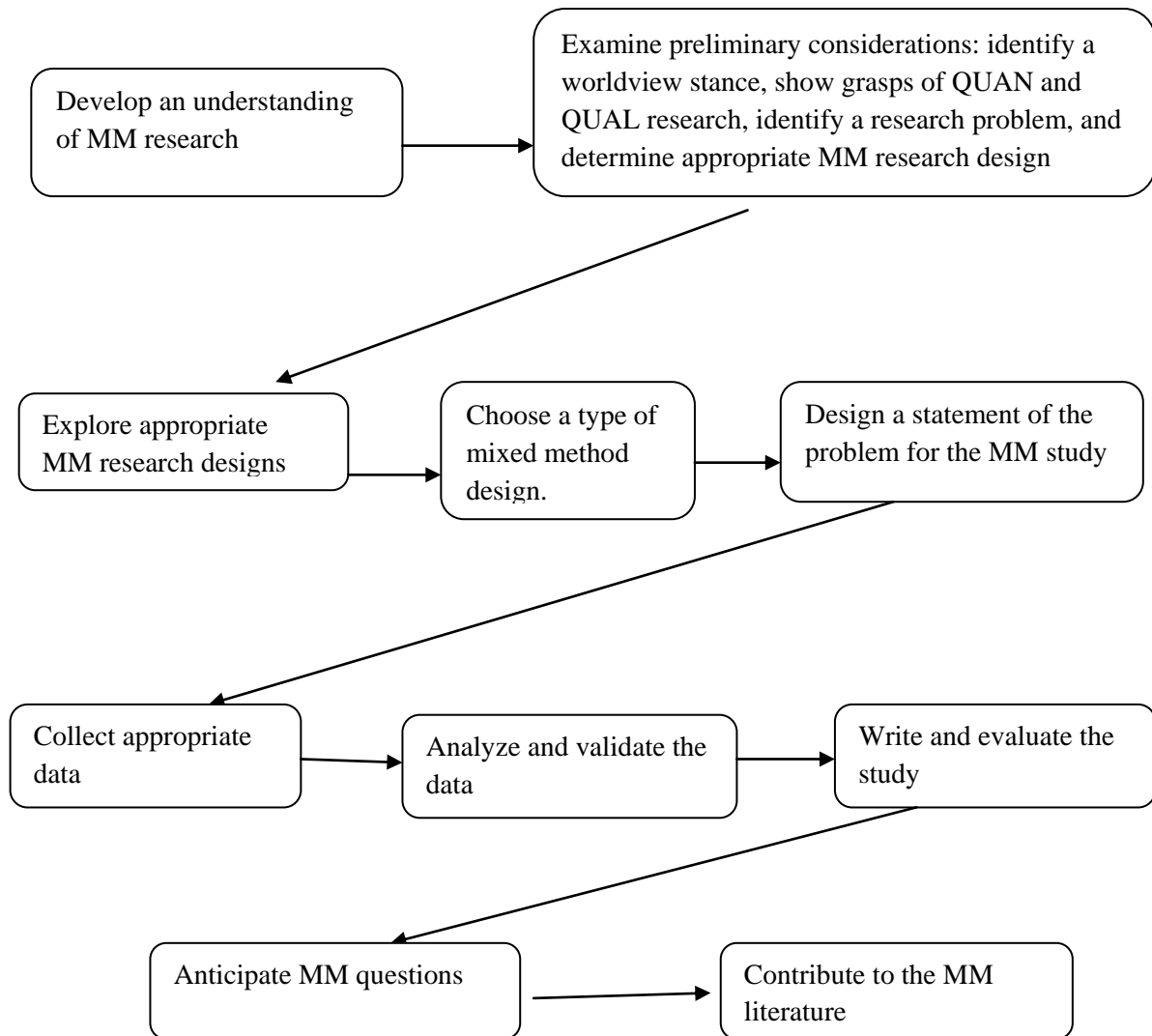
Figure 4.4: Framework for designing a MM research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.3)

The above model for conceptualising and designing MM research by Creswell and Plano Clark (2009, p.3) highlights the fact that each step influences and informs the next in a sort of linear progression. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.163-164) have suggested the following seven steps for designing MM research;

- Determine if your research questions require monomethod or MM research design
- Be aware of the various typologies of MM research designs
- Select the most appropriate MM research design for your study and creatively adapt it if necessary.

- Be aware of the criteria emphasised by your MM research typology and its implications for your study.

- List the general criteria and then select the specific criteria that are most important for your study

- Apply the selected criteria to potential designs and ultimately select the best research design for your study.

- You can explore creativity and flexibility in designing the specific MM research for your study.

The above seven steps for designing MM research emphasise the need for the researcher to ensure that the rationale, objective and type of MM research design are appropriate for answering his/her research questions. With the exception of the Maxwell and Loomis Interactive Model (2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.162) the other three conceptual proposals for designing MM research by Hanson et al., (2005, p.52), Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, pp.163-164) and Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.3) emphasise a linear progression. I will draw inspiration from the above discussions in proposing the following conceptual model for designing MM research.

Purpose of Study &
Review of Extant
Literature   **(1)**

Research Problem(s)
or Issue(s) & Research
Statement   **(2)**

**Research
(3) Questions**:
MM, QUAN and
QUAL questions

Research Findings,
conclusion(s) &
contribution(s) to
knowledge   **(8)**

**Conceptual Framework

(4)**

Theoretical
perspectives &
Philosophical
assumptions: **(5)**

(6) Locating, choosing
& creatively adapting
existing MM design(s)
to suit research needs.

**Designing appropriate MM
research: (7)**

Data Analysis, integration
and inferences making
(**7b**)

(7a) Fieldtrip: QUAN and
QUAL data collection:

Figure 4.5: Eight-step Model for Conceptualising and Designing MM research

I will argue that although the above eight step model for conceptualising and designing MM research reflects the normal steps explored in designing any piece of research, their use here with focus on MM research is intended to illuminate my overall research design. The above eight-step model like those proposed by established MM researchers like Hanson et al. (2005, p.52), Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, pp.163-164) and Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.3) emphasise a linear progression with each step building on the preceding one thereby creating internal validity and cohesion. The next subunit will discuss my MM research design.

4.4.3. Conceptualising and Designing Parallel or Concurrent MM Research (QUAN + QUAL)

This section will focus on MM multistrands designs and specifically on parallel MM research designs (cell 4, figure 5.1) as this will entail the concurrent collection of both QUAN and QUAL data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.151). Parallel MM designs are similar to concurrent triangulation designs (Creswell, 2003, p.217, Hanson et al., 2005, p.229 and Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.59) as they underscore the fact that "quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed at the same time" (Hanson et al., 2005, p.229). Both forms of data will have equal priority as responses to questionnaires will constitute QUAN data while corpus derived from the semi-structured interviews will constitute QUAL data. Both forms of data will thus be analysed separately with integration at the data interpretation and inferences making stage (Hanson et al., 2005, p.229). The rationale for exploring parallel MM design in this study is premised on its potential "to confirm, cross-validate, and corroborate" (Hanson et al., 2005, p.229) as QUAN and QUAL data will complement each other and offset any weaknesses (Creswell, 2003, p.217). The use of MM in this study will engineer complementarity with the integration of inferences and interpretations corroborating, supporting each other and strengthening my arguments. I will explore the Parallel Mixed or Concurrent Mixed design as the appropriate MM research design in gathering data in order to adequately answer my research questions.

Parallel mixed designs often constitute "two parallel and relatively independent strands" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.152) with both QUAN and QUAL approaches generating independent research questions, data gathering and analysis strategies. Both approaches are thus planned and implemented "to answer related aspects of the same overarching MM research design" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.152) with inferences from both approaches integrated in producing `metal-inferences`. The main rationale for exploring the Parallel Mixed design in this study is premised on the understanding that it will enable me to generate very compelling and powerful research findings. Parallel MM research can leverage the opportunity for both exploratory and confirmatory questions to be simultaneously answered in a single study, hence, "verifying and generating theory" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.152). But simultaneously dealing with two independent sets of data in the same study can be challenging, cumbersome and demanding, hence, a

setback which will be resolved through good planning. The following figure illustrates the conceptualisation and design of a parallel mixed design as suggested by Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.152).
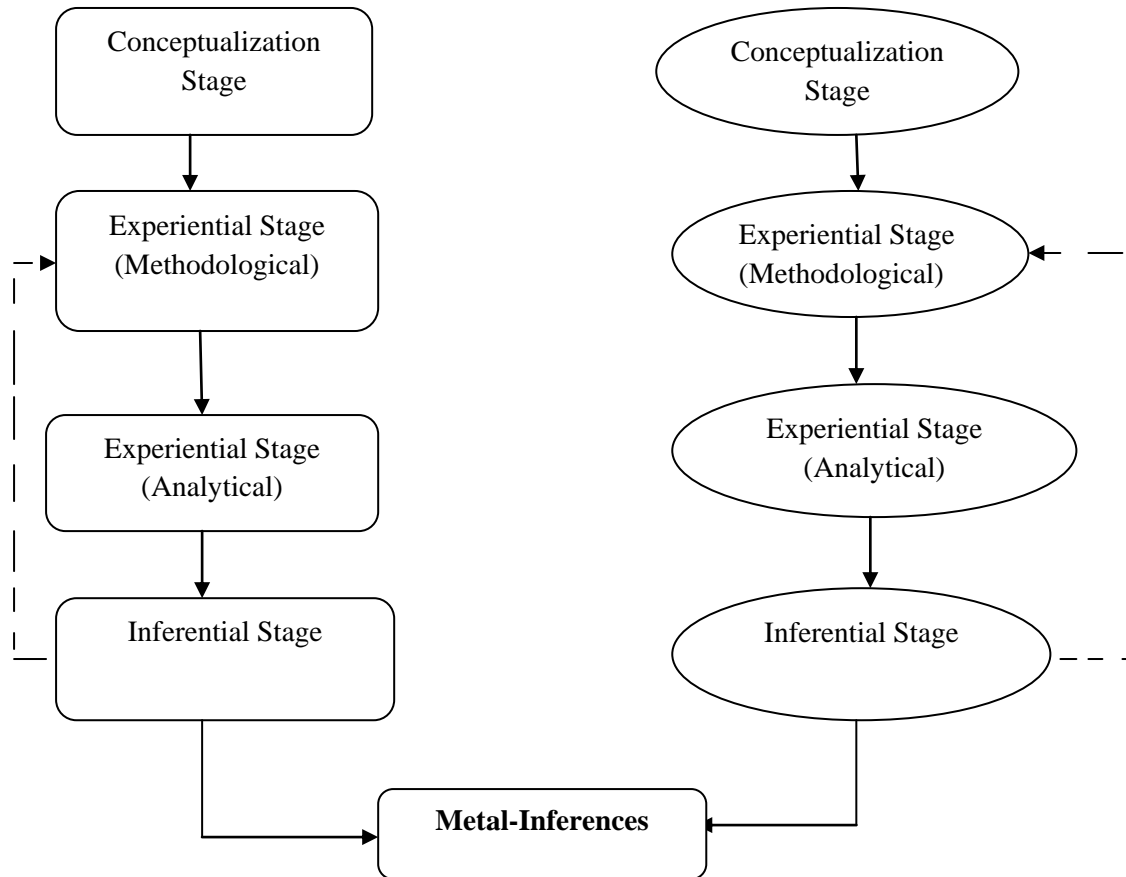
Figure 4.6: (From Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.152) shows Parallel Mixed Designs

The above diagram illustrates a Concurrent mixed design as two independent approaches; QUAL and QUAN are simultaneously implemented in a parallel manner within the same study. I will argue that both approaches will converge through metal-inferences at the inferences stage as underpinned by an integration of the results (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.152). I will also contend that both approaches will entail independent planning and conceptualisation with different data gathering instruments and data analysis techniques Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.152). I can argue that merging and integrating the results from both strands of this study at the inference making stage, will enable it to meet one of the key fundamental requirements of the MM research design; the need to mix both QUAL and

QUAN results. The next subunit will briefly discuss how ethical issues will be addressed in this ethically approved study.

4.4.4 Addressing Ethical Issues in my MM Research:

Ethical considerations are critical in this study and have been given due consideration as I have applied and obtained ethical clearance from my university`s ethics committee in view of undertaking this research. I will seek to ensure the protection and safety of participants including the sites at which I intend to gather my mixed data (Creswell, 2003, p.64). Participants in my study will include young people aged 18-24; who will constitute the respondents to my questionnaires while staff and managers from the three multiple-case studies engaged in providing user-led services will take part in my semi-structured interviews. I am aware that QUAL research can be intrusive since it can deal with very "sensitive, intimate and inner most matters in people`s lives" (Punch, 2005, p.276). Miles and Huberman (1994, pp.290-297) identified the following ethical issues worth considering before, during and after a study. Before the study, consideration should be given to the worthiness of the study, competence boundaries of the researcher, informed consent, benefits and costs as well as reciprocity (Miles and Huberman, 1994, pp.290-297). I will argue that I will pay great attention to the following issues during this study; harm and risk to participants, honesty and trust, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity and interventions and advocacy. And after the study, attention will be paid to; the integrity and quality of the study, ownership of data and conclusion as well as the use of research results (Punch, 2005, p.278).

Ethical issues are important as these constitute the first step I undertook in planning this study. While drawing inspiration for Miles and Huberman (1994, pp.290-297), I will respect extant ethical guidelines and policies of my university and of the three organisations taking part in this study as I will check if there are any specific ethical requirements. I will also be able to observe the following elements as I access and interact with my subjects in the quest of collecting my data;

- Minimise the risks of harm, injury and discomfort to participants in my study
- Uphold the right of participants to voluntarily participate and withdraw from the study

- Explain the rationale, objectives, procedure and nature of the study to participants "as well as any impacts which can emanate from their participation (Crewell, 2003, p.64).

- Explain the benefits of the study to participants, their rights to ask questions and seek to obtain their informed consent.

- Ensure that participant`s rights to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality are maintained as no details about them will be passed over to third parties without their due approval (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, pp.199-200).

- Provide participants with debriefing and more information about the study

The above overview of ethical issues will therefore guide and inform the way I interact and engage with participants in this study but it is also worth noting "that anonymity may be compromised under certain circumstances" (Ary et al., 2007 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.200). For example, this can be deemed necessary where the public`s right to know may override the individual`s `right to privacy` (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.200) like when an individual poses grave danger to him/herself or the public as he/she may disclose his/her intentions to go on a shooting spree. The next subunit will now concentrate on sampling and data gathering instruments.

4.4.5 Sampling and Data Gathering Instruments:

This subsection will briefly discuss the conceptualisation, instrumentation and rationale for exploring questionnaire and semi-structured interviews as my sampling and data gathering instruments.

4.4.5a: Questionnaire

Questionnaires are vastly used in research for collecting information and may comprise open-ended questions, check-lists and scales like attitude and rating scales (Oppenheim, 1992, pp.100-102). Questionnaires may be postal, self or group administered and may seek to measure specific notions like attitude (Oppenheim, 1992, pp.100-102). The rationale for using a questionnaire in this study is premised on the conceptual understanding that it will

enable me to accurately measure and gauge user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. Questionnaire will also enable me to investigate into how gender, ethnicity and level of education can positively or negatively influence user involvement. I will argue that although questionnaires often generate numeric data, they can also generate nonnumeric data which may be quantised. Questionnaires can be administered in the absence of the researcher and can facilitate the measurement of complex concepts like perceptions and attitudes (Wilson and McLean, 1994 cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.377). Questionnaires may be reliable and engage the honesty of the respondent because of their anonymity but they can also be marred by a low return rate (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.413).

Although questionnaires are often "straightforward to analyse" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.377), their design is often time consuming, painstaking and require good skills in conceptualising and structuring and the ability to refine them through pilot studies and pre-testing. The analysis of questionnaire can be less time consuming compared to semi-structured interviews but questionnaire may pose a problem to people with low reading and literacy skills like the target population in this study or may even attract a low response rate (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.411). The issue of respondents` scanty literacy will be mitigated in this study through reading support provided by the questionnaire administrator with the choice of item from the Likert-scaled list being solely that of the respondents. I will also use simple, user-friendly, easily readable, comprehensible language in the questionnaire as this will enable respondents with less developed literacy abilities to easily read and complete my questionnaires. I can argue that the use of staff from my multiple-case studies who are trusted by respondents in administering the questionnaire, the use of incentives like chocolate bars and reminders sent out to respondents will constitute my key strategies for increasing the response rate. This study will explore a five-point Likert-scale structured questionnaire in measuring end user perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services.

The rationale for exploring the Likert Scale in my questionnaire construction is premised on its "simplicity and versatility" (Johns, 2010, p.2) in measuring and identifying the above phenomena. The five-point Likert Scale approach as conceptualised by Likert, himself,

measures on a positive-to-negative dimension along a continuum and may range from strongly agree-to-strongly disagree with a neutral item in the middle (Johns, 2010, p.2). The rationale for exploring a neutral item in the scale like `neither agree nor disagree` is premised on the need not to compel respondents into choosing either "agreement or disagreement when they may lack a clear opinion" (Johns, 200, p.6) as this can undermine data quality. As an ordinary scale, the Likert scale seeks to "indicate order" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.382). My questionnaire will be group-administered, thus administered to small groups with the opportunity for self-administration as these can generate "a high response rate, accurate sampling and a minimum of interviewer bias" (Oppenheim, 1992, p103), thereby engineering robust empirical data. I will solicit assistance from staff at the various organisations under study in order to administer the questionnaires as respondents turn to respond better when questionnaires are administered by someone familiar to them or in official position as this will underpin trust. The next data gathering instrument will be semi-structured interviews:

4.4.5b: Semi-structured Interviews:

Unlike questionnaires, interviews constitute exchange of views and interactions between two or more people on an agreed topic and can be used for gathering rich qualitative information and data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.409). Kitwood (1977 cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.409) argue that although interviews can propel the transfer of information they can be undermined by biases hence these need minimising as the interviewer and interviewee interact, co-construct and co-generate information. Oppenheim (1992, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.412) argues that interviews can achieve "a higher response rate than questionnaires" because interviewees can be more engaged and motivated. My semi-structured interviews will seek to explore some of the questions raised in my questionnaire in more details. The rationales here will be to generate a detailed corpus, compare and contrast user perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services with staff understanding of what user involvement is all about and its potential benefits.

Such comparison will leverage the opportunity for me to identify areas of conceptual congruence and divergence. Kvale (1996, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.412) argues that interviews can be conceptualised through the following seven stages; thematising,

designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting. I will therefore draw inspiration from the above seven stages in meticulously conceptualising, transcribing and thematising my semi-structured interviews. I will argue that I will administer my semi-structured interviews to my respondents at their work place with transcripts emailed to them for authentication before use in data analysis. The rationale for using semi-structured interviews in this study is premised on their ability to leverage rich data and the opportunity for me to explore respondents' experiences thus enabling me to investigate complex issues which cannot be investigated through questionnaires. The next subunit will underline the importance of pre-testing the above data gathering instruments as this will increase validity, reliability and identify any potential problems which can undermine results.

4.4.5c Pre-testing my Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interviews:

A pilot study also called a `feasibility study` or `pre-testing` can be defined as "a small-scale preliminary research project in which the investigator tests procedures to set the stage for the actual study (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.341). It is therefore the petit version of the main study and can be explored in ensuring that data gathering instruments such as interviews and questionnaires have been well conceptualised and designed so as to "increase... [their]... reliability, validity and practicability" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.402). I will therefore undertake a pilot study for this research on the conceptual understanding that it can provide fresh insights, enable refinement and highlight any potential design-related and procedural problems (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001, p.2). Oppenheim (1992, p.48) argues that everything about the study should be piloted including the type of paper being used, character fronts, layout, type of interview questions, transcription as well as sampling instruments. The rationale for pre-testing the above and other instruments and aspects of this study is to identify and address any potential pitfalls which may arise during the main study or adversely affect its results.

I will draw inspiration from (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001, p.2) in cautioning that a successful pilot study does not necessarily guarantee the success of the main study although it can increase the chances of success. I will argue that a main study can be flawed by poor assumptions, funding constraints and data contamination which are more evident in questionnaires than interviews (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001, p.2). This investigator will

mitigate any data contamination of the questionnaire by excluding respondents to the pilot study and their responses from the main study although the qualitative data generated from the semi-structured interviews will be incorporated in the main study for quality enhancement. The next subsection will focus on issues of sampling.

4.4.6. Introduction: Population in Sampling:

Miles and Huberman (1994, quoted in Punch, 2005, p.101) argue that every research involves some form of sampling since "you cannot study everyone everywhere doing everything". I will like to make a brief clarification between population and samples before proceeding to discuss my sampling techniques. A population may be referred to as universe, target population or sampling frame and implies "an aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of criteria" (Blaikie, 2000, p.198) hence, each member of the population is a potential case. A population as in probability sampling can be referred to as "the totality of all elements, subjects, or members that possess a specified set of characteristics that define it" (Wiersma and Jurs, 2005, p.490). Such clearly identified members must therefore have the potentials of being selected for the study as a result of the sampling.

4.4.6a. Sampling and Unit of Analysis:

On the other hand, "a sample is a selection of elements (members or units) from a population" (Blaikie, 2000, p.198), this also "involves selecting units of analysis" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.169), such as groups, settings and people. Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.169) contend that a "unit of analysis refers to the individual case or group of cases that the researcher wants to express something about when the study is completed" as such, a unit is thus at the core of data gathering and analysis. Boyatzis (1998, p.62) argues that "the unit of analysis is the entity on which the interpretation of the study will focus" hence my unit of analysis in this study is the end user. The samples for this study will be drawn from a population which encapsulates the "total target group who would in an ideal world, be the subject of the research, and about whom" (Punch, 2005, p.101) the study is based. Samples are therefore the "actual group who are included in the study" (Punch, 2005, p.101) hence consist "of whatever cases [that] are subjected to formal analysis" (Gerring, 2007, p.21). This

study argues that a good sample is underpinned by representativeness which must reflect "the relevant features of the population" (Blaikie, 2000, p.198) as can be identified through the sampling.

This study will mainly explore MM sampling techniques and specifically Parallel or Concurrent Mixed Methods Sampling by focusing on deliberate or purposive sampling (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.89). This will involve sampling to achieve representativeness or compatibility and is underpinned by a purposive sampling-frame (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.187). This study will equally utilise multiple probabilistic sampling techniques; random and cluster samplings underpinned by a probability sampling-frame for selecting the interviewees and respondents (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.170 and Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.89). It will also explore the critical case samplings to select the P-SEP organisations for the multiple-case studies (Stake, 2006, p.24, Yin, 2006, p.44 and 2009, p., 58, Punch, 2000, p.56).

4.4.6b. Sample Size:

Patton (2002, quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.182) contends that "there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry" since this is based on "what you want to know...[that will]...have credibility". Hence my sample size for the QUAL component of my parallel MM research design will encapsulate what I want to know which I think will be credible and have the potentials of enabling me in answering my researcher questions. I will thus ensure that my purposive sample size reaches `saturation` implying that the inclusion of additional units will not result in significantly "new information that can be used for [thematic] development" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.183). My MM sample size will be efficiently drawn and underpinned by accuracy as Oppenheim (1992, p.43) argues that accuracy in sampling is more important than its size. Hence, my MM sampling size will seek to minimise any sampling biases or errors by accurately, faultlessly and sufficiently considering issues like representativeness when drawing respondents for my questionnaire and interviewees for my semi-structured interviews.

My MM research design will comprise a sample size of 150-225 respondents; young adults age 18-24 who access socially-oriented public services delivered by the selected SEs as a result of a contract with a PSO like a local authority. The QUAL component of my study on

the other hand, will comprise purposively selected three SEs which deliver public services to my target population selected from a population of 3-6 SEs. I will also apply probability sampling in selecting three staff or interviewees per organisation from a sample size of 3-5 staff who are involved in engaging young persons in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. I will briefly discuss probability and purposive samplings before focusing on mixed methods sampling which is my main sampling instrument in this study.

4.4.6c: Brief Discussion of Probability and Purposive Samplings:

Probability sampling is QUAN-focused and refers to the selection of

> "...a relatively large number of units from a population, or from subgroups (strata) of a population, in a random manner where the probability of inclusion for every member of the population is determinable."
>
> (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, p.713)

Probability sampling seeks to achieve representativeness and refers to the extent to "which the sample accurately represents the entire population" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.170). It equally seeks to capture the broad base defining characteristics of the accessible population, which refers to the total group from which the researcher can gather data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.170). Some examples of probability sampling include random, stratified and Cluster samplings.

I will argue that purposive sampling is QUAL-oriented and refers to "selecting units based on specific purposes associated with answering the research study`s questions" (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, p.713). It involves selecting cases for a study in accordance with specific, clearly defined purposes and with the understanding of adequately answering the research questions. An example of purposive sampling is sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability. MM sampling on the other hand, "involves the selection of units or cases for a research study using both probability sampling and purposive sampling strategies" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.171) hence, it draws inspiration from well developed probability and purposive sampling techniques. The next table will capture the key features of probability, purposive and MM sampling techniques.

Dimension of Contrast	Purposive Sampling	Probability Sampling	Mixed Methods Sampling
Other Names	Purposive sampling Nonrandom sampling QUAL sampling	Scientific sampling Random sampling QUAN sampling	Mixed Methods sampling
Overall purpose of sampling	To generate a sample that will address QUAL research questions	To generate a sample that will address QUAN research questions	To generate a sample that will address MM research questions
Issue of generalizability	Seeks a form of generalizability (transferability)	Seeks a form of generalizability (External Validity)	Focuses on external validity issues for some strands of design; focus on transferability issues for other strands.
Number of techniques	At least 15 specific techniques (nominally grouped under three general types).	Three basic techniques with modifications	Relies on all those techniques employed by both purposive and probability sampling with modifications as may be deemed necessary.
Rationale for selecting cases/units	To address specific purposes related to the QUAL research questions; selection of cases deemed most informative with regard to the QUAL research questions.	Selection of cases which are collectively representative of the population.	Focuses on representativeness for some strands of a design; focuses on seeking out information-rich cases in other strands.

Sample Size	Typically small (usually 30 or fewer cases)	Large enough to establish representativeness (usually at least 50units)	Multiple samples varying in size from a small number of cases to a large number of units of analysis; sample size dependent on the research questions.
Depth/breadth of information per case/unit	Focuses on depth of information generated by the cases	Focuses on the breadth of information generated by the sampling units.	Focuses on both depth and breadth of information generated across the research strands.
Time of sample selection	Before the study begins, during the study, or both	Before the study begins	Mostly before a study starts, though QUAL-oriented questions may lead to the emergence of other samples during the study.
Selection method	Uses expert judgement	Often applies mathematical formulas	Focuses on expert judgement across the sampling decisions, especially because they interrelate with one another; application of mathematical sampling formulae required for some QUAN-oriented strands.
Sampling frame	Informal sampling frame somewhat larger than sample	Formal sampling frame typically much larger than sample	Both formal and informal frames

Form of data generated	Focuses on narrative data, though numeric data can also be generated	Focuses on numeric data, though narrative data can also be generated	Both numeric and narrative data are typically generated. Rarely, MM sampling strategies may also yield only narrative or numeric data

Table 4.4: Adopted from Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.86 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, pp.179-181)

It is worth noting from the above table that sampling whether purposive, probability or MM is intended in generate data with which to answer the research questions and achieve some generalizability (Teddlie, 2007, p.83). This emphasises the centrality of sampling to this study as the next subunit will discuss my MM sampling frame and strategy.

4.4.6d. MM Sampling Frame:

 Case sampling thus refers to "the selection of individuals, groups of participants" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.181) like service users, organisations and employees while material sampling, refers to the selection of documents and "written information" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.181) for a study. I will argue that a sampling frame refers to a "formal or informal list of units or cases from which the sample is drawn" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.180) as it defines who is eligible for inclusion in the study. The main rationale for designing a sampling frame for this study is informed by the conceptual understanding that it will offer a list of eligible cases or units for selection, offer each member of the population equal chance for selection and engineer "valid responses" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2010, p.213) from participants as well as avoid any sampling biases. Its importance is further underscored by Miles and Huberman (1994, quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.180) who argue that "just thinking in sampling-framework terms is good for your study`s health". My MM sampling frame thus draws conceptual inspiration from probability and purposive samplings in defining the population from which data will be collected.

But the lack of a common and well established nomenclature in MM research design unlike QUAN and QUAL approaches is a problem which can obscure sampling. I intend to resolve this by espousing and using well established nomenclatures from the QUAN and QUAL approaches in my parallel MM research design (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.88 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.185). Purposive sampling explores a purposive-sampling frame in generating narrative, nonnumeric data while probability sampling employs probability-sampling frame in capturing numeric data (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.83 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.179). MM sampling on the other hand, explores MM-sampling frame in gathering narrative, nonnumeric and numeric data. My sampling logic is informed and shaped by my research questions, which seek to capture themes and innovative models of user involvement as well as their perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. I will seek to briefly discuss the concurrent or parallel MM sampling in the next subunit.

4.4.7. Concurrent or Parallel MM Sampling:

Concurrent or Parallel MM sampling "involves the selection of units of analysis for an MM study through the simultaneous use of both probability and purposive sampling" (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.89). This implies that probability sampling strategies such as random and cluster samplings and purposive sampling strategies such as sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability will be explored concurrently at the data gathering phase of my study (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.78 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.177). Exploring parallel MM sampling strategies in this study is premised on its capacity to leverage opportunity for me to triangulate the separate results of the QUAN and QUAL components of my thesis. Furthermore, exploring parallel MM sampling in this thesis will enable me to "confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate [its] findings" (Creswell et al., 2003 cited in Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.92).

I will focus on parallel MM sampling in

> "which probability sampling techniques are used to generate data for the QUAN
> strand and purposive sampling techniques are used to generate data for the QUAL
> strand"

<div align="right">

(Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.187)

</div>

MM sampling thus explores elements of both probability and purposive samplings in data gathering. I can also argue that my choice of the Concurrent or Parallel MM sampling resonates very well with the Concurrent or Parallel MM research design espoused for this study. "Deliberate or purposive sampling" (Punch, 2005, p.102) is appropriate in emphasising the "relationships between variables" (Punch, 2005, p.102) as this study will seek to investigate into how variables like gender, ethnicity and level of education can inhibit or encourage user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services. I will argue that I will purposively select three staff per case study who will respond to the same semi-structured interviews questions in order to maintain consistency and predict similarity. I will contend that follow-up questions may be asked if need arises. The next figure presents the key components of my MM sampling strategy.

Concurrent or Parallel MM Sampling

QUAN Data   QUAL Data

Probability Sampling   Deliberate or Purposive Sampling

Random Sampling   Typical Case Sampling

Simple Random   Cluster Sampling
Sampling
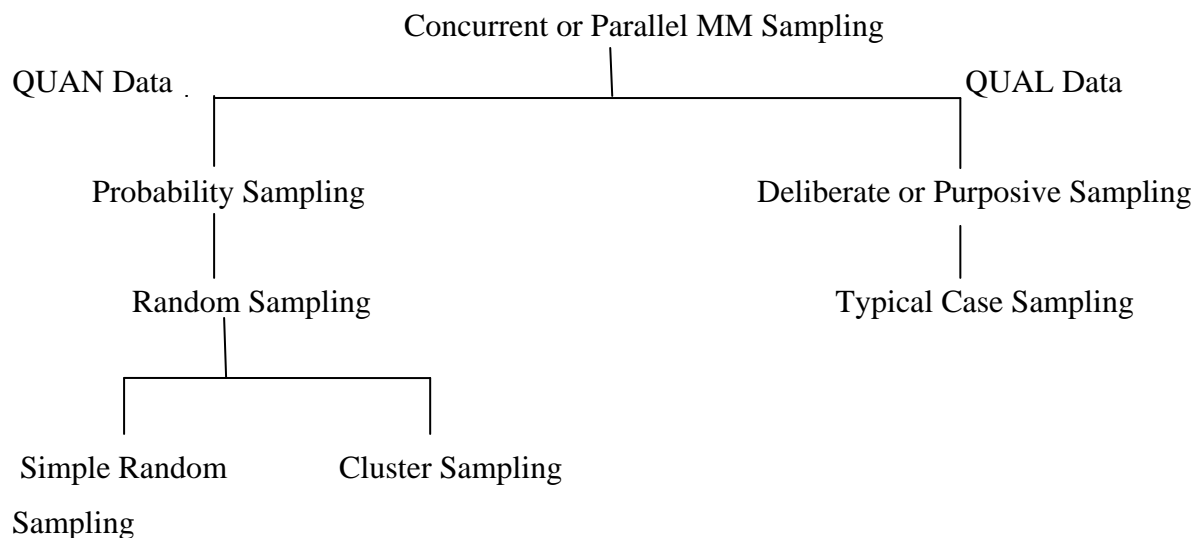
Figure 4.7: Key aspects of my Concurrent MM Sampling.

This study will seek to explore two kinds of random sampling; simple random sampling and cluster sampling as these will constitute the main thrusts of my probability sampling. Cluster sampling will enable me to select the P-SEPs while simple random sampling will be used in selecting the units of analysis. Purposive sampling on the other hand will be used in generating QUAL data while case sampling will facilitate the selection of interviewees for my semi-structured interviews. Data gathered from the semi-structured interviews will evidence and reinforce our conceptual understanding of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led value creation and transformational outcomes (Basole and Rouse, 2008, p.54, Moore, 1995, p.27 and Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004, p.38).

The rationale for selecting MM sampling data gathering instruments for this study is to ensure the collection of rich multiple data that can leverage "complementary strengthens and nonoverlapping weaknesses" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p18). These will imply drawing from the strengthens of the QUAN and QUAL approaches while minimising any inherent weaknesses. My data collections will take place in "natural social settings" (Blaikie, 2000, p.183) which will be investigated through micro and "meso-social phenomena" (Blaikie, 2000, pp.188-189) by focusing on individuals and small groups of service users who access services at the selected organisations. This study will thus concentrate on gathering primary or raw data for analysis through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews (Blaikie, 2000, p.183). The various sources of data will corroborate and reinforce each other at the data analysis and inference phases of my study. I will argue that my MM sampling will espouse random sampling strategies as the next subunit will illuminate.

4.4.7a. Random Sampling; Simple Random Sampling

I will explore simple random sampling in selecting respondents for my questionnaires as this will offer "each unit of the accessible population [such as persons and cases] equal chance of being included in the sample" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.172). Each member of the population who accesses services provided by my multiple-case studies will have equal potentials of being selected as "the probability of a unit being selected...[is]...not affected by the selection of other units from the accessible population" (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.79). The probability of each potential member`s selection is independent of the other`s. I will thus explore simple random sampling strategies like drawing names from the list of end users. The rationale for utilising random sampling in this study is inspired by its popularity, appropriateness and effectiveness as a probability sampling strategy (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, 79) as well as its capacity to engineer representativeness and precision in achieving a "credible sample" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2010, p.215).

Simple random sampling will enable me to minimise bias and generate compelling results and inferences which can "be generalized ...to the population within a computable margin of error" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, 171). But simple random sampling can be problematic and difficult as small but important segments of the population can miss out or

the small size of the sample risks undermining any confident generalised inferences to the entire population (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2010, p.216). It can also be expensive as accessing selected cases may be undermined by their vast dispersal over a huge geographical entity (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, 171). The above shortcomings can be overcome by ensuring greater representativeness, precision and by utilising simple random sampling alongside cluster sampling.

4.4.7b. Cluster Sampling

Limited resources like finance and time may urge the researcher to explore cluster sampling which maybe more efficient and robust in achieving effective probability samples (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.79 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.173). In this light, cost may be minimised by sampling groups within clusters and further sampling these for unit or cases of interests (Teddlie and Yu, 2009, p.79). I will argue that this study will explore simple cluster sampling as this will enable me to randomly select the cluster of SEs providing socially-oriented public services to young people in the East of England. I will explore simple cluster sampling by selecting a cluster of SEs within a specific geographical area and sample these organisations for the units or cases of interests. The rationale for utilising simple cluster sampling is premised on the fact that it resonates with simple random sampling. I will focus on a cluster of organisations in the same geographical area thereby achieving more effective allocation of resources by minimising cost and time spent travelling for data collection (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.173).

4.4.7c. Purposive Sampling; Sampling to achieve representativeness and Comparability

I will focus principally on typical case sampling in this study as this will enable me to sample for "instances that are representative or typical of a particular type of case" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.175) in which I am interested. I will thus utilise typical case sampling in selecting staff from the cluster of selected SEs for my semi-structured interviews and for generating compelling corpus for thematic analysis. Like the other types of purposive sampling such as; intensity sampling, extreme or deviant case sampling and homogeneous

sampling which were considered but not selected for use in this study, typical case sampling will facilitate the achievement of representativeness and comparability (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.175). Although representativeness is often linked to probability sampling, there are instances in which the QUAL researchers may explore it in capturing "the most typical or representative phenomenon of interest" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.175). Typical case sampling thus encapsulates "selecting those cases that are the most typical, normal or representative" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.175) of potential cases. Combining probability sampling and purposive sampling in this thesis is expected to strengthen the quality and representativeness of my selected units or cases. The above data sampling and gathering strategies, techniques and instruments will generate fine-grain data for my MM data analysis and interpretations.

4.5. Data Analysis and Interpretation in Mixed Methods Research

Introduction:

I have sufficiently developed the conceptual argument that MM "research involves combining the complementing strengthens and nonoverlapping weaknesses of" (Brewer and Hunter, 1989 cited in Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006, p.48) both the QUAN and QUAL research approaches in the same study. This subunit argues that data analyses in MM research entail separately exploring data analysis techniques traditionally used in the QUAL and QUAN research approaches (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.203). Results from both strands will be `mixed` and triangulated at the interpretation and inference stage of my data analysis in order to adequately answer my MM research question (Luzzo, 1995, p.382 and Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009, p.14). I will simultaneously analyse the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study and merge the results in a sort of meta-inference at the interpretation and inference stage (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.12 and Plano Clark and Creswell, 2008, p.379 and Luzzo, 1995, p.382).

I will argue that my QUAL data analysis will start with a preparation of my data for analysis, reading and re-reading of my interview transcripts to identify patterns for coding (Saldana, 2009, p.3 and Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.18). I will then categorise my coded data in order to derive inductive data-driven themes which will be analysed for meaning (Boyatzis, 1998,

p.29, Bernard and Ryan, 2010, p.75 and Gibbs, 2007, p.38). My QUAN data analysis on the other hand will comprise the use of descriptive statistics and Excel in analysing the QUAN data generated from my Likert-scaled questionnaires (Punch, 2005, p.108, Green and Salkind, 1997, p.2 and Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.604). This subunit will focus principally on discussing my MM data analyses while drawing conceptual inspiration from data analysis techniques traditionally used in the QUAN and QUAL methods.

4.5.1. MM Data Analysis Techniques: Suggestions and Evidence from the Literature;

Data analysis in MM entails using traditional QUAN data analysis techniques in analysing the QUAN strand of the study and traditional QUAL data analysis techniques in analysing the QUAL strand (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.249 and Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.5). This study argues that the use of both QUAN and QUAL data analysis techniques in mixed data analysis is largely informed by the type of data gathered, the analytic priority adopted by the researcher and the type of MM research design (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.5). I will argue that both strands of mixed data analyses will be analysed and reported separately or concurrently with results merged or integrated at the MM data analyses phase (Luzzo, 1995, p.319, Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.214 and Caracelli and Greene, 1993, p.195). Although I will make a survey of the literature on MM data analyses, it is worth noting that empirical contributions on techniques of data analysis in MM research designs are scarce and still in their infancy!

Earlier contributions on the subject by Caracelli and Greene (1993, p.195) suggest a four-step integrative model for analysing data in MM research designs which comprises; data transformation, typology development, extreme case analysis and data consolidation. Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003 cited in Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.22) on the other hand have suggested a seven-step model while arguing that mixed data analysis can involve all or some of the following seven steps;

- Data reduction
- Data display
- Data transformation
- Data correlation

- Data consolidation
- Data comparison
- Data integration

I will argue that the sort of MM data analyses technique adopted for a MM research design is shaped by the type of data gathered, type of design as well as the overriding purpose for using MM in the study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p.213) contend that the above seven-step model for mixed data analysis does not flow in a linear progression. They further argue that the first two stages are "logical steps in data analysis" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.214) while the other stages from data transformation to data integration could be optional and/or do not necessarily need to follow each another. I agree with the above argument while emphasising that the various steps in the above model are largely optional and depend on the type of data and MM research design.

Bazeley (2009, cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.214) makes a survey of the scholarship on MM data analyses and proposes the following reoccurring conceptual determinants of MM data analyses;

- The substantive purpose of the study
- Employing results from one analysis in approaching data analysis in another form.
- By synthesising data from many sources for joint interpretations
- By transforming data from one category into another
- By creating blended variables
- And by creating multiple, paralleled and sequenced phases of iterative analysis.

Adapted from Bazeley (2009, cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.214)

The above steps underline a vast range of MM research designs and confirm the need to explore logical procedures in analysing mixed data and generating compelling inferences and interpretations for answering the research questions (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.212). But mixed methodologists have articulated several MM data analysis techniques notable amongst whom are Greene, Caracelli and Graham, (1989 cited in Combs and Onwuegbuzie, 2010, p.2). Combs and Onwuegbuzie (2010, p.2) after analysing various typologies of MM data analysis, advanced the following criteria for conceptualising MM data analysis;

- Determine the rationale and purpose for conducting the MM data analysis
- Philosophy underpinning the MM data analysis
- Number of data analysis types that will be analyzed

- Time sequence of the MM data analysis

- Level of interaction between QUAN and QUAL analysis

- Priority of analytic phases

- Link to other design components

- Phase of the research process when all analysis decisions are made

- Type of generalization

- Analysis orientation

- Cross-over nature of analysis

Adapted from Combs and Onwuegbuzie, (2010, p.3) and Onwuegbuzie et al. 2009, p.14)

I find some of the above criteria very informative and useful in conceptualising my MM data analysis. For example, the criterion of rationale has informed the conceptualisation of my MM data analysis as the need to achieve complementarity, triangulation and integration has influenced my choice of the Concurrent MM data analysis (Combs and Onwuegbuzie, 2010, p.3). My choice of the concurrent MM data analysis is premised on the understanding that "the individual strengths of one method [will] offset the other method`s weaknesses" (Plano Clark and Creswell, 2008, p.105). I have also drawn inspiration from "the Mixed Analysis Matrix" (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.4) in creatively conceptualising the MM data analysis for this study.

I will gather QUAL data through semi-structure interviews and QUAN data through Likert-scaled questionnaires in exploring my equal-status Concurrent (QUAN+QUAL) Multitype MM data analysis (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.8). I will also generate multianalysis which will be integrated and triangulated in order to achieve comparison, strengthen my research results, identify and account for any convergence and divergence in results (Onwuegbuzie, Johnson and Collins, 2009, p.117). The next subunit will focus on discussing my Concurrent MM data analyses.

4.5.2. Concurrent or Parallel Mixed Data Analysis

I will draw inspiration from Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003, pp.352-353) in making the case that mixed data analyses as in a concurrent or parallel MM research design can explore both QUAL and QUAN data analysis techniques concurrently. Three compelling rationales underpin my choice of the Concurrent mixed data analysis for this study; first it is partly inspired by my Concurrent MM research design. Second, it will leverage the opportunity for me to separately and simultaneously analyse the QUAN and QUAL strands of my study before integrating and mixing results at the interpretation and inference stage (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 266). And third, it will facilitate complementarity and triangulation of results and thus strengthen and significantly enhance my research findings (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.13). My use of the Concurrent mixed data analysis technique will involve the following five independently separate but complementary processes;

- Data reduction (e.g. qualitative-driven thematic analysis, memoing and quantitative-led descriptive statistics)
- Data display (organising and presenting data analysis from both the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study separately)
- Data consolidation (merging different data sets from both strands of my study)
- Data comparison
- Data integration

  (Adapted from Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie, 2003, p.351 and Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006, p.491).

On the other hand, I will also draw conceptual inspiration from Combs and Onwuegbuzie (2010, p.8) and Onwuegbuzie et al. (2007, p.12) in conceptualising the following four-phase model for my MM data analysis. The rationale for designing a four-phase model for my MM data analysis is premised on the understanding it will enable me to integrate my findings and adequately answer my research questions.

Phase 1: I will separately but simultaneously prepare and analyse my QUAL and QUAN data.

Phase 2; I will separately display and report results emanating from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study.

Phrase 3: I will consolidate and compare results emanating from my QUAL and
QUAN data analyses.

Phase 4: I will combine, merge and integrate inferences from the QUAL
and QUAN strands of my study in macro or meta-inferences.

The aforementioned four-phase model can be represented diagrammatically as thus;
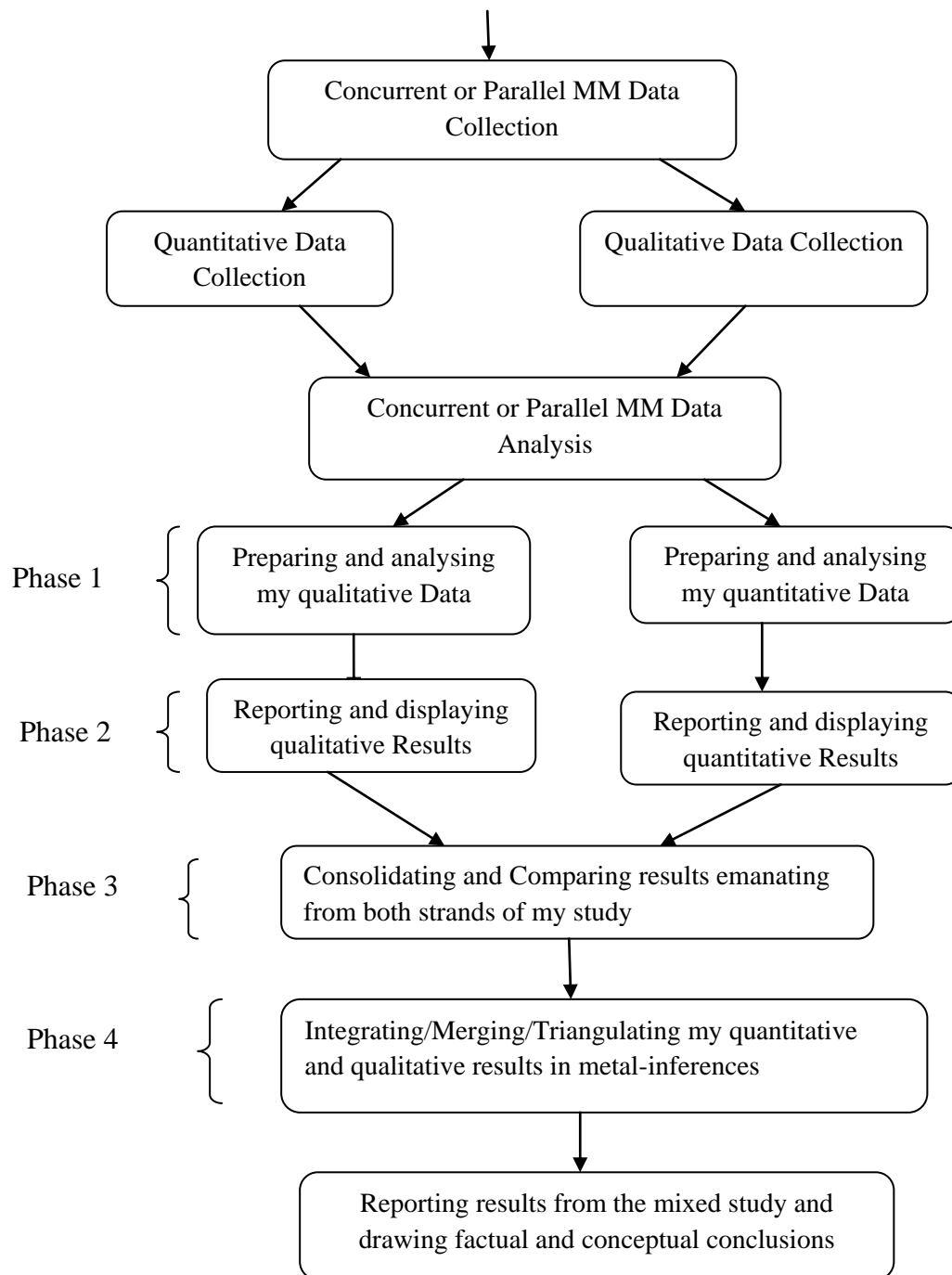
Figure 4.8: Capturing the various phases involved in my Concurrent MM data analysis.

The above figure shows that I will undertake my MM data analysis through two distinct processes which will build on the conceptual understanding that my QUAL and QUAN data will be separately and simultaneously collected. I will explore QUAL analytic strategies in preparing and analysing my QUAL data and QUAN analytic techniques in preparing and analysing my QUAN data. The second phase of my mixed data analysis will involve reporting and displaying results emanating from both strands of my study while the third phase will focus on consolidating the results. The fourth phase on the other hand, will concentrate on merging my QUAL and QUAN results in some sort of meta-inferences. I will contend that combining and merging findings from both strands of my study will widen our conceptual understanding and achieve a fundamental principle of MM research design (Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, p.4 and Onwuegbuzie et al., 2007, p.8). The next subunit will discuss the first phase of my concurrent mixed data analysis.

4.5.3: Phase 1a: Preparing my qualitative data for analysis:

Qualitative data analysis entails organising, arranging, analysing, interpreting and explaining qualitative data in order to capture and discuss the worldviews of the participants who may be interviewees as obtains in semi-structured interviews (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.537). I will prepare my qualitative data for analysis by coding, annotating, underlining, categorising, thematising, analysing and interpreting memos, field notes and transcripts from my semi-structured interviews (Boyatzis, 1998, p.29, Bernard and Ryan, 2010, p.54 and Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.12). I will not transcribe the semi-structure interviews verbatim but will rather transcribe relevant and crucial sections of the interviews in order to eliminate unnecessary details and reduce the data to manageable units. Transcribing only important segments of the interview needed for my qualitative data analysis will also enable me to minimise "data overload by selecting...significant...[segments vital]...for future analysis" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.539). But effective qualitative data analysis can be impeded by the extensive rich nature of the data, thus "...selecting, organizing, analysing, reporting and interpreting" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.540) relevant segments will minimise some of the problems which may be posed by the rich nature of the data.

The nine semi-structured interviews will be coded, categorised, thematised, analysed and interpreted in order to answer my research questions. On the other hand, participant checks will be explored in ensuring the validity and reliability of the semi-structured interviews as the transcripts will be mailed back to the interviewees for confirmation that they reflect what they said and were happy to have them used in generating qualitative data. The rationales for undertaking participant checks are to increase the reliability, validity, safeguard the rights of the interviewees and to underpin the ethical strand of my study. I will also be able to explore NVivo in coding, describing, categorising and thematising my qualitative data. The next subunit will seek to describe the process of coding in more details.

4.5.3a: Codes and Coding:

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.552) contend that a key problematic in qualitative data analysis is the comprehensible management of the vast amount of data often available to the researcher. I will argue that effective coding and categorisation can assist the qualitative researcher in reducing his/her data to manageable levels. Coding is a very important aspect of qualitative data analysis and it is "...a way of indexing or categorizing the text in order to establish a framework of thematic ideas about it" (Gibbs, 2007, p.38). Coding may involve examining and identifying patterns as well as assigning labels to them. A code maybe a symbol, a word or phrase attributed to a segment of linguistic or visual data (Gibbs, 2007, p.38). Boyatzis (1998, p.x) argues that a good code should constitute a label, which is definable, identifiable, describable and exemplary. Coffey and Atkinson (1996, p.27) complement my conceptualisation of coding by arguing that "coding can be thought about as a way of relating our data to our ideas about these data". Hence, codes ensure closeness to the data for better examination, reading, re-reading, categorisation and analysis. Boyatzis (1998, p.x) further identifies three sources of coding in qualitative research which are theory-led coding, data-driven coding and prior-research or data-driven coding and concludes that codes can explore either an inductive or a deductive approach.

I will argue that this study will explore an inductive data-driven approach to coding as this will facilitate effective data reduction and provide compelling raw-data-generated codes located at the heart of my data (Boyatzis, 1998, p.x). I will thus be able to proceed through

reading, re-reading, modification and regrouping of my codes. I will contend that a code may be non-hierarchical or flat and conceptualised on an ordinate basis. The above perspective echoes Miles and Huberman`s (1994, p.56) view that "coding is analysis" hence my codes will mitigate any bias, provide more conceptual creativity and new insights into understanding emerging themes. Ryan and Bernard (2003, p.174) argue that "coding is the heart and soul of whole-text analysis" hence, my inductive data-driven coding technique will be clear, concise and provide an effective code manual. Basit (2003, p.144) on the other hand, argues that developing categorises from codes is good as these can be modified to engineer conceptual schemes which can inform a better understanding of the data. Hence, non-hierarchical axial coding will also be used in arranging codes into groups or categories.

I will purposely choose two samples from my transcribed semi-structured interview texts to develop my codes and code manual which will then be effectively applied to the other texts. I will identify user involvement as my independent variable and user-led outcomes as the anchored or "...criterion-reference and source of subsamples for...[my]...code development" (Boyatzis, 1998, p.24). My unit of coding is user involvement which is an element of my unit of analysis; end user. Boyatzis (1998, p.63) defines the unit of coding as "the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon". User involvement can therefore enable me to generate meaningful information which can inform our conceptual understanding of the themes and innovative models of user involvement as well as leverage comprehensive "insights into the unit of analysis" (Boyatzis, 1998, p.63). I will explore two techniques in processing my texts for data analyses; "cutting and sorting...[and exploring]...key words in context" (Bernard and Ryan, 2010, pp.63-65). The rationale for utilising the above techniques in analysing my qualitative data is premised on the understanding that they will support the development of themes and memos codes for thematic analysis (Bernard and Ryan, 2010, .p.76). I will argue and demonstrate that developing my data-driven inductive codes will go through the following stages and activities;

Table: 4.5: Stages and activities involved in developing inductive data-driven codes:

No.	Stages	Activity
1	Sampling and design issues	a) Deciding on the sampling and design b) Deciding on the subsample
2	Summarising data and identification of initial themes	a) Reducing the raw data to manageable level b) Identifying themes within subsamples c) Comparing themes across subsamples
3	Developing the codes and code manual	a) Developing codes b) Creating a code manual c) Testing the reliability of codes
4	Application of codes and creating additional coding	a) Applying the codes to the transcribed texts b) Creating more codes if need arises c) Determining the validity of the codes
5	Connecting codes to themes	a) Linking codes to themes b) Developing themes
6	Corroborating and legitimating emerging themes	a) Interpreting results b) Confirming findings

Adapted from Boyatzis (1998, p.43), Crabtree and Miller (1999) and Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p.5).

The above table conceptually captures and outlines the various stages and activities involved in creating inductive data-driven codes. For example, performing the activities outlined in stage two of the table above will enable me to compare and contrast the subsamples as well as themes across subsamples. This will enable me to perform what

Miller and Crabtree (1992 cited in Boyatzis, 1998, p.42) refer to as "immersion and crystallization" as I gain a better understanding of the data and emerging themes. I will also pay close attention to my sampling and code development as Boyatzis (1998, p.42) argues that, "the quality of the criterion selection and the sampling...[are key determinants of the]...quality of the codes" and research findings. On the other hand, I will check my codes for reliability by pre-testing them on two other samples before applying them to my study as such a check will create room for refinement or highlight any conceptual deficiencies. I will argue that the above activities will inform the conceptual development of my themes.

4.5.3b. Themes and Thematic Analysis:

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.61) argue that themes can be viewed as a higher level through which categories are assembled into "concepts". Themes can be conceptualised from exploring linguistic aspects like repetitions, metaphors, categories, analogies (Bernard and Ryan, 2010, pp.54-60) and from "indigenous categories" (Patton, 2002, p.454). Thematic analysis on the other hand, refers to the process of identifying, organising, analysing, interpreting and "reporting patterns within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79). Boyatzis (1998, p.1) argues that "thematic analysis is a way of seeing..[and]...sensing" peculiar to how an individual sees and senses the data. "Thematic analysis is also "...a process for encoding qualitative information" (Boyatzis, 1998, p.4) which builds on perceived patterns and may thus be inductively generated from raw data or deductively developed from prior studies or theory-driven (Boyatzis, 1998, p.4). The rationale for inductively generating themes from my raw data is to demonstrate relevance, closeness and a better understanding of my data and to succinctly capture the world views of my interviewees. Thematic analysis thus entails the identification of patterns, encoding and categorisation of codes and inductively developing themes which underline interviewees` worldviews.

I will argue that my thematic analysis will be more conceptual than descriptive as this will invigorate my analytic perspectives, overall analysis and inferences. Boyatzis (1998, p.4) contends that thematic analysis is

...a way of seeing...making sense...[of]...seemingly unrelated material...[and of]...analysing qualitative information...systematically observing ...[and]... converting qualitative information into quantitative data.

Thematic analysis permits the qualitative researcher to construct and communicate meanings with other researchers and the wider world. Thematic analysis involves the following three separate stages. First, choosing the sample, subsample and considering issues around design, second, categorisation and creating code-driven themes and third, "validating and using the codes" (Boyatzis, 1998, p.29). I will argue that thematic analysis can be conceptually informed by three distinct drivers. It can be informed by theory (theory-led), by previous research or data (prior research or prior data-led) and finally it can be inductively generated from raw data, hence data-led (Boyatzis, 1998, p.29). This study will explore an inductive data-driven approach to thematic analysis (Bazeley, 2009, p.6). I agree with (Boyatzis, 1998, p.31) that a good theme should capture the conceptual and "...qualitative richness of the phenomenon" under investigation.

Although thematic analysis can be a good tool for analysing qualitative data, sloppy research design, poor sampling and coding coupled with poor conceptualisation of the themes can inhibit effective thematic analysis, hence I will be diligent and conceptually focused. I will purposively explore the two rich samples from my interview transcripts which were used for coding or generating codes for my thematic analysis. I will read and re-read through my themes, apply them to more samples for validation and input the soft copies of my transcripts, memos and field notes into NVivo for thematic analysis. I will also briefly describe my themes while focusing on their conceptual and abstract meanings and implications to our understanding of the phenomenon under study. The next subunit will concentrate on organising and presenting my qualitative data.

4.5.4a: Organising and presenting data from the qualitative strand of my study:

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.551) in suggesting seven techniques through which qualitative data may be organised and presented; argue that it can be presented "...by

people...by issue or theme,...by instrument,...by case study,...[and]...by narrative account". I will organise and present my qualitative data-driven themes by issues or themes and by research questions. The rationale for organising and presenting my qualitative data by themes and research questions is motivated by the need to explore the main issues while answering my research questions. I can argue that while exploring themes may be economical in facilitating easy comparisons, it can compromise the integrity of data generated from each respondent (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.551).

I will resolve this by equally organising and presenting my qualitative data by research questions. This will provide a window for the systematic organisation of relevant data and for presenting my research findings in a logical, coherent and clear manner (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.552). I will argue that the above seven strategies for organising and presenting qualitative data can facilitate clarity, understanding and a better comprehension of my results at a glance. The above approach will equally enable me to tabulate, summarise and comment on key themes and modes of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. I will argue that organising and presenting my qualitative research findings will constitute a key strand of my qualitative data analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter defines my overall research design, the inductive-deductive research logic and demonstrates that questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are compelling tools for collecting QUAN and QUAL data respectively for this study. It identifies some criteria for conceptualising MM research such as objectives, methodological approaches, priority, data collection, analysis and integration (Hanson et al., 2005, p.229 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.140). It draws conceptual inspiration from Greene et al., (1989 quoted in Hanson et al., 2005, p.226) in identifying the following rationales for combining the QUAN and QUAL approaches in this study; complementarity, triangulation and for enhancing the quality of research findings. The next chapter will focus on presenting the results of my MM data analysis hence; it will present and discuss the results of my QUAL and QUAN data analyses.

Chapter Five
Data Analysis

Introduction:

I have argued in the previous chapter that, my mixed data analysis will explore data analysis techniques traditionally used in the qualitative and quantitative research approaches in analysing data from its qualitative and quantitative strands. I will therefore explore thematic analysis in analysing my qualitative data as codes inductively generated from my semi-structured data will be categorised and thematised. My quantitative data analysis on the other hand will explore descriptive statistics underpinned by frequencies charts, mean, mode, percentages and crosstabulations. The rationale for exploring the above data analysis techniques is premised on the understanding that both thematic analysis and descriptive statistics will leverage the opportunity for me to adequately analyse my data in order to robustly answer my research questions. I will argue that exploring the above data analysis techniques will also enable me to provide new insights and understandings into the phenomena under study, achieve my research objectives and make a modest contribution to knowledge. Two of the organisations, titled `A` and `B` in my case studies provide sheltered accommodation and related socially-oriented services like counselling for alcohol and substance misuse to my target population. The third organisation titled `C` provides employment-based training to unemployed young adults within my target population. This chapter will focus principally on discussing and presenting results from my mixed data analyses while exploring multiple perspectives of interpretations and inference making. The next subunit will thus begin with a discussion and presentation of my qualitative data analysis.

5.1: Phase 2a: Reporting and displaying results of my Qualitative Data Analysis:

I will group the codes which I have inductively-generated from my qualitative data analysis into categories which will further generate five overarching themes. I will argue that the five overarching themes which I have inductively-generated will be described; compared and related to similar themes from the growing body of extant literature on user involvement (Bazeley, 2009, pp.9-11 and Needham, 2009, p.43). Interviewees in my semi-structured interviews; five females and four males within the age range of 28-50years old were

purposely drawn from a population of frontline staff located at my three multiple-case studies. It is worth noting that all the interviewees selected are engaged in exploring innovative models of user involvement and SI in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. This section will also seek to answer the following qualitative research question;

1) What major themes and innovative models of user involvement have emerged from my qualitative data analysis?

Conceptually speaking, coding and categorising my semi-structured interviews have produced the following five overarching and overlapping themes which will be thematised in widening and enriching our understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Table 5.1: Significant Overarching themes which have emerged from my qualitative data analysis:

Themes	Brief Description of themes	Key components of my themes
Transformational Outcomes	This captures situations wherein user involvement unleashes life changing outcomes and results onto end users. Transformational outcomes refer to positive and significant life changing results which the user can derive from his/her involvement in co-producing and consuming public services. Such services must be responsive and have the capacity to significantly transform or change users` experience by generating greater user-led satisfaction, enhancing service quality and delivering better user-focused outcomes.	• Better Outcomes • Unrealistic demands • Complex and challenging demands
User Involvement	This is the most predominant theme which runs through the entire study. It refers to the notion of engaging end users in co-	• Engagement • Participation • Involvement

	designing and co-delivering user-led transformational outcomes. This entails engaging users in controlling; influencing, shaping and selecting how and which services are provided to them.	• User-led/driven
Service Improvement	This reflects the fact that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes is valued and treasured as users` experiential knowledge is factored into improving services. Such improvement must have the potentials of engineering high service quality, better accountability to users and improve service efficiency.	• High Service quality • Organisational Values • Effective Allocation of resources • Value for money
User Empowerment and User-led Responsive Service Provision	User involvement can engineer user empowerment by putting users in control of influencing the way services are conceptualised, designed and delivered to them. It can also enable users to be self reliant, to gain dignity and respect as well as participate in shaping decisions which affect them. It can equally create a sense of ownership, leverage new insights and provide users with greater space and the opportunities to articulate their voices. User empowerment can also enable users to gain new understandings. Responsive services refer to the fact that user involvement can engineer the provision of individualised, personalised and customised user-led services tailored to addressing users` specific needs.	• Customised • Personalised • Individualised • User choice • Ownership • User-led value creation • Greater user voice
User-focused	The idea of social benefits like trust, self-	• Inclusivity

Social Benefits derived from user involvement.	esteem, confidence and inclusivity accruing from user involvement can have very hugely positive impacts on the lives of deprived, dislocated, alienated, disengaged and disenfranchised citizens or young persons. Social benefits thus incorporate those social deliverables which users can derive from their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.	• Self esteem • Trust • Self confidence • Improved quality of life and wellbeing • Solidarity • Employment • Improved relationship with professionals • Rules Setting • Socialisation

Continuation of Table 5.1: Significant Overarching themes emerging from my qualitative data analysis.

The above themes demonstrate the underlying importance of user involvement as my interviewees were all unanimous in underscoring its crucial role while stressing various challenges hindering them from fully achieving genuine and effective user involvement. Some of the frequently cited barriers to genuine user involvement highlighted by my interviewees can be grouped under four broad headings;

- Anti-social or behaviour issues,
- Socially-engineered challenges
- professional related barriers and
- Economic related challenges.

A further breakdown of the above emerging four main barriers to user involvement can be captured as thus;

Anti-Social or Behaviour Issues:
- Immaturity and adolescent behaviours
- Challenging behaviours like confrontations
- Disillusionment/frustration/boredom and general lack of enthusiasm

- Difficult upbringing and childhood leading to a general mistrust of adults.

Socially-engineered challenges:

- Alcohol and substance issues/misuse.

- Competing and unrealistic demands (Some young persons may have own agendas)

- Lack of basic literacy, numeric, social and independent living skills

- Inability to trust or build good relationships because of past reminiscences

- User apathy to involvement

- Social disengagement

- Poor communication

- The lack of clarity around the specific objectives of user involvement or what users can expect to achieve from their involvement.

- Inappropriate application of user involvement and the use of crude techniques/models.

- There lack of user involvement networks, champions and organisations which can articulate users` views and build users` confidence and interest in involvement

Professional Related Barriers:

- Case overload (handling many cases) and work pressures

- Reduction in staffing and huge paper works (Largely still very paper-based)

- Difficulties in getting rapid support and interventions from other professionals. e.g. counsellors, social workers and psychiatry nurses.

- The inability by staff to explore skill sets like problem solving, good communication, interpersonal and negotiation skills which can facilitate user involvement.

- The lack of appropriate trainings and support mechanisms for staff to enable them pursue user involvement.

- The inability by staff to explore appropriate modes and innovative models of user involvement.

- The lack of policy clarity around user involvement as there is a huge degree of policy fluidity.

Economic Related Challenges:

- The stopping of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

- Unemployment and joblessness.

- Poverty and social deprivation.

- Scarcity of resources.

- Delays in payment of weekly service charge of £8.08 by some young persons.

- Changes and differences in budgetary cycles.

- `Cut backs` and budgetary or funding constraints.

- Greater expectations for high quality, efficient user-led transformational outcomes.

Table: 5.2: A brief survey of barriers to user-led involvement in my three case studies

It is also worth noting that poor conceptualisation and communication of government policies like government`s inability to effectively communicate the fundamentals of the `Big Society` can impede effective user involvement. The lack of policy clarity around the expectations of user involvement both from the service users and service providers is a disservice to user involvement. On the other hand, tokenistic and shallow user involvement techniques or when users know that their views or inputs will not be valued can greatly discourage user involvement. Despite the above problems, staff must understand that not every end user will be interested in involving in the co-design of services; hence, staff must seek to explore user involvement where there is sufficient evidence that it can leverage added value. Without being prescriptive, staff must communicate the benefits of involvement to the user in order to enable him/her to make an informed decision on involvement. Staff must also seek to identify the most appropriate window for user involvement which can trigger the greatest user-led value creation and equally identify the most effective model of involvement. I will contend that the above challenges to user involvement emerged from my codification and categorisation of my semi-structured interviews for thematic analysis.

5.2: Discussing and analysing my inductive data-driven themes

Introduction:

I will invigorate my thematic analysis by grouping categories of similar codes or ideas together as found in table 5.1; and by exploring, displaying, comparing and conceptually analysing as well as relating my themes to extant literature (Bazeley, 2009, p.9). This section will focus principally on developing and analysing the following five overarching themes which have been inductively generated from my raw data and qualitative data analysis;

- Transformational Outcomes

- User Involvement

- Service Improvement

- User Empowerment and User-led Responsive Service Provision

- User-focused Social Benefits from involvement

The above themes can be captured as represented in the following figure;
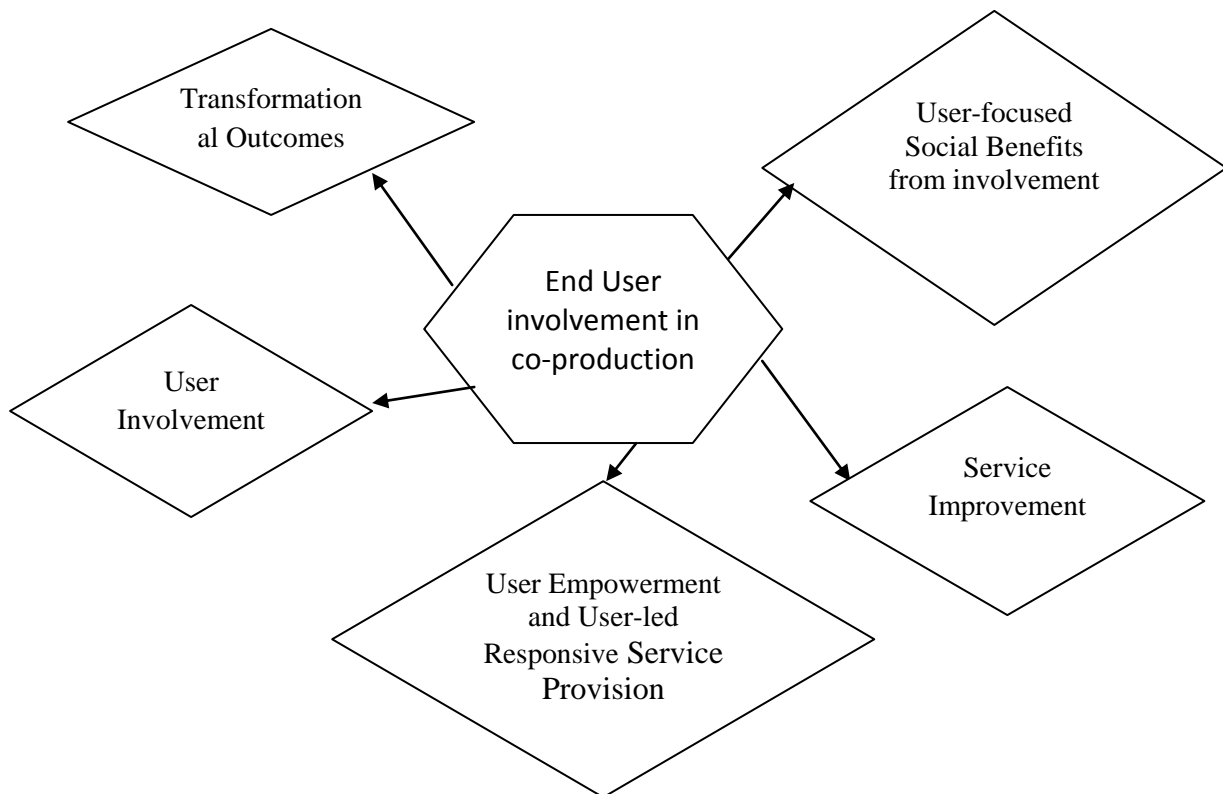
Figure 5.1: Capturing the key themes inductively-generated from my raw data.

I can argue that the above inductively generated themes encapsulate the key issues which were raised by my interviewees although some of them are equally evident in extant literature (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315 and PASC, 2007, p.5). I will seek to do the following four interrelated activities while discussing and analysing the above themes;

- Answer my research questions,

- Utilise interviewees' words in enriching and authenticating my analyses,

- Relate my analyses to extant knowledge as well as

- Explore my analyses in providing new insights, novel perspectives and widening our conceptual understanding of user involvement.

I will also explore field notes, memos and contextual material where possible in developing my themes and demonstrating the relevance and robustness of my arguments. The next subunit will thus focus on discussing and analysing of the above five overarching themes which have emerged from my raw data.

5.2.1: User Involvement

I will argue that the theme of user involvement is predominant, central to this study and runs through all data generated from my nine semi-structured interviews thus emphasising its strategic and conceptual importance. User involvement enables users to assume control, a better understanding and to influence the way services are conceptualised, designed and provided to them, thereby putting them in the driving seat and command of how and which services are provided to them. User involvement also requires some degree of service provider or staff involvement especially in guiding and facilitating better and robust user involvement in order to generate greater user-led value creation and satisfaction. I will contend that the theme of user involvement which runs through this thesis can be conceptually understood within the wider context of public service reforms as evidenced by earlier reforms which focus on user voice, choice, personalisation and making public services more responsive to users` needs (PASC, 2007, p.6 and Cabinet Office 2011, p.14). I will further argue that Arnstein`s (1969, p.217) "Eight Rung Model of Citizen Participation" although drawing much inspiration from the government-citizen power dichotomy, can also be explored in informing our understanding of depths of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven public services.

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│   User Control of services   ┐
├─────────────────────────┤ │
│     User Empowerment        │ ├── Levels of Effective End User involvement
│                             │ │
├─────────────────────────┤ │
│  Provider-user Partnership   ┘
├─────────────────────────┤
│                             ┐
│        Placation            │
├─────────────────────────┤ │
│                             │ ├── Levels of tokenistic user involvement
│       Consultation          │ │
├─────────────────────────┤ │
│                             │ │
│        Informing            ┘
├─────────────────────────┤
│                             ┐
│         Therapy             │ ├── No user involvement at these levels
│                             ┘
├─────────────────────────┤
│        Manipulation         │
└─────────────────────────┘
```
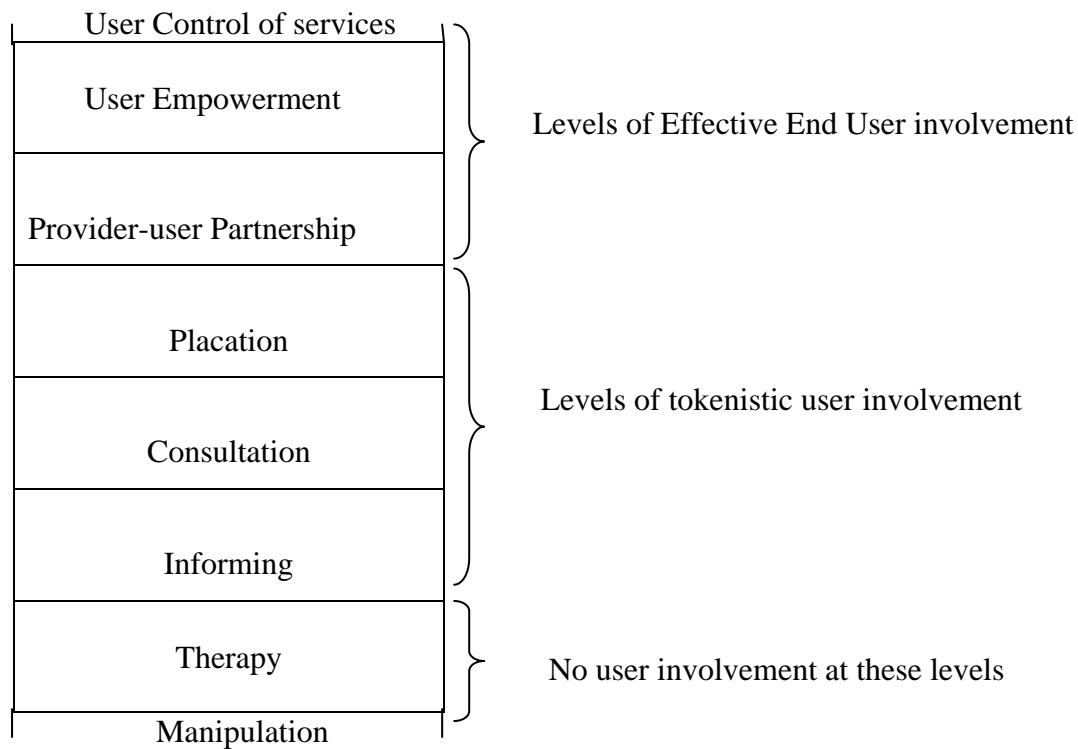
Figure 5.2: Levels of end user Involvement; Adapted from Arnstein, (1969, p.217).

The staff at the three organisations in my case studies indicated that they often largely try to avoid the first two rungs (manipulation and Therapy) on Arnstein`s Eight Rung Model as well as slightly use the third, fourth and fifth rungs (informing, consultation and placation respectively). For example some of them did confirm using deeper forms of consultations like user-led group discussions while appropriately informing users of the benefits of their involvement to them and the organisation. Staff did argue that the rationale for avoiding the first two stages and only slightly using the third, fourth and fifth is due the overt absence of deeper forms of user involvement at the first two rungs.

They further contended that user involvement can be hampered by shallow, cosmetic and tokenistic applications at the third, fourth and fifth rungs (Arnstein, 1969, 217). But staff also argued that contrary to Arnstein`s conceptualisation of user or citizen participation as being tokenistic at the consultation level, they were able to successfully explore deeper forms of consultation like user-led group discussions as robust tools for engaging users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven services. I have also slightly modified the sixth, seventh and eighth rungs of the Arnstein Eight Rung Model to read, Provider-user

partnership, user empowerment, user control of services respectively as these encapsulate degrees of user involvement which I did witness at my case studies. I will argue that a positive, trust-driven partnership between staff, service provider(s), professionals and practitioners as well as user empowerment can enable end users to take control of their lives and effectively involve in achieving optimum satisfactions from public services.

On the other hand, some staff also pointed out that there are some end users who are not bothered about or willing to get involved and as one of them told me;

> "Some service users are adamant that they will not get involve no matter how hard you try to get them involved, we have had situations where, with service user meetings, we have had to bribe young persons with crisps, chocolate, biscuits and cans of drink just to get them to tell us about how effective they think the service is".

The above citation demonstrates the problematic with user involvement as some users may not be bothered about the idea of involving in the co-design and co-delivery of services although their involvement can strengthen their self esteem and confidence. There is evidence in the literature to support the view that not every end user will like to get involved in co-designing and co-delivering the services which he/she accesses (PASC, 2007, p.7). But while recognising this, staff must seek to communicate and clearly explain the benefits of involvement to users so they can make informed decisions about their involvement.

But another staff painted a positive picture of user involvement by telling me that;

> "...service user participation brings self esteem, confidence and really brings clients on the track. I am a real advocate for service user involvement...it gives them the opportunity to take some control of their own lives".

One staff corroborated the above assertion by telling me that;

"To encourage more YPs to come to services, meetings, we may offer sweets, chocolates and just something encourage participation".

This demonstrates that if well explored user involvement can leverage the opportunity for improving service quality although it is not a smooth venture as most young persons are known for not conforming. This underpins the fact that user involvement is a challenging venture hence, staff and service providers must make a strong case in its favour in order to convince users of the potential benefits which they may reap from their involvement. Another staff supported this by arguing that;

"...some users are happy with their involvement and some won`t be, but often with YPs opinions may change regularly".

Despite the above difficulties which may be encountered in the process of user involvement, there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the potential benefits to users from their involvement are huge and can be life changing. All the nine staff interviewed and most end users surveyed agreed on the need for effective user involvement as this can leverage high quality, more targeted user-led transformational outcomes.

5.2.2: Transformational Outcomes:

Transformational outcomes refer to positive and significant life-changing impacts which services can deliver to users as a result of their involvement in their co-design and co-delivery. I will argue that authentic user involvement can engineer significant life changing outcomes which can transform users` quality of live and improve their wellbeing. Better service outcomes emanating from user involvement can also enhance users` experiences of their involvement; generate greater user satisfaction and user-led value. Seven of the staff interviewed articulated the view that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led and user-focused services can engineer better outcomes and more user satisfaction. One of my interviewees even argued that user involvement can create an entirely new, innovative experience and atmosphere which maybe very different from the

"old children`s centres, the old shelters, it is much more a holistic approach to [delivering services to] individuals than a roof and hot food".

Another staff presented a different perspective by arguing that;

"From a starting point, you need to have a clear understanding what the support requirements are and how you have got to provide support throughout the service".

This demonstrates the fact that staff need to show a clear understandings of users` needs in order to adequately establish what support and involvement models will be very appropriate for them. Another staff on the other hand corroborated the underpinnings of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes by arguing that;

"Both current residents and ex-clients do show appreciation of our work and our outcomes as a service are better with client participation so it good for them and for our organisation`s reputation".

His colleague supported the view that user involvement can trigger user-led transformational outcomes by arguing that;

"Genuine user involvement can enable users to cooperate with staff in order to delivery highly responsive services which can enhance users` quality of life and wellbeing".

This implies that user involvement must seek to unleash holistic life-changing experiences and results which can transform user`s lives. The above statements also demonstrate that P-SEPs must explore innovative models of user involvement in delivering life changing dramatic outcomes capable of transforming users` experiences, perceptions and above all quality of life. More compelling, innovative-user-driven modes of involvement like one-to-one surgeries, user juries, mobile text messages and focused groups are some of the robust ways P-SEPs can explore in delivering user-led value creation (Barki, 1994, p.59 and Moore, 1995, p.27). User involvement can engineer the delivery of user-led transformational outcomes by translating users` unrealistic demands into user-led deliverables. Hence, the

dexterous use of user-led approaches in responding to the complex and challenging demands from users for better services can transform their experiences of services.

But another staff raised the issue of users` distorted perceptions of their involvement as a huge setback by arguing that;

> "Yes so some of their requests are really unrealistic but the feedback that they give us can inform us...sometime these can be unrealistic and unachievable but if it is something we can achieve and work or something good that we can do then it is nice to listen to everyone`s opinions".

Another staff on the other hand more philosophically argued that;

> "Staff may have to strike a fine balance between learners enthusiasm and request for what cannot be provided and what is feasible because of staff`s knowledge of the industry and sector. Knowing the young mind like we do...they [users] ask for unrealistic things but they know [that these cannot be delivered and] sometime they just want to push boundaries".

All my nine interviewees were also unanimous in arguing that user involvement can also fail to unleash transformational outcomes as user`s perceptions of their involvement and of service delivery may be distorted, unrealistic, unachievable and conceptually confused. Achieving such demands may be inhibited by scarcity of resources, the very nature and specificity of public services, or may not fit within the overall strategic objective of the service. For example a foyer service expected to provide accommodation services to `rough sleepers`, homeless and deprived young persons while also instilling lifelong independent living skills in them may find some of their demands for their rooms to be cleaned or their individual shopping done by staff very unrealistic. Not only will doing the above requests from end users unskilled them but may also perpetuate "a culture of dependency" (PASC, 2007, p.12) which may run contrary to the empowerment perspective of user involvement. But staff can realistically support such young persons in cleaning their rooms, accompany them to the shops and teach them independent living skills in budgeting, using money, good health habits and shopping. The recent economic downturn and scarcity of resources imply

that most organisations like SEs involved in public service delivery have to `think outside the box` by exploring innovative models of user involvement so as to deliver value for money and to do `more with less` (Needham, 2009, p.43).

One of my interviewees summed up the need for innovative thinking by arguing that;

> "...staff may have to strike a fine balance between users` enthusiasm and request for what cannot be provided and what is feasible".

This is important especially if the user is guided and involved in the actual decision making process. The capacity of user involvement to unleash transformational outcomes can be greatly enhanced by users` positive experiences of their involvement or inhibited by their unrealistic, challenging, complex and ever changing demands for better services (Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.174). But the ability of users to achieve transformational outcomes from user-led public services is encapsulated in the drive for constant service improvements as argued in the next subunit.

5.2.3. Service Improvement

The three organisations in my case studies all acknowledged the critical role innovative models of user involvement can play in shaping, influencing and transforming service quality and thus engineer service improvements. As part of better customer service, user involvement like investing in people, process mapping and the Best Value agenda constitutes a compelling tool for enacting service improvement. I will argue that user involvement can be explored as a service improvement tool since it has the potentials of transforming service quality, efficiency, productivity, cost-effectiveness, more efficient allocation of resources and strengthening provider-user accountabilities (Boyne, 2003, p.368). Six of my interviewees underlined the fact that user involvement is at the heart of what they currently do and constitutes a key strand of their organisational culture and value. All three organisations have embedded user involvement into their policy documents on the understanding that such involvement can lead to service improvement, more targeted allocation of resources and attract more public contacts or funding. One of the key reasons why user involvement is embedded in how these organisations provide user-led services is the fact that such

involvement is a crucial statutory and regulatory requirement and a justification for further funding and sourcing of services.

One of my interviewees, who works for the organisation which provides employment-based trainings to young unemployed adults often classed as NEETs argued that;

> "...learner involvement is absolutely integral to everything we do because we get Ofsted checks and one of their criteria is learner journey and learner involvement".

Another staff also told me that;

> "...it is important to get learners` views because sometimes, I always ask them for feedbacks at the end of a lesson. I get their views and see how we can improve the quality of our services and I think it is important to get the learners` views on everything that we do".

His colleague on the other hand added that;

> "...learner involvement will enable us to achieve our key performance indicators, which can indicate that we are performing better and can generate further contracts and put the company on a stronger footing"

The above excerpts demonstrate that user involvement can be explored as a performance enhancing tool in improving service quality and attaining service improvements. Although one of my interviewees did tell me that user or learner involvement is an integral part of their service delivery strategy, I can as well argue that their adherence to the policy may be guided by the fact that it is an Ofsted requirement and conditionality for continuous provision of publicly funded services. Hence, there is need for P-SEPs to espouse a deeper and stronger belief in the added value of user involvement as the lack of any firm immersion in the user involvement doctrine can lead to cosmetic, tokenistic or shallow approaches of its application (Entwistle, 2010, p.164). Policy documents by previous governments; The Citizen`s Charter

by the Conservative Major government and New Labour`s public service modernisation agenda and publications by the highly authoritative PASC evidence and argue that user involvement can propel service improvement (PASC, 2007, p.12).

On the other hand, one of my interviewees made the case for utilising deeper forms of user involvement by stating that;

> ... [user] feedbacks can help us implement changes where necessary and...
> inform us in providing a better service...make greater changes,[hence] fitting in
> their needs and delivering the services which they deserve.

This study argues that most forms of user involvement like feedbacks, opinion polls and digital text messages can make a huge difference in enabling users to harness their experiences in informing, repackaging or reconfiguring existing services and the provision of entirely new ones. Such modes of user involvement can inform the conceptualisation of new user-driven services. I can also argue that user involvement may not be an easy process as some users may come into involvement with their own agendas while others may become frustrated and disenchanted, as the lack of clarity around what they can expect from their involvement can cause some huge disquiet. I will argue that innovative models of user involvement can also engineer user empowerment and user-led responsive services tailored to addressing users` individual needs as the next subunit will seek to demonstrate.

5.2.4 User Empowerment and User-led Responsive Service Provision:

User empowerment is a "multidimensional social process through which...[end users can]...gain better understanding and control over their lives" (WHO, 2010, p.1). I will argue that user empowerment can also enable them to develop the spirit of "...self-reliance... participation...dignity...respect...[and]...contribute to...[their]...wider community" (WHO, 2010, p.1). Evidence from my semi-structured interviews underlines the fact that user involvement can empower services users, give them a voice and enable them to take control of their lives (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.14 and Brown and Gash, 2011, p.3). User involvement can also enable users to make informed choices, influence and shape how services are

provided to them (Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.17 and Smith et al., 2008, p.298). One of my interviewees argued that user empowerment can complement the acquisition of independent living skills by stating that;

> "...it is very much the case of empowering, supporting and enabling... [users]...so that they could be able to work with agencies, and do simple things like paying their bills...service user involvement can make an impact on the lives of clients, it does empower them, I have worked with YPs on a one-to-one and I have seen them develop their voice...feel a little ownership of the services"

The above excerpt demonstrates that user empowerment can give the user a voice and enable him or her to be better supported by staff, professionals and practitioners while also ensuring that he/she can claim ownership of services. User involvement also creates a sense of ownership of services in users as they can identify and sound positive about their inputs in the co-design and co-delivery of services. Another interviewee argued that;

> "Service user involvement can make an impact on the lives of clients, it does empower them, I have worked with YPs on a one-to-one and I have seen them develop their voice...it gives them the opportunity to take some control of their own lives...[and]... perhaps feel a little ownership of the service".

The above excerpts thus demonstrate the fact that user empowerment can enable users to take greater control over their lives and to influence how and which services are provided to them. User empowerment is thus a critical determinant of how far the concept of involvement can unlock the other skills, potentials and opportunities available to the user. The next figure shows that user empowerment can constitute a robust basis on which other key benefits of user involvement can be anchored.
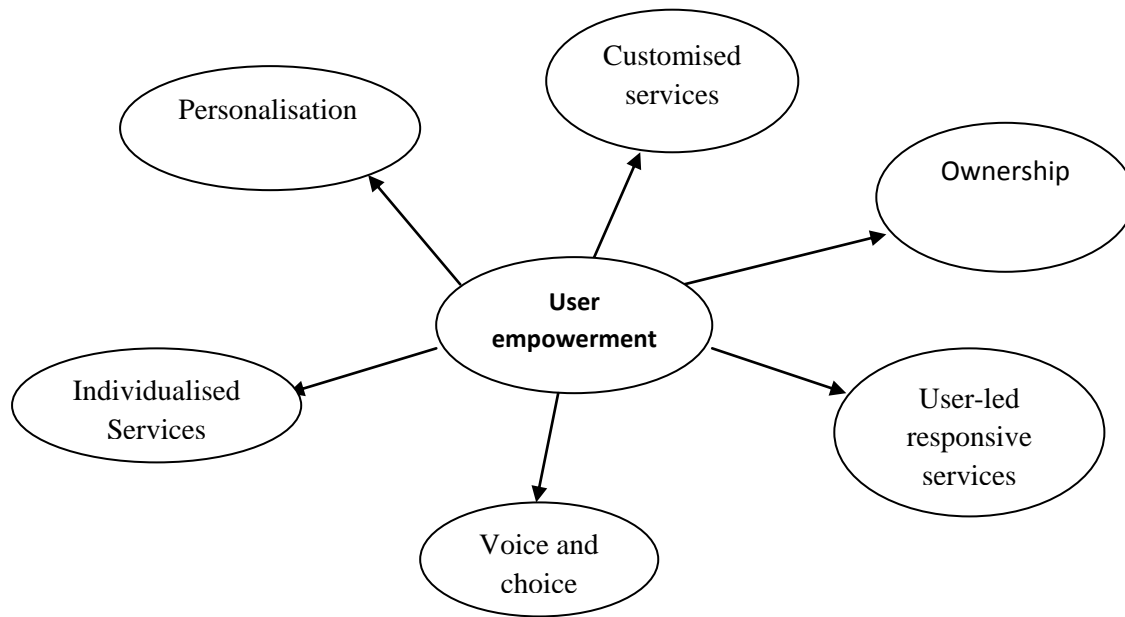
Figure: 5.3: User Empowerment as a basis for achieving user-led responsive services.

The above diagram demonstrates that user empowerment can give rise to more personalised, customised and individualised user-led responsive services tailored to the specific needs of the user. I can also contend that user empowerment can generate greater user voice and choice, create a sense of ownership of services in users and ensure service suitability and efficiency. The key outcomes of user empowerment are thus intertwined and interconnected as they underline the personalisation, customisation and individualisation of involvement-engineered user-led responsive services (Needham, 2009, p.43 and Leadbeater and Lownsbrough, 2005, p.34). The above concepts also echo New Labour`s public service modernisation agenda and narrative stretching back to 1997 (Needham, 2009, p.2009, p.43).

On the other hand, the Coalition Government`s White Paper; "Open Public services" (Cabinet Office, 2011, p.12) also emphasises the importance of choice and the need for public service provision to engage user`s choice as one of the five principles of public service modernisation. This chapter also argues that New Labour`s focus on modernising public services was visible through the promotion of user choice, voice, empowerment and the need for user involvement to influence, inform and shape public service delivery (Powell et al., 2009, p.1). The next subunit focuses on the themes of the social benefits of user involvement as these have not been adequately discussed in the literature on user involvement (Needham,

2009, p.42, Alam, 2002, p.250, Beresford, 2010, p.495, Smith et al., 2008, p.298 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315). This study will argue that user-focused social benefits emanating from user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services have transformational undertones as the next subunit will illuminate.

5.2.5. Social Benefits of user involvement:

I will argue that there is demonstrable evidence from my qualitative data to justify the fact that social benefits which may accrue to users from their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services are the unsung heroes of user involvement. Some of the most important benefits to users from their involvement include peer learning and indirect education as users can learn social values like respect, tolerance or social skills like communication, interpersonal relationships and problem solving. These are important because social benefits like inclusivity, self-esteem, self confidence, socialisation, empowerment, employability, relationship building and improved quality of life and wellbeing are giant life changing achievements for some end users. Despite the positive deliverables of user involvement, there are many other service users who may not be bothered about involving or participating in the co-design and co-delivery of the services they access. In describing the social benefits of user involvement to the users one of my interviewees indicated that;

> "I have seen a client step out from someone that was very needy to someone who had developed his confidence and was offering support to others on a one-to-one. There is a small percentage who many not see any need but for a majority, it is worthwhile the process".

Another staff told me that;

> "These [innovative models of user involvement] are meant to improve their self esteem, since some of them don`t engage because they have got low self esteem, and the attention they may want is not there so they try to get attention by doing negative things".

But despite their hesitations and non participations, they are still interested in ensuring staff provide them with unblemished services which encapsulate their aspirations. This raises the issue of consent in user involvement; hence user consent is critically important and must be obtained prior to undertaking user involvement in order to uphold the human rights of the end user. This subunit will make a compelling case that user involvement should position itself on a social benefit model if it intends to make transformational changes to the lives of deprived constituencies of the population. User involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services leverages the opportunity for staff to gain users` trust in order to build positive staff-user networks which can facilitate the co-production of services.

One of my interviewees, concords with this assertion by stating that;

> "It is good at the very beginning to build up a relationship with the apprentice, establishing that from the start helps make the learning smoother for the learner".

Another staff told me that;

> "Well, to the client, it can be just feeling that they have been listened to, that they are part of the process, again many of our YPs are disenfranchised to some degree and potentially excluded and just the fact that they have been included is important as inclusion for many is just a totally new concept".

While discussing the social benefits of user involvement to the user, another interviewee told me that;

> "The fact that they can come and talk to us, there is an educational part here, but also service user involvement helps with social interactions, confidence building and a sense of achievement, I see very many positives to it"

User involvement can thus deliver a huge array of social benefits to end users, help in developing their good communication skills, promote peer learning and enable users to learn other social skills like empathy. Building positive professional relationships with

service users is important as most of them come from very chaotic backgrounds and might not have experienced a proper respectful relationship with adults. This is also important as positive relationships can knock down barriers, build bridges and promote self-esteem and confidence while also triggering the other benefits of my social benefit model like improved wellbeing. But the intriguing thing is that, most of the service users I investigated in this study have multiple issues and will thus require holistic service packages which can address their unique and multiple needs. For example, a homeless service user accessing sheltered accommodation may also require services for related issues like alcohol and substance misuse or training for employment.

Staff can also explore the idea of user involvement in teaching users about the concept of rule and boundary setting, as they collectively establish the rules guiding how users can get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of user`-led services. One interviewee underlined the importance of setting rules and boundaries prior to undertaking user involvement by arguing that most service users do not often adhere to boundaries hence there is need for norming. Another staff told me that most of the clients who live in the foyer in which he works have;

> ...drink issues, alcohol, substance abuse and drug issues, [and] have been
> rejected by their families.

This therefore requires inter-professional collaboration as counsellors; health staff, the police, education and welfare or income support staff may have to provide service users with integrated service packages (Keast and Brown, 2007, p.45 and Entwistle and Martin, 2005, p.233). This may not be very easy as it may require various levels, systems and multiple demands from user involvement but these can be resolved by having user-led inter-professional meetings. But evidence from inter-professional working or partnerships between the above cited professionals who are supposed to provide users with user-led integrated services is mixed and often resulting in disjointed irrelevant services (Balloch and Taylor, 2001, p.1 and Powell and Glendinning, 2002, p.10). I will argue that it is necessary for professionals and practitioners to minimise and streamline multiple layers and levels of user involvement into a seamless process. The above social benefits of user involvement are interconnected and complementary in ensuring that end users derive holistic life changing

satisfaction capable of transforming and enhancing their wellbeing (Lindsay, Abel and Scott, 2007, p.6 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p317).

The next figure will conceptualise and underline the importance of the social benefits which end users can derive from their involvement. My social-benefit model of user involvement can be construed as a hub capable of influencing and transforming the user`s life and other aspects of his/her wellbeing.
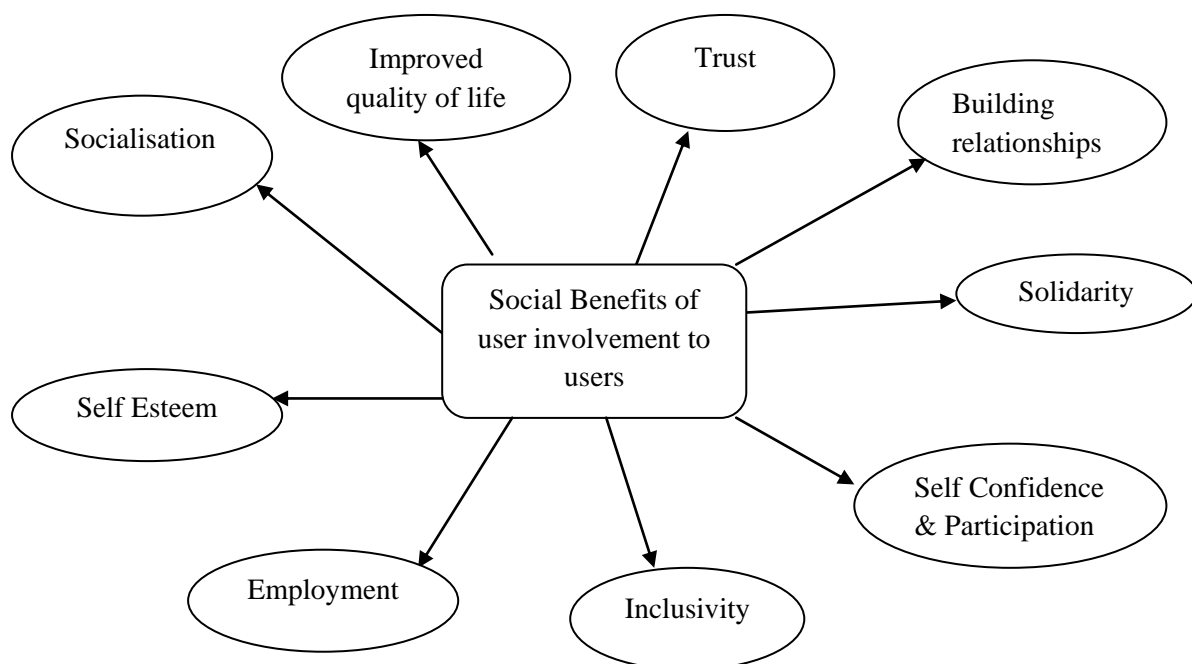
Figure 5.4: Some benefits of the Social-benefit model of User Involvement.

The above model in the form of a hub depicts a structure in which social benefits revolve around the end user who is at the centre of the hub. The above social outcomes can be engineered by the user`s involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services. For many young persons in sheltered accommodation, accessing counselling against substance and alcohol misuse and coaching tips on parenting and health issues, having the self-esteem and confidence to interact with peers and professionals are huge social achievements. I am not positing that the above social benefits can only be reaped through user involvement but rather postulating that user involvement where possible can greatly facilitate their realisations. Since every end user is unique, staff should seek to identify and explore user`s most preferred

model and mode of involvement while encouraging more fruitful forms of user involvement. Other social benefits of user involvement to the user may include an improved quality of life, solidarity and the ability to transfer social skills gained from such involvement to other civil aspects of citizen life. After adequately discussing the themes which have emerged from my qualitative data analysis and thus answering part of my qualitative research question, I will now turn my attention to the other aspect; innovative models of user involvement. The next subunit will thus discuss the innovative models of user involvement which have emerged from my qualitative data analysis.

5.3: Emerging Innovative Models of User Involvement and SI explored by the three multiple-case studies under investigation.

I will argue that innovative models of user involvement are highly effective, novel and creative strategies and techniques employed by staff of service providing organisations in engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. There is sufficient evidence from the literature which suggests that user involvement in the co-design of user-led public services can leverage more user-friendly responsive services tailored to users` specific needs (Smith, 2008, p.298, Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315 and Stickley, 2006, p.570). This study argues that innovative models of user involvement can be broadly categorised into four groups; User-driven, Group-led, staff-led and Digital-driven. But the above innovative models of user involvement can be rendered ineffective through staff dominance, poor conceptualisation, politicisation, non-inclusivity, poor communication of objective(s) to users, `dysfunctional power dynamics` and poor allocation of resources. This study contends that conceptualising and effectively utilising the right model of user involvement underpinned by inclusivity, trust and clarity around the rationale for involvement are vital for attaining robust user involvement outcomes.

 Staff from the three multiple-case studies were unanimous in acknowledging that they often explore facets of SI like upgrading or improving of existing services or the radical reconfiguration of such services in order to meet their clients` needs. This subunit will briefly

discuss innovative models of user involvement prevalent in the organisations under study while capturing how staff are exploring such models.

I will argue that, closely related to the idea of innovative models of user involvement is the idea of modes of user involvement which underscore the techniques and strategies through which end users often involve in the co-design and co-delivery of the services they access. As indicated in Alam (2002, p.256), evidence from my qualitative data analysis demonstrates that the following modes of user involvement are frequently used in the three multiple-case studies under consideration; meetings, focus groups discussions, telephones, user feedbacks and residence representative. For example an interviewee told me that;

> "...learners can use feedbacks in expressing what they feel about the course, if they are not happy about a particular thing or did not understand the wording of a document. Indeed, I do attend resident`s council meetings and through that I get or ask them to feedback about my staff and I have asked them what they will like more from us as staff group when supporting them"

Hence, instruments for gathering feedbacks such as questionnaires, letters, emails, telephone calls, text messages and surveys can be explored by staff in gauging users` ideas, perceptions as well as in involving them in the co-design and co-delivery of services. User feedbacks can enable staff to identify potential problems in service design and delivery and also inform them on better ways of supporting users in realising the greatest value from services.

Another interviewee equally confirmed using similar modes of user involvement as he told me that;

> "We conduct client participation at the macro level wherein clients will make decisions for implementation in client meetings and we have one-to-one client participation which will inform us on how we provide a service to the individual...There are many alternative ways of engaging with a client in a less

formal setting, having a coffee may help the engagement process or interaction while playing pool".

I can argue that there is strong evidence from my case studies to confirm that the various modes of user involvement like one-to-one meetings, user groups and user networks are key drivers of effective user-led public service delivery. Interviewees were unanimous in arguing that modes of user involvement can vary from formal to informal ones as these are largely determined by the individual service users, his/her level of confidence and preferred mode of involvement.

The above evidence and excerpts from my semi-structured interviews thus demonstrate that there are four broad innovative models of user involvement; User-led Model, Group-led Model, Staff-led Model and Digital-driven Model. There is also evidence to suggest that although forms of staff-led model of user involvement are rarely used, staff do explore weaker forms of staff-led model like staff-led meetings while emphasising on the centrality of end users involving in shaping service outcomes. The following models of user involvement have therefore emerged from my qualitative data analysis.

User-led Model of user Involvement
- User Feedbacks through user-led surveys and questionnaires   - One-to-one surgeries (e.g. key working sessions which focus on "outcome stars".   - Monthly evaluation forms, monthly reports, Reviews and Exit Reviews   - Monthly meetings at individual level and User-led Projects   - Through the use of visual aid and adapted material   - Writing and Correspondence to individual service users e.g. letters   - Service user representative or champion   - User-led consultations
Group-led Model of User involvement
- Focused Group, group-based consultations, Service user Panels or Committees   - Group Meetings (House/Foyer, monthly or weekly meetings)   - Service user Networks, user support teams and through competitions

• User participation in staff recruitment, staff evaluation and through social activities
• Resident`s Council/Parliament/Senate and through user participation at events
• Group Consultations
Staff-led Model of User Involvement
• Staff-led meetings • Most Board meetings in which there are user representatives
Digital-Driven Model of User Involvement
• User Blogs • Online consultations • User-led conference calls • Mobile text messages • Social Media (facebook, twitter, MySpace etc but staff have to carefully weigh the added value of using social media as there may be issues around privacy and confidentiality especially when working with vulnerable groups). • The use of apps like the WhatsApp, Blackberry Messenger (BB) • Emails, telephone, faxes etc • Online Feedback forms, surveys etc

Table 5.3: Models of user involvement

I will argue that if appropriately explored, the different modes of user involvement which constitute the above innovative models can make positive and transformational impacts on the lives of deprived citizens. Most of the above modes like feedbacks, questionnaires and surveys can be used in capturing user involvement both at the individual and group levels. Some effective examples of user-led models of user involvement include `personal or individual budgets`, `direct payments` and `expert patients in the Health and Social Care sectors and `personalised learning` in education (PASC, 2007, p.11). Group-led modes of user involvement like user committees, user networks, user parliaments, focus groups, user panels and resident's council are widely used in the service sector because of their potentials to engage many users in group sessions which can engineer peer sharing and shared learning. Other examples of the group-led model include `Community care navigators` and `tenant-led management` in the Health and Social care and Housing sectors respectively (PASC, 2007,

p.11). The fourth model of user involvement and one which is rapidly gaining prominence is the Digital-driven Model.

I will argue that the digital-led model of user involvement is driving SI and constitutes a window, through which services can be repackaged, re-configured and improved in attaining users` aspirations for services of transformational proportions. The increasing influence and reliance on the digital culture and the growing use of digital devices like smart phones, the ipad and mobile text messages like Blackberry (BB) messenger for communication by young adults demonstrate the strategic importance of this model. This study thus posits that the future and sustainability of user involvement could as well rest in its digitalisation. Active engagement of end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes must seek to explore new and innovative conceptual techniques like mobile text messages if it intends to unleash positive life changing impacts on end users. Recent developments and advancements in the digital culture underpinned by the sheer pace at which citizens are increasingly assimilating it point to the strategic role of this model in transforming public service delivery at this moment and for many years to come.

I will argue that the popularity and ease with which digital devices like smart phones can be used even by those with limited formal education, their easy accessibility, and ability to reach a wider audience at the same time underscore the strategic importance of the digital-driven model. Organisations have to think innovatively of how they can craft, explore and build sustainable and successful achievements of end user involvement on the growing influence of the digital and social media cultures (Dunleavy, 2010, p.22 and Lorincz et al., 2010, p.28). But the very complex, challenging and ever changing demands of service users for more responsive services and the hierarchical nature of most traditional PSOs make it difficult to often implement any radical changes to services which can suit everyone. I will argue that the three organisations in my case studies confirmed that they often explore innovative models of user involvement and SI in engaging young persons in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led value creation. The above discussions thus mark the end of my qualitative data analysis as I will now turn my attention to a discussion of the next strand of Concurrent mixed data analyses which is my quantitative data analysis.

5.4a: Phase 1b: Quantitative Data Analysis: Preparing my Quantitative data for Analysis:

Quantitative data analysis is positivistic and focuses on the analysis of numeric data which may be reported and displayed through the use of nominal scales, categorical data and "nominal discrete variables" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.605) which may be used in denoting gender or age group. This section will explore non-parametric data (nominal and categorical data) underpinned by descriptive statistics through the use of mean, standard deviation, percentages, charts, tables and crosstabulation in analysing and reporting the outcomes of my quantitative data (Blaikie, 2003, p.52). While nominal scale or data will depict categories like sex and age groups, ordinal scale as used in my questionnaire will denote order (Cohen, Manion and Morrision, 2011, p.605). The rationale for selecting univariate descriptive analysis as my choice of quantitative data analytic technique is premised on its suitability in facilitating a response to my quantitative research question (Blaikie, 2003, p.51).

I will argue that already completed ordinal scaled Likert-scaled questionnaires will be sorted, categorised and input into Excel for systematic analysis with the aim of highlighting and accounting for any trends (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.266, Oppenheim, 1966, p.187 and Mikkelsen, 2005, p.160). After preparing and analysing my quantitative data through the use of descriptive analysis, I will report and display the results in tables and crosstabulations. Although the analyses of the QUAN and QUAL strands will be obtained separately and independently, there will be a kind of mutual communication between the two approaches in a "semi-iterative manner" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, 266). Each strand will thus be able to inform and shape our conceptual understanding of the other. Blaikie (2003, p.28) argues that the type of quantitative data analyses espoused for a study largely depends "on whether probability or non-probability sampling" techniques had been used. Hence, how the data was selected and the type of data affects the choice of quantitative data analysis techniques (Blaikie, 2003, p.28).

Quantitative data was collected from end users because this study seeks to accurately measure and gauge user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. Hence, I can argue that questionnaires will leverage the opportunity for me to adequately measure that (Oppenheim, 1966, p.187 and Mikkelsen, 2005, p.160). My

primary focus in this study is on the service user; measuring users` perceptions of the concept of their involvement, as positive perceptions by end users of the rationale for their involvement are strategically important for the overall success of this policy. I decided to use questionnaires on end users and not staff because getting an accurate picture of what end users think about the idea of their involvement in the services which they access is key to achieving one of the aims of this study which is to inform, shape and influence professional practice and policymaking in the area of user involvement. I will thus argue that administering questionnaires to end users will enable me to accurately measure their understanding of their involvement as questionnaires are more appropriate for measuring that semi-structured interviews (Blaikie, 2003, p.28). I also administered semi-structured interviews to staff and not end users because I wanted to capture their worldviews with regards to the issue of user involvement as semi-structured interviews are most appropriate for doing that than questionnaires.

This study argues that accurately capturing and articulating user`s perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access is key to the overall success of this policy (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.2). In this light, I do not think that collecting quantitative data from staff will enable me to adequately measure user involvement, since my primary focus is not staff involvement. On the other hand, collecting semi-structured interviews from staff will enable me to investigate into staff understanding of use involvement as a policy mechanism. I did not want to conduct semi-structured interviews with end users as these will not constitute robust instrument for measuring users` perceptions. Secondly because most studies on user involvement have explored qualitative data gathering instruments like focus-group discussions/interviews in gathering data (Beresford and Branfield, 2012, p.33 and Beresford, 2002, p.95). Hence, I wanted to use an instrument which has not often used in order to provide a new conceptual and compelling understanding of user involvement.

I will argue that these three case studies do not need to support or complement survey and semi-structured interviews as I have rather used them as data gathering strategies (Yin, 2009, p.3). I can contend that these three cases have provided the opportunity for me to explore three organisations in investigating the phenomenon under study (Yin, 2003, p.4 and Stake, 2006, p.1). One of the key aims of this study has been to explore both questionnaires and

semi-structured interviews as data gathering instruments while investigating if the evidence gathered through these two instruments is complementary or divergence and why? If evidence from both instruments complements each other, then it will demonstrate that both end users and staff share a common understanding of user involvement. This is important as it demonstrates policy success and underlines the strategic importance of user involvement in the coproduction and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. I can also argue that in the case of divergence, it may underscore the fact that the policy is not making success, or that staff and end users just simply hold different views about the idea of user involvement which can also be promising as there can be richness in diversity.

In order to briefly introduce my three multiple-case studies, I will argue that organisations `A` and `B` provide two key services; counselling for substance and alcohol misuse and sheltered accommodation to homeless destitute young persons. And organisation `C` on the other hand, provides trainings and apprenticeships to young jobless persons classed as NEETs. In term of size, two of the organisations can be referred to as small meaning they have less than 100 service users and the other organisation is medium in size as it has more than 100 but less than 300 service users. The next table will present a summary view of the three organisations which constitute my case studies by capturing size, type and number of end users.

Organisation	Type of Organisation	Size of Organisation	Number of service users	Number which took part in the survey	% which took part in the survey
A	Social Service provider	Small	40-60	35	22.15
B	Social Service provider	Medium	100-125	80	50.63
B	Education & training Provider	Small	60-80	43	27.22
Total				158	100

Table 5.4. Organisations, size and number of service users per case study:

All three organisations of my case study explore various contractual mechanisms with PSOs like LAs in providing public services to my target population. I will argue that out of the 225

questionnaires which were administered on a face-to-face basis, a total of 158 respondents filled and returned their questionnaires thus scoring a respond rate of 70.22%. Respondents from organisations `A` and `B` filled and returned 35 and 80 questionnaires respectively while those of organisation `C` returned 43 questionnaires as depicted in the following bar chart.
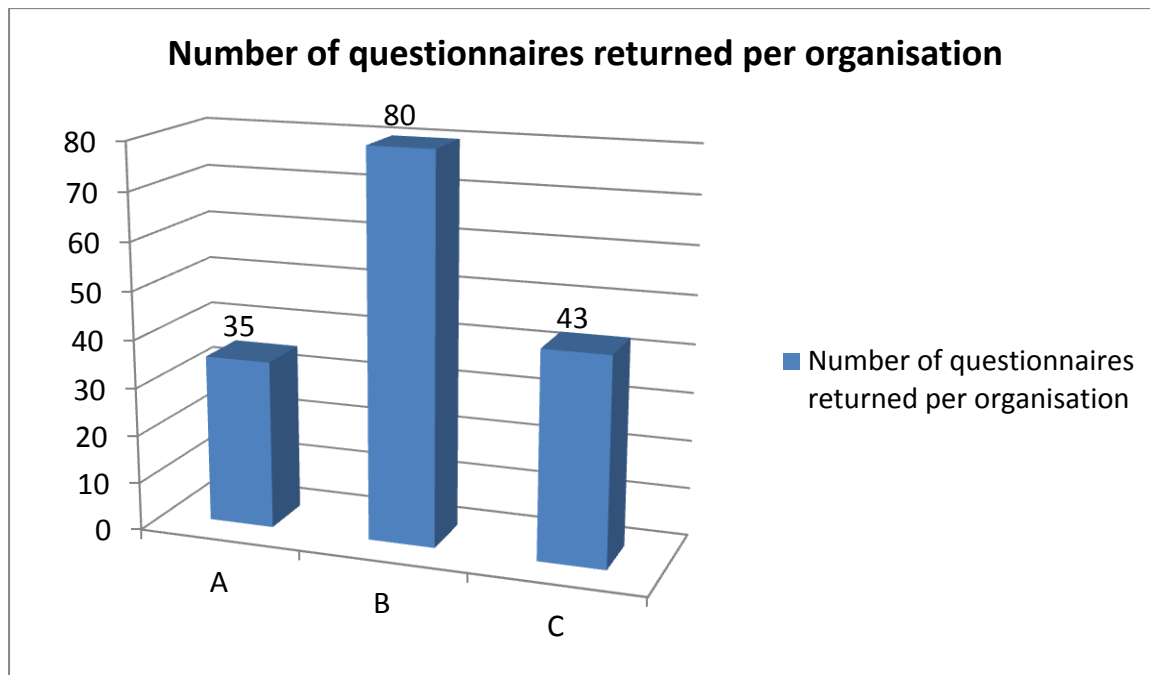
Figure 5.5a: Number of questionnaires returned per organisation.

Two possible reasons explain this good respond rate from my target population which is generally known for not often conforming. First, the use of staff at the organisation to administer the questionnaires as end users often turn to respond better to people they know and trust. Second, the use of Cadbury chocolate sweets as incentives for participation greatly encouraged the high response rate. There were no unfilled items in my questionnaires hence all completed questionnaires generated rich quantitative data which was analysed using Excel. The next subunit will focus on reporting and displaying the results of my quantitative data analysis.

5.4b: Phase 2b: Quantitative Data Analysis: Reporting and Displaying my Results:

The use of descriptive statistics will enable me to describe and "report what has been found in a number of ways" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.606). It will also enable me to make inferences from the sample which I have studied that can be applied to the wider

population from which it was drawn. I will therefore seek to investigate the degree to which independent variables like gender, ethnicity and level of education can influence how end users involve in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. I will argue that "a variable is [a] condition, factor and quality that...can vary from one case to another" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.606). This underscores the fact that a variable can be conceptualised as "a construct operationalized construct or particular property [which are of interest to me] (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.606). An independent variable can be defined as "an input variable, that which causes in part or in total a particular outcome" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, pp.606-607) while the dependent variable denotes outcomes. The next table will seek to illustrate a demography breakdown of the three organisations while capturing the three dependent variables highlighted above.

Organisation	Gender	Total	%	Level of Ed.					Ethnicity						Demographic breakdown		
				1 P	2 S	3 U	4 V	5 O	1 W	2 A	3 M	4 B	5 C	6 O	18 - 20	21 - 22	23 - 24
A	F	10	6.33	2	8	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	8	2	0
Total No. of respondents **35**	M	25	15.82	6	19	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	16	7	2
B	F	35	22.15	7	26	0	2	0	35	0	0	0	0	0	20	12	3
Total No. of respondents **80**	M	45	28.48	8	27	0	10	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	27	12	6
C	F	19	12.03	1	16	0	2	0	15	0	1	3	0	0	14	4	1
Total No. of respondents **43**	M	24	15.19	8	14	0	2	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	12	8	4
Total		158	100	32	110	0	16	0	154	0	1	3	0	0	97	45	16

Table 5.5. A Demographic Breakdown by organisation showing gender, level of education and ethnicity:

Key to the above table:

Level of Education:
P = Primary
S = Secondary
U = University

V = Vocational training
O = Other
Ethnicity:
W = White

A = Asian   M = Mixed Race
B = Black   C = Chinese

A gender breakdown of the above table reads as thus, 10 of the respondents from organisation `A` were females while 25 were males thus representing 6.33% and 15.82% respectively of the total population. On the other hand, 35 of the 80 respondents from organisation `B` were females while 45 were males and these represent 22.15% and 28.48% respectively of the total population. As concerns organisation `C`, 19 of the 43 total respondents were females while 24 were males, thus representing 12.03% and 15.19% respectively of the total population.

I will argue that gender; ethnicity and level of education underscore my conceptual framework. I will therefore seek to investigate and demonstrate whether gender, ethnicity and level of education can influence user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven transformational outcomes. In the above light, when asked about their attitudes towards their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they current access, female respondents to my questionnaires displayed an overall picture as captured in the following pie chart.

Female Attitude towards user involvement

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree

12.5
29.69
57.81
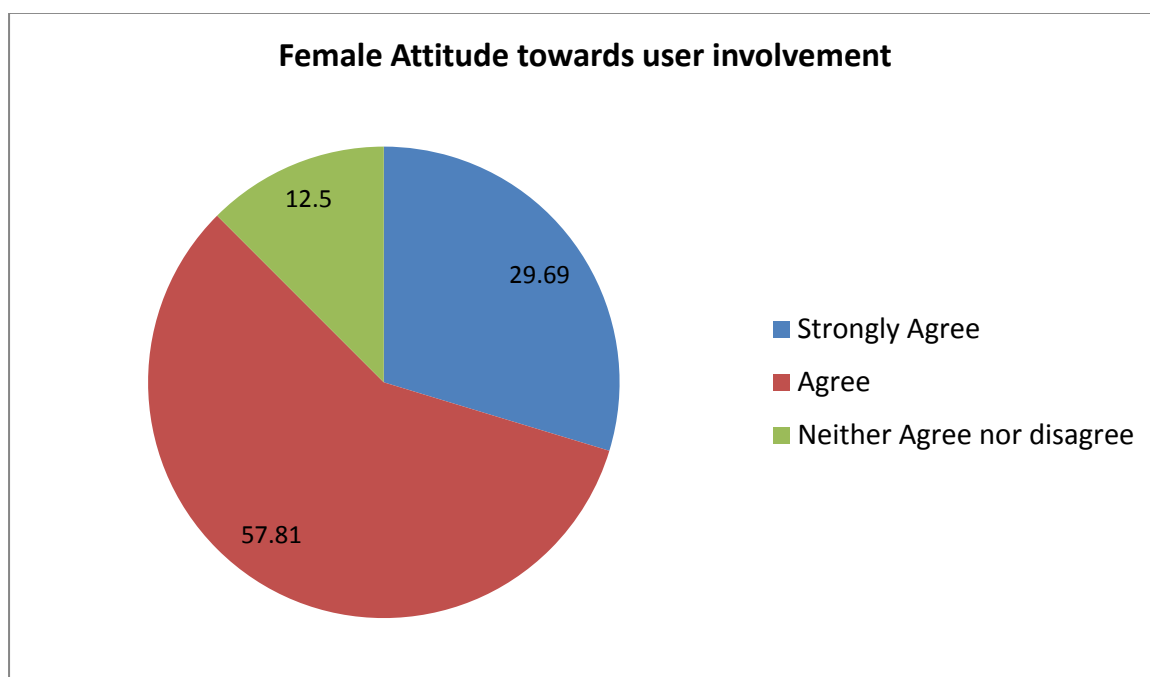
Figure: 5.5b: Exploring female attitude towards user involvement.

I can argue from the above table that when placed on a five-point Likert-scaled ranging from 1-5 with `1` representing `strongly agree` and `5` representing `strongly disagree` 87.5% of

all the females surveyed said they strongly agree` and `agree` in involving in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they current access. This resonates with a mean score of 1.66 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale, falls almost midway between `strongly agree` and `agree`. When asked about their attitude towards the idea of involving in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access, my male respondents displayed the following attitudes.
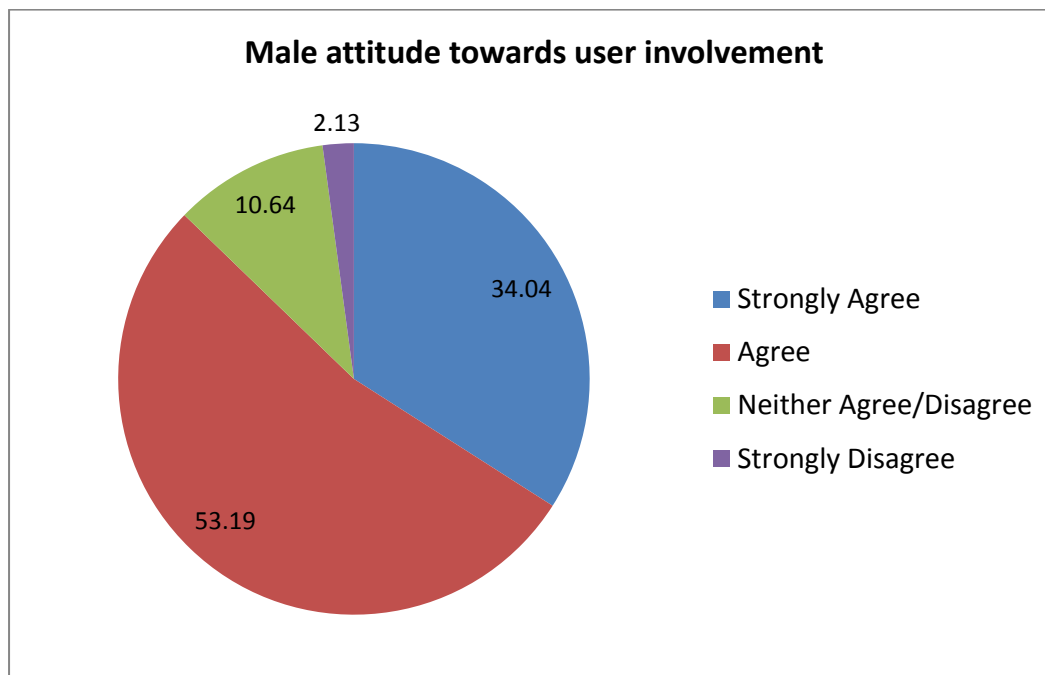
Figure: 5.5c: Exploring male attitude towards user involvement.

I can argue that 87.23% of males surveyed `strongly agree` and `agree` with their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. This is underpinned by a mean score of 1.61 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale, falls almost midway between `strongly agree` and `agree`. This therefore demonstrates two important things; first that there is no significant difference between male and female attitudes towards the idea of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services within my target population. Second, it also demonstrates homogeneity in attitudes towards user involvement between the females and males end users who were surveyed. Evidence from my qualitative data analysis as supported by my quantitative data analysis thus demonstrates that there is no gender disparity between female and male service users` willingness to get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they

currently access. I can argue that their propensity to get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access is down to individual needs and aspirations.

I can also contend that a close look at the ethnic breakdown of the respondents to my questionnaires portrays the following ethnicities.
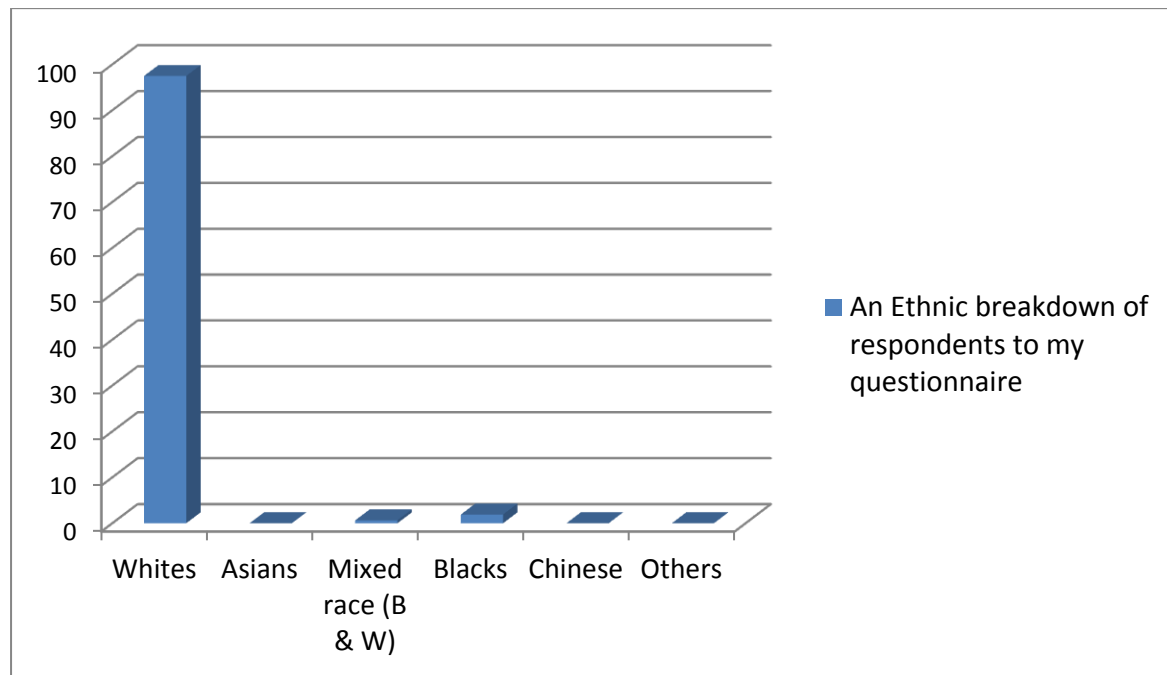
Figure. 5.5d: An Ethnic breakdown of the respondents to my questionnaires.

I can contend from the above table that 97.47% of all the end users surveyed were Whites, while 0.63% were of Mixed race (from Black and White parentage) and 1.9% were Blacks. This largely demonstrates that most of the end users who access services at the organisations under study are Whites with only few end users from other ethnic backgrounds. This is partly explained by the fact that most service users often access public services around where they live or which are based in their community. I can thus contend that the population which was surveyed is largely homogeneous. On the other hand, most of the staff interviewed told me that almost all the young persons who access services (sheltered accommodation, counselling for alcohol and substance misuse and apprenticeships) at their organisations do not have any formal educational qualifications. And despite not having any formal academic or professional qualifications, a large number of the end users surveyed still showed the willingness to get involved in co-designing and co-delivering the services which they access. I can therefore argue that evidence from my primary research thus demonstrates that the key variables of my conceptual framework; ethnicity, gender and level of education do not have

the propensity to either negatively or positively influence end users involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.

I will thus contend that while gender, ethnicity and level of education did not emerge as determinants of end user involvement, high users` perception underpinned by trust, effective communication and genuine involvement emerged as key drivers of effective user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. I can argue that when characterised by trust, genuine involvement and effective communication, high users` perceptions can engineer greater user satisfaction, high service quality and user-led transformational outcomes from public services resulting from user involvement. The next figure seeks to capture the above new variables which emerged from my data analyses.
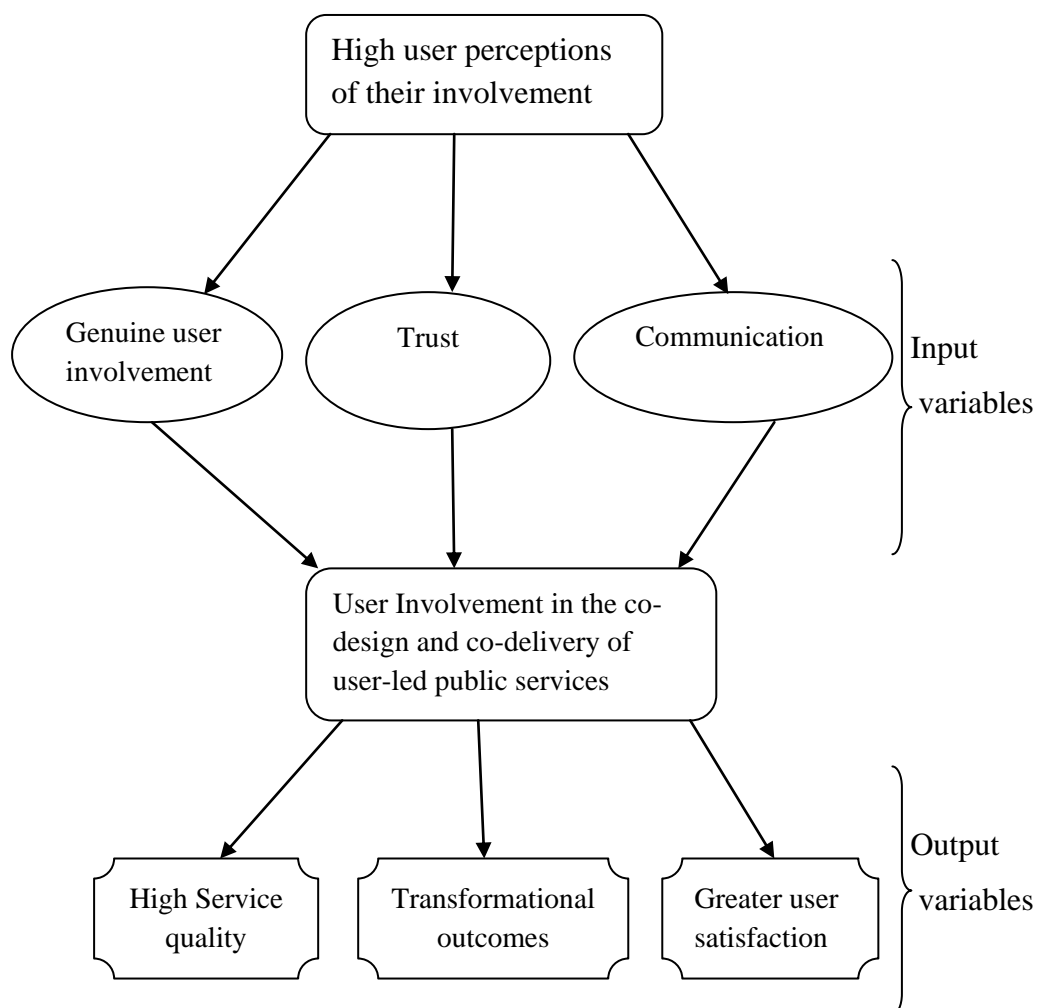
Figure 5.6: Capturing the new input and output variables which emerged from my data analyses.

The above figure portrays that high user perceptions informed by trust, genuine involvement and communication emerged as my new input or independent variables which can influence user involvement thereby resulting in better service outcomes for end users. On the other hand, the above figure also demonstrates that the aforementioned variables when genuinely explored in shaping user involvement can engineer high service quality, transformational outcomes and greater user satisfaction which also emerged as dependent or output variables. I will therefore explore the mean and standard deviation from table 5.3 below in further discussing the above variables.

Questions	Organisation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1) *You like to take part in planning the service you receive?*	A	1.89	0.68
	B	1.80	0.60
	C	1.84	0.95
2) *Staff make sure you take part in planning the service you receive?*	A	1.86	0.73
	B	1.68	0.57
	C	2.21	1.21
3) *Staff are friendly with you when you are taking part in planning the service you receive?*	A	1.80	0.76
	B	1.65	0.60
	C	2.05	1.13
4) *You took part in planning the service which you currently receive?*	A	2.09	0.85
	B	1.65	0.64
	C	2.33	1.21
5) *You are happy to take part in planning the service which you receive?*	A	2.09	0.82
	B	1.63	0.56
	C	1.70	0.71
6) *You are satisfied with the quality of the service you receive?*	A	2.03	0.75
	B	1.63	0.60
	C	1.93	1.08
7) *You are satisfied that staff listen to you when planning the service you receive?*	A	2.20	0.83
	B	1.63	0.56
	C	1.95	1.09
8) *You are happy that staff take your likes into consideration when planning the service you receive?*	A	2.14	0.73
	B	1.76	0.62
	C	1.93	1.03
9) *You are happy that staff take your dislikes into consideration when planning the service you receive?*	A	2.14	0.81
	B	1.71	0.68
	C	1.93	1.10
10) *The service you receive meets your needs?*	A	2.31	1.51
	B	1.81	1.10

	C	2.11	1.62
11) *Taking part in planning the service you receive is a good idea?*	A	2.17	1.73
	B	1.73	1.20
	C	2.14	1.72
12) *You support the idea that other learners should take part in planning the service they receive?*	A	1.91	0.82
	B	1.86	1.29
	C	2.00	1.83
13) *You will like to continue to take part in planning the service you receive?*	A	2.25	2.02
	B	1.91	1.38
	C	1.95	1.90
14) *In future, you will like to take part in planning any service you may want to receive?*	A	2.39	2.14
	B	1.98	1.51
	C	2.09	2.07
15) *Staff support you in taking part in planning the service you receive?*	A	1.39	1.49
	B	2.25	1.46
	C	1.98	1.51
16) *Staff make sure you take part in improving the service you receive?*	A	2.03	0.79
	B	2.00	0.76
	C	2.00	1.00
17) *Planning the service you receive enables you to better understand problems faced?*	A	2.09	0.78
	B	1.90	0.79
	C	1.88	0.96
18) *You like staff to continue to involve you in planning the service you receive?*	A	2.09	0.82
	B	1.83	0.67
	C	1.91	0.97
19) *Supporting you in planning the service you receive is good*	A	2.03	0.86
	B	1.84	0.79
	C	1.77	0.90
20) *Which way of taking part in planning the service you receive is mostly used by staff?*	A	2.03	0.92
	B	1.90	0.70
	C	1.95	0.82

Table: 5.6: Table showing the mean and Standard Deviation of user`s responses to the different questions.

The above table shows the mean and standard deviation of the different questions of my questionnaire as these will provide the windows through which I will explore user involvement in the three organisations in my multiple-case studies in order to identify any similarities and differences. I will argue that the mean of most of the Likert-scaled scores to the different questions in my questionnaire fall between 1.70 and 2.14. This measure of dispersal implies that on a Likert scale ranging from `strongly agree` implying `1` to `strongly disagree` implying `5`, most of the average scores selected by my respondents fall

very nearer to `2` implying `agree`. It demonstrates that many of my respondents agree with many of the statements in my questionnaires. Hence, most end users have positive perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access. The standard deviation of most of the responses especially for organisations `A` and `B` show a slim difference which demonstrates their closeness and the homogeneity of the populations which accesses services at these two organisations. This similarity is accounted for by the fact that both organisations operate in the same industry; social care and provide similar services to young adults from similar social backgrounds.

The key similarity of user involvement in the three organisations is the fact that users generally have a positive perception of their involvement, which is also evidenced by the slim difference in the standard deviation scores which characterise most of the questions. I can also argue that although organisation `C` operates in a different industry and provides difference services (training and apprenticeship) from organisations `A` and `B`, all three organisations share the key aspect of high users` perception of their involvement. This demonstrates three important aspects; first that the population which accesses user-led services at all three organisations is homogeneous. Second, that high users` perception of their user involvement can constitute a common denominator which cuts across public service delivery irrespective of the sector or the services in question. And third, this equally demonstrates the importance of high users` perceptions in the success of the various innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. I can also contend that end users from similar backgrounds accessing similarly services are likely to have similar perceptions about their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of such services. Evidence from the above table further demonstrates that users who access services at organisation `C` turn to have no definite opinion about their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.

This may partly be explained by the very nature of trainings and apprenticeships which are still largely employer-based and driven, with very slight structuring to suit the user`s preferences. For example, most lessons in school settings just like trainings and apprenticeships are largely very structured with the client having no much power in largely influencing what is taught, how it is taught and by whom. On the contrary, a service user may

have more power in influencing and shaping the way socially-oriented services like counselling for substance and alcohol abuse are delivered and how such services can be tailored to encapsulate his/her individual preferences. I can thus argue that end users who attend services at organisations `A` and `B` turn to positively acknowledge the idea of their involvement while those who access services at organisation `C` do not have any definite views. This is explained by a couple of reasons; first it demonstrates that while user involvement is a widely espoused policy mechanism for effective public service delivery, user perceptions of their involvement may vary between the various sectors of the public service. For example the idea of user involvement is more vividly articulated in the health and social care sectors as underpinned by individual budgets and direct payments (PASC, 2007, p.10) than in the education sector where learner involvement is being timidly applied.

This trend may change as one of my interviewees at the training and apprenticeship provider confirmed to me that learner involvement is not only gaining ground in the education sector today but is becoming a key Ofsted requirement. Second, it also demonstrates that user involvement is more widely used in the health and social care sectors than in the education sector partly because the structured nature of education lessons with their fixed syllabuses may offer little room for learners to choose how and what is taught to them and by whom. The health and social care sectors on the other hand, seek to implement more user-focused personalised services as service providers seek to meet the complex, challenging and ever changing requests of users for more individualised services. The next subunit will discuss more evidence emerging from my quantitative data analysis.

5.5: Discussing Evidence Emerging from my Quantitative Data Analysis:

As highlighted above, I will argue that the emergence of user perception as an important variable deserves further discussion since it constitutes a key strand of my quantitative research question which reads as thus;

1) What is the importance of high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes?

I can also argue that the emergence of perception measurement is not only a tool for performance management but it can also be used in gauging and shaping users` opinions of their involvement in delivering and influencing service quality and transforming user satisfaction. I will seek to further analyse and account for the importance of high user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. The central premise of my argument is that high user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes is important in engineering user-led transformational outcomes, high service quality and greater user satisfaction. The rest of my analyses in this subunit will seek to buttress this central thesis of my quantitative data analysis. The rationale for focusing on the above new variables is underscored by their relevance in vividly capturing and providing new insights and understanding into the importance of high users` perception of their involvement. Focusing on the above variables will also ensure clarity and vividness as well as enable me to adequately answer my quantitative research question.

To begin with, end users at the three organisations in my multiple-case studies acknowledge their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access although user involvement is more intense in organisations `A` and `B` than in organisation `C`. User involvement is more intense in organisations `A` and `B` because of its robust implementations in the social care sector partly due to policy changes in recent years and because of the complex nature of most social services which lend credence to personification. Whereas in organisation `C` user or learner involvement is still a novel concept. When asked if they were involved in co-designing the service which they currently access from the organisation administering the questionnaire to them, users` responses could be analysed thus.

Question	Organisation	Mean	Standard Deviation
4) You took part in planning the service which you currently receive?	A	2.09	0.85
	B	1.65	0.64
	C	2.33	1.21
Total Mean		2.02	

Table: 5.7a: Shows user involvement in co-designing the service they currently access.

When placed on a five-point-Likert scale ranging from `strongly agree` to `strongly disagree`, I will argue that while end users in organisation `A` largely agree with the idea of their involvement, those of organisation `B` seem to fall almost midway between `strongly agree` and `agree`. End users of organisation `C` on the other hand, scored a mean of 2.33 which implies that they do not have a definite opinion on the issue of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. I can also argue that end users of the three organisations largely agree with their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access. This is reflected by a general mean score of 2.02 for the three organisations. But a comparative focus on the standard deviation of responses from the three organisations demonstrates a similarity between end users of organisations `A` and `B` and a large difference from organisation `C`.

This also demonstrates sector differences on user involvement amongst end users from different sectors of the public service as they may hold different perspectives on the issue of their involvement. I can also argue that a total of 87.98% of users surveyed acknowledged that they are involved in the co-design and co-delivery of the service(s) which they currently access. This is important for two reasons; first it confirms that recent policy emphasis on user involvement as a way of delivering user-led better outcomes and responsive services is gaining grounds (Magnusson, 2003, p.228, Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.481 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.316). Second, I will also seek to establish if such an active user involvement as evidenced above has any positive impact on users` perceptions of their involvement and satisfaction with service quality.

When asked about their perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access from the three organisations, users` responses indicated the following trends.

Questions	Organisation	Mean	Standard Deviation
11) *Taking part in planning the service you receive is a good idea?*	A	2.17	1.73
	B	1.73	1.2
	C	2.14	1.72

20) *Which way of taking part in planning the service you receive is mostly used by staff?*	A	2.03	0.92
	B	1.9	0.7
	C	1.95	0.82
Total mean		1.99	

Table 5.7b: User Perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services

Here users from all three organisations agree that they have a positive perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access. Such high user perception is important for a couple of reasons; first, it demonstrates that users have a positive attitude towards their involvement which supports the fact that innovative models of users involvement can thrust users in control and command of their lives as well as invigorate users` voice. A comparative analysis of the standard deviation for all two questions shows that the users of organisations `A` and `C` share a similarity on their perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access. This demonstrates that despite mild differences between users who access social care and education or training services, the issue of high user perception of their involvement is a common denominator. Second, it demonstrates that high user perception is important as it can positively influence user satisfaction, trigger high service quality and engineer the delivery of highly responsive user-led transformational outcomes.

I will conclude by arguing that 83.55% of respondents have a high perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-focused services. It will be interesting to further investigate if such a positive or high users` perceptions of their involvement can imply high user satisfaction and high service quality. I will argue that measuring user satisfaction is very important at this moment of budget constraints and reductions in funding to most PSOs. These may limit their capacity to outsource to organisations like VCSOs which are good at providing socially-oriented services to deprived segments of the society (PASC, 2008, 13). Most public service providers today are required to do `more with less` by generating greater user-led value with limited resources. When asked if they were satisfied with the quality of service(s) which they receive from the organisation under study as a result of their involvement, respondents provided information which has been analysed as thus;

Questions	Organisation	Mean	Standard Deviation
6) *You are satisfied with the quality of the service you receive?*	A	2.03	0.75
	B	1.63	0.6
	C	1.93	1.08
7) *You are satisfied that staff listen to you when planning the service you receive?*	A	2.2	0.83
	B	1.63	0.56
	C	1.95	1.09
8) *You are happy that staff take your likes into consideration when planning the service you receive?*	A	2.14	0.73
	B	1.76	0.62
	C	1.93	1.03
9) *You are happy that staff take your dislikes into consideration when planning the service you receive?*	A	2.14	0.81
	B	1.71	0.68
	C	1.93	1.1
10) *The service you receive meets your needs?*	A	2.31	1.51
	B	1.81	1.1
	C	2.11	1.62
15) *Staff support you in taking part in planning the service you receive?*	A	1.39	1.49
	B	2.25	1.46
	C	1.98	1.51
Total mean		1.95	

Table 5.7c: Shows user satisfaction with the quality of service as a result of their involvement.

Most of the respondents provided responses which point to the fact that they are generally satisfied with the quality of service as a result of their involvement. On a five-point Likert-scale, ranging from `strongly agree` to `strongly disagree`, I will argue that the mean of most of the responses from the three organisations falls between 1.63 and 2.25. This implies that most of my respondents agree that they are satisfied with the quality of service which they currently receive from the three organisations. But when asked if taking part in planning the service which they currently receive makes it suitable for them, there were differences in responses between the various organisations. Respondents from organisation `A` strongly agree with the statement, those from organisation `B` agree while those from organisation `C`

do not seem to have any definite opinion, hence they `neither agree nor disagree`. This demonstrates the problematic with user involvement and the conceptual disparity which may emerge from individual users` judgement of service suitability and quality.

This also demonstrates that despite the large appetite for user involvement, they may be users who do not hold any definite opinion on the issue or who may not be bothered about their involvement at all. I will argue that despite this, users are unanimous on the need to access value-creating highly responsive cutting-edge public services tailored to their specific needs. Evidence from the above table thus successfully demonstrates that high user perception of their involvement has the potentials of engineering greater user satisfaction. This is significant at another level as user satisfaction is very important in influencing users` rating of service quality. I will also argue that user satisfaction with the quality of service which they access in linked to users` perceptions of their preferred mode of involvement. When as the question;

21) Which of these ways of taking part in planning the service you receive do staff mostly use? Users' responses were as captured in the following pie chart.
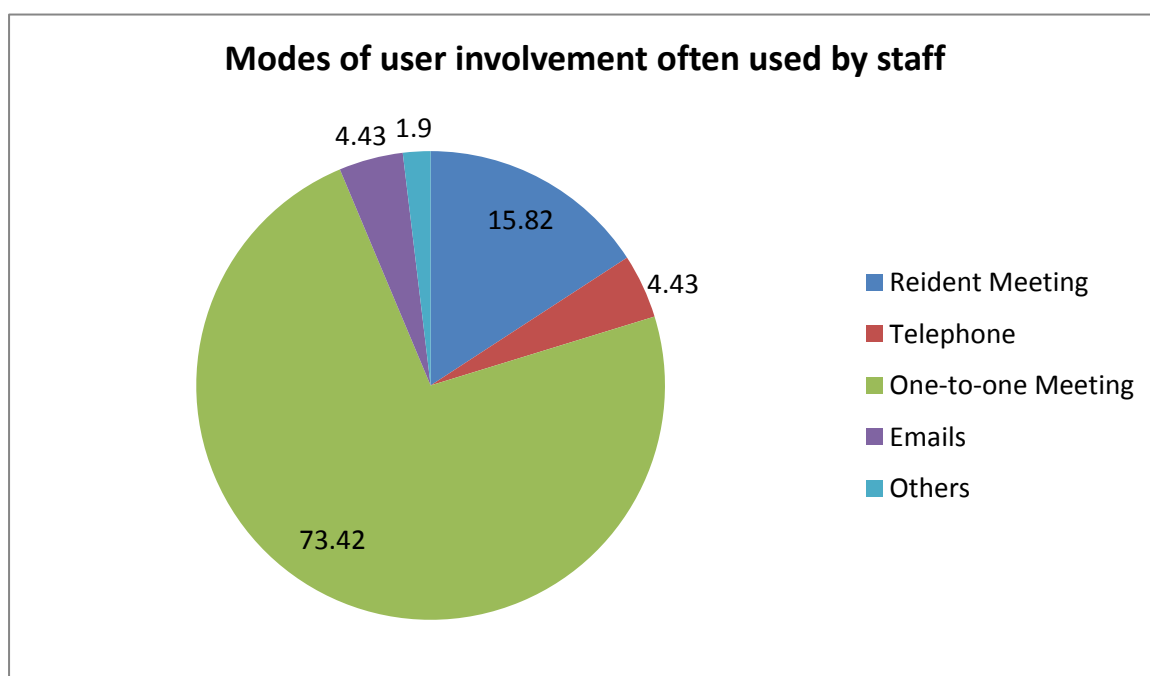
Figure 5.7: User`s preferred mode of involvement.

The above figure demonstrates that one-to-one meeting has emerged as the mode of user involvement most often used by staff while emails and telephones are the least used. This is important as I will further seek investigate if this emergence of one-to-one meeting as the mode of user involvement most often used by staff resonates with user`s preferred mode of involvement. I can also argue that while resident meetings may be good intervention strategies in prisons and probation services as well as social housing where group-based interventions are used, they may not be appropriate in social care because of the intimate and personalised nature of most social services. When asked the question;

22) *Which of these ways of taking part in planning the service you receive do you like most?*

End users` responses were captured as depicted in the following bar chart.
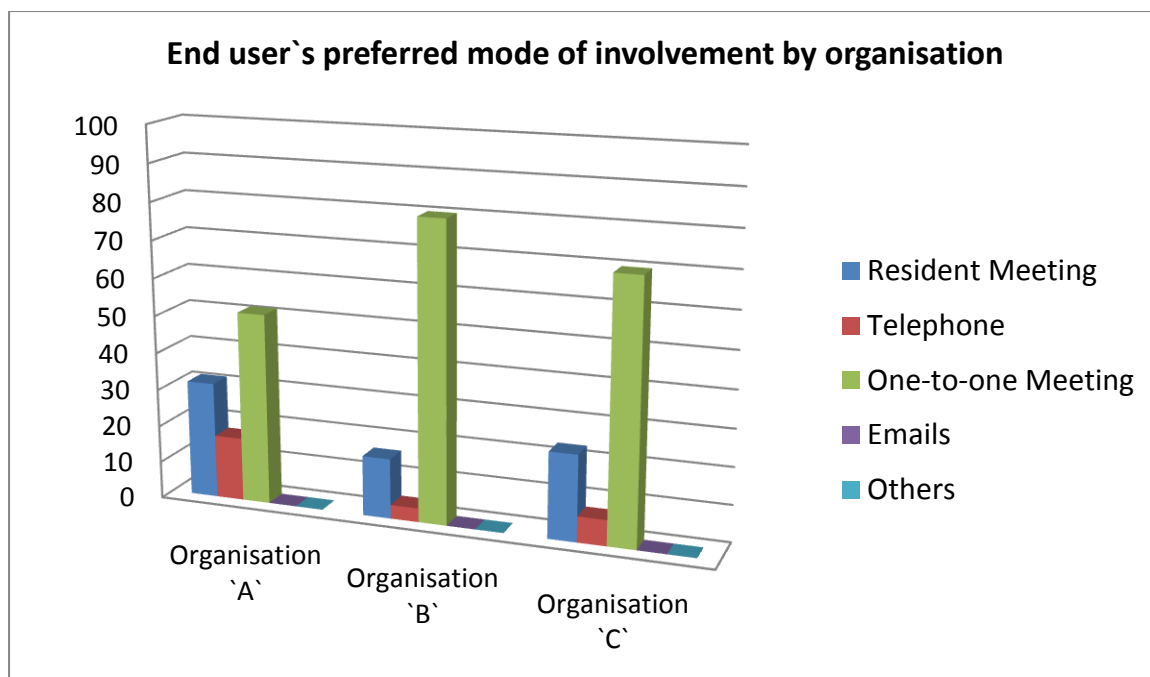
Figure 5.8: End users` preferred mode of involvement by organisation.

When asked about their preferred mode of involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access, respondents from all three organisations expressed a similar preference for one-to-one meetings as their most preferred mode of involvement. For example, a breakdown of user`s preferred mode of user involvement by organisation

demonstrates that, while 31.43% of respondents from organisation `A` prefer resident meetings, 17.14% prefers telephone while 51.43% prefers one-to-one meetings. On the whole, the above chart confirms the emergence of one-to-one meetings with its strong user-led emphasis as the most preferred mode of user involvement with a total of 67.73% of respondents from all the three organisations selecting it. On the other hand, a total of 24.05% of all respondents selected resident meetings (group meetings) as their most preferred mode of involvement. This demonstrates that despite the popularity and effectiveness of one-to-one meetings, user involvement must espouse users` preferred mode of involvement and not adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. Evidence from figures 5.6b and 5.6c demonstrates that both staff and end users hold that one-to-one meeting is the most effective mode of user involvement as such a consensus is important for the sustainable success of this policy initiative.

In a similar vein, when asked about which mode of involvement they think is the most effective, again end users from all the three organisations unanimously selected one-to-one meetings as the most effective mode of user involvement.
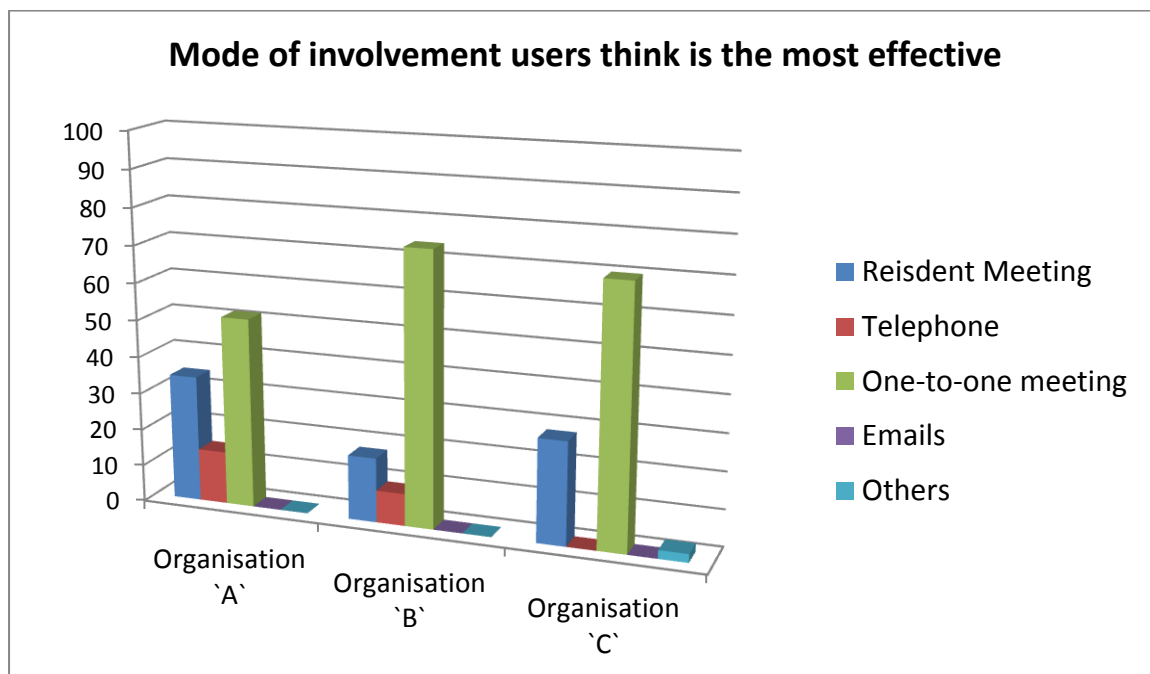
Figure 5.9: Mode of user involvement which end users think is the most effective.

I will argue that 51.43%, 73.75% and 69.77% of respondents from organisations `A`, `B`, and `C` respectively selected one-to-one meetings as the mode of user involvement which they think is the most effective. This demonstrates that as a stronger variant of the User-led model of user involvement one-to-one meeting is perceptually considered by most end users as the most effective mode of user involvement as it seeks to put the user in the driving seat of service design and delivery. I can contend that one-to-one meetings must be premised on users` preference and its comparative advantage in unleashing transformational user-led life changing experiences. A possible reason to explain why most users` prefer one-to-one meeting as their most preferred and the most effective mode of involvement is based on its capacity to empower users and to put them in control of their lives. As I have argued earlier in this subunit, a high user perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services and outcomes, can engineer high service quality and influence how users rate service quality as the next table will illuminate.

Question	Organisation	Mean	Standard Deviation
25) *How will you rate the quality of service you receive?*	A	1.89	0.58
	B	1.70	0.56
	C	2.00	0.95
Total mean		1.86	

Table 5.8: Illustrates a breakdown by organisation of end users` perceptual rating of the quality of service which they access as a result of their involvement.

When placed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from `excellent` to `very poor`, users from all three organisations were unanimous that the quality of the service which they currently receive is good. I can argue from the above table that users from all the three organisations therefore receive mean scores ranging from 1.70 to 2.00. These confirm that users from all the three organisations in my multiple-case studies positively perceive the quality of service as good as a result of their involvement in co-designing and co-delivering such services. This also resonates with the total mean of users` rating of service quality which stands at 1.86, which when placed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from `Excellent` implying `1` to `very poor` implying `5` demonstrates that service quality is good. On the whole, 30.38% and 60.13% of respondents rate the quality of the service which they currently access as a result

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of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of such services as excellent and good respectively. This is important as it confirms my working hypothesis that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can lead to high and better service quality.

I can therefore conclude from the above quantitative analyses that, user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services has the potentials of delivering both user-led transformational outcomes and greater user satisfaction. This also supports the conceptual understanding that exploring innovative models of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can deliver high quality user-focused outcomes (Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315 and Smith et al., 2008, p.298). The next subunit will focus on merging, integrating, consolidating and comparing results from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study.

5.6: Phase 3: Consolidating and comparing results from my Concurrent MM data Analysis:

I will consolidate, merge and integrate research findings from the QUAL and QUAN strands into my MM data analyses in order to achieve complementarity, enhance and strengthen my MM research findings as well as answer my MM research question. I will argue that integrating and consolidating findings from both strands of my study will enable me to identify and account for any divergences or convergences. But I will also argue that research findings which will emerge from mixing, merging and integrating results from the QUAN and QUAL strands of my study will be robust and more compelling than if I had either used the qualitative or quantitative research methods. I will also contend that integrating findings from the above QUAL and QUAN strands does not imply that I am trying to create a single interpretation.

On the contrary it implies that I am attempting to create space for multiple perspectives and interpretations of meaning (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.305). Integrating findings from both strands will enable me to harmonise qualitative thematic outcomes of user involvement and their modes of involvement with my quantitative analyses of users` perceptions of their

involvement, service quality and satisfaction. The following table will merge, consolidate and integrate the key findings from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study into my MM data analyses.

QUAL findings	QUAN findings	Integration and Consolidation of findings	Observations
Themes: e.g. User Involvement	83.55% Total mean score of 1.99	83.55% of all end users surveyed have a high perception of their involvement which resonates with a total mean score of 1.99 which implies `agree` on a five-point Likert Scale. These quantitative scores emphasise my qualitative theme of user involvement in demonstrating that high user perceptions of their involvement can trigger high quality user-led outcomes.	Quantitative analyses confirm qualitative findings.
Transformational Outcomes	86.71% Total mean score of 2.00	86.71% of those surveyed perceptually think that their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access is delivering greater satisfaction to them. This is supported by the total mean score of 2.00 as end users of all three organisations agree that their involvement is generating greater user-led satisfaction. This confirms the conceptual understanding that high user perceptions of their involvement can unleash highly responsive user-led transformational outcomes.	Quantitative analyses confirm qualitative findings.
Service Improvement	90.51% Total mean of 1.86	90.51% of users surveyed think service quality has improved as a result of their involvement. This resonates with the total mean score of 1.86 as end users of all three organisations rate service quality as good as a result of their involvement. This is important as it supports the view that user involvement in the co-design	Quantitative analyses confirm qualitative findings.

		and co-delivery of user-driven services can engineer better service quality and greater user-led value creation.	
Modes of user involvement. e.g. One-to-one Meetings and Resident Meetings	67.73% 24.05%	67.73% of all users surveyed selected one-to-one meetings as their most preferred mode of involvement while 24.05% preferred resident meetings. On the other hand, 73.42% of users confirmed that staff often use one-to-one meetings when involving them in the co-design and co-delivery of services while 15.82% said that staff often use resident meetings.	Quantitative analyses confirm qualitative findings.

Table 5.9: Integrating and consolidating thematic and statistical findings

Evidence from my QUAL and QUAN data analyses is complementary as my QUAL data-driven themes like transformational outcomes, user involvement and service improvement are confirmed by my QUAN data analysis. For example, end users who were surveyed registered a total mean score of 2.0 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale implies `agree` which demonstrates that they are satisfied with the quality of services which they receive as a result of their involvement in their co-production. Although evidence from both strands of my study show an overwhelming inclination for user involvement, staff expressed worries by highlighting some barriers while 5.06% of users surveyed acknowledged having a low perception of their involvement.

Staff interviewed cited one-to-one meetings which are a variant of the user-led model of user involvement as the most used mode of user involvement. This resonates with 67.73% of all the users surveyed who selected one-to-one meetings as their preferred mode of involvement. The rationale for exploring one-to-one meetings as the most preferred mode of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven services is based on its ability to promote user`s privacy, confidentiality, dignity and greater participation. The above analyses demonstrate that when merged, triangulated and integrated evidence from both strands of my study complement each other and thus leverage new conceptual understandings on user

involvement. Merging and integrating the QUAL and QUAN results in my mixed data analyses therefore constitute a key rationale for utilising the MM research design in this study.

The above assertion underpins a key aspect of MM research design; the need to merge or integrate results from both strands of the study at the final phase (Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006, p.12, Morgan, 2007, p.48 and Bryman, 2006, p.97). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p.17) concur this by arguing that researchers exploring MM research designs need to ensure that findings from both strands of the study are `mixed` or integrated at some stage of the study. Teddlie and Tashokkori (2009, p.27) refer to this as "the integration of statistical and thematic techniques" as evidenced in table 5.9 above. This study has successfully achieved data and methodological triangulations and like Luzzo`s (1995, p.319), it has successfully demonstrated how results of a concurrent triangulated MM research design can be merged. The next subunit will summarise the key arguments of this chapter in the conclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter explores thematic analysis and descriptive statistics in analysing my QUAL and QUAN data respectively. It thus explores thematic analysis in capturing themes such as service improvement and transformational outcomes while identifying the following four models of user involvement; User-led, Group-led, Staff-driven and Digital-driven models. My quantitative data analyses on the other hand confirms my working hypothesis in proving that high user`s perceptions of their involvement can trigger greater user satisfaction, high service quality and better user-led outcomes. In proposing a Social Benefit Model of user involvement, this chapter argues that user involvement must re-position itself on new user-led innovative, empirical and conceptual grounds in order to avoid collapsing into a heap of inconsequentiality. The next chapter argues that inferences gleaned from my QUAL and QUAN MM data analysis will be combined, merged and integrated into meta-inferences in order to ensure the integrity, trustworthiness and transferability of my research findings (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286).

Chapter Six

Inference Making, Interpretations and Discussions of Research Findings

Introduction:

This study argues that integrating, merging and combining inferences from the QUAL and QUAN strands of an MM research study is a vital feature of MM research design. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.287) contend that inference making comprises the interpretations and conclusions postulated by a researcher on the basis of the data which was collected and analysed. Such interpretations while building on a faithful interpretation of participants' responses may also explore memos, field notes, the researchers' knowledge and experience as well as context and the research findings. My inferences will not only focus on answering my MM research question but will also seek to provide new insights and understanding of the phenomenon under study. This chapter will comprise two sections, section one will discuss inference making in MM research while section two will concentrate on presenting and discussing my research findings. I will argue that interpreting and making inferences from my MM data analyses will authenticate my conclusions while providing new insights into our conceptual understanding of the different models of user involvement. I will begin by arguing that an understanding of inference making in both the QUAL and QUAN research methods is a necessary prelude for conceptualising, interpreting and drawing robust inferences in MM research.

6.1: Section 1: Interpreting and making inferences in MM research: An Overview of inference making in the QUAN and QUAL Methods:

Discussing the process of inference making and the characteristics of good inferences in both QUAN and QUAL methods are crucial points of departure for conceptualising and understanding inference making in an MM research study. The rationale here is that, inference making in MM research usually builds on inferences generated from the QUAN and QUAL strands in order to deliver "a comprehensive and complete understanding of the results" (Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova, 2004, p.8). Miller (2003 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.288) contends that inference making can be conceptualised as a two step interactive process of deducing meaning from data and drawing credible conclusions based

on the research findings. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.289) identify knowledge of context and participant`s culture as well as the need to know "thy participants" as a golden rule for making compelling inferences in the human and behavioural science. Good inference making in QUAL methods should be authentic and seek to capture meaning from the participant`s perspective.

Closely related to the notion of inference making is the idea of inference quality which refers to the quality of the inferences generated from the data. Inference quality in QUAN method involves both internal and external validities while in QUAL method, it focuses on issues around trustworthiness and transferability of research findings. This study argues that inference making in both the QUAL and QUAN methods should seek to depict participant`s views on the phenomenon under investigation. I will argue that my research questions and objectives will inform the conceptual focus of the inferences which I will postulate. I will not only limit myself to making inferences in order to adequately answer my research questions but I will also seek to unleash new insights and conceptual understanding of user involvement. Inference making in QUAN research is referred to as validity while in QUAL research it is referred to as trustworthiness (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006, p.49). This section will present an overview of issues of validity and trustworthiness in QUAN and QUAL research methods respectively as well as highlight the key characteristics of inference making in QUAN and QUAL research.

Druckman (2005 quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.295) argues that both internal and external validities are positivistic in nature whereas QUAL method should focus on authenticity as the researcher seeks to capture social constructs from "the joint vantage points of researcher and participant". Guba and Lincoln (1989 cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.295) suggest that good inferences in QUAL method should be credible as the researcher seeks to explore social constructs in authenticating the worldview of participants. Such a portrayal of the social constructs of participants must be transparent, lucid, and cogent while spanning the entire research process thus underpinning the rationale(s) and instruments through which participants were selected (Bryman, p.284). Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.295) suggest "dependability audit, confirmability audit, member checks, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy and thick

descriptions" as mechanisms for strengthening inferences quality in QUAL methods. I have used member checks and data, analytic and methodological triangulations as mechanisms for strengthening the credibility of my QUAL inferences. For example, I did email my interview transcripts to my interviewees for confirmation that they reflect what they said and I also emailed my themes to them to check if they share the same understanding with me. I have equally triangulated, merged and integrated key findings from my QUAL and QUAN data analyses as further mechanisms for strengthening my research findings.

On the other hand, inference making in QUAN methods seeks to establish "relations between variables while providing reasonable certainty" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.297). Shadish, Cook and Campbell, (2001 cited in Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006, p.49) while building on earlier works by Campbell, classify validity into; statistical conclusion validity, internal validity, construct validity and external validity. Validity is a long established concept in QUAN research and Remenyi et al., (1998, p.291) define it as "the degree to which what is observed or measured is the same as what was purported to be observed or measured". The Positivistic paradigm which resonates with QUAN research and embedded in Pragmatism holds that validity can be measured through four key indicators; construct validity, external validity, internal validity and reliability (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.179). These may also include the "validity of data...[and the]..overall validity of the research" (Punch, 2005, p.29). The above types of validity emphasise the need to deliver compelling research results and findings while ensuring internal coherence and generalisability (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008, pp.87-88). The following dimensions of validity can be identified in QUAL, QUAN and MM research approaches.

QUAN Research	QUAL Research	MM Research
Internal Validity	Credibility / Authenticity	Inference quality
External Validity	Transferability	Inference transferability
Reliability	Dependability	
Objectivity	Confirmability	

Table 6.1: Understanding dimensions of validity within the various research Methods:

The above table shows that while the QUAN researcher refers to the internal consistency in the results of a QUAN study as internal validity, a QUAL researcher will refer to the same phenomenon as credibility and the mixed methodologist will refer to it as inference quality. Inference quality in MM research can also be referred to as credibility or internal validity while inference transferability is the equivalence of QUAN external validity and QUAL concept of transferability (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286). I will argue that inference quality in MM research is shaped by the conceptual conclusions and interpretations drawn from the QUAN and QUAL strands as well as by the quality of the research design, integrity and interpretative rigour (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286). After presenting the above overall perspectives on inference making in QUAL and QUAN methods, I will now turn my attention to inference issues in MM research design.

6.2: Interpreting and making inferences in MM research:

I will draw inspiration from (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.287) in arguing that inference making in MM research involves three interrelated activities; interpreting the outcomes of data analysis, ensuring good inference quality and the transferability of research results. By inference, is meant the "quality of conclusions" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.287) and interpretation articulated while inference transferability refers to application of research findings to similar contexts and situations. I will explore Teddlie and Tashakkori`s, (2009, p.287) "integrative framework for inference quality and transferability" in postulating trustworthy and high quality transferable inferences. The rationale for adopting Teddlie and Tashakkori`s (2009, p.300), `integrated framework` for making `meta-inferences` in this MM research is premised on its easy usability and capacity to widen our understanding of the phenomenon under study. It is also worth noting that other frameworks for integrating inferences in MM studies have equally been propounded by mixed methodologists, notable amongst which is the "legitimation model" (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006, p.48). My inferences and interpretations will largely draw impetus from my research findings

The central strategy for integrating and merging the QUAN and QUAL findings of this MM study will be a tabulated "side-by-side comparison for the merged data analysis...together...in a summary table" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.223). The rationale for using a table in integrating and merging findings from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my Concurrent MM

data analysis is to ensure that findings gleaned from both strands are vividly perusable and comprehensible at a glance. Merging and integrating findings will also enable me to answer the following MM research question;

1) To what extent do the qualitative analysis of themes and innovative models of user involvement and the quantitative analysis of users` perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services converge or diverge?

I will argue that inferences generated from both strands of my MM research design will be "integrated and synthesized to form meta-inferences" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, 266) in order to adequately answer the above MM research question and to leverage new frontiers of understandings. I will equally contend that merging, triangulating and integrating findings from both strands of my study will achieve complementarity and constitute the key strategic rationales for using MM research design in this study (Collins and O`Cathain, 2009, p.4, Yin, 2006, p.41, Greene, Kreider and Mayer, 2005, p.274). My inferences will thus seek to develop `interpretative rigour` while enabling me to attain my research objectives by effectively answering my MM research question.

I will also argue that making trustworthy and compelling inferences and interpretations in MM research draws on a "coherent conceptual framework" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286) in order to adequately answer the research question. This will also depend on the quality of data collected or research design and the quality of `interpretative rigour` which I will generate from my merged MM research data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.287). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p.239), contend that design quality will include issues such as the suitability of research questions, "fidelity of the quality and rigor of procedures, consistency across all aspects of the study, and [the] analytic implementation of procedures". On the other hand, `interpretative rigour` as suggested by Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009, p.287) underlines issues like "consistency with findings, with theory, interpretations...[and] plausible conclusions" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, 239).

But the distinctive nature of MM research as it involves the QUAN and QUAL strands requires vibrant knowledge of inference making and interpretations from both the QUAN and

QUAL methods. Inference making in MM research can leverage opportunity for convergence or divergence between the QUAN and QUAL strands of the study. It can also offer a platform for multiple interpretations of meaning and for leveraging new insights (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286 and Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.233). But this conceptualisation of inference making as both a process and an outcome is interactive, intertwined and symbiotic without a clear-cut distinction of where one ends and the other begins as they both feed on and inform each other. Hence, the emergence of discrepancy in findings between the both strands of an MM research design does not necessarily imply a defect in design as it may leverage the opportunity for multiple interpretations of meaning. It is also worth noting that "a researcher`s inferences may or may not be acceptable to other scholars" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.288) as multiple interpretations of meaning may be evidenced. Robust MM research inference making will enable my findings to be population and ecologically transferable as this will imply external validity.

I will also argue that MM inferences generated from the QUAN and QUAL strands of my study possess the potentials for Ecological and population transferability. Ecological transferability refers "to the degree to which [my] inference...recommendations are applicable" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.311) to similar settings. Population transferability on the other hand "refers to the degree to which [my] inferences and recommendations are applicable" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.312) to groups similar to the one discussed in my study. I will equally confirm that, findings from this MM study are applicable to similar organisations and end user groups drawn from similar socio-economic backgrounds within the country, hence the results of my study are therefore ecologically and population transferable. This implies that my research findings can be transferred to similar settings and organisations providing similar young person-led socially-oriented services within the same geographical and national terrain. The next subunit will merge and integrate the inferences emanating from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study.

6.3: Combining, merging and integrating inferences from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my MM research design

Interpreting meaning and drawing inferences on the bases of my QUAN and QUAL data analyses will require me to integrate and merge my QUAN and QUAL research findings while identifying elements of convergence or divergence. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p.293) argue that while purpose, the quality of data collection and analysis and rationale are important, the quality of inferences made in largely down to the success of blending, integration and connection of the QUAN and QUAL inferences. I will now turn my attention to integrating, combining and merging the QUAL and QUAN stands of my study. The substance of this subunit will focus on making robust inferences and interpretations based on the initial results of my investigations into user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven services. This study argues that user involvement fits into the broader context of Public sector reforms as earlier initiatives like the Citizen`s Charter and the Personalisation and Choice Agendas emphasise the supreme positions of users in public service delivery (Boyne, Entwistle and Ashworth, 2010, p.3).

But the insistence on user involvement as a public sector reform mechanism for delivering greater user-led transformational outcomes marks a paradigm shift with citizens referred to as consumers and later as users of public services (Shaw, 28). This resonates with the Coalition Government`s initiative to shift power away from White Hall and bureaucrats to Town Hall and local and independent service providers as well as citizens or service users (HM Government, 2010, p.5). Users or citizens' empowerment is crucial as users can hold service providers and professionals accountable just like citizens can hold their government accountable. Perception measurement has become as a tool for gauging and measuring users` or citizens` understandings of the success, failure or appropriateness of various policy reforms (Ormston, 2010, p.2). I will argue that perception measurement has emerged as a key strand of the UK`s public sector reforms especially for gathering user feedbacks while consulting citizens on key policy initiatives. The next table will capture staff and user perceptions and understanding of the idea of user involvement.

QUAL Results	QUAN Results						MM Results
	Users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	
Staff were unanimous that user involvement is a brilliant idea but argued that it requires some limitations.	57	75	18	7	1	158	All the staff interviewed and 83.55% of users surveyed have a positive perception of their involvement. This resonates with a total mean score of 1.99 which corresponds on a five-point Likert scale to `agree`
	36.08%	47.47%	11.39%	4.43%	0.63%	100%	
	The mean of relevant scores gathered from my quantitative questionnaires ranges from 1.73 to 2.14 which when place on a five-point Likert scale falls around `agree`. This demonstrates that end users surveyed agree that they have a high perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.						
All staff interviewed said they were positive about the future of user involvement although they want more policy clarity around what the various stakeholders can expect from user involvement.	User perceptions of their future involvements in the co-design and co-delivery of services.						Users indicate a total mean score of 2.09 which implies that they agree with future involvements in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. This underpins the fact that all the staff and 83.54% of users surveyed sound positive of their future involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services.
	Question	Organisation	Mean		Standard Deviation		
	13	A	2.25		2.02		
		B	1.91		1.38		
		C	1.95		1.90		
	14	A	2.39		2.14		
		B	1.98		1.51		
		C	2.09		2.07		
	Total Mean		2.09				

Table: 6.2: Merging and integrating the results of the QUAL and QUAN strands of my MM research design.

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Two very vital findings have emerged from the above table; first there is sufficient evidence to confirm that staff and end users have a positive perception of user involvement as a tool for actively engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. While all nine staff interviewed were unanimous that user involvement is a brilliant initiative, 83.55% of users surveyed have a high perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. This underpins a total mean score of 1.99 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from `strongly agree` represented by `1` to `strongly disagree` represented by `5` will fall very near to `agree`. This therefore demonstrates that most of the end users surveyed agree that they have a high perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. Second, although staff are quite positive about user involvement, they seem to have some worries about the lack of clarity around the whole initiative especially around what staff and end users can expect from user involvement. It is also very clear that despite the huge support for user involvement, from both staff and end users, there are a few end users who are either not bothered (13.92%) or do not want to get involved at all (2.54%). I will argue that P-SEPs engaged in public service delivery must seek to explore not only innovative models of user involvement but should clearly establish what user involvement will seek to achieve.

They should therefore clearly establish what end users can expect from their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. I will contend that while most staff interviewed were unanimous that they often explore innovative models of user involvement in engaging end users involvement in the co-production of user-led services, there was no conceptual consensus on what staff and users can expect from user involvement. In a similar vein, all nine staff interviewed were unanimous that they will continue to engage end users and are positive about future involvement of end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven service. This resonates with a total mean score of 2.09 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale is very near to `agree` implying that end users concord that they will like to get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of future services. I will argue that end users` inclination towards future involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they will access is critically strategic for the sustainability of this policy initiative. It is evidenced from the above analyses that the challenge for staff, professionals and practitioners is to resolve the often competing agendas and challenging and conflicting demands from end users for more cutting-edge responsive and personalised public services.

This implies ensuring that those who are hesitant about getting involved also have access to high quality responsive services. I will argue that a high perception of user involvement from both staff and end users will lead to a better user-staff relationship, trust, user satisfaction, greater user-led value creation and improved service quality. I can also contend that perception measurement may not be very accurate or may not present an accurate picture of what staff and end users think about the concept of user involvement but evidence from similar studies with even larger sample sizes confirm my findings. First, evidence from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders Programmes[9] is consistent with my findings. Staff and users interviewed and surveyed in the case studies for these programmes have high perceptions of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven services (Ormston, 2010, p.5). Similar studies carried out in the UK for the 2020 Public Service Trust by two very authoritative bodies, Ipsos Social Research Institute and Ipsos MORI on user perceptions of their local services reveal consistent and confirmatory findings (Ormston, 2010, p.2).

For example, Ipsos MORI realised that people turn to have a high perception of the local services they access and a lower perception of the same service at the national level, hence 69% of those surveyed thought their local NHS was delivering good services while 28% thought the NHS was delivering a good service nationally. Despite policy gravitation towards user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led value creation, there is evidence from the health and social care sectors that older end users have less appetite for involvement (PASC, 2007, p.7). I will argue that there is growing evidence from my study as displayed in the table below of positive energy of user willingness for involvement. This demonstrates that the public, citizens and users generally identify benefits of user involvement or citizen engagement like having more control over services, greater voice, choice and empowerment as well as greater satisfaction and high service quality. The next table thus seeks to establish a link between the themes of user involvement and high service quality. It will explore quantitative evidence on users' enthusiasm for involvement in demonstrating that end users also seem to make a link between their involvement and high service quality.

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[9] Neighbourhood Pathfinder Programmes were set up in 2001 "to enable communities and local services to improve local outcomes, by improving and joining up local services, and making them more responsive to local needs (CLG, 2008 cited in Ormston, 2010, p.5). Pathfinders were expected to involve end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led responsive outcomes as well as improve on user-staff relationship and trust.

QUAL Results	QUAN Results							MM Results
The theme of user involvement	Users` likeability for their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services they currently access.							Like all the staff interviewed, users from all three organisations achieved a mean score ranging from 1.77 to 2.03 on a five-point Likert scale, which implies that they `agree` that they like the idea of their involvement. This is supported by 87.34% of users surveyed who confirmed that they like being involved in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.
	Question	Organisation		Mean		Standard Deviation		
	19	A		2.03		0.86		
		B		1.84		0.79		
		C		1.77		0.90		
The theme of high and better service quality.	Users perspectives on service quality as a result of their involvement in co-designing services							All the staff argued that user involvement can improve service quality. This is supported by a total mean score of 1.86 which along with a mean range starting from 1.70 to 2.00 when placed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from excellent to very poor, falls around `good` implying that users rate the quality of service as good. This is supported by the fact that 60.13% of all respondents surveyed rate service quality as good.
	Question	Organisation		Mean		Standard Deviation		
	25	A		1.89		0.58		
		B		1.70		0.56		
		C		2.00		0.95		
		Total mean		1.86				
	Capturing responses to question 25 in %							
	organisation	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Total	
	A	8	23	4	0	0	35	
		22.86%	65.71%	11.43%	0	0	100%	
	B	28	48	4	0	0	80	
		35%	60%	5%	0	0	100%	
	C	12	24	4	1	2	43	
		27.91%	55.81%	9.30%	2.33%	4.65%	100%	
	Total %	48	95	12	1	2	158	
		30.38%	60.13%	7.59%	0.63%	1.27%	100%	

Table: 6.3: Merging and integrating more results from my QUAL and QUAN data analyses.

All the staff interviewed unanimously mentioned the idea of user involvement as a recurrent theme dominating public service reforms and delivery at the moment. End users surveyed achieved mean scores ranging from 1.77 -2.03 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale fall between `strongly agree` and `neither agree nor disagree` but very much nearer to `agree`. Hence, most of my respondents or 87.34% of those surveyed confirm that they like the idea of involving in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.

Staff generally acknowledged that user involvement can enable users to identify their priorities, engineer more targeted allocation of resources, improve access for `hard-to-reach groups` and leverage high service quality. 90.51% of respondents think their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services is raising service quality and delivering user-focused transformational outcomes (Duffy and Chan, 2009, p.8). Duffy and Chan (2009, p.8) of Ipsos MORI also argue that users` high perception of local services is linked to their satisfaction of where they live and with other "key indicators of outcomes". I will argue that it is important for service providers to understand the key drivers and importance of high user perceptions. It is thus clear that high user perception is not only intricately linked to user satisfaction but can provide vital information on issues like variations in perceptions between demographic or ethnic groups.

On the other hand, some of the staff interviewed did caution against any blanket application of user involvement as some end users are either not bothered or do not want to get involved at all. This is corroborated by evidence from my quantitative data which captures the views of 11.39% respondents who indicated that they were not bothered about involving in the co-design and co-delivery of services while 1.27% said they do not want to get involved at all. I must acknowledge that there is a general consensus in favour of user involvement from policymakers, politicians, end users themselves, practitioners and professionals because of the huge user-focused benefits which it can unleash. I must also add that there must be sufficient safeguards for the minority of users who are not bothered or do not want to be involved. Their rights to unblemished high quality public services must equally be of great priority. The next table captures staff and user understandings of the view that user involvement can deliver transformational outcomes, user empowerment and responsive services.

QUAL Results	QUAN Results						MM Results
	User involvement can increase users' satisfaction with the quality of the service which they access						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	
The theme of transformational outcomes	60	77	17	1	3	158	All the staff interviewed and 86.71% of users surveyed agree that user involvement can lead to better outcomes. This is supported by a total mean score of 2.00 which reflects `agree` when placed on a five-point scale.
	37.97%	48.73%	10.77%	0.63%	1.90	100%	

QUAL Results	QUAN Results				MM Results
The theme of responsive services and user empowerment.	Users think their involvement is leading to more suitable and responsive services.				86.71% of users surveyed and all the staff interviewed said user involvement can leverage responsive services and increase user empowerment. This is supported by a standard deviation ranging from 0.78 to 0.96 which demonstrates a strong similarity and homogeneity between respondents of all three organisations.
	Questions	Organisation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
	17	A	2.09	0.78	
		B	1.90	0.79	
		C	1.88	0.96	

Table: 6.4: Merging and integrating QUAL and QUAN results in my mixed data analysis.

Evidence from the above table confirms the understanding that user involvement can leverage better and user-led transformational outcomes which are more tailored to addressing users' specific needs. There is a strong similarity between the three organisations as evidenced by the standard deviation range of 0.78 to 0.96 which demonstrates that the population of all three organisations is homogeneous. This resonates with the fact that most staff interviewed and 86.71% of end users surveyed agree that user involvement can lead to greater user-driven outcomes. All the staff interviewed and 86.71% of users surveyed were unanimous that user

involvement can provide opportunities for user empowerment and responsive cutting-edge user-led services tailored to users` aspirations and needs. I will argue that there is a growing body of scholarship which confirms that user involvement in the co-design of services can lead to responsive user-led transformational outcomes (Smith et al., 2008, p.305 and PASC, 2007, p.7). Despite the above assertion, tokenistic, inappropriate and poorly conceptualised models of user involvement can create tensions, disillusionment and frustration (Forbes and Sashidharan, 1997, p.486 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.316).

In the same light, fragile user involvement infrastructure, the lack of clarity around users` expectations from their involvement and the lack of a firm commitment to experimenting with innovative new ways of involving users can hinder genuine user involvement. I will also argue that staff and professionals should seek to identify where and when the window for user involvement can be genuinely explored while seeking to encourage active user engagement. Genuine user involvement must seek to explore new frontiers and innovative tools by tapping into user expertise and knowledge as well as prompt users to provide new insights which can engineer more user-led value creation. The next table will vividly capture staff and users understanding of the various modes of user involvement.

QUAL Results	QUAN Results						MM Results
	Users` choice of their most frequently used mode of involvement.						
	Resident Meetings	Teleph one	One-to-one meetings	Emails	Others	Total	
Staff identified one-to-one meetings and Resident meetings as the most explored modes of user involvement.	25	7	116	7	3	158	8 out of the 9 staff interviewed and 73.42% of users surveyed said one-to-one meetings were often used while 15.82% think resident meetings were often used.
	15.82%	4.43 %	73.42%	4.43%	1.9%	100 %	
	Users` choice of their most preferred mode of involvement.						

	Resident Meetings	Telephone	One-to-one meetings	Emails	Others	Total	
Most of the staff interviewed identified one-to-one meetings as users` most preferred mode of involvement.	38 24.05%	12 7.59%	107 67.73%	0 0%	1 0.63%	158 100%	67.73% of users surveyed identified one-to-one meetings as their most preferred mode of involvement while 21.52% identified resident meetings.

Table: 6.5: Merging and integrating my QUAL and QUAN results on modes of user involvement.

Most staff interviewed said they often use one-to-one surgeries or meetings with their clients while others frequently use resident or group meetings. But staff were quick to point out almost unanimously that the mode of user involvement used depends on the end users preference, thus fostering user empowerment and control of services as well as building user involvement around user`s preferred mode of involvement (Needham, 2009, p.43). I will argue that staff should seek to provide users with the vital information with which they can make informed choices in terms of selecting their preferred mode of involvement. 8 out of the 9 staff interviewed and 73.42% of users surveyed identified one-to-one meetings as the most frequently used mode of involvement while 15.82% indentified resident meetings. I will argue that there is a similarity between users from all the three organisations in my multiple-case studies as most of them identified one-to-one meetings as the most used and their most preferred mode of involvement.

This is confirmed by 67.73% of users surveyed who identified one-to-one meetings, as their most preferred mode of involvement. I will contend that establishing an appropriate mode of user involvement requires close collaboration, genuine communication and trust between staff and end users as well as the capacity to innovate and think `outside the box`. While evidence from my MM data analyses overwhelmingly establishes the fact that staff and end users generally have a high perception of user involvement, it also acknowledges that some users may be indifferent on the issue or do not want to get involved at all. There is therefore sufficient evidence from my study to confirm but not to guarantee that high users` perception

of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can deliver satisfaction, high service quality and user-led transformational outcomes.

I will also argue that despite this very positive outlook, there is a small minority of end users who are not bothered or do not want to get involved. I will equally contend that this small group will still like to access high quality user-led transformational outcomes. Evidence from my MM data analyses thus demonstrates that there are similarities between users of all the three organisations in my multiple-case studies. Users generally agree that high perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can transform service quality and enhance their satisfaction. These similarities which cut across all the three organisations confirm the homogeneity of my target population. The next subunit will focus on how user involvement can be explored as a tool for enhancing effective public service delivery.

6.4: Enhancing User Involvement in Public Service Delivery through SI.

I will argue that the growing use of mobile technologies by most end users surveyed can constitute a new launch pad for enhancing and invigorating user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services through SI. I will contend that although the three organisations in my multiple-case studies do explore elements of SI like upgrading of existing service products, they do so without overtly referring to the process as SI. Staff acknowledged that they often explore new ways of engaging end users in providing services and slightly have to alter some of their services in order to stay competitive and cost effective. For example, staff told me that effective user involvement can enable them to provide high quality responsive user-focused services as well as save money through making more efficient allocation of resources, hence avoiding waste especially at this time of fiscal constraints. Forms of SI explored by my case studies include new strategies of user involvement like one-to-one surgeries and mobile text messages, radical or slight service modifications (personalisation) and re-packaging of existing services. I will argue that knowledge of SI can inform staff on new and robust ways of involving users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes. I will also contend that organisations engaged in public service delivery like SEs and VCSOs can explore innovative models of user involvement and SI in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services. The next subunit will focus on discussing my key research findings.

6.5: Discussion of Key Research Findings:

Evidence from my MM data analyses suggests that there is a growing interest in user involvement as a key strand of public service modernisation and because of its huge benefits as captured through policy initiatives like direct payments and the personalisation agenda (Turner and Balloch 2001, p.165). This study has conceptualised user involvement as a post-NPM reform which seeks to address NPM weaknesses like service fragmentations which resulted from extensive marketisation of public service delivery in the 1990s (Wegrich, 2009, p.137). It makes the compelling case that user involvement must transcend shallow and tokenistic techniques of involvement like consultations and user representation by exploring more effective or deeper degrees of user involvements in order to deliver user-led outcomes. Examples of such robust and deeper techniques of user involvement include; personal learning in education, `expert patient`, direct payments and personal or individual budgets in Health and Social Care (PASC, 2007, p.7).

This study thus challenges dominant ideologies and misconceptions which denigrate and conceptualise end users as passive recipients of public services. It has argued that end users can be active contributors with `expert` knowledge of more robust and responsive ways of conceptualising, designing and delivering effective user-led services. User involvement must explore more compelling user-driven strategies like one-to-one surgeries and focused-group meetings if it seeks to make transformational impacts on the lives of deprived citizens. This study draws inspiration from an evidence-based approach as captured in my MM data analyses in theorising and postulating the following primary and secondary research findings.

6.5.1 Primary Research Findings:

This study has made three distinct primary research findings; first, it has discovered that high user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can trigger greater user satisfaction and high service quality. Closely related to this is the idea of user involvement; hence, it has discovered that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven services can engineer user-led transformational outcomes. Second, it has identified four main models of user involvement; staff-led, user-led, digital-driven and group-led models. And third, it has identified numerous social benefits

which can spring from user involvement; hence, I have proposed a Social Benefit Model of user involvement. I will thus expatiate on the above perspectives in the paragraphs which follow.

First, evidence from this study confirms my working hypothesis that exploring innovative models of user involvement and SI in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can lead to the provision of user-driven high quality responsive, expeditious and transformational outcomes. This also resonates with my conceptual framework which sought to graphically illustrate the fact that effective, genuine and authentic user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can unleash better user-led outcomes. Further evidence from my mixed data analyses when read through the lenses of the Network theory will expand our conceptual understanding of the fact that trust-driven staff-user relationships are crucial determinants of successful user involvement. Evidence from my field notes and memos confirm the view that user-professional interactions embedded in user involvement must seek to explore users` preferred mode(s) of involvement in achieving clearly defined user-led goals and shared objectives. My evidence also demonstrates that despite the growing appetite for user involvement because of its huge potentials, there is a small minority of users who are either not bothered or do not want to get involved at all. Closely related to the idea of user involvement is the notion of high users` perception of their involvement.

Hence, this study has also explored empirical data in establishing the fact that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can transform service quality, enhance user satisfaction, users` experiences and service outcomes. This strand of my primary findings is corroborated by evidence from similar studies carried out in the UK by two authoritative bodies specialised in measuring citizens, users and public perceptions; Ipsos MORI and Ipsos Social Research Institute. My evidence thus demonstrates that high users` perception of their involvement are linked to high users perceptions of their satisfaction, improved service quality and the delivery of user-led transformational outcomes. This study thus confirms that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can lead to greater control over their lives and better outcomes. But Ipsos Social Research Institute also contends that increased empowerment resulting from involvement "does not always lead to higher levels of satisfaction" (Ormston, 2010, p.3). Evidence from my study also confirms that although "higher levels of satisfaction" (Ormston, 2010, p.3),

may not be guaranteed through user involvement, genuine user involvement has the potentials of engineering user satisfaction and high self-esteem than non involvement.

Second, this study has identified four key models of user involvement; User-led, Group-led, Staff-led and the Digital-driven models. It has explored empirical data in demonstrating that elements of the user-led model of user involvement like one-to-one surgeries are more effective than other techniques. It also argues that user`s preferred mode of involvement should be the premised for selecting a specific model of involvement. It equally contends that while some users may cherish one-to-one meetings, others may prefer resident or focused-group meetings. This study argues that staff, professionals, practitioners and all those engaged in providing frontline services should innovatively seek to identify that window when user involvement can leverage added value. Evidence from this study demonstrates that end users from organisations `A` and `B` share similar perspectives and perceptions on their involvement and also share some instances of dissimilar views on their involvement with end users from organisation `C`. This partly demonstrates the homogeneity of the populations of organisations `A` and `B`. Evidence from my study also confirms most of the modes of user involvement identified by Alam (2002, p.255) such as consultations, group meetings, one-to-one meetings and user representatives. This demonstrates that commercial, public and third sector service providers explore identical models and modes of user involvements since services are generally characterised by the provider-user interface, perishability, intangibility and heterogeneity (Johnson et al., 2000, p.2).

Third, this study has identified and proposed a Social Benefit Model of user involvement by highlighting the social benefits of user involvement as one of the unsung heroes of user involvement. This model demonstrates that social benefits like user satisfaction, self-esteem, inclusivity, participation, self-confidence, socialisation, independence, empowerment, relationship building and improved quality of life can have positive transformational impacts on users. It argues that the aforementioned social benefits which may accrue to an end user from his/her involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services underpin the fundamental rationale for exploring user involvement. This model recognises that while some end users are not bothered or may not want to get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of services, they nevertheless expect to equally achieve the above social benefits.

Evidence from my qualitative data analysis supports the Social Benefit Model by demonstrating that benefits from the above model can improve users` quality of life especially for those who have had disjointed lives underpinned by exclusivity and difficult upbringings. To such end users social benefits like proper relationships building, love, inclusivity, self esteem and confidence maybe significant life changing achievements. I can also argue that although user involvement is not the only determinant of users achieving optimum satisfaction from public services, it has the potentials of enhancing but not guaranteeing such satisfaction. On the whole and drawing evidence from the above analyses, I can comfortably conclude that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivering of user-led services has the potentials of leveraging user-driven transformational outcomes. My social-benefit model of user involvement thus successfully demonstrates that the social benefits derived from user involvement can engineer high service quality, better outcomes and higher user satisfaction. The next subunit will underscore my secondary findings.

6.5.2: Secondary Research Findings:

Two secondary research findings or by-products have emerged from this study. First, the growing influence of the digital culture on end users and citizens and its potential in revolutionising user involvement has emerged as a key secondary finding of this study. Second, this study has identified perception measurement as a potentially robust tool for measuring and gauging public understanding of certain policy initiatives and in engineering public service reforms. I will argue that the qualitative evidence from my memos and field notes demonstrates that there is a growing trend towards the digitalisation of user involvement as this is central to the digital-driven model of user involvement. This emphasises the use of innovative and interactive mobile technologies and strategies in engaging users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. This underscores the fact that today we are more reliant on digital devices like smart phones, the ipad and computers for communication through texts, voice and emails as well as for accessing services like online banking and booking some GP appointments. Evidence from my three case studies thus demonstrates gravitation towards the use of mobile text messages, emails, telephone calls, online feedback forms alongside traditional face-to-face modes of user involvement.

But the use of other online tools like user facebook page, service user blogs and user-focused social media networks must seek to provide adequate safeguards to protect users from related cyber crimes like bullying and grooming. Digitalisation of user involvement is significant and points to the fact that user involvement must re-position itself on new user-led platforms by engaging users through life changing socio-cultural digital techniques. This study has also argued that perception measurement can inform and provide new insights into better ways of actively involving end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. Evidence from my study also confirms the vital role perception measurement can play as a mechanism for gauging and measuring public, citizens and users` opinions, mood and attitude. Perception measurement can also provide new understandings into how well services are addressing and meeting users` needs and it can also be used in monitoring and evaluating users/citizens behaviour.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study has underlined the conceptual understanding that genuine user involvement must transcend tokenistic and shallow strategies like consultations by thrusting the user at the heart of the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven responsive outcomes. It has demonstrated that authentic and effective user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can unleash greater user satisfaction and transform users` perception of their involvement. Further evidence from my study confirms the conceptual understanding that user involvement in the co-design of user-led services in both the public and commercial service sectors shares the same modes and models of involvement (Alam, 2002, p.255). The next chapter will discuss issues like; application of my research findings, my factual and conceptual conclusions and suggest some recommendations to policymakers, professionals and practitioners.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion and Application of Research Findings

Introduction:

This study has argued that the overwhelming need to tackle `wicked problems` like poverty, homelessness, educational underachievement, health inequalities and unemployment in the UK has led successive governments to implement various facets of public sector reforms. Earlier public sector reforms like `Educational Priority Areas and Health Action Zones` culminated in the wave of NPM reforms which swept across Western democracies like the UK, Australia and the USA in the 1980s (Balloch and Taylor, 2005, p.2). This study has argued that partnership working emerged as a policy reform focused at addressing the unintended consequences of the NPM reforms like service fragmentation and extensive marketisation (Goldfinch, 2009, p.12 and Wegrich, 2009, p.137). It has successfully demonstrated with robust evidence that effective user-centric partnership working especially P-SEP working can explore innovative models of user involvement in delivering user-led transformational outcomes. I will make a robust summary of this thesis while highlighting its recommendations and implications for practitioners. But before I begin with the conclusion to this thesis, let me just briefly discuss the ideal, reality and pragmatics of applying the four models of user involvement which I have identified in this study; individual-led, staff-led, group-led and digital-driven models.

I can argue that the problematic arising with conceptualising a consensual definition of user involvement demonstrates the dichotomies which may arise when one considers the ideal, reality and pragmatics of applying variants of individual-led, staff-led, group-led and the digital-driven models of user involvement. I can argue that the ideal is to advocate for the four above models of user involvement to be often used in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services but local circumstances and realities may demonstrate that achieving such a proposition may be difficult. For example, ideally the use of `expert patient` which is a variant of the individual-led model of user involvement within the NHS is brilliant but this may be hampered by the users` lack of professional knowledge about his/her health condition. Hence, staff`s professional knowledge will still put him/her in the driving seat of

service design and delivery and not the user. But I can contend that this can be alleviated by exploring and complementing users` knowledge of his/her health condition with staff`s professional knowledge. Such an approach will ensure that services not only encapsulate user`s aspirations but are tailored to addressing his/her individual health needs.

On the other hand, I can contend that the reality of applying the four above models of user involvement may be complicated by user apathy, time constraints and scarcity of resources especially at this period of diminishing public resources. But proponents of user involvement will argue that encouraging end users to get involved in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access could be critical to realising pressures on resources or may lead to efficient resource allocation. I can argue that in the real world, staff may often turn to combine variants of the above four models of user involvement when involving end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. My central argument here is that in the real world, it is often difficult to use just one model in the processes of co-designing and co-delivering user-led services as coproduction is often realised through the interactive relationship between staff and the end user. For example, exploring `personalised budgets` which is a variant of the individual-led model in social care may require a combination of staff and user inputs which may vary in different proportions depending on the circumstances. This is necessary because of staff`s knowledge of the service, but despite such a combination this study has argued that the final service product must respond to the needs of the end user.

Without being prescriptive, this study argues that despite the ideal and reality which may underpin user involvement, a pragmatic approach remains critical to the sustainable success of any of the above models. I can contend that while bearing the above models and the difficulties of realistically and ideally achieving them in the real world in mind, this study has made a sustained argument for a pragmatic approach to user involvement. The use of variants of any of the above models either unilaterally or in combination with variants from other models must be based on user`s preference and their comparative advantage in unleashing user-led transformational outcomes. As I proceed to the conclusion of this thesis, I will avoid any repetitions and the insertion of new material by drawing only on evidence-based conclusions which emanate from my study. I will seek to remind, tell, sell as well as leave positive impressions of my overall research (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.133). I will thus

begin by reminding ourselves of why this topic or study was chosen, its aims, boundaries, intended research questions and overall research design.

7.1: Reminder of why the topic was chosen and my research intentions:

I will argue that this topic was chosen for a couple of reasons; first it was chosen in response to the need to explore a researchable problem and provide practical solutions which can help in transforming the quality of life for end users. Second, it was also chosen because of its potentials and ability to make a contribution to knowledge and thus fill a gap in knowledge. This topic has therefore emphasised the strategic importance of genuine user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes. It has argued that user involvement especially through P-SEPs can greatly facilitate the co-creation of user-led solutions. I have also argued that user involvement can leverage practical solutions in tackling razor-sharp issues like alcohol and substance abuse which transcend the scope of any single agency to adequately resolve through lone working. This topic has facilitated an investigation into how user involvement; high user perceptions and models of involvement can inform our conceptual understanding of the crucial contributions end users can make in enhancing service quality and outcomes.

This study has equally argued that the huge potentials and resource base of the third sector underpinned by their knowledge and experience of working with deprived segments of the community thrust them as vibrant alternatives for effective user-led public service delivery. It has argued that never before has the case for public service reforms and user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services been more compelling than now because of the economic downturn and the rising cost of public service provision. This study has also demonstrated that user-led models of public service delivery hold the key to effective resource allocation and the provision of user-led competitive, cheaper, high quality public services. I will argue that choosing this topic as justified above has enabled me to investigate into a researchable problem, to contribute towards filling a gap in knowledge and to provide practical solutions on more innovative and robust models of user involvement. The decision to choose this topic was also informed and influenced by my research purpose or objectives.

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7.2: Reminder of Research Purpose or Objectives:

This research has a twin purpose; first, it intends to respond to the growing demand for better, cheaper, competitive, more effective and efficient models of public service provision by providing new conceptual understandings and insights. It also seeks to inform professional practice, to inspire dialogue and new conversations on user involvement with the aim of facilitating, informing and energising the need for greater user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services. It has also sought to fill a knowledge gap. This study has conceptualised user involvement as a robust mechanism for engineering responsive user-led outcomes. It has also sought to discover new conceptual grounds by untangling the web of misconceptions and conceptual chaos surrounding user involvement. It has demonstrated that user involvement can improve service quality, trigger user satisfaction and engineer user-driven transformational outcomes.

This study has thus captured and articulated end users perception of their involvement, their preferred modes and models of involvement and has captured staff understanding of user involvement. It has explored the Network Theory in capturing the often interwoven and complicated web of relationships present in user involvement and partnership working. It has demonstrated that as part of the network model of public service delivery, P-SEPs can explore genuine user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-focused outcomes. On the other hand, the conceptual design of this study has drawn inspirations from the ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions which underpin Pragmatism and the inductive-deductive research strategy (Greene, 2008, p.7).

7.3a: Reminder of Research Design, Methodology and Fieldwork:

I have adopted a pluralistic methodological perspective through the MM research approach informed by the Pragmatic research paradigm and the inductive-deductive research logic. I have explored the Concurrent MM research design by combining the QUAL and QUAN research approaches in this study. The rationale for exploring the Concurrent MM in this study was to ensure complementarity; by integrating and combining findings from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study in order to generate meta-inferences (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.35). After selecting the MM research design as my main research

method, I then decided to use semi-structured interviews and Likert-scaled questionnaires as my QUAL and QUAN data gathering instruments respectively. I decided to adopt an equal status (QUAL + QUAN) Concurrent MM research design because of its ability to support the simultaneous collection of both QUAL and QUAN data. I have argued that the above approach equally ensured that my MM sampling strategy encapsulates elements of sampling strategies from both the QUAL and QUAN research methods. I thus drew inspirations from purposive and probabilistic samplings in designing my Concurrent MM sampling, sampling frame and in identifying my universe, and target population (Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p.78 and Blaikie, 2000, p.198).

This study has explored a field trip for data collection during which a target population was identified and the above sampling strategies applied in selecting my multiple-case studies, interviewees and respondents for my questionnaires. I also applied the Concurrent Mixed data analysis in analysing my mixed data because if its ability to support a simultaneous analyses of both my QUAL and QUAN data. I have explored thematic analysis in analysing my QUAL data and descriptive statistics for analysing my QUAN data (Boyatzis, 1998, p.29 and Blaikie, 2003, p. 52). I have thus explored tables, cross tabulations, mean, percentages and standard deviations in analysing and displaying results from both strands of my MM data analyses while integrating these at the inference and interpretation stage (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.622 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.266). I have argued that adopting the above research design and data gathering and analyses techniques has enabled me to adequately investigate into user involvement. Despite pursuing the above research method, I did encounter some problems while on my fieldtrip.

7.3b: Resolving Problems encountered on Fieldwork:

I will argue that I found the issue of constantly negotiating and renegotiating access and participant apathy especially the reluctance of most young persons to conform or take part in any form of study quite challenging. I adopted a couple of strategies aimed at encouraging participation in my study and to overcome the above problems. First, I developed an opened-mind, explored more flexibility while ensuring effective communication with participants as well as briefing and debriefing them after every encounter. Second, I also motivated respondents for my questionnaires with incentives like chocolate bars while enlightening

participants on the possible benefits of the study to them as it can inform, shape and influence good practice on engaging users in the co-design and co-delivery of services. This study will provide new insights and a better understanding to staff, practitioners, professionals and policymakers on more effectively ways of engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-engineered outcomes. Pre-testing my questionnaire also helped in mitigating any potential problems as these were nipped in the bud. I will argue that the above problems encountered during my fieldwork have been adequately resolved in order to attain my research objectives within its clearly defined boundaries.

7.3c: Reminder of my Research Boundaries:

I will argue that it was necessary to lucidly define the boundaries of my study as I cannot study everything and in order to maintain focus and avoid irrelevance. This study has focused on investigating into how user-engineered P-SEPs in the East of England can explore user involvement in delivering user-led transformational socially-oriented outcomes to young persons aged 18-24years within the East of England. The rising waves of youth unemployment and the likelihood of most young persons falling into poverty, homelessness, `rough sleep` and deprivation implies that most of them may need to access services like apprenticeships, trainings, counselling and sheltered accommodations. My focus on the East of England was inspired by the need to explore this region in capturing the wider context of socio-economic issues which may confront young persons in other parts of the country. This study has thus explored QUAL semi-structured interviews through thematic analysis and QUAN questionnaires underpinned by descriptive statistics in investigating the phenomenon under consideration and analysing my research findings. The next subunit will focus on how I have re-conceptualised my conceptual framework.

7.4. Re-Conceptualising my Conceptual Framework

Introduction:

This study has argued that extant scholarship on end user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services is conceptually confusing and turns to be more celebratory than critically analytical in assessing and capturing the added value of user involvement

(Ling, 2000, p.82). I will argue that the main rationales for re-conceptualising are to enable me to provide new compelling conceptual understandings on user involvement, to contribute to a theoretical development of user involvement and to extend the frontiers of knowledge on user involvement. A re-conceptualisation of my initial conceptual framework will therefore provide more conceptual clarity, strengthen my research findings and explore the key issues which emerged from my primary research since these were not envisioned in my initial conceptual framework. I will argue that while `doing` my primary research, drivers of high users` perceptions of their involvement such as trust, involvement and communication emerged as my new independent (input) variables while high service quality, greater user satisfaction and transformational outcomes emerged as new dependent (output) variables. Hence, this study argues that a re-conceptualisation is necessary as the initial variables of gender, ethnicity and level of education which constituted my initial conceptual framework proved ineffective in supporting a robust investigation into user involvement and in providing new conceptual understandings.

In the above light, I will discuss the new variables which emerged from my primary research while highlighting any relationships which may exist between them. I will also indicate how distinctively different these new variables are from the ones which underpinned my old conceptual framework. This will enable me to demonstrate how my re-conceptualised conceptual framework seeks to highlight what has been missing from extant scholarship on user involvement and illustrate how it will contribute to filling this gap in knowledge. Hence, re-conceptualising will leverage the opportunity for me to underscore both the theoretical and practical implications as well as contributions of this study to the emerging body of scholarship on user involvement. I thus decided to re-conceptualise since the new variables which emerged from my primary research have the potentials of better informing our conceptual understanding of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of effective user-led public services. I will further argue that I have had to re-conceptualise my conceptual framework as gender, ethnicity and level of education emerged ineffective in enabling me to robustly investigate into user involvement. This next subunit will roll out a discussion on my re-conceptualised conceptual framework.

7.4a: Discussing my Re-conceptualised Conceptual Framework:

I will argue that I have had to re-conceptualise as high users` perception underpinned by trust, effective communication and involvement which emerged from my primary research demonstrate high potentials of informing and providing new conceptual insights into user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. Re-conceptualising my conceptual framework will therefore provide the robust platform for me to analyse emerging evidence from my primary research in order to strengthen my research findings. Re-conceptualisation will equally re-position my research findings on new conceptual and empirical foundations in order to make more informed theoretical and practical contributions to knowledge. It also has the potentials of informing theory development (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.532). My re-conceptualised conceptual framework states that, high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services which is informed by trust, genuine involvement and positive communication has the potentials of unleashing greater user satisfaction, high service quality and transformational outcomes. From a diagrammatical perspective my re-conceptualised conceptual framework now looks as depicted in figure 7.1 below as it captures the new input variables of genuine involvement, trust and effective communication which underpin high users` perception that emerged from my primary research. My re-conceptualised conceptual framework now looks as captured in figure 7.1 below.
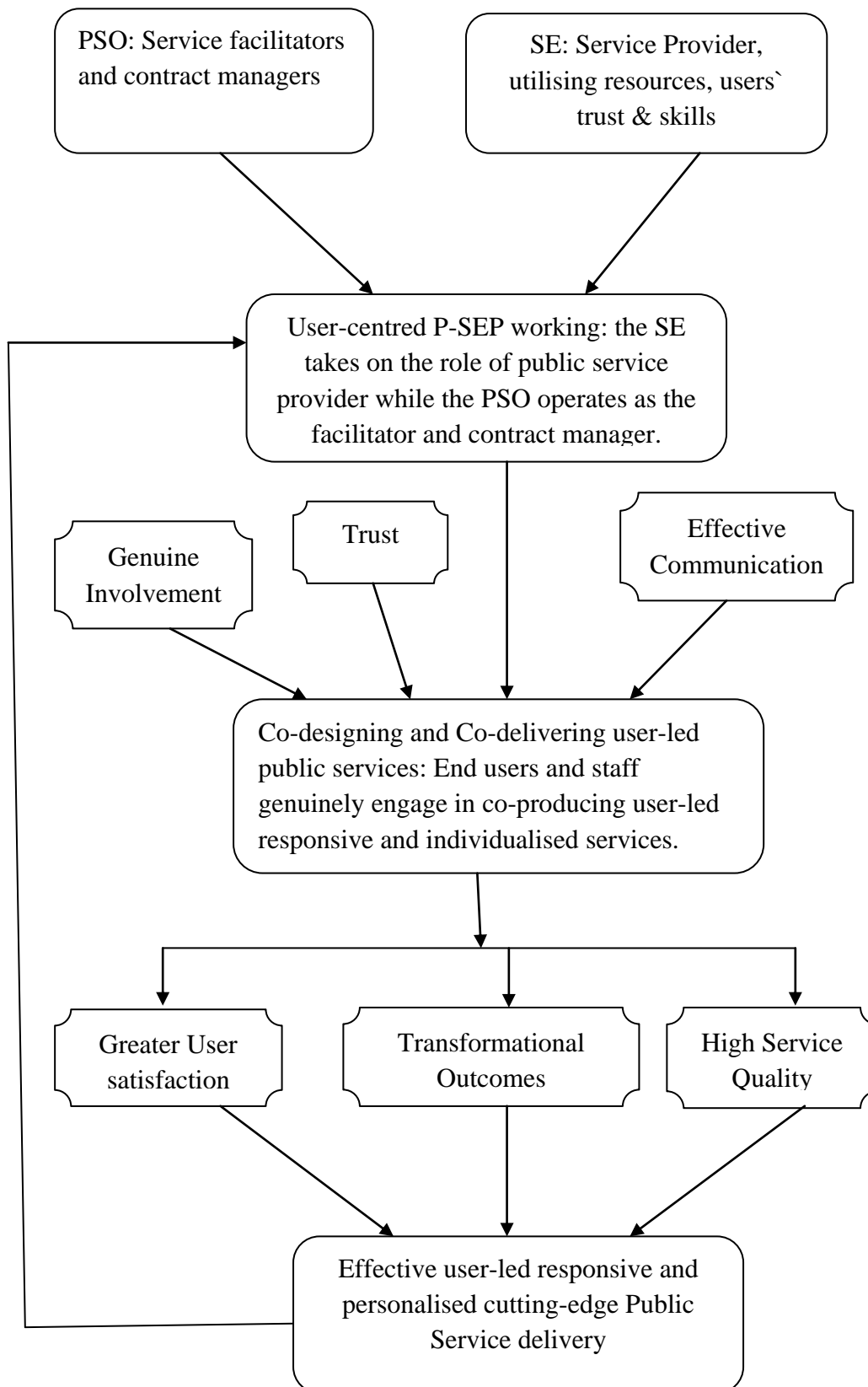
Figure: 7.1: Re-conceptualising my Conceptual Framework:

The above diagram depicts a PSO and SE coming together in a partnership which is aimed at generating high quality user-led public services as the former takes on the role of a contract manager, monitor and facilitator of user-led service delivery while the later becomes the service provider. I will argue that constituents of high users` perception such as genuine involvement, trust and effective communication are the input variables shaping and informing the processes of co-designing and co-delivering user-led better outcomes. This study has demonstrated that genuinely exploring the above variables in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services has the potentials of transforming users` experiences of services. Hence, the arrow pointing away from user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services denotes the potential outcomes of genuine user involvement which include high service quality, greater user satisfaction and user-led transformational outcomes. These dependent variables are thus linked to user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led public services in an input-outcome relationship. The above figure thus shows drivers of high users` perception of their involvement such as genuine involvement, trust and positive communication as input variables in the process of user of involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. On the other hand, greater user involvement, high service quality and transformational outcomes emerged as outcome variables. I can argue that my new re-conceptualised conceptual framework thus draws conceptual inspiration from the Network theory and the growing enthusiasm for user involvement.

I will argue that evidence from my qualitative data analysis, supported by my quantitative data analysis demonstrates that there is an input relationship between user involvement and the drivers of high user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access. I can argue that such drivers include genuine involvement, positive communication and trust. For example, when asked if they perceive the quality of the services which they access is high as a result of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of such services, 30.38% and 60.13% of those surveyed agreed that the quality of service is excellent and good respectively. This resonates with a total mean score of 1.86 which when placed on a Likert-scale ranging from ` strongly agree` represented with `1` to `strongly disagree` represented with `5`, lies between `strongly agree` and `agree` although nearer to `agree`. This therefore demonstrates that end users surveyed have high perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they currently access. This perspective supports evidence from my qualitative data analysis as most of the

staff I interviewed told me that their service users have high perceptions of their involvement in co-designing and co-delivering the services which they currently access.

This also demonstrates that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can trigger greater satisfaction to them. This is supported by evidence from my quantitative data analysis as 37.97% and 48.73% of those surveyed `strongly agree` and `agree` respectively that, they perceive their involvement is enabling them to derive greater satisfaction from the services they currently access. This is also supported by staff who told me that they think their service users are getting greater satisfaction from their services because they are involved in the co-design and co-delivery of such services as these are more tailored to addressing their individual needs. The above examples thus demonstrate that there is an outcome-driven relationship between high or positive users` perception of their involvement and the benefits which they can derive from such services.

I can also argue that the above examples illustrate what is missing from the literature on user involvement as most of the scholarships on this subject often explore qualitative research strategies which usually fail to accurately measure users` perception of their involvement (Barnes and Cotterell, 2012, p.1, Beresford and Branfield, 2012, p.33 and PASC, 2007, p.11). There are a few differences between my re-conceptualised conceptual framework and the old one. First, my re-conceptualised conceptual framework encapsulates the key variables which emerged from my primary research and thus proves a more compelling tool for investigating the phenomenon under study. Second, it also captures the relationships and linkages between my input and output variables as these provide explanations for the outcomes which have emerged from my data analyses.

Third and most important of all, my re-conceptualised conceptual framework also provides a compelling premise for theoretical development; hence, it can effectively contribute towards the development of a theory of user involvement (Eisenhardt, 2007, p.25, Yin, 1981, p.61 and Eisenhardt, 1989, p.532). Such a theory can postulate that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services which is underpinned by genuine involvement, trust and effective communication has the potentials of delivering greater user satisfaction, high service quality and user-led transformational outcomes. Fourth,

re-conceptualising my conceptual framework has leveraged the opportunity for me to provide new conceptual understanding and insights which can inform professional practice and inspire `best practice` in user involvement in public service delivery. I will demonstrate in the next subunit, how the above outcomes gleaned from high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can inform my contributions to knowledge and deliver added value through my research findings.

7.5: Research Findings:

I will argue that focusing on exploring the variables which have emerged from my re-conceptualised conceptual framework has enabled to me investigate into how high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services can generate transformational outcomes. I will argue that the findings which have emerged from this study underline the gap in knowledge while building on existing scholarships in making three distinct but interrelated primary findings. This study also makes two secondary research findings which have emerged as by-products or unintended research findings. First, as a primary finding, this study has demonstrated that high end users perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can engineer high user satisfaction, high service quality and transformational outcomes. This implies that users` perceptions of their involvement is thus important is shaping what end users can perceive of the services which they access. I will thus argue that a negative perception of their involvement can diminish the satisfaction which end users can derive from the services which they access while a positive perception can greatly enhance user`s service experience and satisfaction.

Second, this study has discovered four distinct but interconnected models of user involvement; user-led, staff-led, group-led and digital-driven models. I will argue that innovative models of user involvement explore modes of involvement like one-to-one meetings, focused groups and user representatives. I will argue that models of user involvement should encapsulate users` preferred modes of involvement. Evidence from my qualitative and quantitative data analysis demonstrates that one-to-one surgeries or meetings constitute users` most preferred mode of involvement. Third, this study has indentified a Social Benefit Model as a huge potential outcome of user involvement. It has demonstrated

that to some end users, deriving social benefits like inclusivity, loving relationships, trust and socialisation could constitute huge lives changing outcomes. I can conclude that genuine user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can foster shared or peer learning as well as transform users` experiences of public services.

Evidence from my research findings also supports my research hypothesis in demonstrating that there is a conceptual link between high users` perceptions of their involvement and the outcomes which users can derive from such involvement. This supports my hypothesis in stating that high users` perceptions of their involvement can generate enhanced service quality, high user satisfactions and user-led transformational outcomes. This is conceptually important in proving my research hypothesis, strengthening my research findings, analyses and interpretations and in contributing towards the development of a theory of user involvement. Apart of confirming my research hypothesis, evidence from my findings also supports my three distinct primary contributions to knowledge by providing new insights, understandings and stretching the frontiers of knowledge in the discipline to new conceptual grounds.

On the other hand, some two secondary or unintended research findings have emerged from this study; first it has found that perception measurement can be effectively explored as a tool for managing and monitoring performance in public service delivery and within the wider context of the public sector. Hence, service providers and policymakers can explore perception measurement in measuring users` or citizens` perceptions of particular service or policy initiatives. Second, evidence from my field notes suggests that the emergence of the digital culture, strong users` and citizens` inclinations in using digital devices like smart phones and other ICT-enabled technologies for communication can constitute drivers for digitalising user involvement. This is particularly important in engaging with young service users like the target population in this study because of their profound enthusiasm in using digital devices for communication, networking and in enhancing their social status. Hence digitalisation can hold the key to successful and sustainable user involvement. The above secondary findings have therefore complemented my primary findings in enriching our conceptual understanding of user involvement and in enhancing my contribution to knowledge.

7.6: Critiquing my Research Approach and Methodology:

I can argue that my research results would have been different if I had chosen to explore a mono-methodological approach by either using the qualitative or quantitative research methods. This is important as exploring a mono-method would have deprived my study from benefiting from the complementary strengthens of both the qualitative and quantitative research methods. I have therefore explored a pluralistic research approach underpinned by the MM research design and informed by the Pragmatic research paradigm and inductive-deductive research logic. This is important because exploring both the qualitative and quantitative research methods in the same study has enabled both methods to complement each other as results gleaned from them will be more compelling than those from a single or mono-method. In the above light, I can argue that my research findings would have been different if I had solely used the Interpretivist paradigm as this would have allowed me to collect and analyse only qualitative data. A major advantage of this study has been its capacity to build on the strengthen of the QUAL and QUAN research methods. It has equally realised one of the fundamental principles of MM research design; that is, the need to merge or integrate findings from both the QUAN and QUAL strands in the same study. The next subunit will seek to recapitulate the answers to my three overarching research questions.

7.7a: Research Questions Answered:

I have organised and displayed results emanating from the QUAL and QUAN strands of my study by my research questions as this has given me the opportunity to both display the results of my data analyses and to adequately answer my research questions. This subunit will thus seek to synopsise the answers to my three research questions. My QUAL research question sought to identify and discuss the following five major themes which were inductively generated from my qualitative data analysis;

User Involvement   High Service quality

Transformational Outcomes   Responsive Services and user

                                            Empowerment
Service Improvement

My qualitative data also identified four overarching models of user involvement; User-led, Group-led, Staff-led and the Digital-driven models. The User-led Model of user involvement through its variants like one-to-one surgeries emerged as the most highly preferred, user-friendly and effective model of user involvement. The Group-led model on the other hand, underpinned by variants like focused-group discussions may be very useful in capturing and exploring users` service needs and expectation in wider contexts.

The responses to my QUAN research question have demonstrated that, high users' perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can lead to the provision of high quality, user-led transformational outcomes. For example, 83.55% of users surveyed agreed and strongly agreed that they have a high perception of their involvement in the co-design of the services which they access. This underpins a total mean score of 1.99 which when placed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from `strongly agree` implying `1` to `strongly disagree` implying `5` will fall very near to `agree`. This therefore demonstrates that the end users surveyed agree they have high perceptions of their involvement as this has enabled them to derive greater satisfaction, better outcomes and improved service quality from the services which they access. This is confirmed by the fact that 86.71% of users surveyed agree that they are satisfied with the quality of service which they access. Hence, I can conclude that, high user perception of their involvement can trigger but not guarantee high user satisfaction and high service quality. PSOs must ensure that end users hold high perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access.

Despite the aforementioned potential benefits of high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access, not all end users will hold a positive perception of their involvement. I can contend from the above analyses that high user perception of their involvement can engineer high user satisfaction and positive rating of service quality. And finally in answering my MM research question I have demonstrated that when merged and integrated, evidence from my QUAN analysis have supported my QUAL findings. I can also argue that evidence from the QUAL analysis of themes and the QUAN analyses of my questionnaire have complemented each other thereby strengthening my analyses and enriching my research findings. The next subunit will highlight possible areas for future research.

7.7b: Future Researchable Areas:

This study has identified the need to actually measure the cost-effectiveness of user involvement as a potential area for future research. Such future research will further inform our conceptual understanding of user involvement and strengthen the case for its wider application in the public service. The next subunit will consider issues of validity, reliability and generalisability of my research findings.

7.7c: Generalisability, Validity and Reliability of Research Findings:

This study has explored the inductive-deductive research logic underpinned by Pragmatism and the MM research design in collecting and analysing both QUAL and QUAN data in order to adequately investigate the phenomenon under focus. I will argue that the QUAN notion of internal validity and the QUAL concepts of trustworthiness or credibility are captured in MM research as inference quality (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.239). On the other hand, the QUAN notion of external validity and the QUAL idea of transferability are referred to in MM research as inference transferability (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.286). I have explored member checks, merging and triangulating of my QUAN and QUAL findings as strategies in strengthening my MM research findings, thereby making them population and ecologically transferable (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.551 and Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.295).

I have argued that research findings emanating from this study are not generalisable but are ecologically and population transferrable to similar age groups from similar socio-economic backgrounds. They are also transferrable to similar geographical settings in which there is a case for user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led outcomes. Hence, my research findings can be applied to a similar target population engaged in the co-design and co-delivery of public services in similar social and geographical contexts. While local, sector specific variations and the ever changing context of public service delivery may impede the complete ecological and population transferability of my research findings to other contexts, evidence from similar studies carried out by Ipsos MORI support my research findings. I can contend that such corroborations demonstrate that sector specific and local variations cannot

drastically alter the results of my study, hence, my research findings are largely population and ecologically transferable. The next subunit will focus on my factual conclusions.

7.8a: Factual Conclusions:

This study has found that high user perceptions of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can lead to high user satisfaction and better service quality. It has also found out that user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services can engineer the delivery of user-led high quality, cutting-edge, responsive and personalised transformational outcomes. It has identified conceptual confusions in public policies on user involvement policies underpinned by the lack of clarity around what end users can expect from their involvement and user apathy as potential impediments to effective user involvement. This study has conceptually identified four overarching models of user involvement; User-led, Staff-led, Digital-driven and Group-led models. It has discovered that variants of the user-led model like one-to-one meetings are often used by my case studies and most preferred by my respondents. For example, 67.73% of end users surveyed identified one-to-one meetings as their most preferred mode of involvement while 24.05% said they prefer group/resident meetings. Further Evidence from this study also demonstrates that genuine user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services needs to explore appropriate user-driven modes of involvement.

This study has also found out that although end users are generally enthusiastic about their involvement, a few of them either are not bothered about involving or do not want to get involved at all. It also found out that all the staff in my case studies are enthused about actively engaging end users in the co-design and co-delivery of services although they also feel that user involvement must be moderated or have limits. It equally found out that, a Social Benefit Model of user involvement emerged from my research findings, highlighting social benefits like user empowerment, self confidence and self-esteem which users can derive from their involvement. For example, for some end users, developing their self esteem, confidence, voice and expression can be huge life-changing celebratory achievements which they can gain from their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of services. But despite realising the above research findings, two unintended research finding also emerged from this

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study. It has also identified the growing importance of perception measurement as a tool for measuring what citizens` or end users` may think of particular government policies and in pursuing performance management within the public service. The significant role the digital culture can play in fostering effective user involvement also emerged as a by-product of this study. That said, I will now focus my attention on articulating my conceptual conclusions.

7.8b: Conceptual Conclusions:

I will argue that my factual conclusions seek to capture the facts as they emerged from my study while my conceptual conclusions operate at the abstract level and thus emphasise the key elements of my conceptual framework. My conceptual conclusions will thus seek "to reinforce the conceptual foundations of...[my] ...research design, methodology and intellectual context" (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.140). This subunit will discuss vital conceptual components of my study by arguing that partnership working like Collaborative Public Management constitutes an important strand of public service modernisation and reforms. This study has argued that partnership working emerged as a tool for tackling the unexpected consequences of NPM reforms like service fragmentation and the treatment of end users as passive recipients of public services (Powell et al., 2009, p.1). The emergence of the strategic importance of end users in the co-design and co-delivery of transformational outcomes has been at the core of my conceptual framework and working hypothesis.

User involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven outcomes has become such a powerful policy catch phrase in public service lexicon in recent years for a couple of reasons. For example, the realisation that a flipside of the NPM reforms implemented in the 1980s and 1990s had been the delivery of unresponsive, irrelevant services which failed to capture and address the specific needs of the user engineered the need for user involvement. Although robust evidence of user involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services in public service practice is scanty, this study has made an evidence-driven compelling case by arguing that genuine user involvement can deliver tangible gains to users. User involvement in collaborative public service delivery has been emphasised by ideas like `joined-up thinking`, `joined decision-making`, the provision of `joined-up solutions to joined-up problems` and the effective allocation of resources in attaining shared goals (6 Perri, 2004, p.107). But evidence from this study also demonstrates that, despite the huge

enthusiasm, benefits and a strong evidence-base in support of user involvement, a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work, hence user involvement must resonate with individual users` aspirations.

Second, user involvement should be implemented where there is strong evidence that it can leverage `added value` and make a difference to the lives of end users. Four conceptual models of user involvement have emerged from this study. It has argued that while the user-led model is the most popular form of user involvement, there is a growing interest in the use of the digital-driven model. Despite the mixed evidence-base on user involvement, evidence from this study largely supports the case for user involvement while cautioning against any over enthusiasm in its implementation as its potential for value creation, comparative advantage and user`s choice must be adequately considered. This study has demonstrated that perception measurement can be a robust tool for gauging user understanding, voice and preferences in public service and public policy delivery.

Genuine user involvement can revolutionise public service provision by fostering user empowerment and triggering the personalisation, customisation, and individualisation of public services (Turner and Balloch, 2001, p.173 and Needham, 2009, p.43). This study has confirmed that although high users` perception of their involvement may not guarantee high user satisfaction, it does demonstrate that there are huge potentials for it to leverage greater user satisfaction and high service quality. A positive user involvement frame of mind is important for sustaining the momentum and reaping the fruits of involvement. This study has explored an empirical evidence base in providing new insights and widening out conceptual understanding of user involvement, while making a humble contribution to knowledge.

7.8c. Contribution to Knowledge:

This study has made three vital, distinct but overlapping contributions to knowledge. First, it has delivered `added value` and extended the frontiers of knowledge in the discipline by advancing empirical scholarship on innovative models of user involvement. It has thus explored an empirical evidence base in creating new understandings and providing new insights into user involvement as well as in expanding our knowledge base on this subject. It has thus enriched our conceptual understanding of user involvement and successfully

demonstrated that such involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of public services can unleash user-led transformational outcomes. It has cogently demonstrated and confirmed that high users' perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-driven outcomes can enhance user satisfaction and improve service quality.

Second, this study has contributed towards the development of a theory of user involvement by arguing that genuine user involvement can deliver user-led transformational outcomes. It has therefore argued that high users` perception of their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of the services which they access can leverage greater user satisfaction, improved service quality and transform service outcomes. In the above light, this study has also contributed to the ongoing debates, dialogues and conversations on conceptualising and designing cheaper, more cost-effective alternative models of public service delivery. It has argued that user involvement can be conceptualised both as a model of public service delivery and governance. It has therefore contributed towards generating new conversations and dialogues in strengthening our conceptual understanding of user involvement as a model of public service delivery. I can argue that evidence of user involvement like modes; models and the potentials benefits of user involvement to end users are also applicable to other models of public service delivery like public service mutuals.

Third, it has proposed four models of user involvement and a Social Benefit Model of user involvement. It has thus proposed the user-led, staff-led, group-led and digital-driven models of user involvement. It has also proposed a Social Benefit Model of user involvement as a way of acknowledging the social deliverables and life-changing experiences which some users can derive from their involvement in the co-design and co-delivery of user-focused public services. It has demonstrated and consolidated the above contributions to knowledge through empirical evidence which tap into the complementary strengthens of the QUAL and QUAN research methods through my MM data analyses. The next subunit will thus seek to justify my claim to making a contribution to knowledge.

7.9a: Justification of claims of a Contribution to Knowledge:

This study has sufficiently explored conventional research instruments like questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in investigating the emerging and important area of innovative models of user involvement. The rising cost of public service provision in most developed countries like the UK, makes the case for user involvement more compelling than ever because of its potentials to engineer the effective allocation of scarce resources. This study has therefore demonstrated that genuine and effective user involvement can lead to efficient, competitive, more targeted allocation of resources. The use of questionnaires has enabled me to successfully measure user perceptions of their involvement, their satisfaction and their rating of service quality. QUAL semi-structured interviews on the other hand, have enabled me to generate themes and modes of user involvement in complementing and reinforcing our conceptual understanding of my QUAN analysis. This complementary value realised from integrating and triangulating my QUAL and QUAN findings has enabled this study to extend existing knowledge while providing new insights and understandings into user involvement.

I can also argue that the successful use of the MM in this study has strengthened its claim to making a contribution to knowledge as it has explored grounds not explored by previous studies on user involvement which have often been mono-method. Such studies have often explored QUAL data gathering instruments like focus-group interviews with little endeavour in exploring QUAN tools like questionnaires in measuring users` perceptions and understanding of their involvement (Beresford, 2010, p.497, Stickley, 2005, p.573 and Beresford and Campbell, 1994, p.315). I can also contend that successfully attaining my research objectives and identifying my research findings are other justifications of my claim to having made a contribution to knowledge. Hence, exploring my conceptual framework, proving my working hypothesis, rigorously utilising the MM research design and exploring my field notes have enabled me to provide new conceptual understandings on user involvement. These have equally strengthened my claim of having made a contribution to knowledge. The next subsection will focus on my recommendations, application and implications of my research findings.

7.9b: Recommendations, Application and Implications of Research Findings to Public Service Provision and Professional Practice:

I will argue that research findings emanating from this study can be conceptualised as part of post-NPM drives aimed at fostering public service reforms within the wider context of public sector modernisation (Shaw, 2009, p.19). When applied to public service provision, evidence from this study can contribute in providing robust solutions to problems like service fragmentations, unresponsiveness, user disengagement and disenfranchisement. It thus supports a holistic approach to public service provision which places the end user at the core or centre of service design and delivery. This study will seek to make the following recommendations;

- Policymakers, politicians, practitioners and all stakeholders interested in effective public service provision and modernisation should explore novel and effective models of user involvement. User involvement can also be successfully applied to other models of public service provision like public service mutuals and consortia.

- Public sector managers should also seek to involve end users in other processes of public service provision like service commissioning as users can make robust inputs and contributions in the selection of appropriate service providers.

- Results emanating from user involvement and their inputs must be factored into the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services. End users must realise that their contributions are valued and used.

- Policymakers and practitioners may explore empirical tools like perception measurement in measuring and gauging citizens` and users` opinions and understanding of potentials reforms and policy initiatives.

- Perception measurement can also be successfully used in measuring or gauging service quality, citizen or user satisfaction and policy or service effectiveness.

- User involvement should not be used as a blanket one-size-fits-all but rather on its comparative merit in leveraging "collaborative advantage" (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p.3) and added value while upholding user`s voice and preferred mode of involvement.

- User involvement must be genuine and not tokenistic as well as it must seek to place the user at the heart of service design and delivery. User involvement should clearly capture expected deliverables while stating the expectations from users.

Further evidence from this study can be applied in fostering and searching for better user-led alternative models of public service provision while ensuring more targeted allocation of scarce resources, greater user satisfaction and constant service improvement. Research findings emanating from this study can be successfully applied in informing, capturing new frontiers, challenging existing practice and providing new insights which can transform the public service delivery landscape. Research findings from this study can thus provide a new window and impetus for knocking down those barriers which stand in the way of collaborative working or its ability to unleash transformational impacts on deprived end users. The main implication of my research findings is its potential to challenge dominant ideologies about user involvement, inform and shape our conceptual understanding of user involvement within the public service context as well as to influence professional practice.

7.9c: **Implications for Professional Practice:**

This study can contribute towards improving professional practice, awareness, education and informing policymakers, politicians, public managers and all stakeholders with an interest in public service delivery on the wider benefits of user involvement. Applying evidence from this study to public service provision can unleash the following implications for professionals and practitioners;

- Better education, sensitisation, awareness creation and clarity of focus on how user involvement can be explored in galvanising and enhancing user-led service provision.
- Evidence from this study can be synthesised in informing `best practice` and positively influencing and shaping professional practice.
- Another key implication of this study is its challenge of dominant ideologies and misconceptions of user involvement which have conceptualised the user as a passive, lazy consumer of public services with no inputs to make towards the co-design and co-delivery of services. It has challenged such dominant ideologies by arguing and conceptualising end users as positive individuals with vital `expert` knowledge of their situations who can engineer more targeted allocation of resources in delivering efficiency.

- The above perspective of the user therefore seeks to contribute in widening the debate on user involvement and engineering new conversations on how users` knowledge, skills and expertise of their situation like in health care can be best explored in delivering holistic user-led transformational outcomes.

- Another implication of this study is its capacity to revolutionise public service provision through its support for user involvement as a mechanism for improving service quality and users` experience but it also cautions that user involvement must be implemented on its comparative advantage.

Without being prescriptive, I have also argued that user involvement must not be shallow or `just involvement for involvement sake`, it must seek to explore deeper and more effective techniques of engaging and involving users in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led transformational outcomes. This next subunit will briefly conclude on this chapter.

Conclusion:

This study has argued that user involvement marks a huge policy or paradigm shift in the way public services are conceptualised, designed and delivered to citizens as it places citizens and end users at the heart of service design and delivery. Evidence from this study has successfully identified four models of user involvement; user-led, group-led, staff-led and digital-driven models. This study has also demonstrated that any model which is selected by staff must be informed by its comparative advantage and user`s preference. It has widened and informed our conceptual understanding of how innovative models of user involvement can be explored in providing user-led transformational outcomes. It supports the view that while involvement may be seen as challenging and time consuming, it can also provide fascinating opportunities which can contribute towards a better understanding in co-designing and co-delivering user-focused outcomes. This study has drawn inspiration from Barzaley (1992 cited in Heinrich, Hill and Lynn, Jr. 2004, p.3) in concluding that user involvement must explore empirical evidence and re-position itself on new practical, conceptual and intellectual grounds if it seeks to deliver user-led transformational outcomes.

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List of Appendices

1) Table: `A`: A frequency Chart of the responses to my questionnaire from the three organisations in my multiple-case studies:

No.	Question	G	Organisation	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	*Neither Agree nor disagree* 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5	Total
1	*You like to take part in planning the service you receive from------?*	F	A	11111 = 5	11111 = 5	0	0	0	10
		M		11111 = 5	11111 11111 1111= 14	11111 1 = 6	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 1 = 6	11111 11111 11111 11111 111 = 23	11111 1 = 6	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 111 = 18	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	11 = 2	0	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11111 1111 = 9	11 = 2	0	0	19
		M		11111 1111 = 9	11111 11111 1 = 11	11 = 2	0	11 = 2	24
2	*Staff at-----make sure you take part in planning the service you receive.*	F	A	1111 = 4	11111 1 = 6	1= 1	0	0	11
		M		11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 11 = 12	111 = 3	1= 1	0	24
		F	B	11111 11111 = 10	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	111 = 3	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 = 20	11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	1 = 1	0	0	45
		F	C	1111 = 4	11111 1111 = 9	1111 = 4	1 = 1	11 = 2	20
		M		11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 = 10	11 = 2	1 = 1	11 = 2	23
3	*Staff at-------are friendly with you when you are taking part in planning the service you receive.*	F	A	1111 = 4	1111= 4	11= 2	0	0	10
		M		11111 1111= 9	11111 11111 11 = 12	111= 3	1= 1	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 111 = 13	11111 11111 11111 1111 = 19	11 = 2	1= 1	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 1111 = 19	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 26	0	0	0	45
		F	C	11111 1 = 6	11111 11111 = 10	1= 1	0	11 = 2	19
		M		11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 1 = 11	111 = 3	0	11 = 2	24
4	*You took part in planning the service which you currently*	F	A	111= 3	1111= 4	11= 2	1= 1	0	10
		M		11111= 5	11111 11111 11111 = 15	111= 3	11 = 2	0	25

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No	Question								Total
	receive from-------?	F	B	11111 11111 111 = 13	11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	1 = 1	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 1111 = 19	11111 11111 11111 11111 111= 23	11 = 2	1= 1	0	45
		F	C	11111 1 = 6	11111 11111 = 10	1= 1	0	11 = 2	19
		M		11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 1 = 11	111 = 3	0	11 = 2	24
5	*You are happy in taking part in planning the service which you receive from------?*	F	A	1111 = 4	111 = 3	1111 = 4	0	0	11
		M		11111 1 = **6**	11111 11111 = 10	11111 111 = 8	0	0	24
		F	B	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	1 = 1	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	11 = 2	0	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 1 = 11	0	0	0	19
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 11111 = 10	111 = 3	1 = 1	0	24
6	*You are satisfied with the quality of the service you receive from------?*	F	A	1111 = 4	11111 = 5	1 = 1	0	0	10
		M		11111= 5	11111 11111 1 = 11	11111 1111 = 9	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 111 = 13	11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	1= 1	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	1= 1	1= 1	0	45
		F	C	11111 11 = 7	11111 1111 = 9	11 = 2	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 1111 = 9	111 = 3	0	11 = 2	24
7	*You are satisfied that staff At------listen to you when planning the service you receive.*	F	A	11=2	11111 1= 6	11=2	0	0	10
		M		11111=5	11111 11111 = 10	11111 111 = 8	11= 2	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 111 = 13	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	1 = 1	0	0	36
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 = 20	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	11 = 2	0	0	44
		F	C	11111 1111 = 9	11111 11 = 7	1 = 1	1 = 1	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 1 = 11	11 = 2	11 = 2	1 = 1	24

8	You are happy that staff at----- take your likes into consideration when planning the service you receive.	F	A	1 = 1	11111 11 = 7	11 = 2	0	0	10
		M		1111 = 4	11111 11111 1 = 11	11111 11111 =10	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 11111 1 = 16	11111 11111 11111 1111 = 19	1 = 1	0	0	36
		M		11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	11111 11 = 7	0	0	44
		F	C	11111 11111 = 10	11111 11 = 7	0	0	1 = 1	18
		M		11111 11 = 7	11111 11111 11 = 12	111 = 3	11 = 2	1 = 1	25
9	You are happy that staff at------ take your dislikes into consideration when planning the service you receive.	F	A	111= 3	111 = 3	1111 = 4	0	0	10
		M		11111 = 5	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11 = 7	1 = 1	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 11111 = 15	11111 11111 11111 111 = 18	0	0	0	33
		M		11111 11111 11111 11 = 17	11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	47
		F	C	11111 11111 = 10	11111 11 = 7 1 = 1		0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11 = 7	11111 11111 11 = 12	11 = 2	1 = 1	11 = 2	24
10	The service you receive from -----meets your needs?	F	A	1 = 1	11111 111 = 8	11 = 2	0	0	11
		M		11111 = 5	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 1 = 6	1 = 1	0	24
		F	B	11111 11111 1111 = 14	11111 11111 11111 11111 = 20	1 = 1	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 1111 = 14	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 111 = 28	11 = 2	1 = 1	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11111 111 = 8	11 =2	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 1111 = 9	11111 11111 = 10	111 =3	0	11 = 2	24
11	Taking part in planning the service you receive from-------is a good idea.	F	A	1111 = 4	11 = 2	1111= 4	0	0	10
		M		11111 11111 = 10	1 1111 111 = 8	11111 11 = 7	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	11 = 2	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	11111 11111 11111 111 = 18	111 = 3	1 = 1	0	45
		F	C	11111 11 = 7	11111 1111 = 9	1 = 1	0	11 = 2	19

#	Question								
		M		11111 11 = 7	11111 11111 11 = 12	111 =3	11 = 2	0	24
12	*You support the idea that other learners should take part in planning the service they receive from-----?*	F	A	111 = 3	111 = 3	1111 = 4	0	0	10
		M		11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 111 = 13	111 = 3	1 = 1	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	111 = 3	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 16	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	1111 = 4	0	0	45
		F	C	11111 11111 =10	11111 11 = 7	0	0	11 = 2	19
		M		11111 11111 =10	11111 11111 1 = 11	11 = 2	1 = 1	0	24
13	*You will like to continue to take part in planning the service you receive from------?*	F	A	11111 = 5	11 = 2	111 = 3	0	0	10
		M		11111 11 = 7	1 1111 11111 11 = 12	11111 = 5	1= 1	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 1 = 11	11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 22	11 = 2	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 1111 = 14	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 26	11111 = 5	0	0	45
		F	C	11111 11111 = 10	11111 111 = 8	0	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 11111 1 = 11	11 = 2	1 = 1	0	24
14	*In future, you will like to take part in planning any service you may want to receive from any other organisation.*	F	A	1111 = 4	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	0	10
		M		11111 = 5	1 1111 11111 111 = 13	11111 1 = 6	1= 1	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 = 10	11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	1111 = 4	0	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 = 15	11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	11111 = 5	1 =1	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11111 = 5	1111 = 4	0	11 = 2	19
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 11111 1111 = 14	0	0	0	24
15	*Staff at-------support you in taking part in planning the service you receive.*	F	A	11111 11111 = 10	0	0	0	0	10
		M		11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	0	0	0		25
		F	B	0	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 31	1111 = 4	0	0	35
		M		0	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111	111 = 3	0	0	45

					11 = 42				
		F	C	11111 = 5	0	11111 11111 1 = 11	111 = 3	0	19
		M		1111 = 4	0	11111 11111 111 = 13	1111 = 4	111 = 3	24
16	*Staff at-----make sure you take part in improving the service you receive.*	F	A	1111 = 4	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	0	10
		M		11111 1 = 6	11111 11111 1 = 11	11111 111 = 8	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 1111 = 9	11111 11111 11111 11111 = 20	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	35
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 26	11111 111 = 8	1 = 1	0	45
		F	C	11111 11 = 7	11111 1111 = 9	11 = 2	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11 = 7	11111 11111 1 = 11	1111 = 4	1 = 1	1 = 1	24
17	*Taking part in planning the service you receive enables you to better understand problems faced by staff in providing a service to you.*	F	A	1111 = 4	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	0	10
		M		11111= 5	11111 11111 1 = 11	11111 1111 = 9	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11111 11111 111 = 18	1111 = 4	1 = 1	0	35
		M		11111 11111 111 = 13	11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	11111= 5	111 = 3	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11111 11111 = 10	0	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 111 = 8	111 = 3	11 = 2	1 = 1	24
18	*You like staff at----to continue to involve you in planning the service you receive.*	F	A	111= 3	11111 = 5	11 = 2	0	0	10
		M		11111 = 5	11111 11111 111 = 13	11111 = 5	11 = 2	0	25
		F	B	11111 1111 = 9	11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	1 = 1	1 = 1	0	35
		M		11111 11111 11111 = 15	11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 24	11111 = 5	1 = 1	0	45
		F	C	11111 1 = 6	11111 11111 11 = 12	0	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11111 = 10	11111 111 = 8	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	24
19	*You think the idea of supporting learners take part in planning the service they*	F	A	111 = 3	111 = 3	1111 = 4	0	0	10
		M		11111 11 = 7	11111 11111 111 = 13	111 = 3	11 = 2	0	25
		F	B	11111 11111 1 =	11111 11111 11111	11 = 2	1 = 1	0	35

No.	Question	Gender	Organisation						Total
	receive from------is good.			11	11111 1 = 21				
		M		11111 11111 11111 11 = 17	11111 11111 11111 11111 = 20	11111 = 5	111 = 3	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11111 111 = 8	11 =2	0	1 = 1	19
		M		11111 11111 1 = 11	11111 11111 = 10	11 =2	1 = 1	0	24
20	*Which of the following ways of taking part in planning the service you receive from-----do staff mostly use.*	F	A	11111 = 5	111 = 3	111 = 3	0	0	11
		M		11111 = 5	11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 1 = 6	0	1 = 1	24
		F	B	11111 1111 = 9	11111 11111 11111 11111 111 = 23	1 = 1	1 = 1	0	34
		M		11111 11111 11 = 12	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	11111 11 = 7	11 = 2	0	46
		F	C	11111 11 = 7	11111 11111 = 10	1 = 1	1 = 1	1 = 1	20
		M		1111= 4	11111 11111 11111 1 = 16	111 = 3	0	0	23

Table `B`:   A Frequency count of respondents` selections of preferred mode of involvement by organisation.

No.	Question	Gender	Organisation	Resident Meeting 1	Telephone 2	*One-to-one Meeting* 3	Through Emails	Other 5	Total
21	*Which of these ways of taking part in planning the service you receive from-----do staff mostly use?*	F	A	111= 3	111 = 3	11111 = 5	0	0	11
		M		11 = 2	111 = 3	11111 11111 11111 1111 = 19	0	0	24
		F	B	11111 1 = 6	0	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 29	0	0	35
		M		11111 = 5	1 = 1	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111	0	0	45

#	Question								
						1111 = 39			
		F	C	11111 = 5	0	11111 11111 1 = 11	111 = 3	0	19
		M		1111 = 4	0	11111 11111 111 = 13	1111 = 4	111 = 3	24
	Total & Percentage			**25** **15.82%**	**7** **4.43%**	**116** **73.42%**	**7** **4.43%**	**3** **1.9%**	**158** **100%**
22	*Which of these ways of taking part in planning the service you receive from-----do you like most?*	F	A	11111 = 5	1 = 1	1111 = 4	0	0	10
		M		11111 1 = 6	11111 = 5	11111 11111 1111 = 14	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 1 = 6	11 = 2	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 27	0	0	35
		M		11111 11 = 7	1=1	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11 = 37	0	0	45
		F	C	11111 111 = 8	11 = 2	11111 1111 = 9	0	0	19
		M		11 = 2	1 = 1	11111 11111 11111 11111 1 = 21	0	0	24
	Total & Percentage			**34** **21.52%**	**12** **7.59%**	**112** **70.89%**	**0** **0%**	**0** **0%**	**158**
24	*Which of the following ways of taking part in planning the service you receive from------do you think is the most effective?*	F	A	11111 = 5	1 = 1	11111 = 5	0	0	10
		M		11111 11 = 7	1111 = 4	11111 11111 111 = 13	0	0	25
		F	B	11111 1 = 6	111 = 3	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 = 25	0	0	34
		M		11111 111 = 8	1111 = 4	11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 11111 1111 = 34	0	0	46
		F	C	11111 1111 = 9	0	11111 11111= 10	0	1 = 1	19

		M		111 = 3	0	11111　　11111 11111　11111= 20	0	0	24
	Total & Percentage			**38** **24.05%**	**12** **7.59%**	**107** **67.73%**	**0** **0%**	**1** **0.63%**	**158** **100%**

Table `C`: Shows respondent`s selections of the most important reason for involving in the co-design and co-delivery of user-led services

No.	Question	Gender	Organisation	To improve service quality **1**	To achieve better outcomes **2**	*To make service users satisfied* **3**	I do not know 4	To enable service users to participate **5**	Total
23	*What do you think is the most important reason for taking part in planning the service which you receive from-----?*	F	A	3	6	2	0	0	11
		M		9	10	2	1	2	24
		F	B	9	11	13	0	4	37
		M		18	20	5	0	0	43
		F	C	5	9	2	3	**1**	20
		M		13	7	2	**1**	0	23
	Total & Percentage			**57** **36.08%**	**63** **39.87%**	**26** **16.46%**	**5** **3.16%**	**7** **4.43%**	**158** **100%**

Table `D`: Illustrates a breakdown by organisation of end user perceptions of the quality of service which they do access as a result of their involvement.

No.	Question	Gender	Organisation	Excellent 1	Good 2	Average 3	Poor 4	Very Poor 5	Total
25	*How will you rate the quality of service you receive from---?*	F	A	4	4	2	0	0	10
		M		4	19	2	0	0	25
		F	B	12	18	3	0	0	33
		M		16	30	1	0	0	47
		F	C		7	2	1	1	19
		M		4	17	2	0	1	24
	Total & Percentage			**48** **30.38%**	**95** **60.13%**	**12** **7.59%**	**1** **0.63%**	**2** **1.27%**	**158** **100%**

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